

Daily Nebraskan
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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Reconsider vote

Building's historic value needs examining

The NU Board of Regents jumped the gun when it voted to acquire and demolish the Woodruff Building, 10th and Q streets.

The regents voted unanimously Nov. 10 to acquire the building and convert it into a 45-stall parking lot.

ASUN President Bryan Hill says he plans to ask the regents to reconsider their vote at their December meeting.

Hill says information on the condition and historical value of the building was not distributed at the November meeting until after the regents already had started voting.

"By the time we got it, there wasn't any chance to read it," he said after the meeting. "It wasn't utilized by the board."

Had the regents read the information prepared for them by the UNL College of Architecture, they probably would not have been so quick to vote to destroy the Woodruff Building.

Hill says that according to that information, the building probably meets criteria for placement on the National Register of Historic Places.

Vice Chancellor for Business and Finance John Goebel says the timely distribution of the school's information could not be helped. Goebel insists that he received the information regarding the building Nov. 3 -- too late, he says, to send the materials to all regents for study before the meeting. He chose instead to compile a summary statement of the review and distribute it at the meeting.

But the summary statement was included in the tardy information packet.

In a summary letter included in the packet, James Potter, chairman of the architecture department, wrote that "it is probably worth the time, effort and resources to have a consultant do an in-depth, cost-benefit analysis of the building to determine relative trade-offs of historic preservation vs. new construction."

Hill says UNL professors spent a lot of time on their evaluations, and the regents "owe it to them to take a look at what they have to say."

But Regent Kermit Hansen of Elkhorn disregarded Hill's prudent call to reconsider, and instead called Hill a "juvenile" at the November meeting for protesting the time that the information packet was distributed.

Hill is right, not juvenile.

The university may need parking, but before the regents start letting loose with the wrecking ball, they should pay careful consideration to what they plan to destroy.

Hansen insists the regents devoted four months of deliberation and analysis to the Woodruff issue.

But the regents were the ones who recruited the UNL College of Architecture to review the feasibility of refurbishing the building way back in September. Now that the results are in, they should respect the recommendations from professionals who know what they are talking about and further investigate historic preservation vs. new construction.

-- Lee Rood
for the Daily Nebraskan

UHC takes parental attitude

The headline of your recent article on the vaccination program of the University Health Center (DN, Nov. 16) is in error. A request is not backed by a threat. The action taken by the UHC is a command, not a request. The question then becomes: Why does an organization maintained to serve the students and supported by student fees feel that it can dictate to you? The answer is simple, because it can. The state Surgeon General has empowered the UHC to suspend students and to freeze records if they cannot prove that they have been immunized or had a doctor-diagnosed case of the measles.

Why then does the UHC still insist upon immunization long after the threat of a measles outbreak is over? Because they have issued an edict and woe be on you who fail to comply.

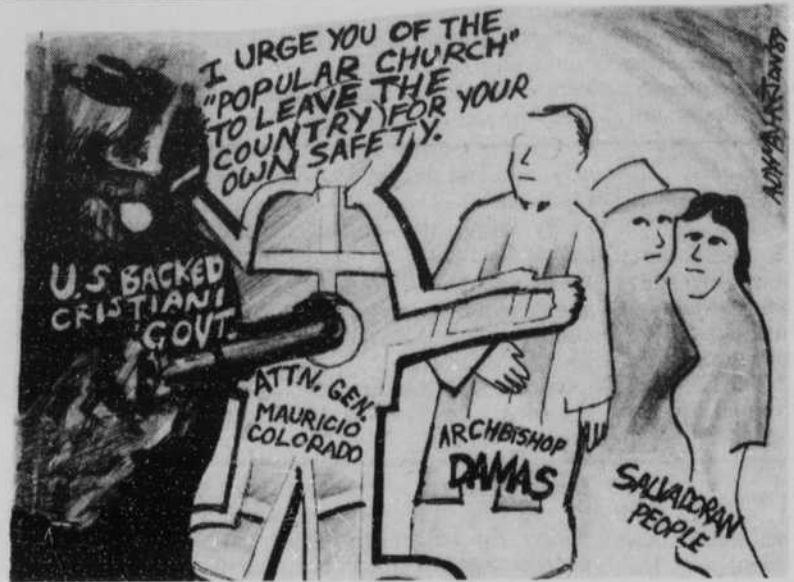
If this epidemic is such a threat to the public health, why are staff and faculty members exempted from the

forced immunization? I believe it is because the Health Center views them as adults who can determine their own course of action, while students are children who have to be told what is good for them, and forced to comply.

The university got out of the parenting of students in the late 60s, conferring upon them responsibility for their own actions. This attitude apparently has not spread to the Health Center. I do not know if this attitude is an example of misguided concern or simply medical arrogance. I do know it is wrong.

The Health Center should stick to dispensing medical care and advice and not coercion and threats. They should respect the students enough to allow them to make their own decisions as to what care is needed. We are, after all, adults.

Timothy R. Shepherd
graduate student
chemistry



Families and holidays don't mix

Feuds rekindle during Thanksgiving dinner at grandma's house

On Thanksgiving Day I find myself thrown into a holiday time warp that doesn't end until after Christmas.

My trip to the past starts when grandma opens the door and greets me.

"Chrissy, Chrissy, Chrissy," she exclaims, while pinching my cheeks to see how well I've eaten in the past year.

Chrissy is four feet tall, has straight dark hair that covers her behind and she never answers back.

I am at least five feet tall and use too much gel and hairspray to control my \$40 perm. I almost got fired from a job once for smarting off.

But grandma doesn't know that. In her mind, I'm still that 9-year-old who got excited about doing dishes or watching her grandparents play cards all night.

Now that I'm 24, these pre-conceived notions my grandma has of me can make for a boring vacation.

But sometimes they let me play cards.

The family-holiday time warp doesn't just affect me.

Each member of this four-generation clan has every other member frozen in time somewhere.

Once the entire extended family sits down to eat, things can get real confusing.

The time warp kicks in soon after the guys start talking "business" and the women begin to express their opposing views.

The annual "business" talk usually has something to do with Pete Somebody and why he went bankrupt this year.

My grandpa will say it's because Mr. Somebody strayed away from what he did best. My uncles will say Somebody should have invested more in that new-fangled something. My mom and aunt will tell my grandpa and uncles that they're all wrong about why Mr. Somebody's business failed and then begin to offer an opinion of their own.

But grandma always interrupts. "Patti, don't talk to your father that way!" grandma says.

"Mom, I was just explaining that."

"It doesn't matter, he's your father," grandma replies.

So grandma pulls rank, and values of the past flood the dinner table while my mom looks away furious, probably like she did when she was 16.

As I got older, I realized that the family chain of command, according to my grandparents, goes not only from the oldest to youngest, but also places men ahead of women.

That's a tough piece of reality to swallow, but it always comes up over Thanksgiving and Christmas dinners.

At this disturbing holiday juncture, the attention at the table usually turns to the almost-adults. Family members over 18, attending college or newly married qualify as almost-adults. The leap to true adulthood is made after one has a child or lands that first \$40,000-a-year job.

I may be stuck with the almost-

adult label for a while.

But it's not such a tough role to play.

"How's school going?" asks my uncle.

"Not bad. I got a scholarship this year and I'll be graduating next year," I reply.

"Keep up the good work," he says.

"But Chrissy," grandma interjects, "don't you have a job?"

"Oh, yes grandma," I reply. "I work three part-time jobs."

"Good," she says.

Every phone conversation with my grandma during the last four years of college has begun with the same question.

"Don't you have a job?"

It's not that grandma thinks I'm lazy or that she doesn't believe in a college education. She just wants to know that I have a place to live,

enough food to eat and friends I go out with once a week. If I say I have a job, then she assumes that the money I make provides those other things.

Of course, not every almost-adult at the table is going to have a job or be going to college. Sometimes one of my cousins is busy trying to find him or herself.

I always feel sorry for them during the holidays.

"So-o-o-o, John," says my oldest uncle while he looks down his nose and around the hunk of steak he's chewing at my 18-year-old cousin.

"Heard you been camping for a while."

"Yes sir," John replies. "I did finish climbing Mount McKinley last month."

"Hmmm," my uncle half says, half munches. "Who paid for that trip to Alaska?"

"Well, I bought my equipment when I had that part-time job in high school. But I had to hitchhike to Alaska," John says.

"Damn lucky something didn't happen to you," says my uncle, pulling the fork out of his mouth for emphasis.

"Well, you know," my great-aunt interjects, "he almost fell off that mountain."

My uncle looks over at John, his eyes saying "I told you so," like he didn't know John almost fell off the mountain until that very instant.

He knew. We all knew John almost fell off the mountain. Grandma had told each of us. She called one night crying hysterically, I calmed her down. She told me John had slipped a few hundred feet. I told her it probably wasn't even a clpse call.

"Maybe not for John," grandma

had said, "but the thought of him falling down that mountain nearly gave grandpa a heart attack," she said.

"He had to take a heart pill."

I knew the mountain story would persevere to the holidays. Any episode that led to grandpa having to take a heart pill would be brought up later.

But I don't think it was John slipping a hundred feet that gave grandpa heart palpitations. It was the notion of John trying to find himself somewhere other than at a job that bothered grandpa.

By now, John was blushing and looking down at his plate. He wasn't the type to get angry. Grandma figured John had gotten the message.

"Hush now," she said to my uncle. "I think he feels bad enough."

Later on, over dishes, my grandma and all the other family matriarchs would talk about John and all the other "black sheep" that had emerged that year. But John had made it through the worst part. After dinner all the "almost-adults" would migrate outside. We'd drive off in our cars for a while.

It was the annual after-dinner break from the family time warp.

We'd go to a park. Some of my cousins would drink beer; others wouldn't because it had caused them so much trouble in the past.

We'd all talk about the adults we'd left back at grandma's house.

"Man, I really get pissed at Uncle Greg. He'll ask how you are and tell you you're doing lousy at the same time."

"Yeah, and grandma acts like she's rescuing you from him when really she put Uncle Greg up to it."

"Well, you know, grandma's too old to change. She has always let grandpa or Uncle Greg tell us that she's mad."

"God, you're starting to sound like mom."

"How old is grandma?"

"I don't know. I quit counting when she was 66. I just couldn't imagine her older than that."

"She's 88."

"No way."

"Yeah, 88 and she still sends me \$2 every week in the mail."

"You too? She's been sending me \$2 since I was 8 years old."

"I guess no one told grandma about inflation."

"I guess not."

"She sends \$5 on my birthday."

"She never misses my birthday."

"Mine, neither. I've moved eight times in the last three years and she always finds me."

"Hmmm."

"Funny thing. I always hate these dinners but when I get home I think about grandma and grandpa."

"It's like I miss them and want to see them, but only from a distance."

"Maybe we oughta go back to the house now?"

"Yeah, maybe they'll start playing cards soon."

Carroll is a senior news-editorial major and Daily Nebraskan columnist and supplements editor.



Chris Carroll