

Opinion

Support available for gay students

Coming out for a gay and lesbian student is a complex identification process involving reactions of fear, denial, anger, ostracism and ridicule from unempathetic parents, students and friends.

Lesbian/gay students wonder if people will hate them now that they know. A very common response is turning out a person before they get to know the entire person.

For these reasons, many gay and lesbian students refrain from coming out. Not only is this extremely uncomfortable, but it's emotionally unhealthy. If you are a heterosexual, imagine that you were the minority and you had to act gay.

It is important to note that people do not choose to be gay, just as heterosexuals do not choose their lifestyle. Sexual orientation is determined at an early age and is irreversible.

Coming out is a lifelong process when lesbians and gays learn to accept their sexual identity, to accept the fact that they are OK, and make others aware of themselves.

Gays and lesbians may develop a cultural consciousness and try to attain equal and accepting treatment from society (employment, housing and public accommodations).

For gay/lesbian students to come out, they must trash all of the prejudi-

ces, insults and doctrines of a heterosexual society. The feelings of lesbian or gay students who are coming out range from isolation, alienation, depression and anger to fear, denial, insecurity and celebration.

Support systems for these students must involve understanding and awareness of the students' feelings. UNL has support for gay/lesbian students: the Counseling Center, the Gay/Lesbian Hotline and Coming Out Support Group, WRC's Lesbian Support Group, and other residence hall counselors.

Sexual orientation is an important feature in every person. Being gay or lesbian and comfortable is essential. Lesbian/gay students make up 10 percent of UNL's population, but must deal with 90 percent of society's heterosexual dogma, ignorance and oppression because of their sexual orientation.

Here's the bottom line:

- gay/lesbian people who are coming out have real needs,
- support systems are available,
- society needs to quit assuming everyone is heterosexual,
- society needs to learn to accept people's inherent differences.

Rodney Allen Bell II
President UNL Gay/Lesbian Student Association

Letters

DN leaves out strengths of UNL's journalism college

In reading the article on the UNL College of Journalism accreditation, (Daily Nebraskan, Jan. 22), it would be hard for someone to realize that the accreditation team said the college has "an excellent program with an excellent reputation." The article pointed out the deficiencies that were cited in the report, but failed to list the strengths pointed out by the accreditation team.

Since I gave the report to the NU Board of Regents and cited the strengths and the deficiencies, let me share the strengths pointed out by the team.

- Spirited college leadership with support from the central university administration. Top-level administration is outstanding.
- A loyal, strong faculty that has

Child abuse rose with legal abortion

I am writing in response to two letters on abortion (DN, Jan. 23). To Rose Beck, you now have what you asked for: a woman's opinion. To Todd Fleischer, let me fill you in on some facts that you obviously lack.

The entire abortion issue centers on the question of the status of unborn life. The person in the womb is clearly a human being, for the only thing that is added after conception is nutrition.

The adolescent girls who have found themselves with an unwanted preg-

nancy cannot murder an innocent, helpless baby because of their mistake. Child abuse consistently has risen with the legalization of abortion. Check the statistics and you also will discover that the victims of most child abuse cases were planned pregnancies.

- An active student body eager to learn and make a contribution to print journalism, broadcasting and advertising. Students are interested, talented, hard-working.
- A solid curriculum firmly grounded in the liberal arts with a strong practical emphasis in print journalism, broadcasting and advertising.
- Strong ties to local and regional professional organizations.
- Particularly strong advising.
- Strong internship program in the news-editorial department.
- The availability of facilities such as the radio station, three satellite dishes, the educational TV station co-

operative efforts and equipment to produce a laboratory newspaper.

- A well-deserved, excellent national reputation.

I hope this gives readers a better idea of the quality of our journalism programs.

Robert R. Furgason
UNL Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs

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Black family poverty confounds liberals, conservatives

COHEN from Page 5

Years ago, certified liberals did not talk this way. They scoffed at the notion that welfare corrupted values and that values had anything to do with the plight of the poor urban black. That was the talk of conservatives, even of racists. Liberals talked programs. They talked jobs, they talked schools. If they needed to answer criticism, they could hold up the historical cross of slavery and the right-wing vampires would beat a retreat.

No more. That's a good thing, and more power to Moyers for bringing

the message home via the mouths of inner-city blacks. But if there was always a core of truth to the conservative message, then there is one to the liberal message as well.

Since 1973, welfare grants of all kinds have been eroded by inflation, and yet the problem of illegitimacy has worsened. If, as conservatives believe, people will do what makes economic sense to them, then babies are being born in the ghetto for reasons having little to do with welfare.

As for the ghetto male, he makes a poor witness to his own plight. His exaggerated manliness testifies to

his inability to be an economically functional man — to work, to provide for his children. The street ethic dresses up economic reality like a poor man's one good suit. There are few jobs in the ghetto.

Moyers went where many social-welfare thinkers have already been. No longer is welfare dismissed as a possibly corrupting influence.

But if there is truth to this, then there is truth also in the proposition that ghetto problems are economic as well as spiritual. Now, though, it is a message that's being ignored.

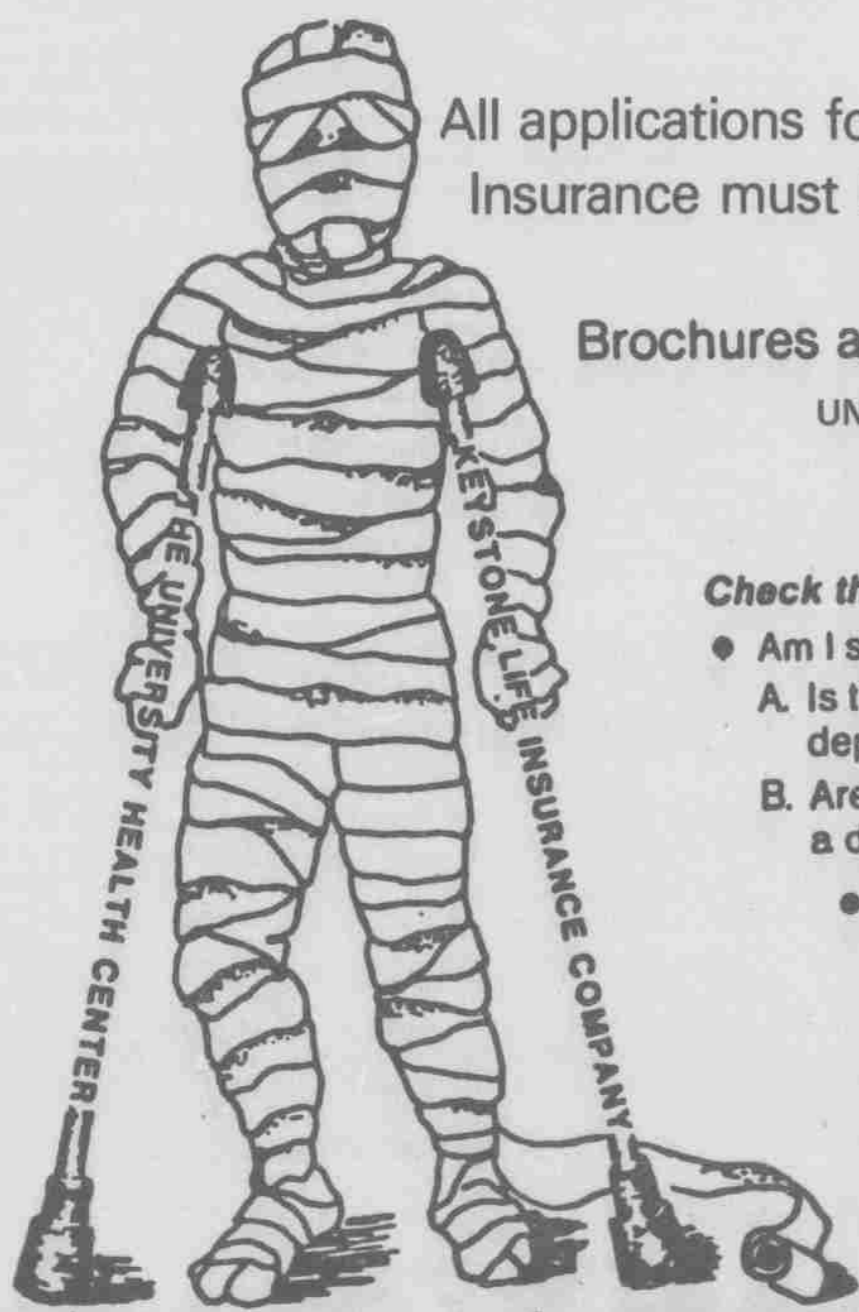
Moyers has provided a service. The camera showed what the

scholars have been writing. His troubled face is one of a man who has come face to face with the truth — and it's not what he once thought. But if liberals can revise their thinking, then so, too, should conservatives by opening the government's purse for economic programs. After all, if you want people to have middle-class values, then at least offer them the chance to lead middle-class lives.

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Cohen writes an editorial column for the Washington Post.

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 - A. Is there an age limit? Most policies limit the age for dependent coverage to age 23.
 - B. Are you thinking of marriage? Most policies exclude a dependent after he becomes married.
- Have I declared financial independence from my parents by receiving financial aid, and no longer eligible as a dependent under their plan?
- Would a medical emergency deplete funds set aside for my education?

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