

THE REBEL YELL

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Letters to the editor should be typed and be fewer than 300 words. Each letter must include name, address and telephone number. Writers affiliated with UNLV must include class and major, or faculty/staff position. Letters are subject to editing for length and clarity.

Faculty member calls for presidential evaluation

By Evan Blythin

For the past 27 years I have been running for the presidency of UNLV. I don't think I'd really like the job, but I do think it's important that a university have some sense of loyal opposition. My campaign has been waged through a series of letters appearing in *The Rebel Yell*, each of which begins with some outrageous claim that I know the president at the time will not like.

In this letter I'd like to propose that the president be evaluated by the university community.

According to the UNLV Bylaws, "The president shall be evaluated at least once every three years." (Sec. 14.2) The bylaws go on to state that evaluative procedures and criteria should be "established by the Faculty Senate," in order to determine "the level of confidence in which the president is held by the faculty."

The bylaws sound reasonable, but they are not being observed at UNLV. If I were the president, the bylaws would be observed and the president would be evaluated.

What's generally happened at UNLV is that the president luxuriates in a paradise of seemingly unlimited power. The president of UNLV is generally ushered in with pride, pomp and consensual welcome. Regents, faculty, and students praise the new president for any accomplishment—well-tied shoes, nice dress, etc. It's no wonder UNLV presidents start thinking of themselves as gods.



Harter

We once had a president who wanted the right to force the faculty to psychiatric evaluation upon presidential demand. This was far too Russian to work, but the president felt that he deserved such power. Another president felt that he had such unlimited power he could place video cameras in hidden spots and covertly spy on his subjects. We've even had a president who screamed at co-workers and would stop meetings to point out that the president was "the boss."

An unevaluated president, like some Chinese emperor of the past, can view everyone else as peasants who have only to tremble and obey. But such folly generally results in short presidential terms.

In my 27 years at UNLV, I've lived through seven presidents—that's an average of fewer than four years per president.

A wise president would insist on working with colleagues rather than dominating subjects and slaves. Presidential evaluation is one way of acknowledging and

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benefiting from the fact that a great university is composed of diverse interests, goals and abilities.

UNLV has bylaws that demand presidential evaluation but, as noted earlier, they are not observed. What generally happens is that the regents, without much campus input, make the decisions regarding presidential longevity.

Many of our regents have day jobs and many live a thousand miles away from UNLV. Their contact with the university community is almost casual. They have little to work with and so, unless there are some deadly headlines, they tend to pat the president on the back and give glowing reviews.

The current president of UNLV has undergone several regent evaluations, none of which have conformed to the bylaws nor campus reality. For example, before the current president even took office, the regents gave her a de-facto positive evaluation by increasing the presidential salary to reflect the cost of living and merit raises earned by personnel who had been

in place the previous year. The raise was particularly significant since other new faculty did not have their contracts changed to reflect the new raises. Obviously, the regents made an evaluation, but that evaluation did not move through the process established in the UNLV Bylaws.

This year the regents again raised the presidential salary. The raise was based on a self-evaluation by the president. The self-evaluation and its secretive nature became the stuff of press and public ridicule. We'd all like to evaluate ourselves and we'd all give ourselves a bigger allowance if we could. As fun as the concept is, self-evaluation does not conform to the evaluative process suggested by the bylaws.

And so our history goes like this: We hire a president, we shower the president with praise and good tidings and we allow the president to indulge in self-evaluation. The end result is that the president ends up acting outrageously and treating everyone like snot, and we all end up asking how such a nice person could turn into such a weenie.

That the regents would allow the bylaws to be circumvented is not a healthy sign. But they can be forgiven because the fault lies primarily with the Faculty Senate. The Faculty Senate has yet to evaluate the level of confidence the university community has for its president.

The situation is highly aberrant since everyone else in the university system is benefited by meticulous evaluation. The stu-

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Fashion of the '90s: Fabulous or foolish?

By Angie Cecchini
Staff Opinion Writer

Who makes the rules on fashion? Do they evolve from the runways of Paris, a Calvin Klein ad, or perhaps from a JC Penny catalog? Who decides what's "in" and what's not?

I've concluded that it is we, the consumers, who decide what is and isn't in style, for if we don't buy the product and there's no market for it, then it's not in style!

The reality that we as customers set the trend doesn't disturb me in the least. It's the fact that we suspend all reason and practicality in the name of fashion that bothers me.

If humans truly are rational, intelligent beings, why do we torture ourselves to look a certain way?

Imagine our culture without any preconceived notions. Pretend that today is the first day you've ever seen an American college student. If you saw one with a steel rod through his tongue that caused him to slobber and lisp, could you think of any justifiable reason to pierce one's body? Wouldn't this seem useless and odd if you weren't aware of the trend?

Besides body piercing, let's think about some other uncomfortable or impractical things people do just to fit or not to fit the mold.

If you were to walk around campus observing people with an

open mind and fresh eye, you'd probably notice a number of trends that aren't designed to be "user friendly" nor remotely comfortable.

Take micro-mini-skirts, for example. Hundreds of UNLV students wear them every day. Why?

When there's a breeze outside, girls wearing miniskirts have to keep a constant hand over their rear to avoid flashing the entire student body. Those planning to sit at a desk for more than two minutes begin to suffer from a condition I like to call "fruit roll-up butt," where the backs of ones thighs stick to the seat and make a pleasant Velcro sound when removed from a moist chair. And girls wearing miniskirts must constantly cross their legs even though doing so decreases circulation and contributes to varicose veins.

So why then do girls wear miniskirts? The only possible benefit I can fathom is that they are a nice alternative to shorts during the hot weather. But I doubt that's one of

the reasons why many women squeeze into the thigh-exposing garments.



Another useless trend is platform shoes. Wearing inch-high platforms can be cute and may make you feel a little taller, but the ones with three inch soles and five inch heels? Please! That's a little extreme, not to mention dangerous for those actually planning to walk anywhere.

The combination of miniskirts and platforms is actually a pretty funny sight. The girls wearing these things scare me because either their skirts are so tight or their shoes so high that I worry the next breeze will knock them flat on their barely-covered bottoms.

A lot of UNLV students seem to agree that today's fashions are getting out of hand.

"People have become too superficial," said freshman Renee Kisse, a criminal justice major. "They are too worried about style and forget about comfort. I also

don't like seeing people expose more of their bodies than they should, or wearing heels longer than their legs."

Kisse noted an increasing lack of individuality. "Everyone looks the same in some way," she said.

Why do people dress the same? I think it's safe to say that most people want to be thought of as creative. Many claim that the way they dress is an expression of their individuality. So why do most people fit into a class or mold of some type and dress like millions of others around them?

"Girls should wear what's comfortable," said John Sanders, an athletic training major. "Letting your body hang out for others to see doesn't seem very comfortable, but some of today's fashions do just that."

In response to my question about the most extreme fashion blunders he's eyed this year, Sanders said, "I saw a girl running around in her bra. True it was a sports bra, but a bra's a bra in my book."

"Women's bodies are temples and should be treated as something sacred, not something to flaunt around," Sanders added.

The general student consensus is that phrases like "dare to bare" and "if you've got it flaunt it" hold

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