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EDITORIAL

## Test of character

Loudon to show integrity by paying fines

**L**ike most Association of Students of the University of Nebraska elections, this year's was followed by a stack of complaints and alleged campaign wrongdoings.

The ASUN Electoral Commission will respond to these complaints today at 4:15 p.m.

Of 17 complaints to be addressed, 12 allege violations by members of the victorious VISION party.

The commission should take all complaints seriously and administer fines when necessary and just.

Although poster violations may not seem serious or malicious, ASUN election laws should be upheld. If the commission is not stern, future campaigners may not take the laws seriously.

The VISION party, led by President-elect Andrew Loudon, should be especially cooperative with the commission. Loudon's term has not begun yet, but his behavior today will preview what type of leader he will be next year.

VISION has already been fined \$82 for four earlier complaints. Loudon has said he will pay any fines levied today to put the situation behind him.

Of the 12 complaints against VISION, seven are for alleged improper posting of signs, two are for alleged phone solicitation — which violates no laws, two are for alleged door-to-door solicitation, and one is for allegedly taking down competitors' signs.

If the complaints against VISION are valid, Loudon could face substantial fines. But his cooperation will show maturity, integrity and a commitment to ASUN law.

## What a waste

ASUN displays frivolity with nameplates

**D**o you want to know where some of the more than \$140,000 of your student fee money is going? The same money that ASUN approved for itself last year?

Nameplates.

Our student government, the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska, showed Wednesday why it sometimes deserves little respect.

ASUN senators voted to approve \$550 to purchase "45 durable metal placards for the incoming executives, senate and CFA members to be used as long as future senates deem appropriate."

ASUN graduate senator Charles Hamilton said the nameplates were needed because the current plastic and paper placards made ASUN and the Committee for Fees Allocation look unprofessional.

Plastic placards do not make ASUN look unprofessional. Spending \$550 of student fee money on unnecessary nameplates does.

Students at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln might as well have burned the \$550 that will pay for the nameplates. The money will be completely wasted either way.

Mark Byars, senator for general studies, wrote the bill and said it was an act of unselfishness for next year's senators.

But Byars' bill and the senate's decision do not represent virtue. They instead represent senseless government waste at its worst.

If you are unhappy about where your student fees are going, you can do something about it. You can call your ASUN senator and ask him or her what ASUN is doing with your student fee money.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Spring 1994 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.



GUEST OPINION

## Irish law resists move to left

**Editor's note:** The following is a guest column written by Edmund Roche-Kelly an Irish student about changes in sexuality and law in Ireland.

**L**et's skip Mass and make love. You want condoms, we got condoms. Pink, blue, purple with yellow stripes, strawberry, mint, roast beef and baked potatoes, apple pie with custard — any shape, flavor or color you desire.

Yep, we've got 'em all. It's about time, too. It was 20 years ago that legislation was first introduced to legalize contraception in Ireland. It's only been two years since we could go into a shop, ask for a pack and get it without being excommunicated, condemned, vilified and run out of town by the parish priest.

So, for your edification, here is a potted history of the transition of the humble rubber from Satan's greatest triumph to fashion accessory.

In 1974, the Irish Minister for Justice introduced a bill to provide limited contraception to the Irish public. That bill was defeated by the leader of the government party, showing the remarkable solidarity of Irish politicians. In 1979, the European Commission on Human Rights ordered the government to provide contraception as a health service. The people of Ireland had to decide if we could have birth control available for married couples for family planning use only. (We couldn't have people making love just for fun, now could we?)

Naturally, the Catholic Church got all up in arms about this, condemned those who didn't regard contraception as immoral, told us that sex without the possibility of procreation was offensive to God, and pointed out the rhythm method was good enough anyway, now wasn't it? There's something strangely ironic about a bunch of supposedly celibate men dictating our sexual policies.

Anyway, the idea got through, though many chemists refused to stock "those filthy things," and you nearly had to get a papal dispensation and a letter from your mother before you could get any form of birth control. You had to be married too, with at least two dozen children.



You couldn't say, "Sure, aren't we all good Catholics who don't even know what sex is till our wedding night," when the number of HIV-positive patients was going up all the time.

The bill introduced was referred to as "an Irish solution to an Irish problem" and provided plenty of raw material for stand-up comedians. By 1984, we were judged liberal enough to let condoms be sold to anyone older than 18, but they could only be stocked by pharmacists.

This means you could get a rubber if you lived in the city, but God help you if you lived out in the country in the bastion of the Catholic Church and were a regular producer of followers of the one true faith. Finally, in 1992, ordinary shops could sell condoms to anyone older than 16, and furtive trips to the pharmacist with fake IDs ended.

AIDS was the turning point in the campaign to allow widespread distribution of contraceptives. People felt a bit silly saying there was no use for them in Ireland. You couldn't say, "Sure, aren't we all good Catholics who don't even know what sex is till our wedding night," when the number of HIV-positive patients was going up all the time.

Finally, the presenter of Irish Television's premier chat show, "The Late Late Show," on at the ungodly hour of 9:30 p.m., demonstrated how condoms should be used. He put one on his fingers, just his fingers. (Pornography is not a major feature of Irish Television.) The floodgates opened, and the government was embarrassed into letting us all have them.

There still exists a core of opposition to anything faintly liberal in this country. There was outcry six months ago when it was proposed that homosexuality be decriminalized, but thankfully, the objectors were ignored.

Various groups exist with the sole purpose of preventing any of these newfangled liberal ideas from con-

taminating our society. The most popular group is the Society for the Protection of the Unborn Child.

They must be disgusted by the Ireland they see around them. Condoms in the shops, gays on television, premarital sex — with only the continued ban on divorce and abortion to get them through the day and into the nights of unprotected sex (missionary position only, of course).

All this to produce more fundamentalists, who must fight the good fight and the evils of proposed divorce legislation and, who knows, maybe abortion in a year or two.

Still, we've come a long way since the '50s and '60s, when the Catholic Church could bring down the government over radical health proposals like free medical care for women and children, and when priests controlled the censorship board.

During the '50s, censorship was Ireland's only growth industry. At one point there were books banned at the extraordinary rate of 50 a day. One can only conclude books were banned on the basis of their covers.

Some claimed getting banned in Ireland helped sell books abroad. If a writer was hit by the censorship board, it was like saying he'd actually been offered sex in a brothel.

A group of Irish men decided that J.D. Salinger's "The Catcher in the Rye" was considered unfit for public consumption.

Looking at sexuality, censorship and the law in Ireland is like taking a long, slow swim through a sewage bed, but sometimes you just have to laugh.

Edmund Roche-Kelly is a junior mathematics major at Trinity College in Dublin, Ireland, and a guest columnist.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### 'Good meat'

In response to Paul Koester's column (DN, March 14, 1994): Today's farmers and livestock producers are some of the most conservation-minded people in the world. They are also some of the most efficient when it comes to how many people they feed besides themselves.

If Koester took some basic animal science classes, he'd probably go back

to eating some good meat.

Stephen Goodrich  
professor  
military science

### Equal rights

In response to Christopher Winkelmann's letter against equal rights for homosexuals (DN, March 11, 1994): The 14th Amendment states, "No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the priv-

ileges and immunities of citizens ... nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

If Winkelmann cannot be fired from a job or refused housing or beaten up for being an ignorant, white heterosexual, then neither can a homosexual person.

Adam Buttress  
freshman  
political science