

# OPINION/PAGES

## Our VIEW

### Affirmed action

*Book shows policy has positive results*

The debate on affirmative action in higher education took a decidedly new twist last week when a book written by the past presidents of Harvard and Princeton universities was released.

The book examines an extensive data set to conclude that, on elite campuses, policies that consider race as a criteria for admission have achieved the goals of providing promising careers for black students.

Black students with low SAT scores, who likely would have been turned away if race wasn't a factor in admissions, have accomplished much in life, the book says. For instance, data shows black graduates are more likely than white graduates to earn graduate degrees and lead community, service and professional organizations.

The book is called, "The Shape of the River: Long-Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions."

Its conclusions are based on a database of the background, race and accomplishments of 45,184 students who entered 28 colleges in fall 1976 and fall 1989. The database includes SAT scores, grade point averages, advanced degree work and post-graduate careers, plus other data.

The study focused on black students because information on them is plentiful and because they remain the focus of the affirmative action debate, according to the Chronicle of Higher Education.

For years, one of the arguments against favoring a minority race for admission to an elite academic program has been that unprepared students are admitted. Those students make a school look better statistically, but they suffer because they cannot compete with white students who often must score 200 to 300 points higher on the SAT to have an equal probability for admission.

After the book's release, author and Princeton ex-President William G. Bowen said in the Sept. 18 Chronicle, "It's time to abandon the notion that the minority students recruited by these schools have somehow been victimized."

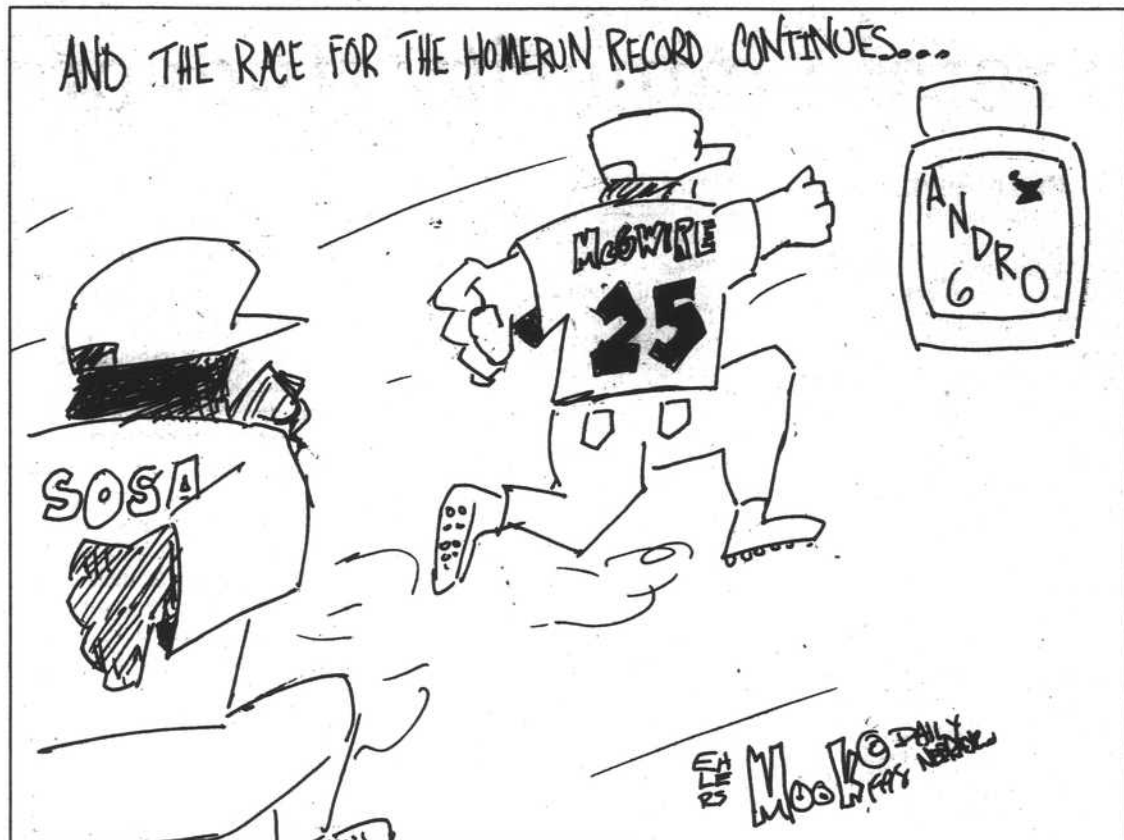
Another conclusion in the book that supports his view is the fact black students with the lowest SAT scores had the best chance of graduating if they attended the most elite universities.

We believe this may show that academic environment, expectations for graduation and resources available to keep students on track are the factors that ensure students graduate.

This secondary conclusion could have massive implications for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, which raised its admissions criteria to combat low graduation and retention rates.

In any case, the book seems to provide concrete evidence that affirmative action programs benefit both students and society at large.

## Mook's VIEW



## DN LETTERS

### Enough IS enough

To quote both Gibson and Hicks, "enough is enough." On the first five pages of your Monday issue there were only three - count them, THREE - articles and columns that did not involve Clinton, Lewinsky, the Starr report or in some other way mention the big presidential scandal. When your paper is only 16 pages long, it appears to me that maybe you'd best reach readers by including a few articles about what is going on around campus, Lincoln or even Nebraska in general, rather than subjecting us to your paper with almost one-third the backwash of every other paper in the country right now.

In response to the editorials by Hicks and Gibson, you're both right and you're both wrong. But who cares? Am I the only one who gets a headache every time I'm in a group of people and someone brings up the whole scandal? I'm tired of talking about it, I'm tired of thinking about it, and I'm certainly tired of it being in my face every time I open a paper. It appears to me that your energies would be better spent on something that is directly affecting us here in Lincoln. Look around you - there is news happening everywhere. I'm sure that there is enough going on to fill your paper without regurgitating the exact same story with 12 different headlines. As for whether or not Clinton will be impeached - I say we all shut up and vote on it. If the population at large wants it to happen, fine, and if not, fine. I just think this needs to be done and over with, and when it's finished, everyone can finally go back to their day-to-day lives and forget about the whole thing.

Jennifer Allen  
Lincoln resident

### Bellowed beliefs

As we walked across campus Wednesday, enjoying the birds and the squirrels and the ranting of the local Christian fundamentalist organization, we wondered, where are the Muslims? And the Jews? And the Buddhists? They were going on with their lives and minding their own business.

Why is it necessary for Christians to empower their beliefs by attacking

all other belief systems? It is weak to gain strength in your own beliefs by forcing your beliefs on others. If people are interested in discovering a new faith, there are many resources they can seek out on their own. There is no need to stand in the middle of City Campus and harangue all those who do not share your doctrines.

We recognize that the University is state and hence public property. This space is for the use of all sectors of the populace to use for assembly. However, this privilege should not allow the use of public space for the purpose of intimidating and harassing passers-by. What really is being attacked here is the right of freedom of religion of all those who work, live and attend classes on this campus.

Darcie Rives  
graduate student  
English

Dave Rogers  
graduate student  
Museum Studies

### No butts, no culture

I am writing this letter to put my two cents' worth in the fray in the seemingly ubiquitous attack on the Douglas Theatre Co. promulgated by the Daily Nebraskan article which ran last Thursday under the banner of "Welcome to the Dullhouse." Once again, it seems that the Douglas Theatre Co. is being blamed for the dearth of culture in Lincoln; film culture, that is. With all due respect to my colleagues who were quoted in that extraordinarily misinformed article, I want to go on record as saying that I believe the Douglas Theatre Co. does a very credible job of bringing the movies to Lincoln that the majority of Lincolnites want to see. As a matter of fact, the Douglas Theatre Co. does a better job than those filmgoers may deserve, in my opinion.

I have been running the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater for 25 years, and by now I think I know the vicissitudes of the film market. It is driven by money. The Douglas Theatre Co. is a business, and they owe it to their stockholders to make a profit. All that aside, they still manage to bring to Lincoln films that don't exactly have their patrons breaking down the wickets to get in.

For example, this weekend they opened "The Slums of Beverly Hills," a film I wanted to include in our fall schedule, but wasn't able to do. In the past couple of years, I could list many additional titles of films I wanted to show, but which were shown at the Douglas Theatres instead. I am very glad they did because if they hadn't, those films may not have been shown in Lincoln.

I can state unequivocally that the primary reason more so-called art films are not shown in Lincoln has to do with the support that they receive from the Lincoln audience. That goes for the programming done at the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater as well as the Douglas Theatre Co. Attendance at the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater has not been good during the past two or three years. Sometimes it's been downright depressing and, as a consequence, the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater may be in jeopardy.

It really makes my ears burn when I read that the Douglas Theatres ought to be more diverse in their programming, when I know that is exactly what I've been doing for years, and it is not getting enough support from Lincoln filmgoers. Without the subsidy that the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater receives in the form of grants, donations and, most importantly, membership dues from the Friends of the Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater, this program would not be able to survive. What we are lacking is more audience and more revenue from ticket sales.

Until it is proved that Lincoln can support this kind of programming, I don't want to hear anyone saying anything disparaging about the Douglas Theatre Co. I have a great working relationship with the Douglas Theatre Co., and I have the utmost respect for them and the job they are doing. If you want more art films to show in Lincoln, then you will have to work with me and with the Douglas Theatre Co. to make that happen. Put up or shut up, that's what I say! Put your butts in our seats, and we'll bring you the films you want to see. Thank you.

Danny Lee Ladely  
director  
Mary Riepma Ross Film Theater

### Editorial Policy

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