

Fantasy Island

Columnist creates own pleasant utopia after reading More's novel



After reading Thomas More's "Utopia," I decided to do some rapid editing and shifting of his fundamental ideas to suit and form my own personal utopia.

I'm going to call my land "Eukarenia," which in Greek means "the joint of pleasure and substance" (with joint referring to a place, not weed).

I just feel disgruntled at the world around me sometimes — hence my need for dramatic change in America (or wherever you want Eukarenia to be).

Ah, America, where spelling doesn't matter; pets do. OK, so I stole that from "Kids in the Hall," but I will reward KITH in my world.

There's a lot of things I need to change, and because we didn't listen to More when he presented his manifesto to cure the world's ulcers, it's time to listen to me.

Rule #1: There is no abortion, and there is no death penalty. This is a simple rule which Americans can't seem to get straight. So many people love to find 101 justifications for the death penalty; then they turn around and hold signs on Friday mornings outside of Planned Parenthood, condemning abortion.

There will be workers (human condom dispensers, if you will)

humanely apportioning, well, free condoms and other forms of birth control. Therefore, there can be no excuse for an unwanted "bun in the oven." However, as mistakes do happen, the unwanted children will be kept as slaves (aka farmers).

Rule #2: The only men in Eukarenia will be kept in cages.

Men are dirty animals and should be treated as such. They will be let out once a day to "graze" and use the outhouse. Once a week, they will have the opportunity to play Ultimate Frisbee for three hours to compete with the men's Ultimate team at UNL (which is virtually unstoppable). Injury will result in execution.

Oh wait, there is no death penalty in my world. All right, the injured will be nursed to health and then kept as slaves. Also, to

appease some of the more bestial females in Eukarenia, the men will be let out on holidays and Friday nights to sex up the women.

Rule #3: Lotion and Chapstick Nazis will be on their guard 24 hours a day. As we all know (or just I), lotion and Chapstick are addictive. I don't really mind addictions, but these two items are too devastating. Ask around, I bet nine of 10 females have a tube of Chapstick in their pocket.

The women who use it and then try to cut themselves off will find their lips chapped after 10 minutes of abstinence. It's the same way with lotion, except it doesn't chap; it makes your skin super amphibious and mooshy, so when you try to feel things, it doesn't work. Those who can't fight the

addiction will be made into slaves — or wrestlers, depending on their height and build.

Rule #4: There will be a giant TV playing nothing but "Kids in the Hall," "The State" and "Mr. Show" 24 hours a day. 'Nuff said.

Rule #5: One thing that will be cherished in Eukarenia is the art of penmanship. Screw e-mail, let's bring back the old-school style and form of communication that has seemed to work for quite some time. Everything that's anything will be written by hand. There will be spelling and writing classes every other day to try to remember what it feels like to hold a pen.

Rule #6: Religion. There will be 24 religions in

Eukarenia, with one hour every other day devoted to each of the designated sects. Atheists have the off days. If your religion is not on the list, you will be coined a slave, but you can submit a 400-page novel (in your most beautiful penmanship) stating why you think your religion should be noticed. Also, one should include another 400-page novel slandering the religion you want booted out.

Rule #7: All citizens will plant a tree on their birthdays. This is the best form of partying that I can think of and besides, those who partake in alcohol on their birthday will be turned into slaves. Trees are more compatible and understanding than are most human beings, so why not grow them with abundance. They'll let you climb their boughs as long as you kill the weaker ones first for their paper-making abilities.

Rule #8: There will be absolutely no partaking in any act that is in any way related to the use or production of sweat pants and oversized sweat shirts. This is perhaps the most important and strongly upheld belief in Eukarenia. It is the belief that sweats in any form are "trashy and inefficient." It is paramount that this rule not be disregarded as a mere "inconvenience" to the cultural trend at large. Anyone caught in sweat pants or oversized sweat shirts will be turned into slaves (i.e., working in Kathy Lee Gifford's "sweat" shop).

So there you have it. That's my utopia. For further rules and regulations into my world, you'll have to buy the book.

After all, if Thomas More could sell the crap out of his fantasy, why can't I?



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Body and brains

Misconceptions of student athletes result from false stereotypes



The portrayal of student athletes at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln has left many student athletes feeling misunderstood.

Stereotypes and conceptions about athletes are often false; the reality of student athletes is often hidden.

This has led to a lack of interaction between student athletes and the student body, which has caused a kind of segregation between these two distinctive groups on this campus.

As a student athlete, I fully understand the responsibilities and the reality of being an athlete at this university.

Nebraska has one of the leading athletic programs in the nation, which is why students like myself have traveled from overseas to pursue an athletic career here. The success of the program has brought millions of dollars into the university.

Nebraska Athletic Director Bill Byrne recently said, "Our athletic and academic staff takes great pride in helping Huskers achieve recognition

as national leaders in the classroom, community and in the athletic arena."

I asked some people recently about the misconceptions the student body has toward student athletes, and this is what I discovered.

1. Athletes have no worries.

Athletes are given a free education, free clothing and they are entitled to use the best facilities in the school (e.g. academic support, the state-of-the-art strength training room and an exclusive training table to eat at). But believe me, being a student athlete is not that easy. In fact, it is perhaps the hardest thing to do, juggling both schoolwork and athletics.

Imagine training for a sport every day of the week, sometimes twice a day for up to four hours.

Athletes have to make sacrifices if they are to be successful, such as limiting their social life and following a strict diet and health pattern.

During competition, student athletes are forced to complete their schoolwork ahead of time. Therefore, it is vital for student athletes to possess good time-management and organizational skills.

2. Athletes are not smart.

We all know there are a few athletes who couldn't care less about their academics. However, the Husker academic facts are very impressive, which illustrates how hard athletes work in and outside the classroom.

Students must maintain a minimum 2.0 GPA to be eligible to participate in a sport.

I get very upset when I hear students tell me that athletes are dumb jocks and that it doesn't take too much to be a student athlete because tutors "take care" of the work. Tutors are simply available to those who need assistance.

3. Athletes don't graduate.

Most college dropouts are not athletes.

According to the athletic department, 86 percent of scholarship athletes who have completed their academic eligibility have graduated from Nebraska. In fall 1998 and spring 1999 semesters, 69 Nebraska student athletes earned a perfect 4.0 GPA.

That same year 532 student athletes were recognized by the Big 12 Commissioners Honor Roll for maintaining a 3.0 GPA or higher.

Nebraska leads the nation with 13 recipients of the NCAA Today's Top Eight Awards — given to outstanding student athletes based on athletics, academics and community involvement.

Nebraska also leads the nation and holds the NCAA record of 162 Academic All-Americans. This award is given to the most prominent student athletes in the country who have maintained a perfect 4.0 GPA and also have earned recognition at the national

championships. Fifty-five of those have been awarded to football players. Nebraska student athletes set the standard when it comes to college graduation.

4. Athletes are very lazy.

There is evidence to support that student athletes are among the most actively involved individuals on campus. In 1999, the Nebraska program was one of seven schools in the nation to receive the Life Skills Program of Excellence award.

Student athletes generously work with the local community and speak to students at school. The School is Cool Jam reaches 100,000 youths annually.

The NU Student Athlete Advisory Board is considered one of the best student leadership organizations on campus and within the NCAA.

5. Athletes are different.

In reality athletes are different. Certainly they are treated differently. They are given perks that other students are not given. Why do student athletes have their own exclusive training table, weight room, medical and training center? This is simply because they are among the best of the best athletes in the nation and, therefore, they need separate facilities.

Is this fair to the rest of the student body? No. But don't blame athletes. Blame the Athletic Department. Its administrators are the ones who treat athletes differently by singling them

out and providing these facilities to make them successful.

On the face of it, athletes are just like any other student in essence. The label "student athlete" is what separates them from the rest of the student body. The Athletic Department attempts to make life easier for athletes by providing advisers, counselors and mentors.

It's all a business to them; the administrators are primarily concerned about making money for the school.

Solutions toward breaking the misconceptions can be instituted. One of the ways to break the stereotypes of student athletes is by simply getting to know a student athlete. Understand the reality of being a student athlete and what it involves.

Another way to create more interaction between athletes and students is to have a Student Athlete Day, where students can basically live "a day in the life of Husker athlete."

This would be a fantastic way to break the misconceptions. Students will be welcome to practice with athletes, eat with them, attend meetings and join in the rest of the fun things athletes do.

Students will then discover just how difficult it is to be a student athlete at UNL, and this will eliminate stereotypes.

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