

Letters

Rec-center funds couldn't be diverted

Recent letters to the Daily Nebraskan have illustrated that there are misunderstandings about the proposed recreation center/athletic facility. These should be addressed so that students make an informed choice when deciding to support or oppose the facility.

One writer claims that "not much space is being added for the students." The December proposal for the facility called for at least 40,000 added square feet of recreational area. Is 40,000 square feet "not much?" It is enough room for eight basketball courts with room to spare. In addition, we would be gaining a renovated Coliseum and part-time use of the indoor practice field. Additional recreation space is definitely needed on this campus, and all of the above would be a welcomed addition.

Another letter decries the fact that money is being spent on recreation, while academic programs are being cut. As much as I and many others would appreciate the boosters and other donors contributing to academics instead of athletics, I don't think this is going to happen, and I don't think we should refuse their generosity. These are not funds that could otherwise be generated and spent on academics. If they are not used for this proposal, they would not even exist. Ongoing academic funding is through the state budget, and any desired changes must be addressed at that level. We can not use the current budget crisis to justify standing still when we have an opportunity to improve any segment of our university experience, of which recreation is a part.

I agree that academics should be our top priority. If you also feel this way, the best solution is not complaining about the recreation center, but instead going down to the Capitol and complaining to your legislator. Judge the recreation center on the facts. A specific proposal is coming out this week. Look for it. Then you can judge for yourselves whether the students are being "raped" by the "athletic-administrative-alumni complex." If you think so, make some noise. But if you

end up deciding the proposal is good, support it with equal vigor.

Mark Otten
senior
engineering

Collegiate Pinocchio can't shed strings

ASUN's recent attempt to change its name to "UNL Student Government" is reminiscent of the story of Pinocchio. ASUN thinks that if it is good, the NU Board of Regents, like a good fairy, will turn the group into a real student government. ASUN is not, and has never been, a "government." To be a government, it must possess authority or control. ASUN has control over nothing of significance. The true authority lies in the university's administration.

The regents can ignore or eliminate ASUN's authority at their convenience. Most student fees, such as those for the University Health Center, Nebraska and East unions and bonded indebtedness, are outside of ASUN control. Every time ASUN and UNL administrators or regents disagree, the outcome is as sure as the result of a bout between "Hitman Hearn" and Pee Wee Herman.

Let's be realistic and admit that ASUN, whatever its name, is a sort of political Sesame Street, best suited to picking Homecoming themes. ASUN has tried to change the alcohol and visitation policies at UNL since 1978. The result of ASUN's eight-year effort? No changes in either policy. If ASUN worked for 100 years, the result would be the same.

If students decide to change anything at UNL, they must be mature enough to influence the controlling political forces, including the governor, the Legislature, the state political parties and the regents. Students must be viewed as a significant political factor, willing to donate money for campaign coffers, volunteer for campaign work and vote.

ASUN is singing to the tune of "I've Got No Strings." But changing its name won't eliminate the strings that are, and always will be, pulled by those in elected offices who have the ultimate responsibility and authority over the university and its administrators.

If you want to make a difference at

UNL, vote! Write your regent, state senator or the governor. Better yet, get involved in a political campaign and become active in your political party.

ASUN was best described several years ago by Daily Nebraskan cartoonist Dave Luebke (with apologies to William Shakespeare) as being "full of sound and fury, signifying nothing." Perhaps this year's theme (with further apologies to Shakespeare) should be "ASUN by any other name would be just as pointless."

Bill Jones
graduate student
law

Objectivity excuse for conservatives

The standard-from-hell that conservatives rally themselves behind as they steal from the poor to maintain the wealthy comes clear in Kevin Terrell's letter (DN, Feb. 6): objectivity.

Objectivity is an outstandingly useful tool for the conservatives, one that never fails to provide an excuse to cut social programs or sell off another chunk of irreplaceable wilderness to private concerns. Objectivity is the tool Reagan used to put off environmental legislation by saying that there was no conclusive evidence that connects acid rain with industrial pollutants, long after it was accepted fact in the scientific community.

Objectivity says that something must be cut, and conservative objectivity seems to say that industries that produce bombs are more important than literacy or the poor or preservation of irreplaceable resources (read topsoil and clean water).

And as for the far left, who cares? Who of the American left are advocating communism (or even socialism) as a solution to our problems? If we wanted to drop the names of excessive conservative regimes, we could mention Hitler or Mussolini, Botha or Pinochet.

Morality? Objectivity? Objective morality? Perhaps, but the hallmark of conservatism seems to remain expediency. Whatever works — whatever the cost.

Jesse Hanson
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Price of rights worth cost

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gations that use the third degree or abuse the suspect. But that misses the whole point of Miranda. Confessions beaten out with a nightstick are illegal even without Miranda.

What does Miranda do? "Miranda's purpose was to eliminate the inherently coercive and inquisitorial atmosphere of the interrogation room," writes Fifth Amendment historian Leonard W. Levy. "That purpose was, historically, the heart of the Fifth." Advising a suspect of his rights is meant to offset the inherent coerciveness of "incommunicado interrogation of individuals in a police-dominated atmosphere," as Earl Warren put it in his original opinion.

The Justice study repeatedly calls this "the fiction of inherent coerciveness" and asks us to believe that coercion means getting hit with a nightstick. But what about a situation in which you are confronted by uniformed men who only carry nightsticks — and who pack guns, trail dogs, slap cuffs on your hands, lock your cell, keep the keys and now want only to ask you a few questions? Is this a situation of free choice? Do you remember what it was like being interrogated in the principal's office? And Mr. Glumly had no handcuffs.

True, Miranda may cost some confessions and convictions. But that is the price of most rights. How many convictions are lost because of the right against illegal search and seizure, of the right to counsel, of the Fifth Amendment itself?

So why the anti-Miranda passion? Meese's men have not just crime and punishment but politics on their minds. "Beyond the correction of the specific evils that have resulted from Miranda's system, an abrogation of Miranda would be of broader import because of its symbolic status as the

epitome of Warren Court activism...." Aha. To go after criminals is one thing. But to go after Earl Warren — now there's a motive. "Overturning Miranda would, accordingly, be among the most important achievements of this administration — indeed, of any adminis-

tration — in restoring the power of self-government to the people of the United States in the suppression of crime."

1987, Washington Post Writers Group Krauthammer is a senior editor with the New Republic.

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