



Scott Lindvall/Daily Nebraskan

Comforting aura offered at South Street Laundry

By Jim Hanna
Staff Reporter

It was a muggy late summer afternoon and the sweat squirted from my pores as freely as the Broyhill fountain. All of my clothes, save the ones sticking to my flesh, were clean having been laundered the night before.

I rode my bike into the parking lot of South Street Laundromat, 3801 South St., and dismounted gracefully. I entered the establishment with my keen reviewer's eye sharply focused and ready to rate.

“ There's a very comforting aura about the South Street Laundromat. ”

I was pleasantly surprised by what I discovered.

South Street Laundromat is a clean, well-managed and very well air-conditioned business. Twenty-four sharp-looking washing machines (in an alternating color pattern of white and creamy tan) are neatly arranged in the center of the store.

The washing machines are complemented by about 14 large clothes dryers and a variety of coin-op services. These coin-ops include Laundromat standards like a detergent dispenser, a pop machine, a snack machine (which also vends cigarettes) and a machine that provides laundry bags. Most of these operate on two quarters, though the pop costs you an extra nickel.

There's an old, rather clunky bill changer that clangs and wheezes as it spits out your quarters and a machine that changes a quarter into two dimes and a nickel -- a rather pointless service in a Laundromat that operates entirely on quarters (75 cents for a wash, 25 cents for each cycle on a dryer).

There's a very comforting aura about the South Street Laundromat. In addition to the great air-conditioning and spotless floors, there is a constant stream of soft rock piped in to soothe your frazzled, clothes-washing nerves. Whitney Houston's "Greatest Love of All" sticks out as an especially placid offering.

Like any Laundromat, South Street has a few rules, but they are conveyed to patrons by pleasing, non-abusive posters with equally pleasing illustrations.

For instance, one sign reads: "Kindly restrain your children from playing with the laundry carts, bumping the machines, running into people, etc. We'll appreciate it and so will the other patrons. Thanks a lot."

The sign is adorned with a comic drawing of a youthful hellion tearing about in a laundry cart (of which there are four, by the way).

As the sign may suggest, South Street seems to be primarily a family oriented Laundromat. There weren't many college-age students washing clothes this day, probably because it's a long way from any of the college campuses in Lincoln.

A final gesture of staggering courtesy from the management is detailed on a sign describing emergency phone procedures. In addition to the standard rules about dialing 911 or phoning the police, the sign states that emergency calls will be refunded by the management. Just put a note in the mailbox and apparently you'll get your quarter back.

On the down side, there is no TV, no video games and no concession stand at South Street Laundromat. This may, however, be a plus to a person who wants to launder in silence or maybe to the student who wants to do some studying while the clothes get clean.

Overall, South Street Laundromat is very nice place and, if it's not too far away, you may want to consider it for your next laundry labor.

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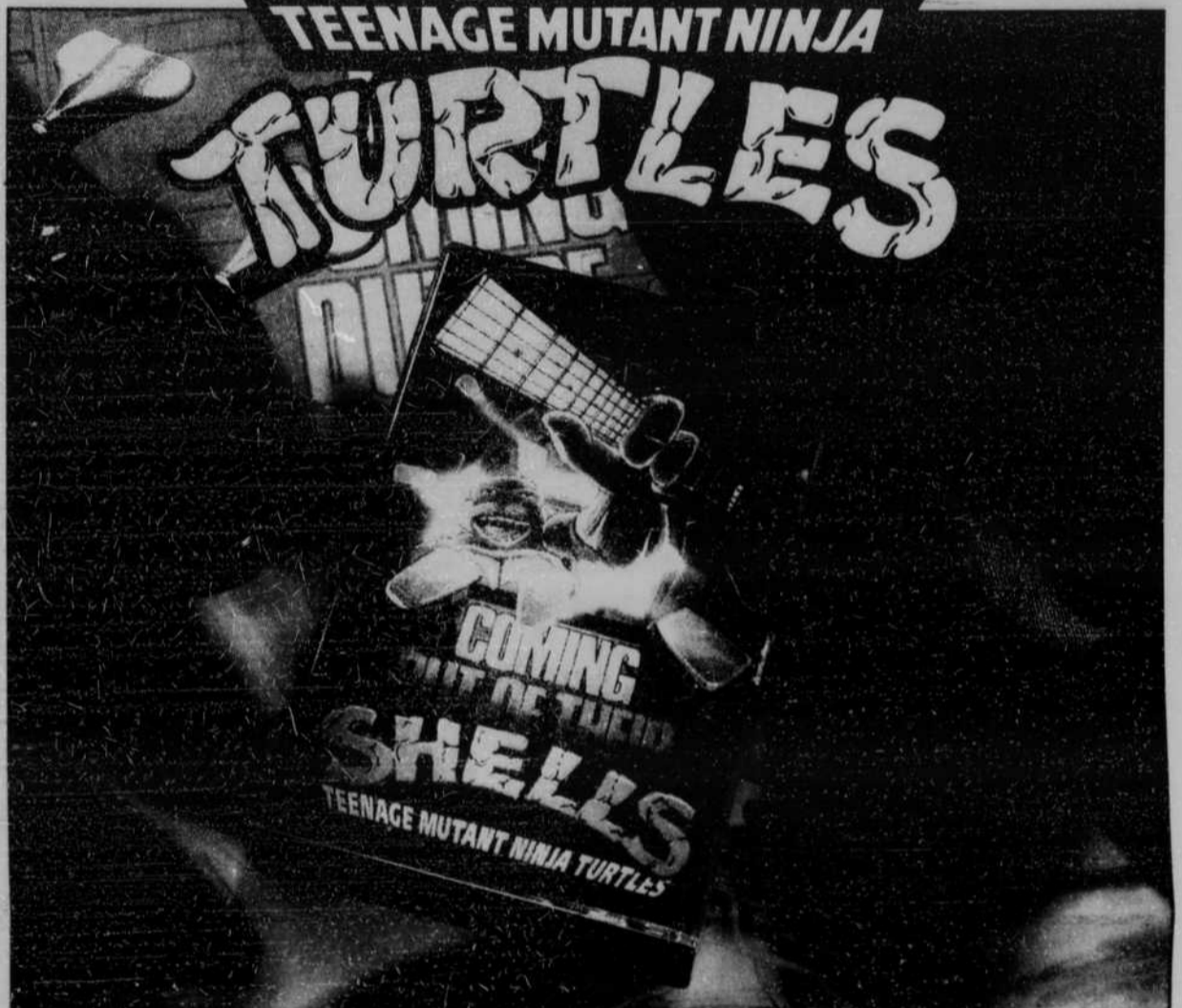
Why is 11:00 a.m. on Sunday morning still the most segregated hour of the week? Does a religious perspective help us see that we are all 'recovering racists?' 'Prejudice--the inner ground of racism': Does a religious perspective provide a cause and a cure?

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