

Editorial

NU budget cuts, don't represent Nebraskan's views

Ninety-seven percent of the 289 Nebraskans questioned in a recent Daily Nebraskan poll said they believed in the worth of a college education. Sixty-four percent said they would give more of their tax dollars to improve the quality of the university.

Of those questioned, 56 percent said they oppose the \$3.3 million NU budget cut.

Yet, the NU Board of Regents Saturday approved a \$3.3 million midyear budget reduction mandated by the Legislature.

The cut means that about 70 class sections at UNL and 100 at UNO could be cut. NU also will lose \$742,867 for equipment and \$170,697 for repairs and maintenance. Many classrooms will be colder because of utility budget cuts.

It appears that NU has the support of the state, but not its representatives.

UNL's budget already is 9 percent less than that of comparable universities.

The latest budget cuts follow a 3 percent midyear reduction in 1981-82, a 2 percent reallocation of 2 percent in 1983-84 and an increase in state aid of less than 1 percent in 1985-86.

Unlike some state legislators, Nebraskans value the university and realize that its benefits are far-reaching. They realize the benefits of county extension agents, research projects and the School of Technical Agriculture at Curtis.

Through research and agriculture programs, the university invests in the state's future.

State legislators are elected to represent the people of the state and decide what is best for the future of the state.

State senators who supported the NU budget cuts failed to reflect most constituents' views and are not providing for the state's future.

It's up to Nebraskans to remind state lawmakers of their support for higher education and to make sure legislators earmark some money from the 1 percent income tax increase and the 5 percent cigarette tax increase for the university.

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The Daily Nebraskan

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WELCOME TO MARLBORO, CAMEL, KENT, KOOL, WINSTON... COUNTRY



Christmas spirit fading True meaning lies in a stable, not in a store

Remember the *Star Trek* episode where Spock was in heat? It was really neat to watch this paragon of dispassion and logic crumble into a babbling, senseless brute, all for the irrational desire of a beautiful yet conniving woman. It is the theme from which great literature has been made for millenia. Well, this time of year I always identify with the poor Vulcan.



James Sennett

Eleven months out of the year, I pride myself on my calculated distance, my trained cynicism, my ability to transcend the moment and hold the events around me in proper perspective and judgment. Then comes Christmas.

During December I go totally ga-ga. I buy cutesy little stocking stuffers, sing inane songs about jolly old elves and electric reindeer and generally make a sentimental fool of myself. And I offer no apologies.

Christmas is the one season of the year when I am given permission by society (and myself) to be a sap. I don't have to think rationally. I don't have to watch out for consistency. I can shed the veneer of respectability and explore the untrimmed corners of humanness. I can be a kid. I can believe in Santa Claus. I can know that Jesus wasn't really born on Dec. 25 and yet that doesn't have to stop me using this season to hope just one more time that His inspiration will somehow make a difference in this troubled world. I don't even have to be afraid of using cliches

like "this troubled world." Christmas is our last stronghold against the dehumanization of the Western World. For a few brief days at the end of the year, we can drop our callousness and remember what it is like to care. We can say, and truly mean, "It is more blessed to give than to receive." We can remember the pure joy of childhood Christmases, and recall that we took as much delight in Grandma and Grandpa visiting as we did in the toys they brought. We can smile at people on the streets without worrying that they'll think we're weird. We can drop money in a Salvation Army bucket without feeling used. And we can cope once again that everyone really does have the best interests of others at heart.

It is from this perspective that the crass-commercialization of Christmas really takes on its most sinister facade. It is not simply that we have made Christmas into just another opportunity to manipulate and pillage the buying public. Rather, the unblinking prostitution of this festival of sanity reveals that we are changing from the inside out. Currently, we can surface at Christmas time and exercise the part of us that still rebels against total materialization. But the remnants are slipping fast.

Every Christmas it gets harder and harder to defend a return to traditional celebrations. Each year brings new ways to turn Christmas into the ultimate celebration of our surrender to the animality of consumerism. We are what we own, and at no time is that evident like the Christmas season.

Of course Christmas was not originally a Christian holiday. Anyone who has ever taken one of those "Christmas Trivia" tests in *Reader's Digest* knows that. But it did reach us as the ultimate celebration of worship to a

deity who (like it or not) played a major role in making this civilization what it is. It was the natural culmination of a devotion that permeated the year. From there it deteriorated into the last vestiges of a forgotten ideal.

Now the holiday has once again been transformed into the worship of a predominant deity. And with each sacrifice on the altar of pecuniary gratification we bury further the last hint of an existence free from fiscal anxiety. Once again, our celebration of Christmas is the natural culmination of a devotion that permeates the year. But in so restoring the continuity of the holiday's reflection of our lives, we are systematically severing ourselves from the final hint that there is more to life than what we can charge on a Visa card.

So go crazy this Christmas. Watch *Miracle on 34th Street* (in black and white) and cry unashamedly at the end. Stand in line to sit on Santa's lap at the hometown department store. Purchase your gifts with your loved ones in mind, rather than with an eye to what its extra-vagance will say about you. Above all, believe those stuffy old preachers and incurable romantics when they tell you that the true meaning of Christmas lies in a smelly Judean stable, not in an electrically heated four-bedroom split-level.

There is something inside us, something fully human and begging to be expressed, something in danger of eviction for reasons of irrelevance — that something must be aired or lost. This season is our only chance to recover and restore to preeminence a view of life which is truly sacred. When it goes, our humanity goes.

Listen...do you hear sleigh bells? Sennett is a UNL graduate student in philosophy and campus minister at the College Career Christian Fellowship.

Yuletide woes and Christmas spirit

A Modern Miracle on 19th Street

The day aggravated me so that I could not even view its end with relief. Things could only disintegrate further.



Chris Welsch

It was a day of frozen car doors, new snow, bitter cold, tests and unfinished research papers. Work at the office was done, yet I still had a long way to go before sleep.

A friend had received a case of wine from California, and I had agreed to

take one of the half-cases home for her. After that I was going to Beatrice to help a friend move from an apartment to a trailer.

As I packed my books away and lifted the wine, I noticed my faithful friend and former lackey Geoff standing in the corner of the room, his head tilted forward, sniffles leaking out of his forlorn face. I asked him to join me on the trip to Beatrice — nothing like a road trip to chase off those holiday blues, I assured him.

Then a co-worker asked for a ride home, and I assented grudgingly. The night grew longer with every minute.

The three of us trudged off into the bitter-cold December night. The sickening, sweet strains of Christmas Musak pervaded the air. I cursed it under my

breath and wondered why the cold didn't stop the stuff from pouring into my ears.

We walked in silence to my Pontiac, parked at 19th and R streets, each of us lost in our own Yuletide woes, each wishing to be warm.

I put the wine on the roof of the car and opened the driver-side door. The passenger door was frozen. We piled in and made our way to the co-worker's house. We sat staring straight ahead. Geoff was feeling the anticipation of the road trip and tried briefly to cheer us up with a discordant rendition of "Santa Claus is Coming to Town." I weakly joined in, and we all had a warm feeling about humanity that lasted about 50 seconds.

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