

Tom Towater/DN

Vain, self-centered greek system flaunting power-position monopoly

The other day, I overheard a conversation by several "prominent" greeks regarding the unhappy Residence Hall Association situation. It got me thinking about the relationship between greek and non-greek students.

If there is one thing that is certain, sensitivity toward non-greeks has never been a virtue of the greek system. Having been a member of this system for three years, I have come to find us to be very vain and self-centered.

For the past Lord-knows-how-many years, the greeks have had a monopoly on the power positions at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. We run the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska, Student Foundations and other student activity groups. Not to say that everyone on these various faculties is greek, but the greeks have always picked and chosen who would be doing what, at least since I've been here.

Like President Bush and his Yale clan, and Sinatra and his Rat Pack, the greeks have been looking out for their own since time immemorial. The greeks are viciously protective of their topnotch positions and fight like hell and do whatever it takes to keep

these positions filled by greeks. Last year's ASUN elections are a perfect example.

Many greeks will defend themselves with statements like, "Hey, we are the sole leaders of this campus." As if only the leaders of this country go through rush. If everyone in the greek system is a leader, then why do we all wear the exact same letters, the exact same Girbauds, the exact same Polo shirts?

Many greeks say that non-greeks don't want to get involved because they really are just apathetic and don't care. Easy for us to say, since we all have big mansions to come back to, full of "brothers" and "sisters" cheering our every move, because they know all campus involvement will make their house look good. But to whom?

Some of us actually believe that we all had personal agendas and goals of being greek and becoming leaders even before we were rushed. I just marked "yes" on my school application where it asked, "Are you interested in the greek system?"

The greek system, for the most part, is a huge ego trip. It is a big Simon Says match. A political game.

Yes, the greek system has its share of leaders and individuals with legitimate views and opinions, but if there is one thing in common with each and every greek, it is that every one of us has had it a hell of a lot easier than non-greek students. We have had the strong peer support. We have had the "connections."

I am a member of the greek system and because of it, I have been afforded many privileges and shoe-ins throughout my college career. But I am also part of something much bigger. I am a member of the student body at one of the best state universities in the country. And if there is one thing this university needs to know, it is that numbers have power. Numbers can conquer.

Watch your leaders closely. Examine them and their tactics. Call them. Talk to them. Show up at their meetings (usually advertised in the Daily Nebraskan) and challenge them.

And then ask yourself, "Are they truly leaders?"

And then ask yourself, "Am I a leader?"

Chris Halligan
senior
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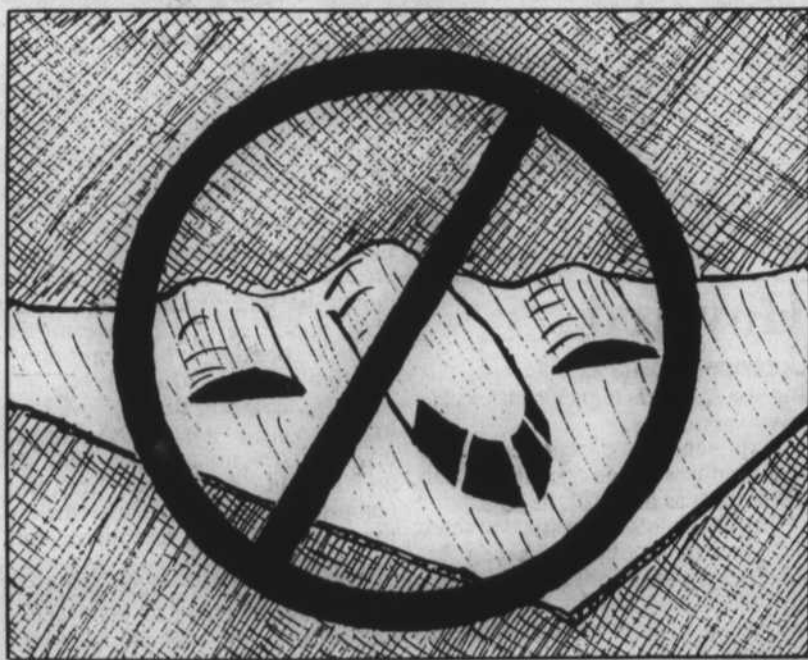
SDI, B-2 better programs to cut than potentially helpful space station

In reference to Chuck Green's column ("Earth has priority over stars," DN, Oct. 2), he seemed to ignore the fact that the cost of Space Station Freedom will be spread out over a decade. Also, if he wants to attack a program, I suggest that he go after the military.

The Strategic Defense Initiative has already wasted more than the \$5 billion Green said has been used on research and development for the space station. SDI is, in my opinion, a worthless project, because it would be so easy to either fool or damage any space-based sensors from spotting any warheads, especially since all you would need would be a bucket of sand in an opposing orbit, which would scratch the sensors so badly that they would be unable to function.

Also, Green neglected to mention the B-2 bomber, which is still undergoing tests a year after it was officially introduced. These planes cost about \$750,000 per copy and aren't really needed, since we already have enough weapons to wipe out life on earth many times over.

In the early 1970s, NASA launched the space station Skylab, and in only three short missions, did studies of the body functioning under controlled stress, which cannot be done on the earth's surface because of gravity. It also studied early methods of materials science research. During several shuttle missions, it was proved that some materials manufactured in



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space come out more pure than those on earth, which could make the United States a leader again in semiconductor technology. Further research on the Freedom could include the development of new industries that could easily provide new jobs for people. With more jobs come more opportunities for mankind to better itself, as well as research into new sources of food to feed an increasingly hungry planet. Also, such a platform could allow more research into getting solar energy to work, as well as allowing construction of orbiting solar energy platforms, which have been proposed as a source of cheap and

clean electricity to help the environment.

Elimination of the space station Freedom might save \$40 billion, but elimination of SDI, the B-2 bomber and other advanced and unneeded weapons would easily save several times that \$40 billion. Imagine putting \$100 billion-plus into the education system, AIDS and cancer research, plus having the benefits from new materials, technology and industries created from the space station.

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Neither Thomas qualified

Even 'new' judge threatens rights

In his first week of testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee, Judge Clarence Thomas repeatedly contradicted his previous record. The committee hearings have given us a "new" Thomas, taking positions at odds with positions he had expressed in the past and forcing the Senate to decide which Thomas, if confirmed, would take a seat on the Supreme Court: the Thomas who advocated an activist conservative judicial philosophy or the one who sought to position himself as a moderate before the committee.

I do not believe that even the "new" Thomas would be a step forward for women in this country. The old Thomas in a 1987 Atlantic Monthly article argued that "the disparities between men and women" could "be due to cultural differences between men and women, educational levels, commuting patterns and other previous events." He also praised an article in the Lincoln Review by Thomas Sowell that argued that historic pay and job inequities between men and women were due largely to women's personal choices, as a "useful, concise discussion" which "presents a much-needed antidote to clichés about women's earnings and professional status."

Thomas maintained at the hearings, "I did not indicate that, first of all, I agreed with Sowell's conclusions" and, "my point in discussing statistics is that I don't

think any of us can say that we have all the answers as to why there are statistical disparities."

I also take offense to his statements against the rights of older Americans. He stated in 1985 in the ABA Banking Journal, "I am of the opinion that there are many technical violations of the Age Discrimination in Employment Act that, for practical and economic reasons, make sense. Older workers cost employers more than younger workers. Employee benefits are linked to longevity and salary." If my grandmother in Omaha chooses to work, I would hope that she would have the recourse to at least look to the law for protection against discriminatory treatment on the job, or while being considered for a job, if she faces discrimination as a result of being an older American.

We have less than one week to change the course of the next 50 years. I hope that young and old people throughout Lincoln and at the university are thinking carefully about the impact Thomas' confirmation could mean to my generation of young women, to older workers and to racial and ethnic minorities, whose affirmative action remedies would be threatened by his confirmation. Those of us concerned with our most basic rights must call our senators today.

Tara Twedt
UNL graduate
Washington, D.C.

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