

Daily **Nebraskan**

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Bush veto bad move
Chinese students need to be protected

Thursday, the U.S. Senate upheld President Bush' veto of a bill protecting Chinese students from deportation.

Bad move.

An estimated 40,000 Chinese students are studying in the United States, according to the Associated Press. Those students need to know that their hosts are not going to withdraw their hospitality.

Legislation would have offered that piece of mind. Tiananmen Square was a tragedy. No one can condone the violence used by the Chinese government against its own people.

Especially not the United States, when the protesters killed were asking for freedoms staunchly protected in our own country.

Bush may not think of his veto as condoning the Chinese government's actions; he is concerned about long-term relationships.

But his move -- and his China policy in general -- show a lack of respect toward those who have condemned China's oppression. A lack of respect toward people fighting for democracy.

Many Chinese students living in the U.S. have spoken out against the problems in their country.

The American government and public were eager to hear those students' opinions when their peers were killed in Tiananmen Square. Had they made those statements in China, they may have been arrested, jailed or killed.

When they return to China, they may face repercussions from their freedoms of speech in the U.S. No one can know for sure, but the thought alone is frightening.

Before the Senate's vote, Bush repeated his promise that students would be fully protected even without the legislation.

"No student, as long as I'm president, will be sent back," he said.

Bush says that now, but what if he changes his mind while he continues to woo the Chinese government?

What about when Bush is no longer president?

Who knows what the Chinese government -- a government that has proven it will use brutality as a means of control -- will be like in three years?

-- Amy Edwards
for the Daily Nebraskan

Pornography column ludicrous

Reflecting on Brandon Loomis' recent column (DN, Jan. 22), on pornography, I feel there is reason for concern. It was unfortunate that those opposed to pornography were caricatured as naive while suggesting that its use is harmless. To excuse pornography as "male bonding or something," even though "women are degraded," is rather ludicrous. The degradation of a segment of our society for any reason, let alone for pleasure, should be cause for alarm. For too long, women have been viewed as objects rather than human beings in their own right and with their own

dignity. Unfortunately, pornography helps to perpetuate such a portrayal.

Finally, I cannot accept the statement that this is an "American tradition" even if Loomis insists that I should "believe it." If, as Loomis suggests, "sexual impulses... came out of the sixth day or thereabouts," then he would also need to accept its conditions for legitimacy which are set forth in the same volume containing this account.

Nate Peachey
graduate student
chemistry

Drunk driving not biggest killer

The facts about alcohol consumption in the United States contradict Bob Nelson's recent editorial statement (DN, Jan. 19), "that drunk driving is the primary evil of alcohol." Dean Gerstein of the National Research Council estimates that each year alcohol consumption is an important factor in:

- 30,000 deaths from cirrhosis of the liver.
- 20,000 deaths from falls, fires and drownings.
- 11,000 traffic deaths.
- 10,000 alcohol-related overdoses.
- 10,000 suicides.
- 10,000 murders.

The total monetary cost of alcohol abuse in the U.S. in 1983 was estimated at \$116 billion, only \$3 billion of which was attributed to motor

vehicle crashes.

The University of Nebraska-Lincoln administration is tasked with promoting the education, health and safety of students, most of whom have not reached the legal drinking age. Assuming that UNL students are not much different from the U.S. populace, authorizing alcohol consumption on campus would most likely increase alcohol-related accidents and fatalities. Insisting that young citizens understand the advantages of not consuming alcohol and other drugs and their responsibilities when they do is the most enlightened stance UNL officials can take.

Tim Karstrom
graduate student
political science



Some pictures last a lifetime
Even routine research can change outlooks on moral issues

We've all been there before -- the wrong place at the wrong time.

Most have lived through such experiences. Some have not.

This was the case for two young boys doing their early-morning paper routes -- Danny Joe Eberle and Christopher Paul Walden.

But who is to blame for their death? Maybe coincidence. Perhaps bad luck.

As the John Joubert story resurges again, we witness yet another move in the lawyers' game of chess.

Joubert's second appeal before the Nebraska Supreme Court is pending. His plea to charges of murdering yet another little boy, this time in Maine: innocent.

Innocent.

You know, there was a time when I would have calmly shook my head, "How can he do that?" I would have quietly wondered how the hell could he do that.

There was a time when I consciously said "no" to capital punishment. No to the penalty of death.

Now, that's all changed. Last week, I was in the wrong place at the wrong time.

I was asked to do some research for a Portland, Maine, newspaper on the case of Joubert.

When The Associated Press call came through to the College of Journalism, I just happened to be close by. It seemed exciting -- thinking about rifling through Supreme Court files of a major murder case. I was fired-up.

I thought I was in the right place at the right time.

God, was I wrong.

Using my important-sounding voice, I entered the Nebraska Supreme Court office and asked for the files. It took a few minutes of searching before they finally were found.

Not too ominous looking. Just a regular, everyday, plain, ordinary cardboard box.

A deceiving package. Because as you may guess, what rested within the package was not plain or regular. It was a nightmare.

As I lifted the lid, I viewed many, many files containing thousands and

thousands of pages. I began fumbling through them. I really didn't know where to look first.

Finally, I found the witness' name I was searching for. It was indexed in the front of a fat, black, vinyl notebook.



C.J. Shepers

"Great," I remember thinking. "This will be easy."

Flipping through the pages, I strained to find the witness' testimony. But it didn't make sense, because instead of finding black-and-white testimony, I was coming across newspaper articles... polaroid photos of police lineups... exhibits of evidence.

What I needed didn't seem to be in there, but I was persistent. It had to be in there.

Then it happened.

I turned to a page that I wish I had never turned to. I saw something never meant for human eyes to see. I saw the pictures of the dead boys. Mutilated. In color. God knows what had been done to them. Or why.

For just a brief second, I froze up. Not wanting to look, but too horrified to do anything else.

I swallowed quickly, turned the page and slammed the book.

I lamely went to the counter and asked for help in finding what I needed. They were helpful, and I finally found it.

But I couldn't stop thinking about what I had seen. Like an obsession, I couldn't erase the thing from my mind.

A few hours later, I finished my research with a sobering view, mailed off the information and jumped in my car, heading home, west down Interstate 80.

The photos of the boys kept flashing through my head, speeding faster and faster. Sometimes, the gentle faces of my own two children flashed

through, mixed with faces of the dead.

I reached for the radio, forgetting that it hadn't worked for months and months. Then I panicked.

Breathing was tough. Driving was tough. My nails dug deep into the steering wheel, trying to keep hold.

I gasped for air and the tears started streaming. Pretty soon I was bawling like a baby. I didn't even know if I could make the last seven miles home. But I was tough, I could do it. I smeared away the tears, sucked in my runny nose and took a releasing sigh.

My peace lasted only a second. The bawling resumed. Hysterical bawling.

And it didn't end there. In fact, it lasted through the night. I began wondering if I would ever sleep again.

Through the night, I asked my husband, "How could he do it?" But he couldn't answer me. No one could.

I kept thinking about those boys. Those sweet, wonderful boys. How could he do it?

Wrong place, wrong time?

No.

It wasn't bad luck. And it wasn't coincidence. It was John Joubert doing what he wanted to do. What he desired to do -- even though he knew it was wrong -- at least in the eyes of the rest of society.

And I believe that he deserves to pay for his sickening crime. He deserves to die.

Now, I know what some of you think. That capital punishment is as wrong as the murder itself. But I don't agree. Two weeks ago I might have. Not any more.

If faced with guaranteed electrocution for his crimes, would he still have killed? After reading testimony, my logic is mixed. But my gut feeling is that he wouldn't have been as likely to kill. He's a smart guy -- in the IQ superior range of 127 -- and he's out to save his own hide.

In the case in Portland, Maine, he is now preparing to draft much of his own legal work because he's so smart. He knows what he's doing.

He always has.

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