

Daily
Nebraskan
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EDITORIAL

Rock the Vote

Students can lose lazy label in election

Students often are accused of being apathetic, uninterested and uninformed. Our generation is made up of slackers, some say.

This year, Generation Xers have a chance to show the rest of the nation the stereotype is wrong. Students can show they are interested by exercising their power to make an informed vote in the upcoming November election.

This week, the Daily Nebraskan is running a four-part series about the eight Board of Regents candidates. The series will explore the issues and questions facing the University of Nebraska.

The regents govern NU, making important budgetary and hiring decisions that affect every student on this campus.

Students should take the time to read the series and learn more about the candidates in their voting district.

Instead of accepting Generation X status, let's take a few minutes to get informed.

Sober socializing

Nightclub idea is another brand of fun

Nine members of a steering committee hope to turn the Nebraska Union's Crib into a student nightclub on weekends. They'll need lots of luck.

The University Program Council in recent years has been disappointed by turnout at some of its nonalcoholic events. And members of the greek system have done away with competitions for the best nonalcoholic party, even though the events were relatively well-attended.

Let's face it, "nonalcoholic" is not the favorite word on college campuses.

But the idea of a student nightclub is a good one.

In the last couple of years, a crack-down on drinking on campus and underage drinking at the bars has left minors feeling they have no alternatives for congregating with friends.

A nightclub certainly wouldn't solve the problem of underage drinking and would be far from embraced by all minors, but it would be one more entertainment option for all university students.

David Bower, drug education coordinator at the University Health Center, said the nightclub could include everything from stand-up comedy to live bands and disc jockeys — depending on student support and interest.

Students have expressed an interest in such a club.

Bower said a spring survey of 200 students from greek houses, residence halls and academic classes indicated that 86 percent of the students polled wanted the club.

With the expressed student interest and the positive focus, the idea seems worth perusing, even though it will take a large effort.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 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.



"CAN ANYONE EXPLAIN HOW TO MAKE A MOUNTAIN OUT OF A MOLEHILL.... BILL."

MIKE ROYKO

Defining moments lose impact

I'm disappointed to learn that I blindly missed a defining moment in American history.

This has come to my attention in the many gushing reviews of a new movie called "Quiz Show."

The movie is loosely based on the true story of how a popular TV quiz show from the 1950s called "Twenty-One" was rigged to heighten suspense and increase ratings and profits.

Most of the critics say the movie is of great significance because the quiz-show scandal marked the loss of our national innocence.

Americans were supposedly stunned to discover that they couldn't believe everything they saw on their rabbit-eared television sets. They were shattered by the revelation that Charles Van Doren, a bright, young college teacher and a member of a prominent literary family, had been slipped the correct answers and really wasn't as brilliant as he appeared.

And that is when we lost our national innocence, which is a serious loss, indeed.

It just shows how alert you have to be if you don't want to miss defining moments.

I owned a TV during much of the 1950s, and I vaguely recall watching a few segments of that tainted quiz show. I also vaguely remember the scandal.

But I stupidly failed to recognize its great significance — namely the loss of my innocence and that of my fellow Americans.

Shortly after the quiz-show scandal, I forgot about it completely. In fact, I didn't think much about it even when the scandal was unfolding. And I haven't given one thought to Van Doren, the scandal and the rest of it until I read the scholarly movie critiques.

That's because I was a Chicagoan. As such, I was familiar with alderman, bagmen, juice men, hit men and other exotic urban wildlife. I had a naturally suspicious nature and assumed most public activities weren't on the level.

As for the honesty of TV, by the late 1940s our family tavern had one of the city's early sets. Those were the days when pro wrestling



And what about Watergate? If I had a dollar for every time someone said that scandal shattered our national innocence, I could afford a nose job.

was one of the biggest hits, and everyone knew those outrageous matches were fixed.

In fact, the wise men of the tavern agreed that just about everything they saw on the tube was a fake. When bowling became popular, fat Eddie would say: "They oil the lanes for higher scores." When roller derby became a hit, shiny Chisel said: "If it wasn't rigged, they'd all get killed." When somebody read the news, Birdie said: "Hey, what's he know, sitting in front of the camera?"

But that is no excuse for any alert person missing so significant a defining moment as the loss of our national innocence.

My only excuse is that it is difficult for any American to keep track of defining moments.

If anyone did a computer search of the phrase "defining moment" in the general press, we would find that it has been used as estimated 1,286,543 times in the last year or two.

In modern journalism's socio-jargon, the only phrase even approaching "defining moment" might be "sea change."

I'm not completely clear on the difference between "defining moment" and "sea change." I suppose that if you have a sex-change operation, that is a "sea change" in your life. Of course, it might also be a "defining moment," if not for you, at least for the other guys on your softball team. So I'm still confused.

If the forgettable Charles Van Doren punctured America's faith in TV, why do millions of Americans tune in every day to watch talk shows on which transvestite mothers-in-law describe their affairs with their sons-in-law?

While I would never argue with profound movie critics about defining moments or the precise time we lost our national innocence, these are debatable points.

Some might say that we lost our national innocence during the terrible slaughter and hardship of our Civil War. Or when tens of thousands of young men went off to die in World War I. And were there any innocents left after the Great Depression, World War II and the dropping of the A-bomb on Japanese civilians?

There are national shrinks who say we lost our national innocence when the 1919 White Sox threw the World Series for gambling bribes. Cub fans might respond that they lost their innocence in the fall of 1969.

Others will argue that national virginity was violated by the Korean War ending our winning streak. Or it was plucked when John F. Kennedy, Martin Luther King and Bobby Kennedy were assassinated. Or the debacle of Vietnam.

And what about Watergate? If I had a dollar for every time someone said that scandal shattered our national innocence, I could afford a nose job.

That's the tough thing about being an American. In most countries, defining moments and loss of innocence are the result of the collapse of governments, invasions or revolutions.

But in our society, defining moments are defined by movie and TV scripts. And the loss of national innocence is that poignant moment when a movie critic twitches.

By the way, I went to see "Quiz Show." I fell asleep. It was not one of my defining moments.