

Daily Nebraskan  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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## What others think? Media tests First Amendment Rights

• "Congress shall make no law . . . abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press . . ."  
The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution states this, but unfortunately it is not true. The Oklahoma Daily has reason to believe that our beloved university has violated the Oklahoma Open Records Act, as do other media outlets, but we have no power to protect our rights. One state agency cannot bring suit against another state agency according to Oklahoma law. Fortunately, other media outlets have brought their own suit, and we can benefit from this.

But what happens when we don't have other media outlets involved? If any arm of the university decides to not release information to us, as required by law, what recourse do we have? Almost none. . .

We will find out Tuesday if OU indeed is acting in violation of state law. Hopefully, the court will find that the police department has to make its actions and reports open to the public. If the court finds otherwise, a dangerous precedent will be set. If the police are not accountable to the public, who will control them? Our country is government by the people, not government by police secrecy.

If the people are going to give us information only they want to give, instead of the information they have to give, why don't they just complete the censorship by controlling which stories appear in the paper each day?

-- The Oklahoma Daily  
University of Oklahoma

• Yet another segment of the university has hopped aboard the fee-hike bandwagon, news that should come as no surprise to a student population bombarded with hikes and increases and fees. But this time, the administration has taken the admirable position that if students don't want the increase, they won't get the increase.

The Illini Union Board wants to renovate the Union's fourth floor. Plans are still sketchy, but the board may move offices of registered student organizations up to the fourth floor's north side, eliminate the hotel rooms already there and perhaps install a non-alcoholic bar. . .

Students control the fate of that increase (\$6 a year for three years), administrators say. "This fee isn't going anywhere without student input," said Stanley Levy, vice chancellor for student affairs. "If they don't approve it, we won't do it."

A refreshing attitude coming from this university. Students should make the most of it. . .

-- The Daily Illini  
University of Illinois at Champaign-Urbana

• Some little tidbits of news are just too good to pass up without making some sort of comment. Such is the case with this Business Note for this week's Time Magazine.

We're all familiar with Domino's Pizza's Noid, that devilish little gremlin intent on delaying the delivery of your pizza, or turning that piping hot cheese into a sheet of ice.

Well, it seems that last week, Kenneth Noid, 22, walked into a Domino's Pizza in Chamblee, Ga. with a .357 Magnum revolver and took two employees hostage, demanding \$100,000 in cash, a getaway car, a copy of the 1985 novel *The Widow's Son* and, we're guessing, delivery in less than 30 minutes. The two employees managed to avoid Noid and slipped away, after which he gave himself up.

Just as we always wondered what would happen if the cop who ever caught the roadrunner, we wondered how the Noid would foil Domino's. We never imagined this would be how he'd try.

-- Iowa State Daily  
Iowa State University

# CUPID 1989

SHORT HAIR WITH STYLING GEL

U.S. MADE, AIR TO SURFACE WEAPON OBTAINED IN IRAN-CONTRA AFFAIR

CENSORED... THIS IS STILL THE 80'S

CONDOM AMMUNITION

AIR JORDAN SHOES. WINGS HAVE BECOME UNNECESSARY



## Free-speech democracy works

Columnist blames Congress and Wright for salary raise fiasco

You know, they almost got away with it. They would have, too, if you and I had not raised such a fuss.

Rank may have its privileges, but in a free-speech democracy, bitchin' is the great equalizer.

In this day when everyone from the White House to Aunt Tilly's house is screaming about the budget deficit, Congress was all set to let an automatic pay increase of over 50 percent go through for themselves and other top government officials. It's a nice system they have -- an independent panel determines the pay increase, which goes into effect unless Congress overtly acts to stop it.

All the perks, none of the pain.

The real culprit in all of this is House Speaker Jim Wright. I never thought I would say it, but I miss Tip O'Neill. At least O'Neill would look you in the eye and treat you like a grown human being. Jim Wright talks to the American people and to the President of the United States in the most condescending tone I have ever heard from a politician. He may want us to believe that it is a sweet, "Aww, shucks" Southern drawl. Lloyd Bentsen has a sweet, "Aww, shucks" Southern drawl. Jim Wright has a "You're just too young to understand" smirk.

Anyway, the Senate had voted overwhelmingly to refuse the pay raise. Representative after representative was calling for a vote in the House. But Wright refused to hear. For days, he totally ignored what some reports said was a 9-1 ratio in congressional mail against the increase.

Then, a few days before the raise would go into effect, Wright introduced -- from the goodness of his heart and his great concern for American opinion -- a bill that would lower the increase all the way down to 30 percent. It just brought a tear to my eye.

### letter

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others.

Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit all material submitted.

### editorial

Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents.

Editorial columns represent the

Finally, with visions of his credibility sinking faster than the Cornhuskers' Big Eight basketball standing, Wright scheduled an 11th-hour vote on the raise. The raise lost 380-48 in the House and 94-6 in the Senate. And mark my word -- Wright will choose any opportunity we give him to take credit for this roll back on government spending.



James Sennett

Then, to add insult to imbecility, Wright had the nerve to represent the Democratic party and deliver the response to President George Bush's budget speech last Thursday night. The first words out of his mouth were about the budget deficit and how important it was that we do all we can to get it down. Is he really that out of touch, or does he just think we are?

But Wright must not take all of the blame here. As vocal as other members of Congress were against the raise, the indications are that most were hoping it would never come to a vote. They wanted to have their featherbed and eat it, too. For all the cries about how atrocious the whole thing was, I never once heard a single lawmaker say they would not accept the raise even if it went into effect. No one volunteered to give all the raise back to the federal treasury or to a favorite charity.

There are many lessons to be learned from this fiasco. First, it is amazing how fast Congress can move when their own political hides are at stake. Present a bill for funding research on a deadly disease or protecting the rights of some oppressed underclass and see how long it takes

even to get the thing out of committee. But when a deadline is one day away a bill becomes law before you can say "pork barrel politics."

Maybe the American citizen should use this strategy on other issues that Congress ignores. Maybe if we raised as big a stink about the budget deficit or the line item veto or national health insurance or any other crucial issue, Congress could act just as quickly. Of course, we would have to set the deadlines for them, but that could be arranged. They can move in a day on the pay raise, and I'd be willing to give them a whole month on the deficit.

There is a lesson that Congress should learn, but I wouldn't hold my breath. Those few who were willing to speak publicly in favor of the raise spoke of how long it had been since they had gotten a raise and how behind the times their current salary is. Members of Congress make \$89,000 per year, plus many thousands more in speaking honoraria. I live on less than 15 percent of that, as do millions of Americans.

How can we possibly relate to people who insist that they must have a minimum of \$135,000 a year to make ends meet? I know of no more accurate measure of the distance between our lawmakers and the people they supposedly represent than this startling and sad disparity.

Ronald Reagan told us for eight years that the budget deficit was largely the responsibility of Congress, not of the President. George Bush is now telling us the same thing. Congress, of course, wants to lay all the blame on the Oval Office. I have struggled with whom to believe. But when Congress pulls a stunt like this one, I find it a lot easier to feel sympathy for the Executive branch.

Sennett is a graduate student in philosophy and a Daily Nebraskan editorial columnist.

Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. Whether material should run as a letter or guest opinion, or not to run, is left to the editor's discretion.

Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned.

Anonymous submissions will not be considered for publication. Letters should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted.

Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.

opinion of the author.

The Daily Nebraskan's publishers are the regents, who established the UNL Publications Board to supervise the daily production of the paper.

According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student editors.