

# Sub-rosa 101

## Secret greek society members should stop being childish



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They devote themselves to rude and discriminating acts.

They wear cowardly, intimidating hoods over their faces.

They believe it's their duty to lead and keep society on the "right" track.

They're not the Klan. They're three "secret" greek student groups.

But the similarities are frightening.

Theta Nu Epsilon, Senior Scroll Society and Rho Delta are three student groups composed of members of the greek system.

Each group, through its actions, has shown that its members believe in speaking hatefully of fellow human beings. Each has secret rituals. In photos, they wear black, pointed hoods covering their faces.

They are all white and, in many ways, Klan-like.

In case you're not a member of one of these secret societies, you've never heard of them, or they've never taken out their jealous frustrations on you, let me give you the rundown.

Because I'm not in one (although sSs claimed I was its rival's president), I can't tell you everything.

I won't give you a complete list of people, because you would probably rather not know that certain individuals are involved. I won't give you a list of names, because my intention is not to hurt the members. Rather, it is to protect the individuals who have been hurt by the members.

But I'll give you insight into these silly elitist groups called sub-rosas.

TNE and sSs (rivals, both all men)

and Rho Delta (all women) are made up of the campus leaders in the greek system. They include house presidents, lower officers and common members.

Some groups are active on campus nationwide, and famous American politicians have been members. The leaders of tomorrow are members in societies around the nation.

The 1979-1980 Association of Students of the University of Nebraska and Interfraternity Council presidents were accused of being TNE members after a membership list was allegedly found in a fraternity study room.

Being in one of the societies is a status symbol for many greeks. The members feel powerful and influential when it comes to campus elections, and they have used intimidation to keep students from running for high offices.

They also feel powerful when they make fun of their own houses through childish, anonymous newsletters.

At random times throughout the school year, each society writes newsletters and then distributes them to the houses. The latest newsletters claim responsibility for "positive" effects on campus.

When you open the letters, both claims are found to be false.

Inside, individual students are singled out and publicly. A recent Rho Delta newsletter asks a named sorority member, "Did your parents beat you daily with the ugly stick?!" The same newsletter predicted a student "gains back all her weight plus 20 pounds."

Other sorority members are listed under the heading "Girls who should keep their mouths (and legs) shut."

The back of the letters are home to

the Roll Calls. Here, the elitists let every greek member know what's wrong with each house.

However, no attempt is made to present the criticisms constructively. Instead, the sentences are laced with racism and bigotry.

This year the Rho Deltas chastise houses for a "jungle fever" competition. Another house is told that "It's OK to be greek and gay."

(They even welcome back the greek dominance of homecoming, but

Outranking Griesen for the sub-rosas is Charles Greene, director of Student Judicial Affairs, who gets the title "Death Star Commander." These titles are unfair and undeserved.

You see, these people hang out, make fun of others, act important and belittle our administrators, then hide when it is time to be held accountable.

We have reached a time for action. We have hit the end of the road.

Enough is enough.

I see three steps toward resolving

please become perfect before you point out others' imperfections.

Second, if you're going to have your little groups, use them to do something beneficial for the campus. If you are, in fact, campus leaders, then use your energies to organize philanthropies or crusades for campus causes.

Claiming campus buildings by putting your stickers on them does not count. I'm sick of going to the sSs building (whoops, I mean CBA) and seeing the stickers. It's vandalism, pure and simple. Vandalism is a crime and does not reflect a commitment to better your campus and the greek system.

Finally, it's time for the appropriate administrators to launch investigations of these groups. It is in the best interest of the UNL student body for Chancellor James Moeser, Griesen and Greene to seek out the secret members and hold them accountable for their actions.

When students decided to write cruel and anonymous remarks on campus sidewalks last year, it gained the attention of the administration.

In that case, the remarks ridiculed a group of people. In this case, the societies go straight for individuals.

Students at this university deserve to be protected from such treatment. They have earned the right to live peacefully in campus housing and not be sniped at by the bigots sitting on the grassy knoll.

Writing these groups off as harmless student entities would be reckless and irresponsible.

TNE and the Scrollers advertise themselves with Klan-like pictures. In these photos, the members make hand signals and hide their faces beneath pointed black hoods.

It is time for these hoods to be removed. It is time for the administration to protect the well-being of the students.

Will I receive physical threats, phone messages and late-night phone calls for writing this?

Probably.

I hope they'll have the decency to leave their names with their messages.



ROBB BLUM/DN

we all know that the greeks have no power over homecoming, right?)

Instead of stopping with the students, the societies' individuals march their egos right over to the offices of Student and Judicial Affairs.

Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs James Griesen can find his picture with a fat sSs stamp on his forehead. They have termed him "Emperor of the Evil TNE Empire."

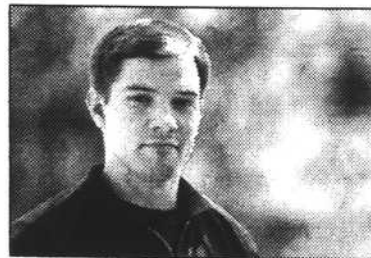
the problems set forth by the immature actions and attitudes of the T's, Scrollers and Rho Deltas.

To the members: Cut it out. If someone personally offends you, talk to him or her individually. If someone weighs more than you or looks differently than you, learn to live with it.

Quit writing those stupid newsletters unless you have enough courage to put your names on it. Oh yeah, and

# The power of one

## CAMP HEARTLAND opens its doors to young victims with AIDS



**AARON COOPER is a senior English major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.**

Deep down, in that place within us which remains invisible to the outside world, we all search for meaning. We all, at one point or another, ponder the answer to the question, "What do I want to do with my life?"

Some of us achieve our dreams.

Others get sidetracked and lose the determination and will to achieve what we consider to be success.

Regardless of the paths we take, we all are faced with defining moments that determine whether we are destined for greatness or mediocrity.

Neil Willenson was your average college student in 1991. As a 20-year-old junior attending the University of Wisconsin, he had big dreams. He was a native of Mequon, Wis., majoring in television and film, and he hoped to move to Hollywood in the future to become a feature film producer.

One day, he saw a headline in his hometown newspaper that read, "AIDS Hysteria in Mequon."

The story chronicled the life of a young boy named Nile Wolff who had been born with AIDS. People in the Mequon community were having trouble dealing with Nile's entering

kindergarten. They were quick to project their own fears and personal ignorance onto a 5-year-old boy who only wanted a chance to be like his peers.

Nile wanted only to feel normal.

Neil Willenson was unable to get the story out of his mind. Neil reached out beyond his own personal goals and the life he had been leading. For the next two years, he got to know Nile, his brother Sean and his mother Dawn — an entire family living with AIDS.

Neil Willenson's dreams began to change.

Neil's perceptions of his hometown of Mequon were drastically different than Nile's. The place that had once been a haven of acceptance and childhood innocence for Nile had turned into a prison for young Nile.

Neil refused to sit by and let Nile be punished for the fear and prejudices in the hearts and minds of others.

Neil got involved.

One of the hardest realities for Nile in 1993 was that most summer camps were not equipped to meet the emotional and medical needs of children living with AIDS. While most camps paid lip service to the Americans With Disabilities Act, aimed at guaranteeing children with AIDS equal access to recreational programs, they quietly told children with AIDS that they were not wanted.

Neil changed that the day he founded CAMP HEARTLAND.

Neil put on a tie and went out into America's corporate environment determined to find the money to get his project off the ground. He attended countless meetings to ask for grants and donations. He probably called

hundreds of companies and individuals, asking them if they would contribute to his worthy cause.

Many refused to help. Many hospitals and medical facilities did not believe Nile could pull off what he had set out to do and said they would not support or work for the camp.

In the first summer alone, CAMP HEARTLAND welcomed 73 children with AIDS. Five years later, the camp now has its own permanent, year-round home in Willow River, Minn.

Neil made it happen.

I had the opportunity to talk with Eva Nekovar, known in Lincoln as "Eva Ryan," a disc jockey with KFRX-FM (102.7), about her involvement with CAMP HEARTLAND and her perceptions of Neil Willenson.

Eva had nothing but positive things to say about Neil and the camp after being a counselor there during the summer of 1997. "Noodle," she says, referring to Neil's camp nickname, "has a big heart and provides inspiration to the children." She further commented on the Mighty Morphin Power Rangers watch and the colorful clothes Nile often wears to make the children feel at home.

Eva said that many of the children feel so welcome and have the best week of their lives that their goal is to live for another year, just so that they can return to camp the next summer.

Eva was so touched by her experiences at CAMP HEARTLAND that she has co-founded CAMP NOODLE, a camp based on services provided by CAMP HEARTLAND and will open its doors in the summer of 1999 at a campsite in Hordville.

CAMP NOODLE continues to

accept applications for children infected with or affected by AIDS who wish to come to a place of acceptance and friendship and will be serving other states in the Heartland outside of Nebraska as well.

Unfortunately, even as America begins to realize the growing need for camps catering to those children infected with or affected by AIDS, there are still many on waiting lists.

There are more than 12,000 children under the age of 19 living with AIDS today. And because of people like Neil, Eva and the many others, many of these children will have a reason to hope and a place where they can go to be treated as equals and as people rather than caged animals.

These children have minds, just like you, full of ideas and perceptions about the world. They have hearts, just like me, full of love to give and dreams about growing up and finding their place in the world.

They are human, just like all of us.

And through CAMP HEARTLAND's "Journey of Hope," an inspirational tour that travels all over America speaking about AIDS and educating institutions about the disease, a message of hope is passed on to students, faculty and employees across America. Neil Willenson and the members of "Journey of Hope" shared their stories in Lincoln at the Lied Center last year.

They teach us that by refusing to be a part of the communities that ostracize children because of things that are out of their control, we can begin to search for better ways to make these children feel a sense of hope and a sense of belonging.

Meanwhile, we can stop wondering whether or not the power of one can truly make a difference. Those who doubt the truth behind this timeless wisdom need only talk with the children who have been distinguished guests at CAMP HEARTLAND.

**Cooper's Law:** *One person with a goal and the determination to see it through is more powerful than 10 who think it's a good idea.*

Nile Wolff is going to be 13 years old in February. I wonder if the doctors or the people of Mequon believed he would make it this far.

As for the continued plight of children living in the scope of AIDS across America, I think it was best summarized during a candlelight vigil one night at CAMP HEARTLAND. It was a time for campers to get together with family members and remember those affected by such a powerful disease.

One mother noticed her candle's flame was down to a mere flicker, and she sadly proclaimed into the microphone, "The candle is getting shorter and shorter," as she thought of her 14-year-old son who was living with AIDS and hemophilia.

An 11-year-old boy courageously took the microphone from her hands and softly said, "You're right. The candle is getting shorter, but it's still lit. It still burns. It still provides light. The flame is still alive. There is hope."

If you would like to support CAMP HEARTLAND, please visit their Web site at <http://www.campheartland.org>, or call 800-724-HOPE. For more information on CAMP NOODLE, please write to the camp at P.O. Box 81147, Lincoln, NE 68501.