

OPINION

Monday, March 11, 1996

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Daily
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Jason Gildow/DN

Sex education

It's time for frank talk with young people

Never mind TV stations and Hollywood, magazines and the Internet, cartoons and comedians.

We live in a society that's a little squeamish when it comes to frank talk about, well, you know ...

Sex.

Jokes and innuendo aside, there doesn't seem to be much real talk about sex.

Last Friday, Joycelyn Elders reminded us of this.

Remember Joycelyn Elders? The former U.S. surgeon general? The one who made that infamous comment about masturbation being taught in public schools? The one who was then asked to resign?

Elders told about 900 people at Nebraska Wesleyan University on Friday afternoon that the average American child watches 15,000 hours of television from kindergarten to 12th grade and receives only 14 hours of sex education.

Fourteen hours.

Of course, that 15,000 hours of television certainly included some sort of sex education.

But a majority of it probably wasn't the kind of education young people need to prevent sexually transmitted diseases, unwanted pregnancies or rape.

These are all difficult problems, especially when sexual contact with someone who is HIV-positive can mean life or death.

We need to bring these issues out in the open — and not be embarrassed. We need to combat a lack of information, and misinformation, with words.

"We tell them what to do in a car in the front seat through driver's education," Elders said Friday. "It's time to tell them what to do in the back seat."

She's right.

We need more sex education in the schools — unbiased, factual education, to help combat raging hormones with some hard facts.

Let's not have to hear another generation of adults asking radio shows and magazines if they can get pregnant by kissing while wearing a swimsuit, or if they can prevent pregnancies by having sex while standing up.

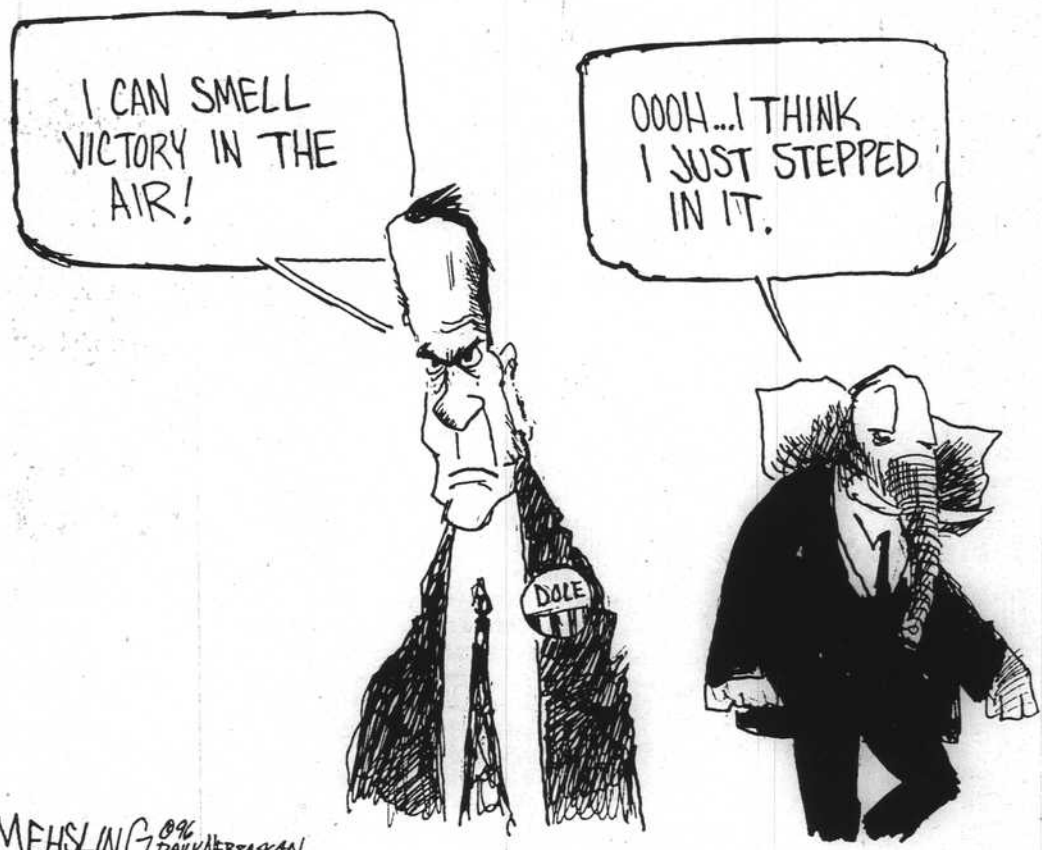
If we weren't afraid of talking about so many things, there wouldn't be nearly as many things to be afraid of.

Editorial policy

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MEHLING/DN

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Point

Steve Willey's article "Fighting mad — Parking Services fines don't fit the crimes" (March 6) needs a rebuttal. First of all, if UNL were to allow any or all students to park wherever they wanted, without paying for parking permits or being assigned lots in which to park, we would have an uncontrollable parking disaster on our hands. If Mr. Willey has a better solution to maintaining parking order on campus, we will be more than happy to listen to his ideas.

As an administrator, I have no problem with Mr. Willey's right to issue his opinion on the size of parking fines. The real pain inflicted by his commentary, however, is not to the UNL Administration, but to his fellow students. His comment that "meter maids are the lowest form of vermin" is uncalled for. These "meter maids" are his fellow students. (By the way, the correct title of these student workers is "Student Enforcement Cadet," and they include both men and women). They are hard-working students doing their job the best they can while at the same time earning money to help pay for their education. I am very proud of the work they are doing for our university. By labeling these students as "belonging to a species genetically close to a worm," Mr. Willey has, in my mind, displayed poor taste and judgment. His fellow students deserve better than that.

Paul Carlson
associate vice chancellor
for business and finance

Counterpoint

I am writing in response to Mr. Willey's article about the parking services. First of all, I would love to thank you for writing about this



Jason Gildow/DN

issue. I have been waiting all year for someone from the DN to bring up this issue. Now that you have, I would like to share two stories about parking services.

1. My girlfriend came down to visit me the weekend of the Pacific football game. As you know, parking services closes down many of the lots around the campus, so they can make a little bit more money. I did not, however, see a sign marking the lot behind Abel/Sandoz as closed. But someone recommended that I call parking services just to make sure, so I did. The lady there told me not to worry, that the lot was not closed, so we parked the car in a meter slot. The next day, we go out to her car to be greeted by a nice \$25 parking ticket. I appealed the ticket, but to no avail. The odd thing is, I noticed that the following week, signs were posted outside of the lot.

2. A friend of mine was visiting me and put money in the meter. She kept exact time of when she put the money in. With five minutes left, she went down to feed the meter. As she walked out the door, she saw parking services driving away.

Because she still had time on her meter, she had nothing to worry about. But to her surprise, she walked up to the car to see a ticket for a meter violation. She looked to the meter to see two minutes still on it. These meter maids figured she would not make it to her car in time and went ahead and ticketed her.

These two examples show how out of control the parking services has gotten.

Joe Glogowski
freshman
business

Elderly can contribute

Kudos to Kelly Johnson for her sensitively worded piece on aging. Let me point out, though, that as we leave our most productive years behind, we are more content if we do have a valued societal role. Older people need not be viewed solely as liabilities.

My ancestral homeland, Ireland, faced such a positively skewed demographic curve long ago. Of course, a good deal of this was because of high emigration. The anthropologist, Arensburg, who studied Irish country life in the 1930s, attributed the peculiarly long life expectancy to the fact that the elderly were not only respected, but allowed to work as long as they were able and were integrated into extended families.

Long life is not enough. The elderly must be part of society — contributing members. Anything else is just a matter of waiting to die. We, who are not yet old, must recognize that to live or work interacting only with the young is artificial and undesirable. We must not shun social contact out of self-consciousness.

Robert J. Tobin
graduate student
geology

Post it

...to the

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