

Editorial

Daily Nebraskan
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Teacher tests Evaluation ensures quality

Some teachers in Texas are sitting scared this week.

About 200,000 of the state's teachers and principals took tests to determine whether they know enough to keep their jobs. About 5 percent are expected to fail the test.

Unfortunately, that 5 percent probably can be matched in every state. There's too many teachers who could be replaced by someone better. Everyone remembers those bad junior high or high school teachers who never changed their tedious lesson plans, who never bothered to spend the extra time in their offices after school to answer questions.

The Texas test, it first seemed, would be the start of a movement to weed out some of the sour apples.

Not so.

The Sunday New York Times had an article, that included some questions patterned after the Texas test. The questions were ludicrous, easy enough for a 14- or 15-year-old to answer.

An example: Where could an educator find the page on which the foreword in a book begins. The choices for answers included the table of contents, library card catalog, a bibliography or an encyclopedia.

The Texas exam, it seems, doesn't pass the test itself. But it's more than Nebraska has done.

Teaching students at UNL have to take a basic skills test when they begin their education and another when they graduate.

Out in the field, teachers must get extra college credit hours about every three to five years. But that isn't enough.

Nebraska should take what Texas has done, build on it and set up a teacher-screening test that's effective. Besides checking teacher's knowledge of writing, reading comprehension and math, the test also should include problems directly related to their particular field. History teachers should be tested not only on history itself, but also on new research and findings about their particular fields of interest. Society and educational theories change. So should teachers.

To complement the test, students also should have input. A student's knowledge of a particular subject is a fairly accurate mirror of the teacher's ability to motivate students into learning the subject.

Students base their attitudes about school and learning in their early years. It's important that we have good, competent teachers to make students want to learn.

True, other professionals don't have to take periodical tests. But then again, other professionals don't have as large a stake in building people's attitudes and stereotypes.

Honest coach?

Iba not best coaching example

The search officially has begun for a new basketball coach, but some people question the coaching qualities UNL officials are looking for.

NU Athletic Director Bob Devaney was quoted in Saturday's Lincoln Journal as saying, "We want to get a coach who's as honest as Moe (Iba)."

Apparently Devaney is looking for a coach honest enough to conduct illegal practices, then deny it.

No, Iba never was discovered offering money to players or recruiting illegally, but his slate was far from clean:

- Oct. 8: "I just walked in, stayed there for a few minutes and (then) ran them. When they play their games and things, I'm not supposed to be there."

- Iba (Daily Nebraskan)
- Oct. 9: "Everything we're doing is strictly legal . . . in our minds we feel that we have not done anything wrong."

- Iba (Associated Press)
- Oct. 10: "I just have no comment or reaction to that (reports of the illegal practice)."

- Iba (Lincoln Star)
- Oct. 18: "I made a mistake. It was poor judgment on my part. I apologize to the University of Nebraska community and to our supporters, and now I hope we can put this behind us and all get together in support of our basketball team this year."

- Iba (UNL press release)
- One wonders what Devaney's definition of honesty is.

NU fans deserve a coach who sets a good example for players, on and off the court.

Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials represent official policy of the spring 1986 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Its members are Vicki Ruhga, editor; Ad Hudler, editorial page editor; Thom Gabrukiewicz, managing editor; James Rogers, editorial associate and Chris Welsch, copy desk chief.

The Daily Nebraskan's publishers are the regents, who established the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily production of the paper.

According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student editors.



America's value crisis

The blame, and responsibility, must be shared

Newsweek reports an unprecedented boom in cocaine abuse among teen-agers; Bill Moyers broadcasts the disintegration of the black family; and columnists everywhere are alarmed about children having children.

A breakdown in society. The disintegration of values may not have the tangible, empirical impact of a Great Depression, but the effects may be all the more damaging for their subtlety. America's crisis in values runs through the nation like a giant fault line. We know it's there, but we don't know whether it will continue to slowly grow or one day explode.

Conservatives blithely claim liberalist reforms and the carefree mores of the '60s are coming home to roost. It's a big, ugly bird, but liberals alone did not hatch it.

I don't underestimate the importance and danger of America's value crisis, but there is also great danger in oversimplifying the problem by explaining it away as a backlash to the activism and leniency of the '60s.

Undoubtedly, the "sexual revolution" contributed to today's crisis of children having children. It's also true that welfare programs may have made some of its recipients too dependent. And our drug crisis is in part a result of the psychedelic era.

1969, however, is 17 years gone. It is 1986. Republicans control a majority of the Senate, and President Reagan has been in office for six years. Across the country, conservatism has grown, and

the values crisis has not gone away. To the contrary, it has gotten worse.

The crisis pervades every class, but the heart of the problem is among the poor, a steadily growing sector of America. A sector conservatives often choose to ignore.

Therein lies the greatest danger in the values crisis: ignoring it or trying to hide from it. Taking the poor off welfare will not get them into jobs, or tape families back together, or keep kids from having sex. It will make the problem worse.



Chris Welsch

Many conservatives suggest a return to the ethics of the '50s. President Reagan certainly believes that although Americans seem a little troubled, underneath we're all like Ward and June Cleaver. Conservatives forget that the activism of the '60s was a backlash to an ignorant, ethnocentric, Beaver Cleaver dreamland — a reaction to Commie bashing, to segregation, to senseless war. The liberal movement brought civil rights laws, the end of the Vietnam war and a new social conscience.

If middle-class America chooses a return to those "ethical" days of 1956, it will be turning its back on a crisis that won't go away. Crawling into conservative shells and pretending this is

a white, Christian nation with two cars in every garage and a chicken in the boiler won't change things.

Americans badly need something to believe in. And they badly need help. Neither Reagan's call to arms, nor a mass return to the ethics of the '50s will fulfill those needs.

We are beyond the point where we can go back. The nation has to face its ills and go forward with social compassion and restraint.

The time for blame is passed. Blame must be shared, for just as surely as liberalism contributed to our ethics crisis, conservatism has ruled over its alarming growth.

As a society, we must rebuild our values. We've got to get our kids off drugs, out of each others' pants and back in the home. But it's going to take action — and reform.

The way will not be easy. In our pluralistic society, pat religious or political answers are out of the question.

And we must be willing to pay — with our money and our time. Government can give the poor jobs; it can provide drug and sex counseling, but America must be willing to pay. If we listen to conservatives, we will spurn the opportunity for social reform for more personal wealth and a bigger war machine.

Unfortunately for all of us, the threat from within is growing faster than the threat from without.

Welsch is a UNL senior English and journalism major and a Daily Nebraskan copy desk chief.

When the U.S. stopped sending aid, Mrs. Marcos sent the 'salesman' home

Biff! Listen, Biff. You're my son and I know what you think of me. I know I'm a washed-up salesman, going off in the world on a smile and a shoe shine, polishing the apples of customers, groveling for sales and — alas and alack — getting none. But once, Biff, once I was a terrific success. Yesiree, Biff. I sold shoes to Imelda Marcos.

Oh, boy, those were the days. The Philippines were my territory. Hot. Muggy. Those fans turning slowly overhead. Everyone smoking Camels. All the women wearing slit skirts. I was alone, afraid and not doing particularly well, but I thought, what the hell, I'll try the palace. I asked for Imelda Marcos. What are you selling? she asked. Shoes, I said. She said she'd take 400.

Biff! Biff! I couldn't believe my ears. I whipped out the old order book, made sure I had my carbons in the right place, took out the old pencil, wetted the end of it and wrote it all up. Yesiree — 400 pairs of number 72 black pumps, size 6 1/2. Would the lady like anything else? Yes, she said. She ordered 400 insoles, 400 shoe trees, 400 little plastic bags for the shoes and \$813 in Dr. Scholl's footpowder, which was another of my lines.



Richard Cohen

I could hardly write fast enough. My hand was shaking. I slipped the order pages on my book, smearing carbon on my fingers and later on my face. Imelda just smiled at me. I tried to calculate the commission. Oh, the days we could spend together at Ebbets Field, Biff. I would take you and your brother, Happy, and your mother out of that house near the El where Arthur Miller had put us. I was going to buy a condominium with a fancy British name — the Buckingham or something. Imagine me, Willie Loman, in a condominium!

I could not believe my good luck. Of course, I told nobody about Mrs. Mar-

cos and the way she was spending money. When a Philippine's aid bill came up before Congress, I just looked the other way. I was not alone, of course. Real-estate agents all over the world knew. The fanciest jewelers called on the Marcos family. Mstislav Rostropovich played his little cello for them.

Biff, you remember that toast Vice President George Bush made to Ferdinand Marcos? I was in the palace at the time. I used to stay in the salesman's quarters. All of us were there. Gus from Cartier's, Phil for Tiffany's, Ernie from Rolls Royce, Jay from Gucci, Sal from Kron chocolates and Irv from Sotheby Park Bernet. Most of the time we used to play poker, but that night we went to see Bush. What a toast! That stuff about admiring Ferdinand's democratic ways. I thought Ernie would die laughing. Only Jay didn't laugh. Those creeps from Gucci. No sense of humor. He kept saying it was a disgrace.

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