

# OPINION

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## Daily Nebraskan

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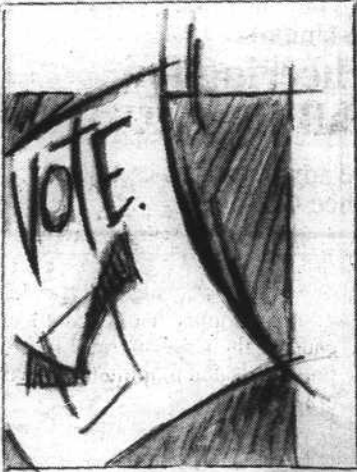
## Union, yes

### Renovation, expansion badly needed

On Wednesday, University of Nebraska-Lincoln students have a unique opportunity to help future students on this campus.

Voters will be asked on the ASUN ballot if they would be willing to spend about \$20 a semester for a renovated, expanded Nebraska Union. The fee would not go into effect until the construction is complete — possibly as soon as 1998.

Most students now in college will graduate before the expansion begins. So this isn't a vote for yourself, but for a younger brother or sister or your own children.



Amy Schmidt/DN

Student support for the expansion is crucial. Without the backing of students, the NU Board of Regents could deny the project. And without student support, the Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education certainly will veto the plan.

Parts of the Nebraska Union are dangerously outdated. The limited meeting space, lack of popular stores and the lack of recreational activities are a few relatively trivial problems facing the union.

Accessibility to the disabled (or lack thereof), asbestos in the ceiling and limited fire exits are serious concerns that need to be looked at now.

The Daily Nebraskan agrees with Union Director Daryl Swanson when he calls the handicap entrance an embarrassment. It is difficult enough to negotiate the steep ramp during the summer, but that task becomes nearly impossible in the winter months.

It often seems to students that they have to foot the bill for nearly everything. But the reason for this increased student fee is justified.

Students have to be partially responsible for the renovation's financing because tax dollars appropriated by the Legislature can only be used on academic buildings.

The Nebraska Union is — and always has been — the center of the University of Nebraska campus. In 1938 the Nebraska Union opened. The \$400,000 structure was dedicated to the "spirit of unity and friendship of campus."

On May 4, 1938, a special edition of The Daily Nebraskan screamed: "Union Opens Tonight. Eight-Year-Old Dream Becomes Reality at 7:30. \$400,000 Structure Testifies to Efforts of Alumni, Leaders, Students."

Reviewing that special edition reminds the Daily Nebraskan of the significant history the Nebraska Union holds in the community. It is much more than a building. It has represented more than 57 years of "Unions" among students, faculty and the community.

It is this student body's responsibility to create a union with the future of UNL and carry the legacy of the Nebraska Union into the 21st century.

### Editorial policy

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Spring 1995. 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.



## 'Lefties' mistreated by society

Being a right-handed person, I am constantly struggling between two feelings, the first of which is gratitude. I am grateful because I am right-handed, and therefore I am what is considered normal to the great masses that make our society.

The second feeling is guilt. I feel guilty because as a right-handed person, I witness the treatment of those few who aren't right-handed, but I rarely do anything about it.

It is a fact that there are just some people who are not born right-handed. These people did not choose to be left-handed. It's just the way they are.

I honestly do not know many left-handed people. Not many come out and admit that they naturally favor their left hands. Those who do publicly announce they are southpaws always claim that they did not choose to favor their left side, but that it had always been that way for them.

I am inclined to believe them. There is no reason in today's world to admit to left-handedness. In fact, it's rather a foolish and sometimes dangerous thing to come out and admit.

There are people just waiting to hear the words, "I am left-handed. Deal with it."

It is a statement like this that brings out the worst in some people. We all know who these people are. Most of us have been, or are, these people.

These people argue that it is not God's way for a person to be left-handed, that it is not natural and not intended in the grand scheme of things. They say that because left-handers are against God, and therefore sinners, that they should not be accepted into a religion. If they are accepted into a religion, they are told that they must change their left-handed ways, or God will not accept them. God personally talks to a lot of right-handed people, obviously.

Some right-handed people believe that being left-handed is nothing more than a mental disorder.



Todd Elwood

Lefties can be cured of their ailment through various forms of treatment and counseling. Lefties can someday be normal, and favor their right hands, if a cure can be achieved.

These people say that left-handed people should not be allowed to serve in the military because these left-handers will most certainly try to recruit other soldiers to join them. Left-handed people have no self control and will most assuredly try to convince all of the other soldiers to pull the trigger of their machine guns with their left index finger, they argue.

These people say that left-handed people should not, in any circumstance, be allowed to raise children. There is no question that these southpaws, if given the responsibility of parenthood, will not love the child, but persuade the child to become left-handed. Even if the child is naturally right-handed, as the majority of people are, the left-handed parent will teach that favoring the left hand is the only way to live. They will train the child to be left-handed.

Some people, even, on the ugliest of occasions, will group together and seek out a left-handed person for the sole purpose of applying punishment. If left-handed people can not use the right hand, they say, then beating them is the only reasonable alternative.

Finally, many right-handed people claim that being left-handed is nothing more than a lifestyle choice.

It doesn't seem to matter that, in every aspect of American life, being left-handed brings about suffering of

one kind or another; it is still their choice. If left-handed people choose, they can be right-handed at any moment, as easy as flipping a switch.

As I have said, I witness all of these things, but rarely do anything about it. I feel guilty about this, and I am responsible for my non-action.

I look at history in America and see the oppression of other people who are simply born one way instead of another. I am referring, of course, to those who are born with brown eyes. Being born with brown eyes is no one's choice. It is a fact. People with brown eyes merely come into this life as a minority.

People with brown eyes were not allowed to use lunch counters, restrooms and certain seats on the bus. I see the history of all of this and wonder why no one did anything about it for so long. It is not that oppression against those with brown eyes is no longer a part of our world, but it is not as distinct as it once was.

I wonder why brown-eyed people were so openly oppressed by laws and by people in America for so long. I wonder this and I suddenly see the mirror in my face. I see that left-handed people are experiencing the same discrimination, the same open and hateful injustices that brown-eyed people experienced in the '60s.

I see how ludicrous and simply wrong all of the arguments were when people justified the oppression of brown-eyed people, and I recognize the same words used against left-handed people today.

I wonder about my parents' generation. I wonder why they let it go on like they did. I wonder what my children will say about my generation. I fear that my children will wonder why left-handed people were treated the way they are. I fear I will have to answer those questions with a shrug of the shoulders.

Elwood is a senior English and sociology major, and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

P.S. Write Back

The Daily Nebraskan wants to hear from you. If you want to voice your opinion about an article that appears in the newspaper, let us know. Just write a brief letter to the editor and sign it (don't forget your student ID number) and mail it to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R Street, Lincoln, NE 68588-0448, or stop by the office in the basement of the Nebraska Union and visit with us. We're all ears.