

OPINION PACKAGES

OUR VIEW

Smokescreen

Re-election is real aim of tobacco proposals

The Clinton campaign is blowing smoke. On Friday, President Clinton announced plans to "snuff tobacco's appeal as sexy and fun" by proposing severe restrictions on tobacco advertisers — the ultimate goal being the obliteration of sales to minors.

Under the proposed regulations, advertisements in magazines with large teen-age readerships would be limited to black-and-white text, as would billboards — which would be prohibited within 1,000 feet of schools or playgrounds. T-shirts, hats and some other promotional items that advertise tobacco products would be banned. And tobacco companies no longer could sponsor sporting events, teams or race cars.

Announcing his plans, Clinton said, "Today we are taking direct action to protect our children from tobacco — and especially the advertising that hooks children on a product."

Correction, Mr. President. If anything, you are trying to send a message (or campaign pitch) to the American people that you want to protect children from advertising. But it's the tobacco that hooks children on the product — not Joe Camel or the Marlboro Man.

And while we are on the subject of icons, what about "Buttman," the Democratic representative who dresses up like a cigarette and follows around Bob Dole, making sure the GOP candidate's reluctance to address the issue remains in the spotlight?

What would Barney say? Mascots have always been a popular means of reaching children. Perhaps the president would do well to get his party to practice what he preaches. School children all over the country are sure to have seen footage of the juvenile — if not self-defeating — ploys of Buttman.

Of all the icons, Buttman is the most blatant. Seeing a camel toking it up and looking cool or a cowboy getting roughed up by a big old bull is less likely to stir children's interests in tobacco than a charming bigger-than-life cigarette.

What does the Clinton campaign have to say to that?

The proposed tobacco advertising regulations are hypocritical, misdirected and flat-out unconstitutional.

Parents have a right to be concerned about their children's exposure to nicotine addiction.

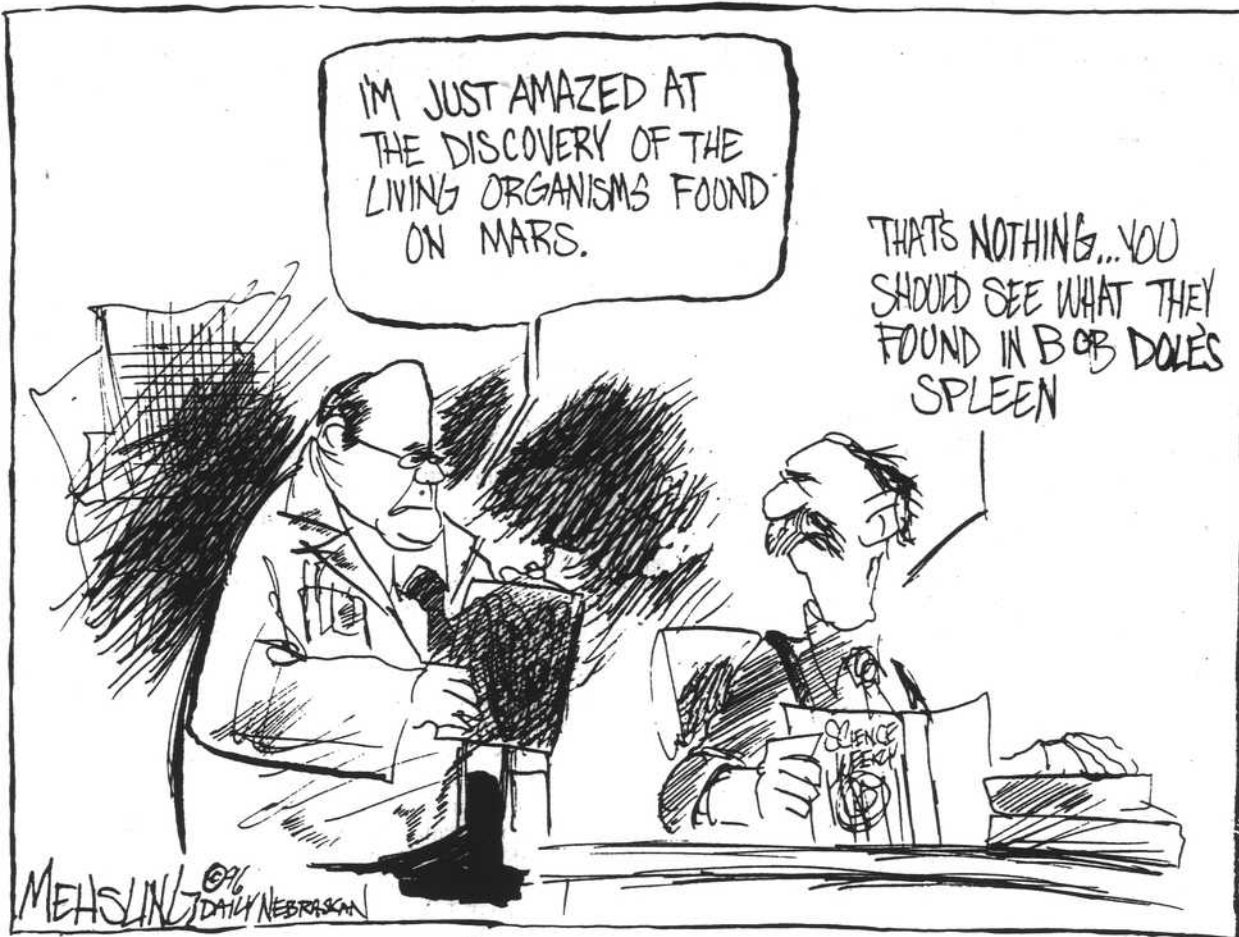
But advertisers have a right to do their job too.

It's called freedom of speech. The president says, "This epidemic is no accident."

And neither is the timing of his show of concern.

Never mind the First Amendment. There's an election to be won.

MEHSLING'S VIEW



Doug
KOUMA

Making the break from tradition

It's become a tradition of sorts.

About this time every August, on the first day of the new school year (that would be today) the new editor of the Daily Nebraskan (that would be me) introduces himself or herself to the readers.

Far be it from me to break with tradition.

If memory serves, I think I'm supposed to start by telling you about the first story I wrote for the Daily Nebraskan — my first real brush with journalism, that life-changing experience that put me on this path and made me realize this is what I want to do with my the rest of my life.

As new DN reporters are wont to be, I was a freshman. I covered a speech on water issues by Sen. Bob Kerrey. It was interesting and all, but the experience didn't leave a lasting impression on me.

I'll admit I felt a small thrill seeing my byline on the front page the next morning, but I didn't run back to my dorm room to phone my parents and tell them I had found my calling.

In fact, I have yet to make that call.

Don't get me wrong. Journalism has been good to me. The Daily Nebraskan has been good to me. I've dedicated myself to doing the best I can in journalism, and that has landed me summer internships at two wonderful newspapers. I've dedicated myself to doing the best I can at the DN, and that has landed me this job.

But for me, that's exactly what this is — a job. I enjoy it, I work hard at it, and I think I'm usually pretty good at it. I might even say I'm often impassioned about it.



EDITOR'S NOTES

"We are a part of this campus, not apart from it."

But I can't say that journalism itself is my passion. I can't imagine being a journalist for the rest of my life. I can't imagine being anything for the rest of my life. I see too many options, too many opportunities to pursue. I don't want to limit myself to one path.

So what does that make me? I think it makes me a typical 22-year-old, in my fifth year at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln contemplating life after graduation.

In short, an average student. Just like my colleagues here at the DN.

We may be reporters, editors, photographers, artists and advertising account executives, but we are all students. More specifically, we are UNL students, and we're proud to call this place home.

Chances are, you've sat next to us in class. Talked with us in line at

Burger King. Lounged with us on Broyhill Fountain. Cheered with us on game day.

We are a part of this campus, not apart from it. And for that reason alone, you should expect the Daily Nebraskan to bring you more relevant coverage of university-related issues than anyone else.

When the Board of Regents meets to decide how to spend your money or ASUN mounts a drive to lobby against cuts in financial aid, you should expect our news staff to tell you what it means to you.

When you want to know more about the players behind the statistics as the Huskers go for the first "threepeat" in college football history, you should expect our sports staff to have the stories.

When you want to find out your best bet for weekend fun or need to know just how good that new movie really is, you should expect to find out from our A&E staff.

And when you want to gauge the pulse of the campus or maybe express your point of view, you should expect to find the opinion pages a forum open to wide-ranging discussion.

If you feel like those expectations aren't being met, if you want to let us know about a story you think we should cover, or if you just have something to say, give us a call (472-2588). Drop us e-mail (letters@unlinfo.unl.edu). Or come on down and talk to us (Nebraska Union, room 34).

We're here, and we want to hear from you.

Kouma is a senior news-editorial major and Daily Nebraskan editor.

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P.S. Write Back



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