

## Open pockets

### Senators should be required to report gifts from lobbyists

In the words of Jerry McGuire, we are asking Nebraska officials to "show us the money."

Elected officials should be accountable to the people who elected them.

For that to be true, voters must be able to trace the money, gifts and contributions that flow into their senators' pockets and stomachs, but those gifts from lobbyists, corporations and private individuals can be difficult to trace under current Nebraska law.

Two bills pending in the legislature could help itemize elected officials' incomes and slow the revolving door between elected official and lobbyist.

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LB1021 would expand the current definition of gifts to include food, event tickets and transportation. Lobbyists would be required to report food expenditures less than \$25, which are currently exempt.

In 1998, more than \$500,000 in entertainment and miscellaneous expenses was reported by Nebraska lobbyists.

Part of that amount accounts for the gifts given to state officials and their staffs, but it is unclear how much individuals received and from whom.

Omaha Sen. Ernie Chambers, who accepts no gifts, introduced the bill, which now awaits committee action to advance.

LB156 would require senators and other state officials to wait one calendar year from the end of their terms before becoming lobbyists.

Many other states and the federal government have already adopted similar restrictions to limit the potential influence of lobbyists. With the delay, lobbying groups would have greater difficulty offering someone in government a cushy job in the private sector in exchange for support.

Our representative government was founded on the idea that public officials serve the people of the state.

For this system to work, the people must be able to evaluate their representatives' performances. The people must be able to view what has been accomplished along with the record of who influenced those accomplishments.

Voters need to know if their representatives have served the highest bidder instead of their home districts. Voters also need to know if their representatives have steadfastly refused gifts. Under the current rules, voters know neither.

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Submit material to: Daily Nebraskan, 20 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448 or e-mail to: letters@unl.edu

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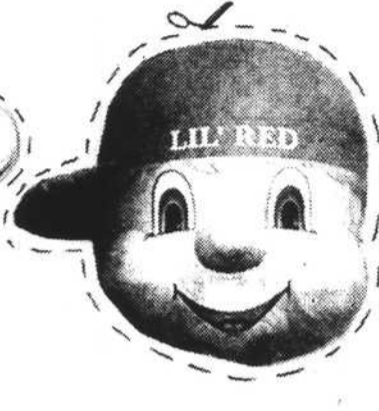
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#### Obermeyer's VIEW

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#### Letters to the EDITOR

##### Dr. Tom isn't Mrs. Clinton

Keith Bartels draws a false comparison between Tom Osborne and Hillary Clinton.

Tom Osborne grew up in Hastings and owns farmland and a home in the 3rd District. Hillary Clinton grew up in Illinois, has never lived in New York and didn't buy a home there until considering the run for the Senate.

Instead of making a logical argument based on all the relevant facts, Mr. Bartels accuses the editorial board of "seem[ing] to harbor a great deal of anger toward Clinton." Clinton supporters have a history of attacking their critics instead of answering their arguments, and this looks just like more of the same.

Brad Pardee  
Love Library staff

##### Reconsidering heroes

Jeremy Patrick may want to reconsider his choice of heroes – or kindred spirits. He should, at the very least, reflect more carefully on his choice of literary quotes. His column on "Lucifer's courage" responds to only one part of John Milton's complex portrait of the diabolical temperament in "Paradise Lost."

The first quote deserves both a second and third glance. For a start, Satan's resolution that the war against heaven be "Open or understood" signals that he's ready to engage in undeclared hostilities. Such tactics are hardly courageous, although Milton at times shows the fallen angel actually being brave, as well as skilled, in thrilling poses of defiance.

Also, the character's dismissal of "Submission" puts a very proud spin on the heavenly state of affairs. As Mr. Patrick admits, the Angel-Formerly-Known-As-Lucifer "craved power for himself" – and no one else. He insists on seeing freedom as the spoils of war instead of a divine gift that he should share with fellow creatures. He wants to be followed absolutely and will use any means to get others to submit to his will.

Which brings us to the last quote. Satan does not want liberty in hell or elsewhere for anyone but himself. He wants to reign – to rule over others. He does not want to serve God or his fel-

low angels or the lesser beings that are part of Creation. So he sets out to conquer humankind, even while claiming that he has no choice in the matter.

The Satan of Milton's epic poem may present himself as a freedom fighter, especially in Book I, but he is soon shown to be a warrior against choice, against responsibility, against sharing freedom. What's left of his courage – another free gift that he claims is his only – greatly diminishes after his own fall. This occurs not because of arbitrary punishment but as a consequence of his actions. In order to achieve his conquest of humankind, he becomes a saboteur and spy. He is, in Milton's presentation, the primal terrorist, lashing out at the innocent, as well creating the model for imperialists who make indigenous peoples the actual victims of a power struggle. Given Satan's principles and behavior in "Paradise Lost," I can only hope and pray that Mr. Patrick does not really share the same "outlook on life."

Stephen M. Buhler  
associate professor  
English

##### Angelic atrocities

I'm writing in regard to Jeremy Patrick's article "Lucifer's courage" which was printed in Monday's edition of the Daily Nebraskan.

First off, I want to get it straight that all angels created by God have a free will. They, like us, don't have to follow his law or do as they were predestined. There is no set agenda that they have to follow. Angels are in essence sinless God-fearing creatures. Because they are sinless from their conception, they have no desire to deviate from God's laws. Only when they are deceived by Lucifer are they sinful and cast out from heaven.

In your article you wrote that if angels deviated from God's law they were tortured and put to death. Angels are infinite beings. They cannot die physically. The only death that they can know is separation from God's love and grace. I do agree with you that angels are tortured. Lucifer and his angels, or should I say Satan and his demons, are reminded every second of every day of their rebellion by

the fire, smoke, darkness and agony they go through in hell. Luckily we as mere mortals have Jesus to save us from the fiery clutches of hell.

Lucifer did not rebel because of tyranny. God is loving and just, giving no one real reason to rebel. Lucifer rebelled because he thought of himself as greater than God. He sought the throne of heaven only because of his selfishness and vanity. Lucifer managed to lure many angels to his side through his lies and false promises. Lucifer himself is called the "Father of Lies." He's the greatest deceiver and misleader in the universe, and apparently he has misled you as he does to so many.

Having the ability to sin through Adam and Eve's eating of the forbidden fruit isn't something to applaud. The world would be a sinless, loving place if it had not been for one mistake made by two people.

I don't know about you, Mr. Patrick, but I don't think that I would idealize such a being as Satan himself. He stands for wickedness, arrogance, deceit, malice and any other terrible thing you can think of.

Now I ask, what do you stand for Mr. Patrick?

Cody Davids  
sophomore  
music performance

##### Lucifer lover

Way to go Jeremy Patrick. I really liked the article "Lucifer's courage" in Monday's Daily Nebraskan. It is excellent when the unlikely popular opinions get published. I felt enlightened as well as entertained after reading the article.

I hadn't ever considered the positive aspects of Eve's choosing independence, and I have the Daily Nebraskan to thank. I thought there would probably be enough really vocal critics who would point out your assured damnation, so I just wanted to give some positive feedback. (All the people I pointed it out to really liked it.)

Luke Pawlowski  
Freshman  
computer engineering

P.S. Write Back

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