

OPINION PACKETS

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Quotes OF THE WEEK

"We're football freaks, but I don't think we're going to win. I'll be shocked if we score one or two points."

Elaine Adolofo, of the Center for Democratic Education at University of California at Berkley, on Cal's chances against Nebraska

"Instead of one screen running a horrible movie, we are going to have two or three screens running a horrible movie."

Gwen Foster, UNL film instructor, on the prospects of a new film megaplex in Lincoln

"In order to continue to grow in the community, Ballet Omaha had to be a part of the community. It forgot that."

Derrick Wilder, former Ballet Omaha official, on the end of the program

"To restrict areas of the union to students is not a way to discriminate (against) the homeless."

Bil Roby, executive director of Daywatch, on the motion to remove the homeless from the union

"Sisterhood is more than brick and mortar, it's long-term friendships, so I guess it doesn't matter where it happens."

Barbara Robbie Elliot, former president of Alpha Chi Omega Sorority, on the plans to move the sorority

"I would place this among the most spectacular events in sports history."

Benjamin Rader, UNL history professor, on Mark McGwire's breaking of Roger Maris' record for most home runs in a season

"The neighbors are noticing when the music is so loud they can't think or someone is urinating in their front yard. That's when they call us."

Capt. Joy Citta, regarding Lincoln police's targeting of house parties

"If students don't feel comfortable in the union at all times, I have a prior obligation to them over members of the public."

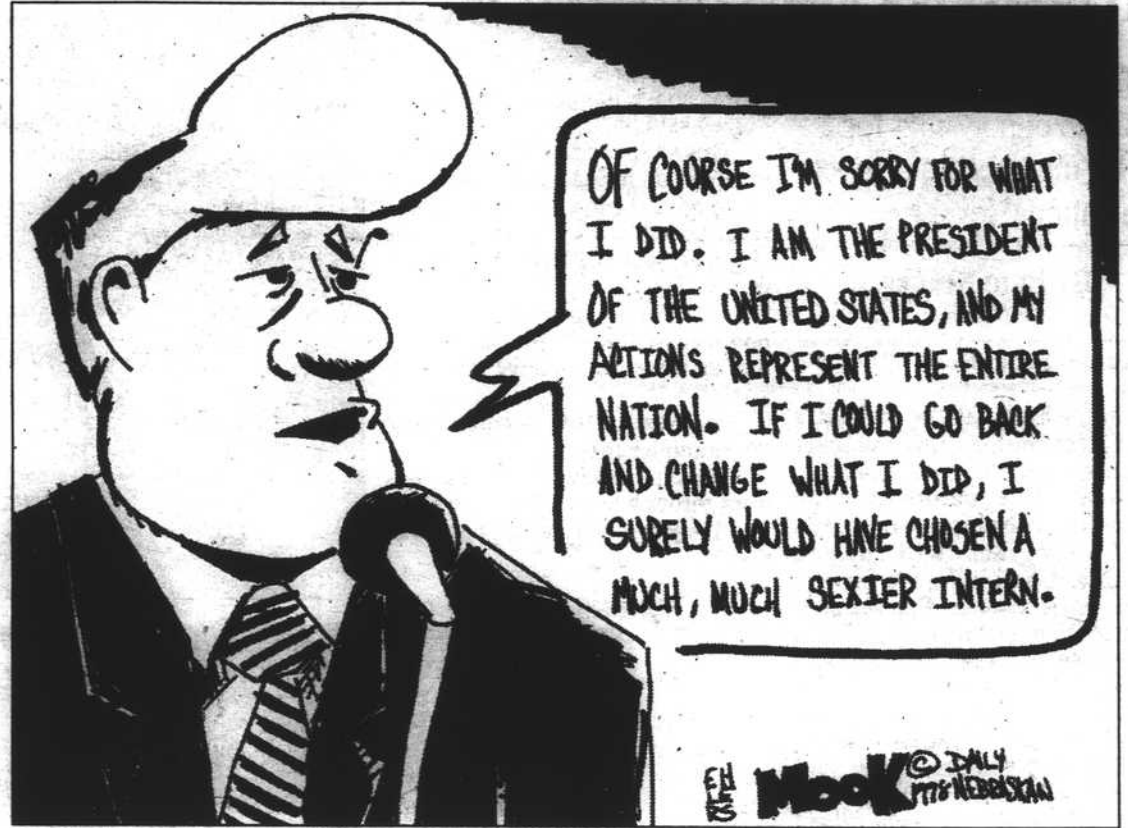
Daryl Swanson, Nebraska Unions Director, regarding the measure that would extricate the homeless from the union

"It will be continued light, followed by darkness. We hope everyone in the Flatlands will enjoy the game as much as we will."

Marc Gantz, representative of the Legion of Tightwad Hill, on the upcoming California-Nebraska game

"It's part of show biz."
Musician Frank Black on why he records under a pseudonym, rather than his real name, Charles Thompson

Mook's VIEW



DN LETTERS

Mass isn't critical here

As a commuter student who lives a mile south of City Campus, I know what it is like to regularly bike through the streets of downtown Lincoln.

I've repeatedly been on the receiving end of the middle finger, had my rear tire touched by the grille of a shiny, red sports car, and come closer to the side mirror of a StarTran bus than I ever cared to. However, I continue to do it, and I do it right. I ride down the left side of the lanes and use hand signals whenever I intend to turn or change lanes. I stop for red lights and stop signs, even pay attention to yield signs. I also wear a helmet just to save the clean-up crews some time if I ever am in a serious accident.

In other words, I go out of my way to ride safe.

However, I have to agree with the recent Daily Nebraskan editorial that "bike lanes would wreak havoc downtown." (Wednesday, Sept. 9th) The best immediate remedy to the bicycle/automobile relationship isn't in new legislation, but as Rick Dockhorn advises, in being "a better cyclist." The Critical Mass movement has its place, but not here and not now.

Critical Mass is a legitimate step toward raising awareness of our concerns, as Olivia Brown and Elizabeth Goodbrake point out, but not the first step. It will only piss people off and make the situation worse.

The Lincoln biking community needs to come together and educate its members, because until cyclists start learning the rules of the road and abiding by them, we are just shooting ourselves in the "pedal."

Whether you want to be or not, when you hop on your bike you become a representative of the biking community. So every time you

zoom through that red light with a half-dozen witnesses, or when you almost knock over a pedestrian, stop and ask yourself why people in cars should give you equal treatment, much less special treatment.

Once we are doing our part, then we can begin to engage in a proactive discussion with those who drive. If that fails, then Critical Mass may be the best way to make some changes.

As to why I bike: It's because it is the smart thing to do, the right thing. I get a little exercise each morning and afternoon, I save a bunch of money on parking fees (and tickets), I get to class a whole lot faster than if I drove, and I'm not contributing to the congestion and pollution of downtown Lincoln. In the winter, I just catch a bus (it's free for students).

I challenge the students, staff, and faculty of the UNL community to stand up and be heard on these issues.

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Mass misinterpreted

The "ragtag mob of cyclists" the Daily Nebraskan's September 9th editorial refers to is called Critical Mass. The issue of establishing bicycle lanes in Lincoln is often discussed by cyclists of this community, including many who rode in Friday's Critical Mass. However, the purpose of staging such an event is not necessarily to advocate bicycle lanes. Critical Mass is an organized coincidence, dependent upon the will and whim of the cyclists who participate.

Never is there any collective agenda behind CM, except maybe to have fun.

Obviously, the editorial board member who penned Wednesday's Our View does not rely on a bicycle to get to school or work everyday. What I mean is this piece was written from a car-centered perspective. If you had ever tried to ride a bicycle on Lincoln streets behaving like a car (as you advocate and I do when I ride a bicycle), you would realize that drivers are much slower than cyclists to act as responsible road users. In fact, a cyclist who acts like a driver is likely to be subject to threats, insults, being forced off the road or possibly assault from rage-filled motorists.

Critical Mass can and (I believe) should advocate bicycle awareness and responsibility to both motorists and cyclists. Critical Mass shows that bicycles are not impediments to traffic, contrary to common perceptions. Bicycles are traffic. What is rush hour but traffic? What is Critical Mass but cyclists (traffic) during rush hour?

I am not suggesting that the Daily Nebraskan advocate bike lanes once again.

I would, however, suggest that it is a mistake to place all the responsibility for the bicycle-car dichotomy on cyclists. I would also suggest that the editorial staff recognize the responsibility motorists have to be courteous and safe while using the streets. Bicyclists deserve all the rights and responsibilities drivers assume.

In Iowa City, Iowa, there are these great road signs. They are yellow diamonds with two icons: a car and a bicycle. Below are three words both cyclists and motorists should take to heart: SHARE THE ROAD.

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