

Walk, not talk

Regents' words aren't solving problems

University officials are taking about diversity. Again. Regent Nancy O'Brien of Waterloo said Wednesday that the Regents' Committee on Minority Affairs has discussed increasing diversity on campus by the establishment of more financial incentives.

O'Brien said the financial incentives might include giving departments extra funds to hire minority faculty members. She said that although the budget is tight, members of the Legislature could be willing to approve more money for diversity projects.

"It may be foolish, but I'm kind of assuming the Legislature may be willing to help us increase diversity," she said.

Other goals she said the committee set were to provide diversity training for faculty and students, to improve the university's environment for minorities and to enhance recruitment of minority faculty and students.

She said the committee would try to have a recommendation for the board by the end of the summer on how to achieve these goals.

While the regents' apparent concern for increasing diversity is admirable, English professor Joyce Joyce expressed what is probably the opinion of many university students and faculty members.

"There's too much talking and not enough progress," she said.

O'Brien and the rest of the committee has taken a first step toward a more diverse university, but first steps don't cover much ground. Some members of the university community are getting tired of trodding those same first steps over and over again.

Unfortunately, beyond the first step the long journey requires money. Even more, it requires commitment from the regents to see these goals through to the end. The Legislature won't be convinced easily of the need to throw additional funds this way.

The regents have shown they can talk. But we have yet to see them walk.



PAUL SOUDERS

Shaving proves hate of body

American women of virtually all races, ages, creeds, religions and sexual preferences endure a certain ritual, a deeply and mysteriously feminine act that involves the regular removal of body hair.

As far as I know, this is a largely American habit, to painfully and sometimes forcefully remove hair that must have been put there for some reason or another.

So I did a little research and spoke to two actual women, who of course asked to remain anonymous, like everyone else I interview, about hair removal methods, to balance the article and give my fellow sexist pig brothers some sort of perspective on the issue.

This doesn't mean that women should stop reading at this point and skip back to "Calvin and Hobbes," however, so don't do it.

What, I wondered, are some of the fabled hair removal methods actually about? What is waxing like?

"Pretty painful," one woman said. "Like using trillions of tiny tweezers to simultaneously yank out your hair at the root," the other said.

Neither had actually used the Epilady, a device that apparently first gained widespread use in Turkish dungeons during the Crusades. The contraption is "sort of a coil or spring, which vibrates or rotates or something and pulls your hairs out."

One woman speculated that it probably would feel like "getting body hair caught in a zipper, maybe." (Ouch!)

The other said that "if you do it enough it won't hurt anymore, probably because you pull out all the pain sensors in your leg."

Then there's Nair, which is "some sort of chemical that removes hair," according to one source.

"It actually disintegrates hair, I think, like Alien blood," said the other. It also leaves large un-bald patches that must be shaven anyway. Nair is painless, but the user runs the risk of irritation or an allergic reaction. Gee, I can't imagine having an allergic reaction to using a toxic chemical that dissolves body hair.

That leaves good old-fashioned shaving, which both my sources agreed is the easiest method.

"You can control where you shave," one said, "versus other methods that leave big hairy splotches like a grassy plain."

"You have to watch the danger spots," the other said, "like knees and shins and ankles. I've got cuts all over my ankles."



Gee, I can't imagine having an allergic reaction to using a toxic chemical that dissolves body hair.

So why do these women shave? One was very practical about it.

"It's very itchy, especially to wear pantyhose (if I don't shave)," she said.

The other said it was "very social — people would curl their lips at me (if I didn't shave) and men don't like hairy women. If I had ever wanted a date in my life, I'd better damn well shave my legs."

Both women said they would stop if it became socially acceptable not to shave, or if they were living in Europe or some other part of the world where going about unshorn is the norm.

This pretty much confirms my suspicions that Americans (and I guess I'm lumping Canadians in here, too) absolutely hate the way the female body is supposed to be.

Yeah, I know that a few guys out there are chuckling, "Heh, heh, I don't hate the female body, nudge nudge." These are the same sorts of guys who tend to tuck in their monster truck racing T-shirts.

I'd venture to say their objectification of the female form is merely a way to remove the flesh from the person inside, so that they can divorce what they hate — women — from what they like — sex with women. That's a pretty rotten concept.

But mostly we just hate women's bodies. Few (actually, almost no) people would object to a Chippendales dancer, who makes his money more or less naked. But we all know how up in arms blue-nosed moralities get about some woman taking her shirt off for money. Apparently there's something filthy and disgusting about female bodies, which is why I am

never, ever allowed to look at one, especially if I'm paying for it.

Some of this must be related to the way boys and girls are brought up in this country. Little girls are given to idolize a doll whose proportions would be, if she were life-size, something like 40-22-34. They are bombarded with images of borderline anorexics in fashion magazines and told that this thoroughly unrealistic body form is beautiful.

Boys, on the other hand, see sex symbols like Sean Connery, who is balding and aging and developing a gut, or Harrison Ford, who has all kinds of scars and a pretty bad complexion.

By the time we're all twentyish, women thoroughly hate their bodies. They're too fat or too hairy, not blonde enough or tall enough. Men completely love their bodies, no matter how fat and hairy and unsexy they are, and they love to sit around in their underpants and drink beer and not exercise.

Lots of guys I know — no kidding — even name the spare weight they carry around their midribs. (Phil is a popular option.) And plenty of men with a bit extra in the gut department rationalize that "if I'm ever stuck in the Gobi desert, I can last three weeks without food."

Women, on the other hand, are made to conceal particular portions of the body for no good reason other than that's what society expects.

Why is it I can take my shirt off at the beach, thus exposing my pale and flabby chest, but if a woman did the same, especially in Nebraska, she'd get arrested, or at least some unpleasant stares? The only difference between a woman's chest and mine is a) a little subcutaneous fat and b) hers works and mine doesn't.

Hairy, heavy or otherwise, there's something just generally nice about anyone's body. Think, at least, of what a feat of engineering all the interrelated systems are, or that more bodies don't shut down or switch suddenly into reverse like Pintos.

Even the bodies that don't work quite so well, with a minor malfunction like a disease or disability, still do a pretty good job of staying alive and keeping the brain working.

Just because a body isn't "perfect" because of some excess hair here and there doesn't mean it isn't worth something. Try getting along without it sometime.

Souders is a junior English major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Cartoon portrays Israel fairly

I am writing in response to Professor Berkowitz's letter published on March 17 ("Cartoon shows Israel as terrorist not victim," DN). I do not think there is any need for the DN or anyone else to apologize for printing the cartoon in which Israel is portrayed as a terrorist state. It is true Israel is a terrorist state whose government consists of ruthless hypocrites who do not care for anyone else.

If Israel has been the victim of terrorism, what about the occupied territory where nearly 600,000 people have died so far trying to fight for their religion and freedom of their homeland? The Western media never show what happens in the occupied territory, but even if a single person dies in Israel it is shown with extreme exaggeration. This kind of coverage has resulted in a surge of hatred for Israel. Do you know that people living in the occupied territory are not

sure if they will come back alive after buying bread? Do you know that the youth of the occupied territory have gone? This all was designed to break the will of the population, but it has bonded them more. I would suggest Professor Berkowitz go to ETV if time permits and watch the movie "The Sword of Islam."

I do not have anything against Jews or American-Jews, but what I hate is the Israeli government. They have made Muslims hate them by their shameless behavior. They are not the victims — the people of the occupied territory are the real victims. I am very proud to write that Pakistan, where I am from, has not accepted Israel on the map. I know no one cares, but still it is a kick for me.

Arshad Altaf Shaikh
junior
pre-pharmacy

Liberals uphold immoral views

I thought I would start off this letter by praising Mr. Fahleson's truly conservative values. Since Mr. Fahleson decided to take off bashing the bleeding-heart liberals for Lent, I decided there needed to be another true conservative voice heard; that's why I'm writing this. That small radical group of bleeding-heart liberals and Nazi-feminists in our country are trying to destroy us from within. They want to throw their immoral views on the rest of us because they believe society needs to be more open-minded. Those liberals and Nazi-feminists support homosexuality, immoral funding of the NEA, and another cause they find controversial to the mainstream of society. Those same liberals claim they're tough on criminals, but when it comes to put up or shut up, those bleeding hearts won't expand the death penalty like is needed. We need to expand the death penalty to a mandatory death penalty for all murders except in cases of self-defense or involuntary manslaughter.

This would send criminals a message. And those who consider themselves above the law will pay the ultimate price. These people are nothing but a hindrance to our society. They can't be reformed — once a criminal always a criminal, so let's clean the scum out of our jails. They get out of jail and re-commit crimes at a rate above 80 percent. Let's make our streets safe again; let's expand the death penalty and make it mandatory. For all you bleeding-heart liberals who are going to respond critically to my position, it's you who are helping these criminals. You whine and complain that it's society that corrupts these people. You all need to wake up and figure out criminals aren't going to go unless we take charge, take our streets back, and put these scum out of their misery.

Matt McDonald
junior
political science