

E. HUGHES SHANKS

# 'Sleepy' town violently awake

Is there something about life in Lincoln that makes a person complacent, or is it just me?

Somehow, I had managed to forget just how harsh life can be. Somehow, over time, I had forgotten about a frightening event that happened to me, right in this town.

While in a small Missouri town recently, I had my memory jostled. Every September I spend two days in Kirksville, Mo., home of the Northeast Missouri College of Osteopathic Medicine. On this trip, I met a guy named Bill, who had been to Lincoln only once ...

"Two years ago," he explained, "and that was enough for me." I asked what happened, and what he said made my chin drop.

"I went there because a friend of mine got shot," he said.

"WHAT?" I screamed. This floored me. I just could not believe it. "What's his name?" I asked. I was sure I would recognize the name, because shootings are so "rare" here, but I didn't. I pressed on. "Who shot him — the cops?"

"Don't really know," he said. "They arrested somebody, but she got let off. But I think she knew about who did it. At the funeral ..."

"WHAT?! He's dead?" I screamed again. How unlikely to have met the friend of a Lincoln murder victim in Kirksville, Mo. Nobody gets killed in Lincoln. That kind of violence seems so rare. But is it?

I'm no dumb hick. I've been to virtually every major city in the country — and not as a tourist. I've lived in Houston and New Orleans, and I've worked for days at a time in several other big cities. But as Bill talked about his friend's murder, I began to feel like a hick.

Several days ago, a federal prison escapee was apprehended in downtown Lincoln after allegedly trying to rob a convenience store and overturning a mail carrier's truck. A few days later, a Husker



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football player was wounded by a bullet fired at a group of partygoers.

This week, police arrested a man near campus after a gun fight and high-speed chase that left one officer wounded. Is this the picture of a quiet Midwestern town?

Monday night I was driving through University Place. I barely noticed a passenger in the rear of a two-door compact car. He reached forward, extended his arm through the driver's window and "threw out a Crip sign" to me. I thought I was going to die.

I had the same feeling in Jefferson Parish, La., in 1978 when I made eye contact with a Ku Klux Klansman standing five feet from me. He wasn't wearing his hood — that's how I knew he was looking at me.

Bill explained that his "visit" to Lincoln was to attend his friend's funeral and find out who had killed him. Instead, he found out he didn't want to know.

"I asked around at the funeral and was told right away that if I wanted to live, I'd quit asking questions. I didn't ask no more about it," he said. And as if the pretty picture of my little town hadn't deteriorated enough, Bill had more ugliness about my "quiet" town.

"Later, we went to the bar with some of the people from the funeral. They seemed all right. We weren't leaving 'til morning 'cause of the long drive.

"About 10 minutes after gettin' there, the people we come with just disappeared. We didn't know where the house was we was staying at or nothing. We started walking, and right then the cops come and tell us we'd been drunk at the bar and causin' trouble."

That was a trick played on me before. (Suddenly, I was worldly again.) But at first, I didn't recall this ever happening in Lincoln.

It did happen to me in Lincoln, 12 years ago. I went to a party and wasn't let in. Outside I was accosted and beaten. As I drove away, I was pulled over and questioned by police about "being drunk and causing a disturbance" while in the house. I told the officer I never even got inside, and I showed him my swollen face.

This had happened to me in Virginia Beach, Va., twice in New Orleans and once in Midland, Texas. I wasn't beaten in any of those places, but I didn't forget what happened. Maybe I had gotten used to it.

What happened to the worldliness I used to be so proud of? Somehow I've been lulled to sleep. Lincoln isn't as "sleepy" as it looks. I may be "sleepy," but Lincoln has the same violence we see on the evening news.

Sometimes, I guess I just forget where I come from.

Shanks is a graduate student and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

KIM STOCK

# N. Korea is cause for worry

Between China and Japan lies a tiny country divided into two parts. We don't know much about Korea.

We know that lately North Korea has been appearing in various newspaper headlines. South Korea makes a decent imitation Honda, and Samsung seems to produce good televisions and stereos. The 1988 Summer Olympics took place in Seoul. Didn't we fight a war or something in Korea? Oh yeah, and don't those people eat dogs?

So why does this country have the world wringing its hands and second-guessing what's going to happen next? The United States has enough to worry about with President Clinton wanting to invade Haiti. Why add another country to our growing list of places the United States needs to police?

For those of you who already understand Korea's history, you may want to skip my column completely. It would be better for you to read the sports or "Calvin and Hobbes." However, for the rest of you who have only a faint notion or not a clue in the world as to what's happening, I'll briefly summarize the bizarre sequence of events.

An important element of this puzzle is that historically Korea has yet to act as an independent nation. Before World War II, Japan controlled Korea. After the war, Korea was divided by the United States and the former Soviet Union.

South Korea was molded into the democratic and capitalist country it is today. North Korea, under the careful guidance of Stalin, became a communist country that secretly carried on with its affairs. Stalin picked Kim Il Sung to lead his little country lying in the Sea of Japan.

Kim Il Sung ruled North Korea and privately named his son, Kim Jong Il, as his heir. It was rumored that North Korea had access to



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nuclear bombs, and this is why the United States started to sweat. Last year, Kim Il Sung kept inspectors from visiting two suspected plutonium sites and threatened to withdraw from the nuclear nonproliferation treaty. This raised U.S. concerns and fears about what North Korea would do next.

Earlier this year, Kim Il Sung agreed to set up "talks" with the United States. During the summer Jimmy Carter traveled to Pyongyang to negotiate with him. Despite Carter's reports that he was "strong and ready to talk," Kim Il Sung died of a heart attack. His death ended his 48-year reign over the North and caused the world to question whether his son really would succeed him.

The United States has good reason to worry. We want to protect and remain close allies with South Korea. Geographically, South Korea is a political safe haven between Japan and China. The United States has some 40,000 troops in the South warning the North to keep its distance.

In 1983, the North attempted to assassinate the South Korean president. We would be fooling ourselves to think the North wouldn't harm its neighbor below. Let us not forget that it was North Korea, in an attempt to reunite, that invaded South Korea in 1950.

If North Korea gains or has nuclear weapons, we have no idea what it would do next. North Korea could sell nuclear weapons to countries like Iraq or Libya. Some think the North would use them against the South. I've even heard the North wouldn't mind using the bomb on Japan. (They've never liked each other much.)

Kim Jong Il is more dangerous than people give him credit for being. We don't know much about him, but we know he's a ruthless sponsor of terrorism. He's been blamed for masterminding the attempt to kill the South Korean president in 1983. In 1987, he ordered a South Korean airliner to be blown away. The new Kim is rumored to be mentally unstable.

The worst fact is that North Korea is desperate. Since the '60s, the North Korean economy has been going downhill. North Korea has no real allies anymore, and communism is a dying trend. North Korea's country is poor, and its people need something good to happen.

How they choose to make this happen is cause for the United States to worry.

Stock is a junior secondary education major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

The 1994 Involvement Fair  
Nebraska Union Plaza  
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10:30-2:30

student organizations  
UNL departments  
volunteer opportunities

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## Free Computer Classes!

The Computing Resource Center is offering free microcomputer classes to UNL students. The classes will feature an introduction to Microsoft Word for the Macintosh. No reservations are required.

### Introduction to Microsoft Word for Macintosh

Tuesday, September 20 2:30 - 3:20 Andrews Hall lab

Thursday, September 22 2:30 - 3:20 Andrews Hall lab

### Intermediate Microsoft Word for Macintosh

Thursday, September 22 7:00 - 8:30 Andrews Hall lab

Tuesday, October 4 11:00 - 12:30 Andrews Hall lab

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The Racial Pluralism Action Team (RPAT) is now accepting applications. RPAT was established to foster understanding and harmony between the many races and cultures represented in the student body at the UNL. The team also serves in an advisory capacity to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs on matters of diversity.

The goals of RPAT are as follows:

- To plan educational programs on diversity, which may include a fall semester cultural diversity retreat and a spring semester diversity mini-conference;
- To serve as contact persons for students and others with concerns about cultural diversity issues;
- To work with student government (ASUN) to provide advice and consultation to the university administration on issues confronting racial minority students at UNL;
- To provide additional support and resources for diversity programming on the campus.

The members of RPAT include UNL students, faculty, and staff who are committed to the task of creating a campus environment that is multicultural, progressive, supportive, educational and challenging for all members of the campus community.

Applications for a two year term (1994-96) beginning this fall are available until Monday, October 3rd, in the Office of the Vice Chancellor for Students Affairs (124 Administration Building). Those individuals who are selected for membership will be notified during the week of October 3rd.

Addressing  
Racism

RACIAL  
PLURALISM  
ACTION TEAM

