

OPINIONPAGE

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"They kind of did selective enforcement of their own policy."

— Lambda Chi Alpha President Scott Moller, on police procedures in issuing MIPs to three busloads of UNL students traveling to a fraternity party

"When I'm president, I don't intend to wink at drugs."

— Bob Dole, criticizing President Clinton's anti-drug efforts

"I'm still big. I'd just like a couple of inches, and even if you don't have the size, you can make up for it with your heart."

— Husker starting center Aaron Taylor, on his height

"If men could get pregnant, family planning would be a sacrament."

— Frances Kissling, president of Catholics for a Free Choice, in support of abortion rights

"A campus that says they have no problems is lying. It's like a city saying it has no crime."

— UNL Police Chief Ken Cauble, on the reluctance of some campuses to report crimes

"President Smith has no intention of nickel and diming the students for every issue that comes along."

— NU Regent Nancy O'Brien, on budget plans for campus renovations

"The thought crossed my mind, but Coach Osborne put a damper on that. Plus I would probably get a penalty."

— Nebraska wingback Lance Brown, on the temptation to perform post-touchdown backflips

"It'll be a packed house. People hanging off the lights as far as I know."

— Arizona State quarterback Jake Plummer, on the upcoming game with the Huskers at Sun Devil Stadium

"He's really quiet—but that's kind of the unwritten rule for rookies."

— California Angels rightfielder Tim Salmon, on former Cornhusker Darin Erstad, who was a first pick in the June 1995 major-league draft

"I knew Harry Truman, and Bob Dole is no Harry Truman."

— Veteran political reporter Helen Thomas, on Dole's hopes for a historical comeback in the 1996 presidential race

"You can access the Unabomber's 35,000-word anti-technology manifesto on the World Wide Web. ... Irony is a harsh mistress."

— The Deep End, by cartoonist Chad Strawderman

"Martyrdom is not what we're seeking. Office is what we're seeking."

— Ross Perot's running mate, Pat Choate, on the Commission on Presidential Debates' decision to exclude the Reform Party

"If I start thinking out on the court, I start playing crappy."

— UNL outside hitter Kate Crnich, on her volleyball approach

MEHSLING'S VIEW



Steve
WILLEY

It's just gas, gas, gas

The other day in Spanish class, while posing as a pencil in the hopes that my professor wouldn't call on me, I had an astounding revelation: I HAVE YET TO WRITE A COLUMN ABOUT FARTING!

The more I thought about it, the more I couldn't believe the subject had escaped my pen for as long as it had. Just like every American male, farts have been a huge part of my life—from the day my father first demonstrated their flammability, right down to the day he simultaneously demonstrated our couch's flammability.

So I could not, in good conscience, allow another day to expire without sharing my thoughts on this subject.

But bear with me if you will, as this topic, even for a collegiate newspaper, is a little risky.

Now I am not condemning public flatulence, nor shall I condone it. I am, however, confused by it. I don't understand why farting is considered taboo and, if done in the presence of the pope, a mortal sin.

Even when I mentioned it to my editors as a possible column, they all shifted uneasily in their chairs. Why? I am afraid I don't know. Maybe I'm just not as easily agitated. Or perhaps, in another much more accurate way, I'm quite possibly just a flaming idiot.

As our history has emphatically proven, flatulence—any flatulence—is severely frowned upon. One historic example occurred on June 8, 1969, when then-President Richard Nixon accidentally let one loose during a nationally televised press conference. (For those of you who may have forgotten, Nixon was subsequently asked to resign.)

I have obtained, from the Internet, the transcript from that day and will let you make your own assumptions about the man.

(10:28 a.m. EST)
NIXON: "And furthermore, I resolve to decrease the number of troops in Vietnam by (he pauses, visibly straining) D-Deer Lord..." He winces.

(10:29 a.m. EST)
The following is heard by those in attendance: "FHHHHHTATATATAT-ATBUDABUDAWHEEEEEEE..."

(10:58 a.m. EST)
"...WHEEEEEETTTTTT!"

The crowd of astonished reporters looks about, eventually a man speaks: "Er... Mr. President, Uh... Walter



Cronkite here, CBS News... Er... was that, uh... Did you???"

(11:00 a.m. EST)
NIXON: "Er... Indeed, uh Walter. I... er... stepped on a tree frog. They're terrible this time of year."

(11:01 a.m. EST)
An anonymous voice in the back shouts: "IMPEACH HIM!"

By the repercussions of that event, it's no wonder many of us will conceal a fart, even if it means driving to Ontario to pass gas in an abandoned wheat silo. Personally, I'm too frightened to fart in public, but secretly, I admire those who aren't.

I have compiled a list of the two major types of farts, partly to insure a common shred of human understanding, but mainly because it has been some time now since I have publicly humiliated my mother.

The most common fart is the "Boomer" fart. Thankfully, Boomer farts are not fatal unless someone with a hearing aid is within a three-inch radius of the person doing the booming. As their name suggests, Boomer farts are unique in that they emit, among other things, enormous decibel levels.

Pootologists gauge these levels at about 173 decibels, which, according to my charts, is slightly louder than the noise a walrus would make if its snout were caught in a garbage disposal.

The reactions to this fart are typically varied. While adults usually brace themselves in doorways, teen-agers will often use the opportunity to loot newly collapsed buildings. These farts also will always evoke ravenous laughter in third-graders and fat columnists. (Ahem.)

The other type of common fart is called the "Woosher." Unlike Boomer farts, Woosherers are relatively silent. They usually begin with an audible "POP," and trail out in utter silence. Because of this silence, Woosherers are the fart of choice for politicians and priests, and are usually only noticed by

people in the same state who have noses.

(I have always found the name "Woosher" a bit odd because growing up in my house it was always referred to as a "GOD STEVIE! WE HATE YOU! YOU'RE THE REASON WE STOPPED HAVING KIDS!")

As with Boomers, the reactions to Woosher farts are widely varied. Usually the victims will look about the room upon hearing the "POP" and eventually, once they've realized what has happened, will make a face generally associated with drinking 48 gallons of lemon juice.

Another typical response is to spray 193 cans of Lysol in the general direction of the assumed Woosher—but therein lies the problem.

Since Woosherers are virtually noise-free, it's difficult to tell who the culprit is. The old adage of "The hen who cackled laid the egg," isn't always true. Oftentimes, the person who first yells, "HOLY JERUSALEM, MY NOSE IS ON FIRE!" is just a person who really would rather smell something else at the time.

Most nuns agree the best saying is: "Beat whoever it smells the worst by with a garden hose." The problem with this advice is that, in order to find the Woosher, someone must be a designated sniffer. Many times this person must be chosen with the aid of a machete, but occasionally the person who yelled, "Holy Jerusalem..." doesn't expect to live to see tomorrow, and accepts the job.

I hope my words have cleared up any concerns you had about the gases within us. And although the names escape me, I'm sure there are groups devoted to answering nothing but fart questions. (EDITOR'S NOTE: They can be found in the blue pages of your phone book. Also, Steve is only allowed to write columns about flowers in the future.)

In closing, try to remember the following quote from Winston Churchill's famous speech in Paris: "In the end, when you are returned to the earth that begot you, understand that you shall be remembered by your realized ambitions and not by an accidental toot during an auction."

I couldn't have said it any better myself.

Willey is from Mississippi. Yup.

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