

# OPINIONPAGE

## Our VIEW

### We are the world Hurricane survivors desperate for aid

Last week, Hurricane Mitch swept through Central America and annihilated everything in its path. Now the world is in a race against time to save the survivors.

Entire villages were wiped out. Honduras and Nicaragua have lost virtually all their crops. Central American economies have been crippled, and it will take years for them to recover.

An estimated 10,000 are dead, and the number is rising. About 15,000 are still missing and believed to be dead. Three million people, about 10 percent of all Central Americans, are now homeless.

International rescue services are worried that without proper medicine, food, clothing, shelter and transportation the people of Central America are susceptible to epidemics of disease and starvation.

Without a global effort to help the Central American people, even more lives will be lost.

It is pretty safe to say most of us will never face that kind of crisis. We will never know what it is like to lose our homes, family members or everything we have ever worked for. We will probably never have to face the frustration of having everything we own destroyed by a random act of nature.

We can't control nature. But we can help those whose misfortune we have been lucky enough to escape.

The Environmental Resource Center and the Agribusiness AgEcon Club have started a rescue relief drive. Donation barrels have been placed in the Nebraska Union and the Nebraska East Union. The groups are hoping to receive enough canned foods, clothes, blankets and medicine that they can make an immediate shipment to Central America. To lessen the cost of shipping, they have asked the National Guard to take the items. They also need volunteers to help take donated items to their warehouse. The drive will run until Nov. 20.

The American Red Cross is also taking donations, but primarily needs money. They plan to use monetary donations to buy supplies from the surrounding countries not devastated by the hurricane, rather than ship supplies. This will allow them to get supplies to the disaster areas faster and bolster the surrounding economies.

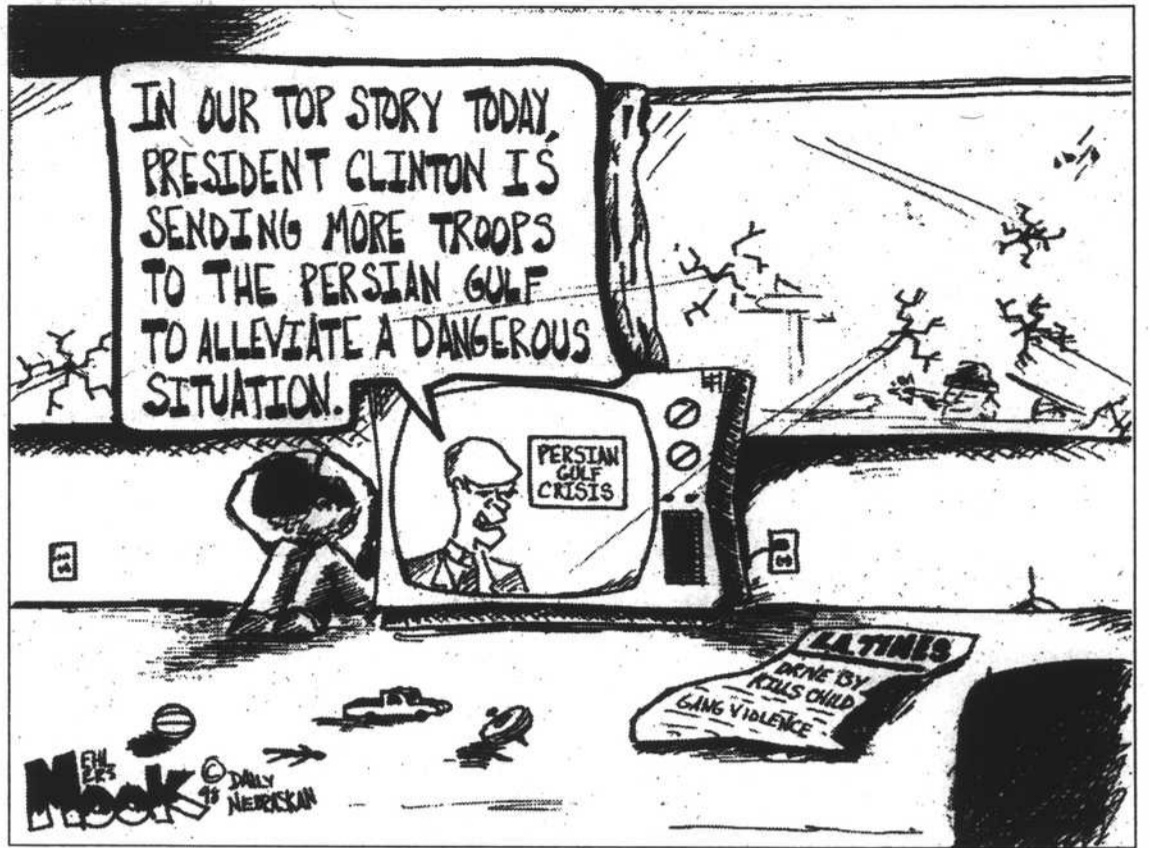
Donations can be sent to the Lincoln chapter of the American Red Cross at:

P.O. Box 83267  
Lincoln, NE 68501

Contributors must indicate they want the money to go to the Central American relief effort.

Donations to the American Red Cross can also be made via its Internet site at <http://www.redcross.org> or toll-free phone number (800) Help-Now.

## Mook's VIEW



### Academic bulimia

Interaction between professors, students enhances learning



**JOSH WIMMER is a senior news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.**

Sometimes, I'm not very excited about going to class.

None of you can relate, I'm sure. Admittedly, this is frequently my own fault. I mean, I'm sure I'd be more excited about class if I got to bed before 6 a.m. on a regular basis.

But it's not just me. I'm sure none of you can relate to this, either, but some of the professors here could do a better job.

Some of them are boring. Some of them don't seem very interested in teaching us.

Their *modus operandi* is pretty standard: They stand at the front of their classrooms for 50 minutes and read from the notes they've used for years. They never solicit questions, comments or discussion from us, their pupils.

It's like, they have this information, and they think it's their job to recite it to us as quickly as possible, so that we can recite it right back on our exams.

And at the same time, they expect us to remain interested in what they're telling us.

Huh? Why should I — or anyone — stay awake to hear someone recite a shopping list of terms and concepts, none of which is even remotely explored in detail?

Isn't that what reading textbooks is

for? We pay good money to attend a university that wants to be recognized as one of the finest academic institutions in the country.

And I want instructors who care about keeping us interested in what they're teaching.

Believe me, I understand that some of the responsibility for keeping us interested in a class lies with us, the students.

But it seems to me professors who can't present information in an interesting, thought-provoking manner aren't succeeding at their jobs.

Folks like that shouldn't be professors. They should be researchers, plain and simple.

And anyway, I'm not asking for much. I'd just like it if professors would hit a point, explain it concisely, and then say, "What about you guys? What do you think?"

I mean, not so long ago, one of my professors was running through a chapter's worth of information, breezing through about six concepts that I, with my silly little mind, thought deserved more than two minutes of our time.

And then, before immediately moving on, the professor said, "I don't know what your opinion about this is ..."

Well, then *ask us*, for Chrissakes. Maybe some of our professors don't care about our opinions. Maybe they think of us as idiot peons with nothing to contribute.

Or, more likely, maybe they don't think there's time to discuss the concepts we run across in class. Three or so hours a week certainly isn't a lot of time.

But once again, what's the point of spending those three hours on information we can get from books?

If we're not getting the opportunity to use our brains in class, what kind of education are we paying for?

I don't think a little interactivity is

too much to ask for from our instructors.

Maybe when they were in school, it was standard for their teachers to recite and for them to absorb and regurgitate. Maybe they could do that.

But we kids today, we grew up with television and Nintendos. Our attention spans are short; we like to interact.

We grew up amidst nostalgia for the tumultuous '60s. We were taught that authority figures — policemen, politicians, professors — don't know it all.

And more important than either of those points, a lot of us know we could go get good, decent-paying jobs without what we learned in History 101, because that's not going to be worth a piece of cat poop.

Perhaps that sounds like a cop-out. Unfortunately, it's reality.

If our professors are genuinely interested in instilling in us a love for their subjects, then they need to do more than just throw facts in our faces.

To be fair, a lot of professors do a good job. They assign reading and devote class time to discussing that assigned material.

Those professors' efforts are stymied mostly by their aforementioned colleagues, who don't make reading a necessity, which leads to students getting used to sliding by.

Nevertheless, they press on. They want to know what we students have to say. When they lecture, they ask questions instead of making statements.

And, if some of us still aren't interested in what they're teaching, at least they've done their part. No one can say they don't care about their students or their subjects.

Yikes. Would that all of our faculty were like that.

Maybe then we'd be getting our money's worth.

And maybe we'd all be more excited about going to class.

#### Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials are the opinions of the Fall 1998 Daily Nebraskan. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, its employees, its student body or the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. A column is solely the opinion of its author. The Board of Regents serves as publisher of the Daily Nebraskan; policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. The UNL Publications Board, established by the regents, supervises the production of the paper. According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student employees.

#### Letter Policy

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor and guest columns, but does not guarantee their publication. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject any material submitted. Submitted material becomes property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Those who submit letters must identify themselves by name, year in school, major and/or group affiliation, if any. Submit material to: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St. Lincoln, NE. 68588-0448. E-mail: [letters@unlinfo.unl.edu](mailto:letters@unlinfo.unl.edu).

**"Everyone has an opinion... share yours."**

**Apply to be a Daily Nebraskan columnist.**

Applications available at the DN - Due Nov. 17th