

Unforgiven

Passage of time can't hide NU's problems

Some people may say that talking about abuse and sexual harassment on this campus is like beating a dead horse.

I don't agree; the subject is more than noteworthy, and the horse needs to be reincarnated until something is done.

Certain members of our repeat National Championship football team have had much experience with the law and, above all, harassment.

Other members of our student body (non-athletes) are guilty of the same crimes as well.

As a child, I can remember my mother telling me to treat all girls and women with the same respect that I would treat her.

I always have tried to do just that, but as a human being, I have made my mistakes just like everyone else.

But I have never physically threatened a woman with my fist. Never did several women publicly accuse me of sexual harassment. And never did I embarrass and disgrace a woman by showing disrespect for her body in a public or private place.

Anyone who has is not a friend of mine.

The Husker football team is supposed to be the pride of this university. When the rest of America hears the words University of Nebraska-Lincoln, the people think of powerhouse football.

But along with Husker football, America has been provoked to think that UNL also represents violent acts, men on trial, and crimes of assault and sexual harassment.

I don't want anyone to be led to believe such things of this fine institution.

When I was home in Chicago over winter break, everyone I spoke to — friends, family and even



Bob Ray

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strangers — tore into this place, and why?

Well, for a good reason. Because about four months ago, an incredible athlete with a responsibility to his fans and more importantly to himself, scaled a terrace, broke into an apartment and physically assaulted a woman and a fellow team member.

That wasn't Lawrence Phillips' first brush with the law in the state of Nebraska, and I want to know why he wasn't expelled by this university.

We are not running a day care center. The way the Phillips situation was handled was absolutely appalling.

Come on — no matter who the student is, there are only so many chances they can be given.

I can try to understand Coach Osborne's reasoning behind keeping

Phillips on the team and letting him play again.

But behind Osborne's good intentions came national scrutiny of his entire football squad, of the university and of the state of Nebraska.

And even though in a few years the rest of America may not remember, it still matters.

It's the moral principle, the foundation that so many Nebraskans are raised to have.

Too many people are getting hurt, women especially. And why? Because no one in authority will make an example out of someone who has taken advantage of the system.

How many abused and sexually harassed women does it take for this university to do something? How much more does the law-abiding student have to take?

Someone in administration must take a stand on these crimes, at least for our future. Ignore the political circles that are keeping these students enrolled and take a stand on these crimes.

If the state judicial system won't convict them, then the university needs to.

Expel these individuals if they are guilty; politely say "thanks for coming, but the party's over, pal."

I want to be proud to tell people that I graduated from the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. That our football team won back-to-back National Championships. That our volleyball team won a championship. And that I thoroughly enjoyed the campus, the state of Nebraska and the people.

The issue of domestic abuse and violence is about the victims. Have some compassion for them, not the criminals.

Ray is a senior broadcasting major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Long-shot candidate may cause an upset



David Broder

EPSOM, N.H. — What happened here last Thursday night demonstrates why millionaire publisher Steve Forbes has gone beyond his lavish self-financed television campaign and become a personal force to be reckoned with in Republican presidential politics.

Almost 300 people jammed a crossroads restaurant on a foggy winter night to listen to, and cheer, the political novice from New Jersey. Drawn simply by newspaper ads and the word-of-mouth interest in his seemingly quixotic effort to rewrite the tax code and shake up the Washington political establishment.

Susan Webb of Pembroke said it was "the first candidate's rally I've ever been to," — and she liked what she heard. "He'll run the country like a business," she said. "And I really like the idea that he would stop taxing retirement checks."

From young people like Mark Jennings, who said he switched on the spot to Forbes from Senate Majority Leader Robert J. Dole, to grizzled veterans of New Hampshire campaigns like Roger Lagasse, who found in Forbes "a sense of the country like Ronald Reagan had," Forbes clearly made votes by his personal campaigning.

That was not something this awkward, owl-like tycoon seemed capable of doing when he began this effort a few months ago. He remains a long shot for the nomination, but he clearly has changed the dynamics of the Republican race.

With the wisdom of hindsight, one can see that Forbes has combined three appeals with powerful chemistry for Republican voters:

First, he is Mr. Tax-Cutter — something that Republicans have cherished ever since the Kemp-Roth across-the-board tax cut proposal of 1978 gave the Watergate-damaged GOP its keynote to recovery. Alone in the GOP field, Forbes is promoting a flat tax that also would be a tax cut, he claims, for every taxpayer, no matter his or her income. Other candidates are focused on balancing the budget and are inhibited by the memory of Reagan-era deficits. Forbes goes right on promoting the supply-side faith that cutting rates will eventually boost revenues, so why worry about a few hundred billion dollars of deficits?

Second, he is Mr. Upbeat, promising a bigger, brighter, better future — if only we break the shackles of the current tax system. Others in the race, notably former Tennessee Gov. Lamar Alexander and Sen. Phil Gramm of Texas, also talk about the promise of America, but Forbes sells it better.

Third, he is Mr. Outsider, the

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most anti-Washington candidate, bashing the capitol and its politicians in his highly negative ads about Dole and Gramm, and pushing term limits, the favorite populist panacea for the political system.

The last Republican who successfully combined those three appeals — the optimistic, tax-cutting outsider — was in fact Ronald Reagan, who almost upset the incumbent Republican president here in New Hampshire in 1976 and blew away the field four years later.

Forbes is no Reagan when it comes to campaigning, but neither is anyone else running in 1996. He has become very disciplined in delivering his stump speech, hitting the same applause lines each time, and he is getting a bit looser and more effective in playing to his audiences as his confidence grows. Press conferences do not faze him.

The "rich kid" background that rivals thought would be his vulnerability, may turn out to be his shield. Jim Courtovich, Gramm's New Hampshire manager, jibes that "the toughest challenge Steve Forbes ever had to face was when he was a sperm swimming upstream to the egg." But most voters are like the Claremont watch repairman who said, "With his wealth, you know he's not in it for the money. These other guys are all looking out for themselves."

What is notably un-Reaganlike about the Forbes campaign is the savagery of his anti-Dole ads, which come close to calling the Kansas senator a liar. Forbes has drawn Dole into a tit-for-tat negative TV war, in which Dole decries Forbes' "untested leadership and risky ideas." Some of Dole's own key New Hampshire supporters worry that four more weeks of this negative fusillade before the Feb. 20 primary could damage both Dole and Forbes and open the way for a closing-week rush by Gramm or Alexander or even conservative commentator Patrick J. Buchanan, should one of them get a boost from his showing in the Feb. 12 Iowa caucuses.

Forbes himself still faces huge challenges. His signature flat tax proposal is coming under increasing criticism from his New Hampshire rivals, because it wipes out the deductions for property taxes, home mortgage interest and charitable contributions that are important to many individuals and interest groups here. Forbes may not be able to survive that counterattack. But New Hampshire is no longer in the bag for anyone — and Forbes can take credit for that.

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Mind altering

Earth has caught the deadly disease of life

The other day while I was shooting up heroin ... or was it cocaine, I forget.

Maybe it was in the afterglow of unprotected oral copulation that I first thought it — or it might have been while I was all jacked up on six cups of black coffee, washed down around two "espresso" brownies ...

In any case, something — whether illegal, immoral or fattening — first made me realize:

Life: It's sort of addictive.

It's a hard habit to kick —

It's a trip —

It can be Mind Altering.

And just about here I realized that, like addiction, life is a disease.

A particularly virulent disease that Mother Earth caught some time ago and hasn't been able to shake.

A couple of ice ages later, life still clings to her surface like a bad case of trenchfoot, a monkey on her back.

And life begets, as a matter of course, death and decay — a malady of which the other planets remain blissfully unaware.

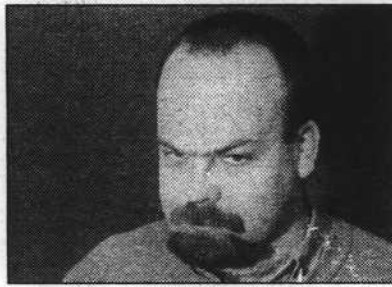
On Mars, time stands almost still. Minerals don't require a lot of it.

There, eternity is measured out in baker's dozens of millennia.

There, stones sitting in sunlight pass for sight. And the air smells like nothing, not even the dirt it carries at speeds approaching Mach 1. Because the dirt, like everything else on Mars, is lifeless, odorless, natural, perfect.

It's Earth that's the freak. The stumbling junkie of the solar system, Earth has yet to admit she has a problem; the first step to a cure. Even if Earth were to kick the habit tomorrow — in a devastating natural disaster, say, or searing nuclear holocaust — the danger would persist.

Without constant vigilance the Earth would slide back into her old ways again. Cockroaches first; later,



Mark Baldrige

"The stumbling junkie of the solar system, Earth has yet to admit she has a problem, the first step to a cure."

dinosaurs.

There is no safe amount of life.

And we are that drug, the fix the earth would crave — if ever she tried the cure. We are the pestilence and plague ... but we think we are the thing itself.

In this we are mistaken: The Earth might one day go 'round without us — we, on the other hand, will not go 'round without her.

We are the drug.

Perhaps heroin, while it lasts in the body, thinks IT is the person, and that the personality it covers and deforms is merely the bedrock, the flimsy crust it inhabits.

The drug, like life, has a strong sense of its own identity and continuance. Self-preservation ranks high on the list of priorities for drugs — they want to go on living, even at the expense of the human they inhabit.

And some drugs, alcohol for instance, can pollute their environment to the point of exhaustion — literally succeeding themselves out of a home.

In the meantime, drugs may represent a kind of mineral attempt at life; while we cling dependently on the skin of our Earth, the drug in us rolls itself in a flesh blanket.

It tries to enter into time through our biology.

But its success is only partial — perhaps that's why some drugs bring with them a sense of timelessness. The mineral consciousness is waking in our minds.

The analogy is flawed, of course. Most drugs are the product of biological processes, unprotected sex is morally indefensible, blah blah blah.

I bet you can come up with an objection of your own.

The thing is, it's just words. It's a game I'm playing with the words that stand for ideas that constitute the world.

You can kind of see how a guy like me might be burned as a heretic in a more literal age — a witch; I can't resist screwing with the reality controls.

But then what do we mean by "sight" if not stones warmed in the sun?

What do we mean by "time" and "life" and "thought?"

Damned if I know.

But people, like me, we don't care anymore about the so-called answers you find in books like the Bible and "Dianetics."

People like me say, "Curb your dogma! Can't you see? It's just a game."

But some people play too rough. They should be suspended.

In that light, and lest some overzealous bike cop take a fancy to my buttocks, I might say here that I haven't actually tried heroin or cocaine ... yet.

But follow my metaphor anyway. It might be fun.

Baldrige is a senior English major and blah blah blah.

BE OUR GUEST

The Daily Nebraskan will present a guest columnist each week. Writers from the university and community are welcome.

Must have strong writing skills and something to say. Contact Doug Peters c/o the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, NE 68588, or e-mail at letters@unlinfo.unl.edu. Or by phone at (402)-472-1782.