

Daily
Nebraskan
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EDITORIAL

System overhaul

Governor should appoint regents to office

Ever since the suspicious firing of former NU President Ronald Roskens in 1989, the people of this state have been left wondering who the NU Board of Regents answers to.

The answer, of course, is the voters. Regents are elected officials, and it is the voters' duty to guarantee that they are doing their jobs. But recent events have drawn light to the fact that the regents' actions and misdeeds do not earn the attention they deserve.

Last fall, it was discovered that some of the regents gathered in private to discuss the coming evaluation of NU President Martin Massengale. It was also reported that two of the regents spent tax money on a chartered flight to Lincoln for the unofficial meeting.

But those incidents, and others like them, received little attention around election time.

Voters, of course, should know as much about their elected officials as they can, but the regents don't get the same news coverage the governor does. That makes it difficult for voters to make informed decisions and hold the regents to their duties.

Their lack of prominence makes it difficult to know when to congratulate the regents for their successes, and, more importantly, it becomes hard to hold them accountable for their mistakes.

To combat that problem, Sen. Ron Withem of Papillion has introduced LR3CA. The proposal would trim the regents' terms from six years to four years. That measure, combined with last year's term-limit law, would limit the officials to eight years in office.

The proposal has some merits, but it is riddled with faults. Some of the regents have argued that four years is not enough time to get acclimated to the office. If the regents don't understand their job, it only makes it harder for the voters to know if they are doing it right.

In addition, the amount of attention the regents receive is not likely to increase if their terms are shortened. The move will not help voters judge their performance.

And, most importantly, the plan is based on the repugnant theory of term limits. Last year's drive to limit the terms of Nebraska's elected officials was pushed through because supporters said term limits would make those officials more accountable to the people who elected them. Ultimately, however, the bill is based on the belief that voters aren't mature or knowledgeable enough to make decisions on their own.

If there is a problem with the accountability of the regents, limiting their terms is not the answer. The best solution would be overhauling the system and giving the governor the power to appoint the regents.

If those officials must be approved by the legislature, the governor is sure to appoint people who care about education. Because the regents' performance would reflect on the governor's record, the governor is sure to appoint people who would treat the office with the respect it deserves.

The regent position is not a high-profile office; once the regents are elected, it is not likely their job performance will be closely examined by the press or the people who voted for them.

Some accountability should be restored to the system, but the best way to do it is not Withem's bill.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 1992 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents. Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author. The regents publish the Daily Nebraskan. They establish 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 students.

LETTER POLICY

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others. Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject all material submitted. Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. The editor decides whether material should run as a guest opinion. Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Letters should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted. Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Apology

Now that Sen. Robert Packwood has apologized for his behavior, perhaps Daily Nebraskan columnist Sam Kepfield should now apologize for his misplaced defense of the Senator.
Peter T. Hoffman
law professor

Vocabulary

Trying to decipher the sophisticated vocabulary of Gary Young's Jan. 11 column was like trying to conquer a Daily Nebraskan crossword puzzle. Perhaps Gary thinks that by using long, impressive words somebody will take him seriously. Anyway, if I understand the gist of the article, he is saying that the problems of the black community are not a result of the attitude and behavior of whites toward blacks.

By comparing the community life of Africa before the French, British and other Europeans conquered and enslaved the African nation to the community life of urban black America today, it becomes apparent that the current high crime and murder rates are a result of the African people being stripped of their culture.

Where do blacks fit in to our materialistic, exploitive, superficial society? How can parents raise their child when they have no cultural background except the white society they have been put into which, not until 30 years ago, decided to start acknowledging them as human beings?

This letter is not an attempt to justify black inner-city crime, but is an open-eyed view contrary to the racist opinion that blacks are inherently evil.

Paul Koester
senior
agronomy

Snobbery

Snobbery does not have a monopoly on flannel shirts, "alternative" music, record stores and KRNU. Snobs are perfectly capable of wearing pastels, donning turtle-necks and buying Del Amitri tapes.

I cannot speak for the record-store personnel. As for the KRNU DJs, most of them are either volunteers trying to get demo material or are on the air to fill a class requirement. Some of them have never been exposed to "alternative" music prior to their on-air experience. Even those who know what they're doing are asked not to overkill a song that is being overkilled on MTV. Plus, there are only three slots reserved each hour for requests. To demand that your request get played as opposed to the other five requests that people also demand get played is unreasonable and childish.

Your argument in which you pigeonhole flannel-wearing, MTV-lis-



tening and record-store "alternative" punks is weak. I find it offensive that you would so blindly seek to degrade a singular socio-economical sub-class/culture just because you consider them, as a whole, "snobs."

I can't imagine the opinions that would fly if you had singled out the greek system, the Chicano student organization or Campus Crusade for Christ. Surely snobs exist in these circles, but I don't see you categorizing these groups according to one individual stock characteristic and/or personality trait.

Could it be that record-store employees are an easy, defenseless target?

Could it be that you are ignoring the individual and picking on the whole to reinforce your superior position in society?

Or could it be that you're somewhat intimidated by a few individuals who are better at being a snob than you are?

Amoree Lovell
senior
music performance
and broadcasting

After reading Wendy Mott's piece in Monday's Daily Nebraskan, I felt compelled to respond. It startled me.

Ms. Mott. You are worried about snobbery? Condescension? Allow me to quote here, if I might. "No latest issue insight there, just halfway friendly smiles accompanied by cheap ties and dress pants they bought at Jeans West." Anyone who missed your piece won't recognize these words, but I'm sure you do. I'm not

even going to dive into the whole "KRNU punk" thing.

Snobbery? Condescension?
Look in the damn mirror, will ya?
Sean Doolittle
senior
English

Yes, as you and dandruff shampoo commercials say, first impressions are important. Thus, after reading your article I've been able to get an accurate picture of your personality.

In your article, you managed to put down flannel-shirt wearers, clerks that greet you, people who wear biker jackets, anyone who works in the music industry and even Twinkie eaters. Then you have the gall not to include yourself in the snotty, pretentious category.

I, as a consumer, welcome new information, especially when it refers to music. I've done plenty of shopping in music stores, and have come to the conclusion that these salespeople possess an asset of great value to the general consumer. They can supply the public with insider information which they acquire through industry magazines that are not available to the general public.

Maybe the reason you have such a problem with music store personnel is because you are envious of their knowledge. You enter these stores thinking you know it all, but you soon find out that your almightiness is lacking in music knowledge.

To all of the workers at Pickles and especially Twisters, I thank you for your insightfulness and your help to those of us who aren't afraid to learn from others. Keep up the good work. And to you Ms. Mott, maybe you should buy a few more Spin magazines so you can become more secure in yourself.

Justin Oldham
sophomore
general studies

Regents

I was rather dismayed to find the NU Board of Regents decided to have the so-called higher standards for admissions implemented.

(UNO) Chancellor Del Weber does not think the admissions standards will exclude minorities but this is precisely what it will do.

If we lived in the ideal society and everyone was given an equal chance to a decent education then this would be OK. Unfortunately our country has yet to provide this.

Minority students and persons who attended inner-city schools are at a great disadvantage.

I realize there is a high freshman dropout/failure rate, but I also believe that education should be available to all those who need a second chance.

Coric Leahy
freshman
elementary education