

Daily Nebraskan

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Good move, but . . .

Lack of knowledge cheats student body

One of the biggest themes of this year's ASUN election was that student leaders and their constituents needed to open up the lines of communication to gain a better understanding of student needs.

Wednesday night's senate meeting was a fulfillment of that campaign promise as the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska voted in a racial affairs committee and a gay/lesbian/bisexual committee.

Unfortunately, that campaign promise almost got lost this semester in legislative semantics and confusion. Senators waded through the ASUN constitution for almost three hours Wednesday night before the bylaw amendments were passed.

It was ridiculous. By the time all was said and done, it was discovered that minority representation had been slowed this semester by a lack of knowledge about ASUN's structure.

When the senate voted down a racial minorities committee back in October, senators proposed legislation to create advisory boards. But minorities rejected the advisory board idea saying a non-voting standing committee would give them a stronger voice.

Unfortunately, neither side realized that the board and the non-voting standing committee really carried the same weight: both provide input and knowledge on issues that senators have little knowledge of.

So after much pain, sweat, agony and an attempt to completely restructure ASUN committees, we find out that it was a misunderstanding. ASUN and the minorities were playing on the same team.

Speaker Andy Massey remarked that the senate was getting bogged down with one issue and not addressing other equally important campus problems.

He's right. The entire student body has been cheated by its student government because it didn't understand what it was doing. As President Phil Gosch said, there was a lack of communication.

"It shows how hard cross-cultural communication can be," he said.

But the senate's mistakes went beyond cross-cultural communication. What we had here was a lack of understanding by the government of how its structural parts work. It is difficult for student government to even function, much less communicate, when it has no idea what it's doing.

"I think a lot of people learned a lot of things. . . both about government and themselves," Gosch said.

In the process, the senate passed some of the most progressive legislation to hit ASUN in a long time. For the first time in years, senators responded to student needs and lived up to their campaign promises.

Unfortunately their lesson almost cost students and their government an entire semester.

Now it's on to other issues. ASUN better take the winter break to go over its structure. That way the lines of communication won't get tangled in technicalities.

— Lisa Donovan
for the Daily Nebraskan

Make defense consistent in animal rights argument

Fran Thompson, in wanting to help you fulfill one of your life's major goals of the defense of animals and to enable you to defend animals against "the unnecessary pain humans put them through all during their lives and deaths," I suggest a few additional steps:

- Stop driving your car, because no matter how carefully you drive you will kill, injure, and maim hundreds of animals, insects, birds, rodents, etc. If you do not stop driving it implies that you approve of such wanton killing.

- Stop using all types of petroleum products. By using them you are directly supporting the petroleum industry that is responsible for natural atrocities as the Exxon Valdez disaster.

- Stop washing your skin and hair. By continuing good personal hygiene you are depriving animals such as

lice a natural place to live and are actually poisoning and killing and otherwise causing grievous harm to facial mites.

- Stop eating vegetables. In the production of vegetables, countless billions of animals: protozoans, insects, arachnids and others are poisoned, crushed and otherwise receive great bodily injury. If you eat any fresh vegetables you are directly responsible for causing animals to be eaten alive and to suffocate and/or be burned to death by your own gastric secretions.

If you truly want to defend animals, why not be consistent and defend them all instead of just ones that are "convenient" to defend?

Dave Stage
freshman
law



Execute the death penalty right

Capital punishment's purpose is being hindered by loopholes

"Today is a good day to die."
— Kiefer Sutherland,
"Flatliners"

Tomorrow would have been . . . In 1983, I was a scared little kid; a little kid who feigned bravery and bravado every time he walked down the streets after dark, a little kid who turned on all the lights in the house and armed himself with the biggest knife he could find whenever he was home alone.

I was afraid because everything I had been taught about my hometown had blown up in my face.

Bellevue was supposed to be the perfect place to grow up, far from the crime, drugs and violence of urban America.

That was until someone snatched 13-year old Danny Joe Eberle as he was delivering papers early one morning and shattered Bellevue's storybook image as the perfect suburban homeland. And before the town could recover from the shock and dispel the rumors that accompanied the discovery of his dead and violated body, another little boy was gone.

As I walked to school every morning, I compared notes with my best friend as to how we would protect ourselves from the menace that was killing little kids in our hometown.

We were afraid, but as seventh graders, far too manly to admit it. Months later, I could relax, comforted by the knowledge that John J. Joubert was in jail, had plead guilty to the killings, and was on the short path to hell to pay for what he had done to two boys and the psyche of the city.

Today I am a taxpayer whose blood boils every time I think of the fact that Joubert has a roof over his head and is eating three meals a day out my wallet. I am irate because everything I have been taught about truth, justice and the American way is turning out

wrong.

As they are growing up, children in this nation are spoon-fed a picture of Uncle Sam sheltering them from harm while the powers of evil receive their well-deserved punishment. When they are old enough to think for themselves, they see that the old codger is just picking their pockets as the scum skips back into the alleys.

Joubert has been on death row

**Chris
Hopfensperger**

since 1984, when he was sentenced for the killings of Eberle and Christopher Walden.

Since then, he has gotten fat, appealed his case countless times, been denied just as often, and winged off to Maine for a little vacation from the friendly confines of Nebraska's death row.

In the great Northeast, Joubert was convicted of yet another child killing, which he had committed conveniently before the enlistment in the Air Force that brought him to Bellevue.

Today, instead of being under Nebraska's thumb in the state penitentiary, Joubert is in a cushy Maine prison, where he is buying himself time chasing down legal loopholes and technicalities to get out of his death sentence.

Joubert would like nothing more than to stay there forever. If he can overturn the agreement between the governors of the two states, he can stay in Maine, and stay alive, because the Lobster State has no death penalty. He should already be dead. Last week, however, U.S. Supreme Court Justice Harry Blackmun barred the

state from exterminating Joubert so that the high court could stick its nose into the mess.

The people with the gavels in their hands, the judges who are supposed to keep the streets safe for everyone, obviously do not realize that the purpose of the death penalty is not reform. It is not intended to teach people the error of their ways. It is supposed to kill people, those who don't deserve to live.

More and more, it seems that states are not willing to get rid of their trash. There is nothing intimidating about screaming "An eye for an eye," while practicing "A free ride for an eye."

Today Nebraska has 12 men on death row, but the state's electric chair has been gathering dust since the 1959 electrocution of Charles Starkweather. John Rust has been gathering dust on death row since 1975.

Convicted murderer Harold Lamont "Walkin' Willie" Otey, who was to die at 12:01 a.m. Tuesday, was granted a stay of execution in November by the Nebraska Supreme Court.

A new execution date could be set if Otey's appeal for post-conviction relief in the state's high court is rejected after the upcoming six to eight weeks of deliberations.

What makes even less sense are the state's priorities. The next scheduled deaths in the state's electric chair, in February, are for Michael Ryan and Clarence Victor — the death row rookies. Ryan was sentenced in 1986, and Victor in 1988.

Maybe they figure that Ryan and Victor will be easy to nail because they haven't been on death row long enough to figure out all the ways to get out of dying.

Hopfensperger is a sophomore news-editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan senior sports reporter.

editorial POLICY

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Readers also are welcome to sub-

mit 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. Letters should be typewritten.

gents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its students.

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.

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