

**Erin HANSBROUGH**

## Alive and well

*Don't put feminism in 'has been' category yet*

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Feminism is dead.

At least, Time magazine thinks so.

On June 29 of this year, Time magazine officially declared the end of the modern American feminist movement as we know it. Again. The response from feminist readers? Stop. We've heard this one before.

It seems that once every few years, at least one popular news magazine decides to dedicate a couple of pages to the investigation of what Feminists (one group, capital "F") are doing these days. This should be simple enough, since all women who identify as feminist have the same agenda and work together on everything, right? Right? Oh, if only they knew how long it takes to get a women's studies department to agree on where to go to lunch.

When the researchers can't come up with a comprehensive answer to The Feminist Question, suddenly the movement is declared dead. Time and time again, world without end. (Except for in 1994, when Details magazine made the shocking discovery that some feminists actually like sex, and "Do-Me Feminism" was born; then the movement was alive and kicking!)

The Time article, titled "Feminism: It's All About ME!" declares that real feminist movement has died down because young women today are more concerned with their bodies and their love lives than with making social change. Their proof? The popularity of female characters such as Ally McBeal and the Spice Girls. Excuse me, since when has television or commercial rock 'n' roll offered us revolutionary role models? Even during the '70s, when modern feminism was considered very much alive, the average young woman probably wanted to be more like Farrah Fawcett than Angela Davis or Gloria Steinem.

The truth is, social change and feminist action are happening all over the place, whether it's in our classrooms, where bell hooks is being assigned along with Herman Melville; at our jobs, where sexual harassment is finally being recognized as a problem; or in the Nebraska Legislature, where abortion and gay rights are among the most pressing issues. Feminism dead? Well, don't bury anybody yet; it looks to me like we're still moving.

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**Haney's VIEW**



**Jim VANCE**

## Have it your way

*Service industry should look at how it does business*

**JIM VANCE** is a senior physical and health education major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Customer service.

To most college students, that means a summer job of kissing butts and listening to people complain at us for things that are not our fault. But there's a little more to the phrase than that.

I'll agree the jobs advertising customer service normally suck, mainly because you're just trying to sell people crap they don't need nor want. And it's usually over the phone.

Yet the biggest element we are all missing is the latter term, "service". This word implies a certain respect which must be shown to those whom we attempt to serve. Without that respect, there soon may be no former term.

I have recently experienced poor customer service. I'm not going to withhold names, it was at Perkins and Arby's restaurants. (Although these events did not occur in Lincoln.) Their service was so poor that I left both establishments fuming with anger, and a multi-year boycott plan. (For the record I have just finished my four year boycott of Wendy's.) The saddest thing is that both restaurants could easily have made me a happy customer given the circumstances, had they simply apologized and

offered me free meals. I would have gone from a disgusted customer to a continued loyalist, had they made a very upsetting situation a pleasant one, and I could expect the same in the future. But their reaction was to be simply obtuse to the situation they caused, even though I had been calm, respectful and courteous in explaining how upset I was.

Think if a hospital or doctor's office did this. They would be sued for malpractice. Even worse, they do not have the opportunity the food industry and others have to make an unhappy customer happy, as the unhappy customer more times than not is dead.

The fact that it would be so easy to alleviate a poor situation but yet a service company would not attempt to, only further goes to show the lack of respect for those who pay their bills, we customers.

What if the electric or gas companies did this? Imagine calling to tell them you are out of power and they simply said use a candle or light a fire, and all they would do is offer a candle or some fire wood. This is pretty much the reaction I have gotten. Where does this attitude of disrespect originate?

The fact our phone, electric and gas companies are obvious monopolies makes it scary to think what it would be like if they treated us as such. Unless you're Amish, you'd be continually subject to

their crap.

Something worse to think about is many reports say a lack of jobs for college graduates have lead to them flooding the customer service markets, namely the food industry. If this is the type of service and respect coming from college graduates, how does this speak of our educational system? Do we need Respect 101 to be included with our prerequisites?

If you are involved in the customer service industry, which includes nearly everyone, I hope you will think about the value of respect, not only in a business sense, but in a social and personal sense as well.

If you are treated poorly by a service company, don't hold back. Let them know you're unhappy. If we don't, we're not doing anything to bring respect to ourselves and our society. How can I expect respect, if I don't have enough for myself to tell what treatment I demand? What respect level will I have for others if I have none for myself?

If I am continually run down, and begin to run down other people, what greater good do I bring society?

So am I saying if the guy behind the counter doesn't at the very least give me a smile and "Thank you" with my burger and fries, the world is a lesser place? Damn right I am.