

Daily Nebraskan  
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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## What others think Diversity, asbestos and athletic ethics

Campus groups proclaiming the need for more diversity at the university sometimes find they must diversity themselves as well. The Lesbian and Gay Student Alliance, by restructuring this fall, is expanding as an organization and welcoming members with different interests.

LGSA has created separate structures: one group that offers private, personal support for gay men and lesbians and one that provides a channel for political action. Now, gay men and lesbians either can represent the organization vocally, or they can use LGSA's resources on a more personal level.

The alliance's new support group is an excellent way to reach gay men and lesbians who may need help and understanding but do not wish to thrust themselves into the limelight of political activism. Establishing a social, academic and emotional support group serves to reach more people and address other important needs for gay men and lesbians.

... An additional group, True Colors, will go even further to address the unique concerns of gay men and lesbian students. The combined effect of racism and homophobia on these students calls for special attention and stronger networking.

A stronger internal structure tail-made for the interest of individuals can only help strengthen LGSA as a whole and make it a more effective organization.

-- The Daily Collegian  
Pennsylvania State University

### ● Awww. Naaaah. Really? Naaaah...

An asbestos czar charged with overseeing asbestos removal at the university? While that's a positive step, the appointment still leaves many questions about the asbestos affair unanswered.

The appointment of a "czar" is dubiously progressive. To make a special appointment of someone to oversee asbestos removal seems to be an admission by the administration of one of two things: that no one was overseeing the removal to begin with, or that those who were were incompetent.

... If correctly implemented, (the appointment of an asbestos czar) could be a good one. But workers should keep a careful watch over that implementation. Given past horror stories, they've got no reason at all to trust the administration with their health. In the end, the only czar who will protect workers is one who's accountable to them.

-- The Daily Texan

### ● National Football League Commissioner Pete Rozelle made the proper move when he issued a four-game suspension to Cleveland Browns' running back Kevin Mack last week. This action by the NFL is common practice for first-time drug offenders.

The entire affair is unfortunate for the Browns, for their fans and for young people who look up to a player with Mack's status. And it points to a larger problem -- athletes as role models.

Professional athletes have attained a near-hero status in American society. Many are paid enormous amounts of money for playing a kid's game, while basking in the national spotlight.

While it is tempting to hold athletes up to a higher ethical standard, it is unrealistic to expect model behavior from them.

Athletic ability has little or nothing to do with an individual's moral character or sense of social responsibility.

-- The Daily Kent State

## Legendary band performs simple, superior production

I was very impressed with Sunday night's Crosby, Stills and Nash concert at the Bob Devaney Sports Center. Despite playing before a less-than-capacity crowd, the group demonstrated true professionalism by giving the audience a top-rate performance. They proved to me that rock 'n' roll does not have to use loud music, a driving drumbeat and flashing lights to achieve a superior production. They demonstrated that music is best when it utilizes the most powerful instrument ever invented, the human voice.

The sophisticated style of Crosby, Stills and Nash has certainly made them masters of their particular genre of music, the kind who will be respected for decades to come. During the concert, it didn't hit me that I was watching a performance by true legends until I noticed a man holding a newborn, and realized that he had brought his baby so that the child could grow up to say that he or she had attended a concert such as this one.

Nathan Strong  
graduate  
geography

## editorial

Signed staff editorials represent the official policy of the fall 1988 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Its members are Amy Edwards, editor; Lee Rood, editorial page editor; Jane Hirt, managing editor; Brandon Loomis, associate news editor; Bob

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Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author.



## Former addict offers solutions Prevention requires more than slogans and drug testing

President George Bush's war on drugs wouldn't have done a lot for me at 15. My world didn't include newspapers that reported on drug lords in Colombia and stiffer penalties for illegal drug use in the United States.

I was fighting my own war and survival at any cost was my goal. Teenagers tend to be dramatic, and I was no exception. But teenagers do face many problems and are given little control over the solutions. Drugs and alcohol were my way of taking control.

Back then, I was a teenage addict. Today, at age 24, I know how to face problems without blacking them out.

Last week, as Bush announced his drug plan, I celebrated my eighth drug-and-alcohol-free year. As others debated how effective his plan would be on drug-dependent America, I remembered being 15, my own addiction and the mindset that accompanied my abuse.

The possibility of getting caught with drugs made no impact on me or my friends. The consequences included time in juvenile hall or humiliation from authority figures. Most of us wanted to be somewhere other than home, and whether it was chemicals that took us there or a police officer... well, it just didn't matter. Everyone knew we did drugs, we were the burnouts who partied on the school steps, and we felt the disapproval daily.

However, even those of us bent on living in a cloud had aspirations. Mine was acting.

I emerged as something of a class leader, but later fell from the theater instructor's good graces. One day I came to class stoned and, while trying to impersonate a giraffe, broke into hysterical laughter.

I remember feeling my face grow hot, the shame hitting me as my classmates whispered that I must be high. That in itself was bad enough, but the instructor took the incident a step beyond humiliation.

He said it was obvious that I didn't want to change; that I should stay

away from my other drug buddies because they were "salvageable."

Today I realize this teacher knew little about drug addiction and was obviously a little angry. At the time, however, his pessimistic evaluation sounded about right.

Within a year, a social worker managed to help me start dealing with what was causing my drug usage rather than the behaviors stemming from it. I could admit to her that drugs made my day seem more like everyone else's. They were something worth getting up for, and without them, a black cloud of depression hung over me.



Chris Carroll

After that admission, I was admitted into a drug and alcohol treatment program. The 30 days I spent there dried out me and my fellow addicts. The real challenge, however, began when we got out. We had to find a way to deal with the black clouds or we would use again.

This is what society must offer today's drug abuser -- an appropriate way to deal with black clouds. That cloud is poverty for many inner-city youths. For others, the cloud is lack of attention, discipline or love. The list varies and attempts to place blame accomplish nothing. Drug and alcohol abusers must deal with their own addictions. The help from out under that cloud, however, comes from the outside.

Bush is asking Americans to provide that way out. Unfortunately, his approach to this country's drug problem sometimes misses the mark.

Two times in his proposed drug plan could work, however, if implemented properly.

One requires the adoption of drug-

prevention programs in schools, colleges and universities. The other asks for drug treatment coverage in insurance policies.

Effective prevention programs must offer more than slogans, such as "just say no" or mandatory drug testing, which only can identify users.

Prevention is a lost cause for many children soon after they enter school. My cousin told me several years ago that her fifth-grade classmate had been busted for selling angel dust. A school convocation on the perils of drug abuse wouldn't have done much for that student.

Professionals capable of both identifying and listening to students who use drugs are needed. These adults can't be hung up on judging youngsters who have the audacity to try something their parents told them is harmful. Teenagers who develop serious drug problems usually have other problems that have needed attention for years. These professionals, rather than acting as trained narcs, must be available to sort through conflicts with students encountered at home, school or with their peers.

Some young addicts who want to recover need time away from their youth and home life. Many reputable peers-rehabilitation programs exist, but all come with a \$3,000-or-more price tag. In the past five years many insurance companies have moved away from providing inpatient benefits. The trend needs to go the other way, with all insurance companies making effective treatment financially feasible.

Some skeptics say no matter what we do, the drug problem won't get better. They view young drug addicts as rebels without a cause.

Think again. These youth only reflect back to society what they have been taught: inebriation is the next best thing to handling your problems.

Chris Carroll is a senior news-editorial major and supplements editor for the Daily Nebraskan.

## 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 availability. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit all material submitted.

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.

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.