

UNLV: The unfriendly university

By Trevor Hayes
Opinion Editor

When I first left the small Southern California mountain community of Tehachapi, population 20,000, at age 18 to begin my college career, I went to Orange Coast College, enrollment 30,000. Having spent my entire life in a town where everyone knew everyone else, I was afraid it would be hard to meet new people because of my limited experience.

My fears were completely unfounded. I met some of my best friends ever in the first month. When I walked across campus and happened to make eye contact with another student, there was always a customary exchange of pleasantries. These encounters may have been as simple as a nod or a raised eyebrow and a smile, and often went as far as verbal communication. Those students I encountered on a regular basis would frequently stop to converse for a moment or two and we would often share information of parties or other significant social events. Not everyone I met instantly became a bosom buddy, but when I would see one of these people at a party or lounging at the beach we would hang out and many friendships developed from the initial courtesy we displayed toward one another.

When I decided the cost of living was too high to remain and I was ready to transfer to a university, there was no doubt in my mind that making new friends would be a cinch.

My first weeks at UNLV proved to me that people are not the same everywhere. Many times I attempted to give the courtesy of acknowledging those persons with whom I made eye contact. The responses I received were less than cordial. The responses ranged from the "quick look away and pretend the eye contact never happened" maneuver to the more severe "die stranger die" gaze.

After many months of isolation, and submersion in work and studying, I finally made a friend. During my second semester I met this guy from the dorms while working on a group project in class. I don't even want to think of how long it would have been before I made friends had I been in another group. Through him I made several other friends and once again began to have something resembling a social life.

Today, after becoming involved in several campus organizations, I have many acquaintances and friends with whom I speak everyday. In fact, I found myself complaining that it was nearly impossible to go outside to

study or have a cigarette without someone approaching me to say hello or ask my view on some topic or other.

What an ungrateful jerk I am. A couple of years ago I would have loved for just one person to notice my existence and today I complain because I know too many people. I feel for that student who is sitting where I was a few years ago and can only tell you there is hope. For the rest of you, I feel nothing but contempt. Who do you think you are treating new students or people you don't know as if they don't exist? I learned to hate Las Vegas because of the attitudes toward new residents.

I can now finally tolerate this rude city, but anxiously await graduation in May when I can leave and move to a city where people have a genuine interest in one another.

A majority of students here didn't know many people when they got here. The arrogance they display toward students newer than themselves is appalling.

I urge everyone to not forget where they came from and to take some initiative to make new students feel at home. Remember, today's new student could be tomorrow's student or community leader.



GUEST COLUMN

FROM PAGE 4

dents undergo evaluation in the form of SAT and GRE exams and in the form of tests and assignments in their classes. The faculty are evaluated at department, college, provost, president and regent levels. At the University of Nevada, Reno, all of the higher administrators undergo periodic evaluation by the university community. It seems odd that in a system marked by evaluative measures, the CEO of UNLV should be treated so cavalierly.

Other universities of comparable size, such as California State University at Hayward and Cal-Poly at Pomona, engage in faculty evaluation of their president. UNR engages in faculty evaluation of its president. The UNLV Bylaws mandate that the faculty should be polled in an attempt to give the regents a comprehensive assessment of how confident the university community is in the president's performance.

Neither the regents nor the president can be happy with non-conformance of institutional bylaws. The university community can't be happy with being left out of presidential evaluations. Clearly the Faculty Senate needs to take care of business.

Dr. Blythin is a faculty member in the College of Urban Affairs.

FASHION

FROM PAGE 4

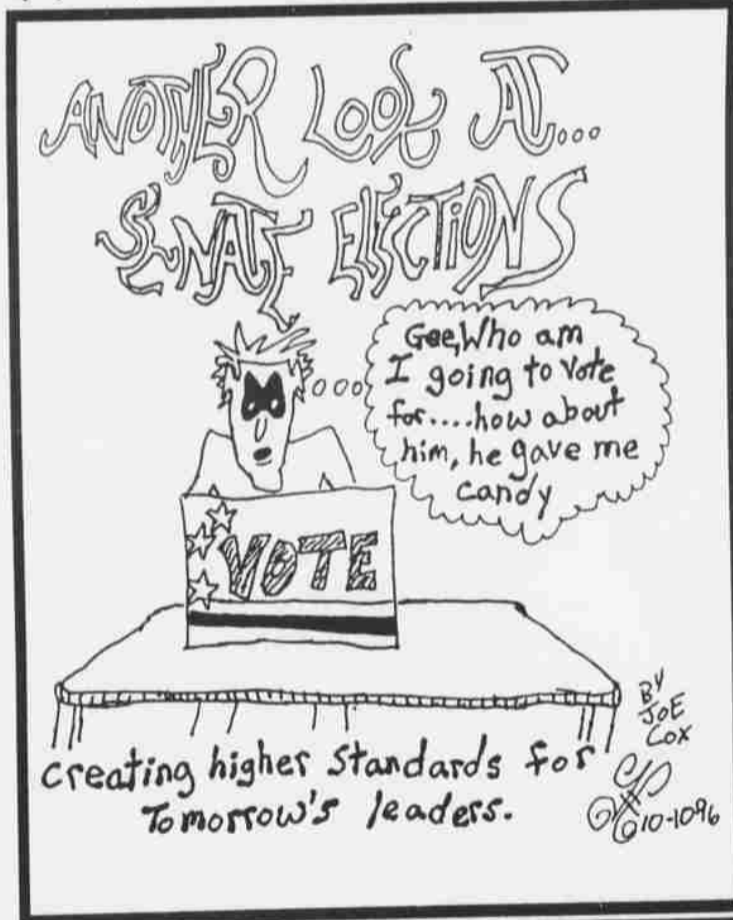
no bearing.

We often laugh at impractical fashions or trends of the past, like the women of the 1800's who cinched their waists so tight with whale bone corsets they would swoon in the heat. And how dumb were the Marge Simpson 'dos of the '50s? You know, those beehives that took two hours to rat and spray in to place and even longer

to wash it all out.

Generation X makes fun of these kinds of things, but who are we to talk? How useful is a gold ring hanging from a nostril, tongue or nipple? How cool is it to wear pants so big that your underwear and a good portion of your backside peek out over the waist-line? Members of our generation wear stupid things all the time!

Sophomore Aaron Johnson, an electrical engineering major, said of our useless trends, "Stuff that



seems dumb to me are bell-bottoms, body piercing, coloring your hair bizarre colors and that grungy, scummy look."

I surely agree with his last opinion. Although not as popular now as in recent years, the "grunge" look still exists. I have to ask again, why? What could possibly be good about wearing clothes that belong in a bio-hazard bin? I also don't understand why grunge-goers sport the greasy tresses. Nasty.

Of all the worthless trends, this one takes the cake. The only benefit to this trend is the money you save by not buying laundry soap and shampoo.

What's my solution to the '90s fashion saga? I challenge each and every one of you to dress in a way that reflects you. Forget about Cosmo covers and Tommy Hilfiger ads. Don't wear anything that doesn't demonstrate who you are. Dress in things that make you feel comfortable, physically and emotionally. And don't be afraid to be an individual.

If you like the movie "The Grinch Who Stole Christmas," cruise on down to Kmart (yes, Kmart) and buy a sweatshirt sporting the grumpy guy! Feel free to go to the Gap and buy a nice, comfortable Polo shirt instead of that spaghetti-strap thing you've been wearing.

It doesn't matter what in the world you wear, provided you're wearing it because it's comfortable and because you like it, not because it's plastered all over the display window at Contempo or the

Oak Tree.

In the words of Calvin Klein, (even though I hate those depressing, creepy commercials) "Just be."

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Letters to the Editor

To the Editor:

My first encounter with UNLV President Carol Harter was not exactly what I had anticipated.

The way that she conducted herself recently in front of my interviewing class, taught by Mary Hausch, left much to be desired.

Dr. Harter was invited to my class on Thursday to give a press conference. I was excited to finally get a chance to see what she looked like in person and to get a feel for what she was all

about, first hand.

My expectations were high and I had a couple of questions that I wanted to ask her.

Had I known that I would get such an explosive response to the question that I asked her, I probably would have approached the situation differently.

In Dr. Harter's opening discussion, she told the class the No. 1 concern of the administration was the students and that the students should be considered the center of campus life.

I was curious if this was truly how she felt so I asked her why students weren't invited to the State of the University Address.

She blew her cool in front of about 22 students and replied, "You're invited. This is a whole area that I think is foolishness. Students are invited. They've always been invited."

This was the kind of response she gave students during the entire press conference.

Dr. Harter treated the students like they were unimportant. Then, to top off the event, upon answer-

ing my question, she stormed out of the classroom without so much as a good-bye, thank-you, I'll never be back, or anything.

—Jennifer Tucker,
senior, communications

To the Editor:

Thanks to Angie Cecchini for her excellent article on the parking situation at UNLV.

There's one option she doesn't mention, however: bicycle to school. Except for students who live many miles away, riding a

bike to school is fun, good exercise, costs nothing, and if one stays off main streets, is not that dangerous if one pays attention.

Imagine cruising past all those people struggling to find parking at the last minute before class, the wind blowing in your hair, the sun shining...plus you save on gas and cut down on air pollution. I think more students should consider the bicycle option.

—Prof. James O. Ward
Lecturer, Italian and Latin