

Readers deride, support Hanna, blast abortion coverage

Critics of Hanna should recognize learning, change

I am seriously troubled at the response made by so many letter writers to the ethical dilemma faced today by Gary Hanna and many others, as they question their capacity and willingness to engage in the warfare and destruction that others seem to feel is so unquestionable. Since 1962, under Department of Defense Directive 1300.6, military regulations have provided that service members who object to participation in war in any form may apply to be discharged or transferred to noncombatant status. This provision is supported by the same civil court rulings that relate to C.O. claims under a military draft.

It is easy to make self-assured judgments and call names like "coward" or "selfish." It takes but a little more thought to realize that, hopefully, people learn and grow through experience, and that possibly, one thing learned about oneself and one's values through military service could be that you want no part of killing or the physical and psychological preparations to kill.

The military system has recognized this possibility since 1962 and, generally, honors those who take recourse to it. I'm sorry that, in the heat of patriotism, or whatever, your letter writers cannot do the same!

And, not incidentally, who but educators, like John DeFrain, should be able to think about and support human learning, growth and change?

Rev. Larry Doerr
coordinator
Lincoln Draft Information Center

'Guest' students should stay out of U.S. debates

In response to Mr. Ashad Altaf Shaikh's letter (DN, Jan. 28), it matters not whether I agree with your statements. What does matter is who is making those statements, as I am assuming you are from another country studying in America on a student visa.

Mr. Shaikh, as a student in this country, you are a guest, not a citizen. When was the last time you were a guest at someone's house, and you interjected yourself into the middle of an argument amongst the family members with emotional criticisms of their decisions?

If you feel as though America is an oppressive country and your educational opportunity is not worth the imperialistic nature you have to endure, then maybe you could choose another country to attend a university. Your other choice is to keep your opinions to yourself and leave the debates regarding American policy to Americans.

Mr. Shaikh, please don't label me a "Kill the Foreigners" type. I have nothing against foreigners studying here. In fact, I've been in your shoes before, having spent six months overseas, studying at a foreign university. However, when I had disagreements about the policies of the government of my host country (and I had many), I kept my opinions to myself, where they belonged. In respect for your host country and in light of the tensions between Americans and Middle-Eastern students, I request you do the same.

Dave Bialke
sophomore
College of Law

Reluctance to fight shows cowardice, not conscience

Gary Hanna, somewhere in your Army Basic Training Course, they should have taught you the meanings of the words "privilege" and "responsibility."

Responsibility and privilege are inseparable. If you accept one, you accept the others. In accepting the privilege of public funds to be used for your education, you accepted a legal and moral obligation to live up to the corresponding responsibilities of service to your country.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Moreover, the fact exists that you sought and assumed your duties voluntarily. You were, presumably, of sound mind and judgment when you entered into your enlistment contract, and I suspect that your reluctance now stems from cowardice rather than conscience.

I am a member of the Air National Guard, so I understand your fear. But I have not attempted to weasel out of my duties. Your actions have been dishonorable and have disgraced the good name of your service.

I don't believe that, in your function as engineer, you would be called on to kill, other than in self-defense. I understand your moral objections to killing, but you should have thought those things through a little more carefully before going ahead with your enlistment.

Professor DeFrain, can you be so foolish as to believe that the U.S. military would cause a conscientious objector to disappear? For one thing, a military member is too valuable in terms of training cost and other factors for the Army to cause him to "disappear."

Moreover, if the military wanted to make an example of a conscientious objector, a criminal charge of dereliction of duty, a trial and a possible conviction and prison term in Leavenworth would be a more public and useful example. Whatever your opinion is, it is nonsense to believe that America is a police state.

Finally, I have a comment for Ms. Navratil and the DN staff: What sensationalistic, trashy coverage. Congratulations on elevating yellow journalism to an art form. You have given your support to a coward when you need to be supporting our military personnel overseas.

Scott Farber
senior
political science

War objector doesn't deserve label of coward

Gary Hanna might be obligated to serve in the military for his country, but he does not deserve to be termed as a coward, a wimp or a guy getting a free ride to college.

I am not a close friend to Gary Hanna. Neither do I owe him any favors. But we worked together as a team at the Computing Resource Center last year. He is a man of high morals, a man who respects life and the people around him. Through the many projects and tasks we have completed together, I judged him as a responsible person. He is the kind of person who would refuse to go to war not because he is afraid to die, but simply because he does not favor killing. It is not fair to condemn him in strong terms while he is ready to leave for Fort Leonard Wood to serve his obligation.

This gulf war business is getting ugly. Not only has it changed the lives of many Americans who are serving their duty now in the gulf, it has also changed the lives of many others back here at the home front. I have been attempting to get a hold of Gary since Tuesday, but I could only reach his depressing message on his answering machine. He is upset because he must become part of the "war machine," not because he couldn't get the conscientious objector status. This has come as a shock to us when a peace-loving person has to prepare for war in just a few days, leaving his job, his family and friends, not to mention the greater impact on his emotion.

The sign that says "War is stupid" on the sidewalk in front of the Nebraska Union will fade away when the snow and the rain comes, but the consequences of the war will edge a hole in our lives for many years to come. And this is just the beginning.

I support the allied troops in the Persian Gulf, but I won't live with the idea that we have to come to a point where we send our brothers, sisters and friends to the war, risking their valuable life in exchange for the ideology of this nation.

We want a new world. Not a nuke

world.
God bless you, Gary.
Hai-Wei Tan
junior
electrical engineering

Hanna voluntarily enlisted in Army, obligated to serve

We would like to comment regarding Mr. Hanna's belated attempt to avoid being recalled to active duty. The great majority of reservists called up have returned to duty to serve their country, many at great inconvenience and financial cost. When Mr. Hanna initialled each block and signed his enlistment form, he knew what his obligations to the U.S. Army (and his country) were. In return for college assistance, he was expected to be available for military duty for eight years (only three of that active duty). The recruiters did NOT force him to enlist in the Army. He (and probably many others) joined for that financial assistance. Mr. Hanna, unlike many during the Vietnam era, was not involuntarily drafted into the service. We find it very self-serving that he received pay for three years of active duty (and we assume GI bill education benefits now) and now reneges on his own VOLUNTARY obligation to our country (and ourselves as taxpayers)!

Some do question the role of our

country in the Persian Gulf, and we encourage everyone to be informed and express your opinions (including you, Mr. Hanna). However, when he signed that enlistment form, he agreed to serve his country for EIGHT years in any manner that the Commander-in-Chief of the Armed Forces (President Bush) should determine to be necessary. If he cannot do that, we believe that he has defrauded the American public of three years of training plus whatever educational benefits he has wasted during his time at UNL. Therefore, we hope the military authorities do not allow Mr. Hanna to make a mockery of our VOLUNTARY military services.

Capt. D.T. Hickenbottom USMCR
graduate student
electrical engineering
Steven Green
graduate student
electrical engineering

Walk for Life attended by many, ignored by DN

The Daily Nebraskan apparently has decided that ignorance is bliss.

I read the DN every morning; every day, there is at least one item in the paper that manages to irritate me enough so that I don't fall asleep during my 9:30 class. Monday, however, I was kept awake by something I couldn't read because the DN didn't

cover it: Saturday's Walk for Life attended by 5,000 supporters.

When 5,000 people gather at the State Capitol, march to the Federal Building and hold a reception in the Nebraska Union (a university facility), one would think that the university's newspaper would see fit to at least inconspicuously bury a couple of paragraphs about it.

The only argument that I could see against covering the walk would be that events in the Persian Gulf have captured peoples' concern. But if 5,000 people show up to protest against abortion, it would appear that a good number of people are still, indeed, concerned about the issue.

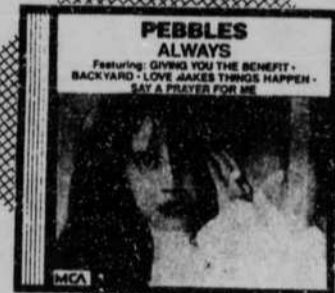
The DN is the only written news source for most, but fortunately not all, students. As such, it has a responsibility to cover those issues that people are concerned about. When 5,000 people gather to demonstrate their leanings, we ought to read about it no matter what their cause—the Middle East crisis, abortion on either side, the environment, the unavailability of parking or even the mistreatment of laboratory dung beetles on East Campus.

Journalists often warn the public about governmental censorship. Few people, however, stop to think about the media's ability to censor through deciding which stories to cover and which ones not to cover. That decision is a powerful one and carries with it the ability to manipulate public opinion.

Joe Luby
junior
history and math

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