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So, what do you know these days? As the Venus of obsessiveness, I should have known that at this tender track of my life — three months until my supposed graduation — that a question so simple would certainly hurl me further into my feelings of inadequacy and uncertainty.

As I thumbed through my mental crib sheet of all re- and acquired knowledge from the past 4½ years, I reached a conclusion both im- and depressive: I know nothing, really.

Actually, so as to contradict myself (a Gemini thing), I have to admit that I do know a few things, like how many picas go into an inch, and that the word "set" always takes an object. Similarly, I know that I share the same birthday as the late John Wayne, and that the only medical nod toward the drug apomorphine is for making one puke. I'm a veritable river of trivial information.

Nonetheless, when the curtain crashes down, I really can't say what I know about the end of the show. In what portion of my story will I be able to plug these mental plots?

Now I'm the first to admit that I've spent most classes cerebrally lounging atop Harry Connick's best baby grand as he pounds out something like "Love is Here to Stay," and launches into his daily mantra of how much he respects me. And I'm no stranger to staring vacantly into the blinking light of my VCR while pleasantly enjoying the fabric on my futon — anything to keep from studying. But honestly, when have I been

## Fruits of knowledge Classes breed mediocrity

allowed to learn what I *want* — or even in some cases, *need* — to know?

So let's see ... I do know what people *want me to know*, such people being school administrators and future employers. Similarly, I do what people *expect me to do*, thus inhibiting me from inserting "I'd sure dig Cleopatra's gig" into my cover letters. But if I'm following everyone else's ideas of what I should know and do, perhaps I should look into perfecting my Bleat rather than my Française.

Truthfully, I find it repulsive that we spend all these years in educational facilities, and still, it seems as though we're left with little to do with *true knowledge*.

Yeah, I know, so much for a profoundly fresh idea — you don't have to tell me twice. But that's exactly my point. What *do we know* that's new? What do we know, aside from what our schools choose to feed us, which normally consists of a balance between antiquated arguments, impersonal ideologies and trance-inducing terminologies?

And as for our professors ... those poor, poor people. How frustrating it must be for them to look around a classroom, know that they have so much to teach us, and yet they're constrained by curricula and discouraged by the disenchantment of their students. In fact, it was one of my flustered professors who inspired me to look further into this problem.

So what is the method behind a university's madness? Why would anyone want us to read books and take exams, only to forget as soon the book or exam is out of sight? Why would we desire knowledge that pertains only to a certain area?

I think that theologian and philosopher John Henry Newman said it best — even after nearly 1½ centuries — in his work "On University," where he wrote that "a

university training is a great ordinary means to a great ordinary end."

Wow, who wants to be *ordinary*? And what does this say about any of our dreams and ideals? Sure, none of us wants to have to tell our loved ones that we can't provide what they need. But this only covers our most primary purposes for earning a degree: A university education (the ordinary means) is one of the best methods in this day and age for attaining basic survival (the ordinary end).

Perhaps this basicness stems from the fact that our education is incessantly weighed and measured. Our education serves as our personal meter stick. We are weighed and measured according to what the current system requires.

But who wants to build and build only to find that their constructed masterpiece doesn't measure up to someone else's standards? Who wouldn't rather have their sidewalk supervisor tell them what they can do to improve the not-so-perfect structure, rather than simply dock their pay for doing something wrong? Who wants an F in a class? It's almost as though we're being reprimanded for trying things at which we have no previous experience. Isn't trial and error all part of the learning process? Sure it is. But at the same time, the weight of our errors can bog us down so much that we cannot get up to try again. And if we no longer try, we give up our chances for greatness.

To quote Newman once again, "a university ... does not promise a generation of Aristotles or Newtons, of Napoleons or Washingtons, or Raphaels or Shakespeares."

Certainly a university education may lend us the tools to build up to such greatness; but unless we find the means for this greatness, we may never reach a great end: true knowledge.



**LANE HICKENBOTTOM is a senior news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan photographer and columnist.**

Why are there even more divorces in this country than there are construction sites at UNL? Well, I think it all comes down to the F-word. No, not some dirty synonym for a physiological function (although that is a possibility); I'm talking about feminism.

Now before you pass judgment and call me an antifeminist, read on, because I'm really not.

I believe equality is an important issue, if not more important than any other issue in America. I think it is essential for a utopian society to have either mind control or equality. As an enemy of mind control, I believe true equality seems to be the answer to any question as to how to make this country a better place.

In the 1970s the largest women's movement since the turn of the century began. Tired of limited career opportunities, the monotonous life of a housewife, and the fact that society treated women as second-class citizens, women made feminism prevalent once again. And today the results are still unfolding, bringing women closer to equality.

Women are now less dependent upon men. They have opportunities in virtually every possible career field. In fact, women are no longer limited to the lifestyles — or paychecks — of secretaries, nurses, elementary school teachers or house-

## Feminists step forward Equality affords opportunities

wives. This has been a phenomenal advantage to women in terms of equality.

However, as mentioned before, feminism has caused some other problems. These problems evolve from what I believe is a fundamental need for everyone: the need to feel appreciated. This desire to feel important has sparked not only the feminist movement itself, but also its results.

In the past, a man came home after a day's work to a home where his wife and children were happy to see him, and dinner was waiting. He felt appreciated because if it were not for him, none of this would be possible. There would be no money nor food nor children.

But now that feminism has created a society where there are two breadwinners, and independent women are in the mainstream, men feel their roles are more menial than in the past. They do not appreciate the wife's role as a money-maker because it results in men's roles appearing less important. When this happens, the wife feels less appreciated for all the hard work she does each day.

The end result: A more independent woman who feels less appreciated, and a man who feels less appreciated, and all of a sudden there is a huge boom in the divorce rate, introducing an entirely new range of problems.

Feminism has created an environment where a woman does not require assistance from her husband. This relatively new situation allows a woman to remove herself more easily from the marriage. That development, coupled with the woman's capability of making her own living,

makes maintaining a good life through marriage a less logical answer than it used to be.

These circumstances have led to an influx of non-traditional families, which, like feminism, have advantages and disadvantages. More and more families do not have the face of a mommy, daddy, 2.4 kids and Fluffy the dog. There is a huge population of single-parent families, re-married families, homosexual-parented families, etc.

Many sociologists agree that a confrontational marriage is more harmful to children than a non-confrontational divorce. Because of this, more doors are open for women and their children to leave abusive relationships. This outcome is a relief considering that studies suggest children who witness domestic violence grow up to be violent parents and spouses. They also end up in prison more often than children who come from a more loving environment.

The more I think about this, the more problems I see in this whole divorce chain-reaction. Single parents, usually mothers, often end up living in poverty. Children in poverty are more apt to engage in a life full of crime, drugs and violence. Hell, this columnist who was brought up in a middle-class family has been taught to believe that bad things are more prevalent in an impoverished situation. Am I right? You decide.

But at any rate, compare the feminism movement to an old car with a constant backfiring problem. It is by no means a perfect ideology, (mode of transportation), but it is still better than walking. And most importantly, without feminism, the movement to equality for half of the country's population would be crawling.

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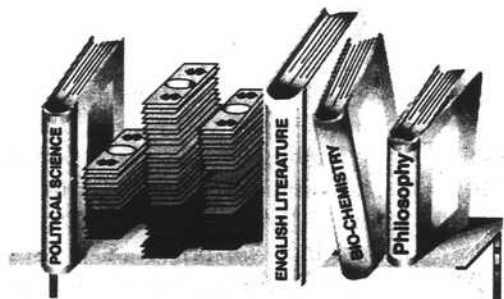
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