

letters to the editor

The Daily Nebraskan encourages brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested parties.

Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available in the newspaper.

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Readers are also welcome to submit material as guest opinions, subject to the editor's decision to print or not to print the material, either as a letter or as a guest opinion.

Anonymous submissions will not be considered for publication, and requests to withhold names will be granted only in exceptional circumstances.

Submit all material to the Daily Nebraskan, Room 34, Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588.

I am increasingly disturbed and disappointed by some of the things I read in the Daily Nebraskan. Two such recent incidents have brought me to the point of writing this letter.

The first has to do with the reporting by Suzanne K. Nelson and Ward W. Triplett III in an article, "Walk for Life really attracts record crowd" (1-26-81). In a few short lines the reporters managed to do a horrendous job in reporting the remarks which I delivered on behalf of the Nebraska Catholic Conference.

The reporters quote me as saying, "Abortion is the greatest destroyer of peace today." Those are the words I used but my statement was quoting Mother Teresa and my statement made that fact clear. Then I'm quoted as saying, "We have people here who say women should have a right to choose. It's impossible to put such rights above the right to life." The second sentence of that quote is correct. The first sentence is fabrication on the part of the reporters. I made no reference whatsoever to "people here."

The fact of the matter is, my remarks were delivered verbatim from a prepared statement which consisted of portions of a statement issued on Jan. 22 by the Catholic Bishops of Nebraska. I made this point clear in my introductory remarks. Apparently the reporters did not hear this. Instead they chose to create quotes from the general sense of what I was saying.

Generally, I appreciated the coverage which the Daily Nebraskan gave to the Walk for Life. I did not appreciate the shabby job of reporting. It seems to me that if reporters cannot quote accurately, they should not quote at all.

My second concern has to do with the article entitled, "I do" means free sex; no more tiny back seats." (1-29-81). What a tasteless, degrading waste of newspaper space. As a Catholic, I find it insulting and bigoted.

The concept of a wedding section seems like an outstanding idea, both for your readers and your advertisers. Too bad you had to spoil it with such trash as that written by Val Swinton.

James R. Cunningham
Executive Director, Nebraska Catholic Conference

Creationism bill flawed

LB182, the bill to require equal time for creationism and evolutionary science, has a number of flaws that will, hopefully, prevent it from passing.

In section 6 of LB182, it is stated that religious writings must not be used in teaching creationism. That means that scientific books supporting and explaining creationism must be used. To my knowledge, no such books exist. (There are a few books that "prove" creationism by presenting evidence against evolution, however.)

The exclusion of religious materials is there to prevent the bill from being rejected as unconstitutional. Even with the exclusion, LB182 is likely to be unconstitutional.

The attorney general says the constitutionality of the bill is doubtful.

If "scientific" books about creationism are indeed available, schools all over the state will have to purchase them, at considerable expense. That expense will require schools to reduce spending in more important areas, like teachers' salaries and special education programs.

Another problem with LB182 is that it is very vague in its definition of equal time for "creation-science and evolutionary science." Individual schools or teachers will be able to interpret equal time to fit their own opinions. Chances are that their idea of equal time will not agree with Sen. Peterson's.

If equal time was defined in an amended version of the bill, enforcement will still be impossible, because no provision is made to force compliance.

Instead of teaching evolution and creationism with "equal time" in science classes, such questions as the origins of life and the universe should be dealt with in philosophy classes. Philosophy is currently legal, but not required.

The state should not interfere with school curriculum. So far, the only subject required by state law is American history.

With all of its flaws, the Legislature will probably not pass LB182, but if it does it will have to face the Supreme Court. Then it will probably be ruled unconstitutional, sending Sen. Peterson's efforts to pass it to waste.

Steve Schonberger
Freshman, Arts and Sciences

Thoughts on Near concert

Sunday night's Holly Near concert reminded me once again that a relaxed muscle is infinitely stronger than a tense one. Near's humanist pragmatism, common sense tempered by a tenderness toward the human condition, her perseverance, her reserved, yet positive attitude toward activism, were gentle bugle calls to a sleepy mind. The obvious solidarity of Lincoln's feminist community added immeasurably to this feeling. The atmosphere seemed to me to be like a rural union meeting the day after a member has been unnecessarily hurt. Subdued, yet strong in purpose and intent—1981 off to a slow start in the face of changing times and tactics. It was a warning against the tendency to pigeonhole and classify people politically—a pleasant evening well spent in hope and prayer.

Michael Zangari

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