

# Editorial

## Say 'no' to despair; believe in yourself

"Keep your face to the sun and you cannot see the shadow."

— Helen Keller

### Why not despair?

A university professor jumps 10 floors to his death.

A disabled man sets fire to a chair in his living room and while being carried from his burning home, says he did it because he didn't want to be alone anymore.

Television brings nuclear holocaust in "living" color into 100 million living rooms.

And the season — one traditionally shared with family or friends — causes feelings of hopelessness among the single, the elderly, the alone.

Let's put politics aside awhile and talk about a real issue — people and emotion. Henry David Thoreau wrote, "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation." He knew that it wouldn't be easy being a person these days.

To be honest, the despair finally caught up with me — like some bad thing that only happens to other people. It just grabs ahold, like a strangled cat clinging to a tree limb. You have this feeling that it's never going to let go.

The biggest problem with despair is that you can't really talk about it. When friends ask what's wrong, all you

can answer, in truth, is "I don't know." Despair is like one huge, collective pain that can only be described by all the stupid little things you can put in words. The ones you tell people about and all they ever say is, "You're depressed about that?"

The climax of despair comes that day when you ponder some abstract thought that you believe you must be crazy for even being able to think about. Like teeter-tottering on a threshold. Standing in tomorrow, remembering today and imagining what you have done with all the days in between and if they were meaningful.

Not to say that emotional consciousness isn't good, but listen guys, we gotta shake this despair.

I went home for Thanksgiving and came back feeling desperate-less. Nothing like home to remind you of what is real in life.

We got new living room furniture. It was the first time I had been able to get home to see it. And Dad is finally gaining some weight — I thought the swelling in his face was from his dentures! My parakeet died (no honorable death) and Mom buried him in a new washcloth under the rose bushes in our front yard. My nephew, Christopher, center of my love always and in many ways a director of my destiny, is an old man of 8 now, but still likes to sit

on my lap.

And that snow day was fantastic: We need more of them. It throws everybody off and breaks up the monotony and regulation. Every minute isn't scheduled — belonging to someone else.

I feel good now. Had time to catch up. To wind down. To ask again, "Why not despair?" Why? Because people, not despair, are what life is all about and life is what we seek in one another.

As we enter the last days of this semester and final exams, keep in mind that it's not easy being a person these days, but say "no" to despair. Deny access. Believe in yourself. Comfort yourself. Congratulate yourself. If you feel you need a time-out, take it. If you feel you can't handle it alone, there

are several places you can go on campus to get help.

— The Counseling Center, Seaton Hall 1316, 472-3461.

— University Health Center Mental Health Clinic, 15th and U streets, Room 104, 472-5125.

— Educational Psychology Clinic, Bancroft Hall 130, 472-1152.

— Psychological Consultation Center, Burnett Hall 111, 472-2351.

— Campus ministries.

A wonderful friend once wrote me a note, wishing me one of life's most warm and satisfying moments. Picture this: "Someone is making hot-buttered toast for you," he wrote. I think that's one of the greatest feelings I've had in a long time. Everything will be OK. Really.

— Michiela Thuman



## Letters

### 'Stupid' law mangles AT&T

Chris Welsch's editorial concerning the power of money (Daily Nebraskan, Nov. 29) is true enough, but his stabs at the American Telephone & Telegraph Co. are unjustified.

Look at all the terrible things AT&T did for us: pumping billions of dollars every year into research, reasonable rates for local and long-distance calling, not to mention providing the best telephone system in the world.

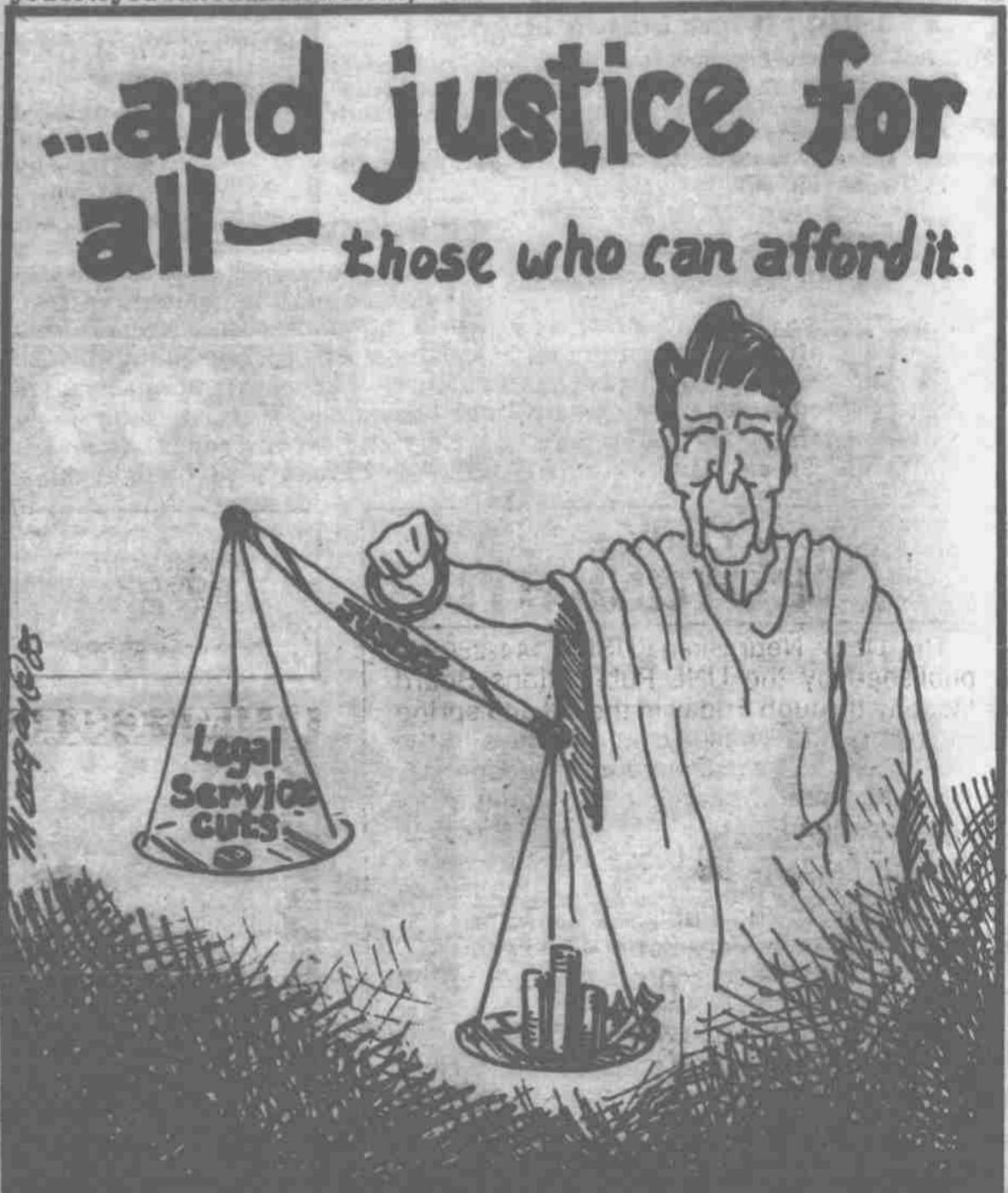
Overall, a simply dreadful corporation. So AT&T decided to go out and spend billions to change that. After a long hard fight against the government, AT&T achieved its goal.

And now we are left with such a wonderful communications industry. Less money for investment and research, a divided and inherently less efficient phone system, not to mention that extra bonus: incredibly higher local rates in exchange for slightly lower long-distance calling.

Yes, it is undeniably true: money talks. And it tells me that the breakup of AT&T was the stupidest bit of regulation the government has pushed through in recent history.

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## Campus Quotes

How would you rate the city of Lincoln's snow removal job?

