

RAINBOW ROWELL

Problems plague potty-mouth

I have amazingly bad luck with the service industry. Any time I'm dealing with someone who is getting paid minimum wage to help me, I have problems.

It's as if a wall sits between me and cashiers, fast-food workers and the like.

A friend and I were at Blockbuster Video a while back, trying to rent a movie. The cashier and I went through the movie rental motions smoothly enough, until the crucial moment of payment.

I made the mistake of trying to pay with three Susan B. Anthony dollars that I had received from a stamp vending machine in the Nebraska Union.

"Um," the cashier said, "I don't think we can take those."

I assured him that he could, but he looked worried, even a little frightened. He stared at his drawer. Pennies, nickels, dimes and quarters all had their own spots. Ones, fives, tens and twenties had a proper place. His lip started trembling.

"I better talk to my manager."

The manager sauntered up in the way only unimportant middle management can. The cashier feebly held up my suspicious money.

"Sorry," the manager said. "We can't take Canadian quarters."

I tried to explain to her that I wasn't trying to pass on foreign money, that I was offering legal U.S. tender, but she wasn't having any.

And she was starting to forget the 11th Commandment: The customer is always right.

"Look, the bank won't take those. You'll have to pay with American money."

At that point, my friend came unhinged.

"Look, we can take you to court if you won't take our money. That's discrimination."

He was almost shouting, and



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other Blockbuster customers started peeking from behind the Wild Comedies shelf.

"Take her Canadian quarters," she instructed the cashier, her voice dripping with sarcasm. "We'd hate to face a lawsuit."

"They're dollars," I said.

It's not always someone else's stupidity that gets me in trouble. Often, when the moment of truth arrives, and it's time for me to give my order or pay my check, I become stupid incarnate.

If you've ever eaten at the Imperial Palace Express, you know they move fast.

Sometimes, they've got your meal ready before you've had time to grab soy sauce and a fork. The cashier is already taking orders over your shoulder before you even walk away.

So Monday evening I went to the restaurant and ordered Imperial Chicken. But I didn't really want Imperial Chicken; I wanted Princess Chicken.

I knew something was wrong when she said "\$4.25." So I looked at my change and then back up at the cashier, but lo ... she had already helped two people in the time it took me to look at my change.

I tried to talk to her, but she was pretty annoyed that I should break the natural order of things.

"I don't want Imperial Chicken," I said.

"Too late," she said. "Too late." And lo ... it was too late. In the

endless minute and a half that had passed, the Imperial Chicken had been made.

My confusion of royal terms had landed myself right in the middle of the bizarrely efficient machinery that is the Imperial Palace Express. And I was being crushed.

I don't like Imperial Chicken. I paid 50 cents more for something I don't like. And my status as a friendly, regular customer was in danger.

I could feel my pulse speeding up. And then I did something I regret. I cursed. Not at the cashier, not out of anger — out of desperation.

I said the F-word.

Well, that got the attention of the cook — the wok man, so to speak. He announced that he would make the Princess Chicken, would everyone please calm down.

I've always expected him to be a very strong man. I've never seen anyone else at the wok, so he must work long hours. And he must be the quickest wok in the West.

I got my Princess Chicken after all. But I lost more than 50 cents.

The people at the Imperial Palace Express will never look at me the same. No matter what I order, they'll never trust me. And they'll probably whisper mean things about me when I walk by.

"Potty-mouth wants Princess Chicken."

Rowell is a senior news-editorial, advertising and English major and a Daily Nebraskan associate news editor.

JAMIE KARI

Gay day boosts health hazard

Tuesday, the cultural war comes home to UNL.

At least we have been warned. Next to Broyhill Fountain, one of the lighted billboards reads: "National Coming Out Day — October 11, 1994."

So, in an attempt to "de-closetize" every homosexual and bisexual in the city of Lincoln, gay activists have conjured up an "admit-you're-gay day." Cute.

Coming Out Day, according to the signboard literature, is supposed to be a day of "enlightenment" for those of us who find the whole idea of homosexuality a bit confusing.

But because beliefs about homosexuality are rooted in warring moral codes, Coming Out Day will settle nothing and convince no one. It simply will be a pitiful attempt to show homosexual strength on this campus.

Nonetheless, for those who still want to be "educated and enlightened," festivities will begin on the eve of the big day with a campuswide discussion.

"The questions you always wanted to ask ... here's your chance!" the billboard proclaims.

Good. I have a lot of questions. In fact, allow me the first inquiry: Morality issues aside, why would anyone partake in a lifestyle as harmful as homosexuality?

According to a 1993 report from the D.C. Family Research Council, citing dozens of experts and studies, including a five-year study of some 5,200 obituaries in 16 gay newspapers:

- The average age of men dying with AIDS is 39.
 - The average age of homosexuals dying of all other causes is 41.
 - Only 1 percent of gay men live to be 65 or older.
- The obituaries in the gay press suggest a homosexual "life" style



The truth is that homosexuality is creating an unprecedented health crisis in this country, and at its forefront is AIDS. What is worse, no one is doing anything to curb the behavior of those responsible.

will cut two or three decades from one's life expectancy.

According to the same study by the council, gay men are three times as likely to have alcohol or drug abuse problems, 14 times more likely to have had syphilis, 23 times more likely to contract a venereal disease and thousands of times more likely to contract AIDS. And I thought the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Health Center had it bad.

The phenomenon, however, is not restricted to gay males. The study reports: "(A) compilation of recent studies shows (that) ... lesbians are 19 times more likely than heterosexual women to have had syphilis, twice as likely to suffer from genital warts and four times as likely to have scabies."

According to the studies I have read, most homosexuals admit to having a multitude of partners with whom they have had sex only once. According to a 1978 study on sexual behavior (from Raphael Kazamann's book, "Homosexuality: A Public Health Problem"), 43 percent of male homosexuals admitted to having sex with 500-plus partners, and 28 percent admitted to having 1,000 or more partners.

If rampant disease and early death are so tightly connected to homosexuality, how can anyone call this a happy, "gay" lifestyle? Why would anybody want to promote

this way of living?

The facts and figures spell it out: Homosexuality is a health hazard. That harsh truth may be branded as coldhearted, but a truly compassionate response to people pursuing destructive behavior is to tell them the truth and give them hope for a better life. That means discouraging them from indulging in homosexual behavior, not pushing them into it.

The truth is that homosexuality is creating an unprecedented health crisis in this country, and at its forefront is AIDS. What is worse, no one is doing anything to curb the behavior of those responsible. But opportunity knocks Tuesday. A university administration that truly cares for the present and future well-being of all its students, both straight and homosexual, would call off any observance of National Coming Out Day at UNL. Chancellor Graham Spanier and the university administration are obligated to cancel this celebration of sodomy. Not doing so would be beyond moral confusion, beyond blatant cowardice.

Allowing the festivities to go on as planned would send the message that the university administration does not give a damn about the welfare of the students who attend this institution.

Kari is a junior news-editorial and political science major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

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