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EDITORIAL

## Breathless

New DWI law too weak to be worthwhile

A new drinking and driving law passed this summer may actually be more trouble than it's worth. LB564 lowers the legal blood-alcohol level for drivers under the age of 21 from the standard .10-percent level to .02 percent. Minors caught driving while intoxicated will have their license suspended for 30 days if they fail a Breathalyzer test.

But there could be some problems with this new law. The Breathalyzer has a 10 percent margin of error, which makes it hard for the machine to measure alcohol level as low as .02 percent.

The law is also a secondary offense — like the current mandatory seat-belt law — which means a police officer must pull the driver over for a different traffic violation first. Also, those who break this law will not be reported to the Department of Motor Vehicles or their insurance companies.

Besides the 30-day license suspension, which alone is probably a substantial punishment for many teenagers, this law does not seem to be worthy of the trouble and money spent. It will be a time-consuming process but somewhat incomplete because the punishments are not very sound.

Minors caught drinking and driving should be punished more because they have been drinking illegally. But this law alone is not the answer. If this law were not a secondary offense, and if those caught breaking it faced rising insurance premiums, perhaps LB564 would be worth the time and would cut down on underage drinking and driving. But as it is, the law is restricted and not strong enough.

OTHERS' VIEW

Each of the last five presidents has unveiled a plan to cut government spending and get the public off their backs.

Now, with pomp, circumstance and forklifts of paper, President Clinton has revealed his plan to slim down the burgeoning bureaucracy.

The plan, which is supposed to save \$108 billion over five years, suggests ways government can consolidate agencies that do the same thing. Clinton wants to merge the law enforcement functions of the Drug Enforcement Agency and the FBI, close some Department of Agriculture field offices and give the FDA all responsibility for food inspection.

This all sounds great, but why should Clinton's plan fare any better than the past four presidents' plans?

Because people really hate the government. When other presidents proposed their plans, anti-government sentiment wasn't as widespread, the financial mismanagement wasn't as obvious and the deficit wasn't nearly as great.

Now people are so sick of the government going on wild spending sprees that they are ready to see some real cost-cutting.

Clinton must make sure these cuts are actually made and that the American public can see savings. Additional money has a way of getting lost in the government, so if Clinton wants to see his "Reinventing Government" plan succeed where Carter's "Zero-Based Budgeting," Reagan's "Private Sector Survey on Cost Control," and Bush's "Right-Sizing Government" plans failed, he must show the public that money was saved and that it was reapplied to areas where it is badly needed.

— Daily Illini  
— University of Illinois

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 1993 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents. Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author. The regents publish the Daily Nebraskan. They establish 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 students.

LETTER POLICY

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 or reject all material submitted. Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. The editor decides whether material should run as a guest opinion. Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. 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.

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MORE GREAT MINDS...

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Oppression

Look at laws being passed to protect women and minorities and you will see a disparity about protection for Euro-males who do not practice, use or preach sexism and/or racism. Equality is not receiving the short end of the stick. History serves as a reminder so bad things will not happen again. It has been established that sexism and racism are bad.

We are one race: homo sapiens. Our cultures are different and together we must work to create one culture: American.

I will feel little sympathy for things I had no part of. I will accept no bill of retribution for oppression I did not cause. I believe each individual's ability affects his or her opportunities more than pigment or gender. The days of the gross and wanton oppression are gone.

I respect others for their difference and individuality. I treat others as they treat me and how I want to be treated. The past is the past, and we can only improve today and tomorrow. Let us do a good job so that when our children eat side by side, it is at a round table so that no one is superior to another except for ability and aptitude.

I offer no explanation or apology of the dominance of Euro-males in fledgling America. Oppressing Euro-males so that they have a taste for it is more wrong than the initial oppression.

Joe Hering  
freshman  
general studies

### Guns

Sam Kepfield's column (DN, Sept. 1) spewing forth rhetoric hand-fed to him by the gun lobby and the ensuing letters to the editor in response have finally prompted me to write. Mr. Kepfield seems to believe that gun control is an evil advocated by fools who don't understand how important it is for the innocent to have firearms to protect themselves. I firmly believe in the rights of the innocent to have all manner of projectile weapons to protect themselves. So here, I outline my plan to use gun control to reduce violent crime nationwide and to virtually eradicate violent acts against women.

First, Congress would pass a law making it mandatory for women above age 15 to carry a loaded semi-automatic handgun at all times. Financial assistance would be given to those not able to afford a reliable weapon. Women would also be required to undergo an intensive joint NRA/local police force handgun training/marksman/self-defense course. They would be required to renew this training once a year.

Second, handguns would slowly, over five to 10 years, be legally phased out for men. Men could sell their handguns to the government to reallocate to women. Eventually the law would prohibit men from owning or buying handguns, with the exception of sworn police officers and the armed forces. Men found breaking this law would be subject to heavy fines and long prison sentences.

The result of this action would be very interesting. Approximately 98 percent of all violent crime is perpetrated by males, and almost 70 percent of those involve handguns. Granted, even if this program was phenomenally successful and all handguns were turned in or confiscated, that still wouldn't stop the violent crime from occurring.

Yes, Mr. Kepfield, men would still use knives or even rocks. I, however, would rather face 10 madmen armed with knives and rocks any day than one with a MAC-11 capable of firing 1,200 rounds per minute. But the biggest things this system would accomplish would be the drastic reduction of misogynistic crime. Rape, sexual assault and all manner of abuse would virtually halt. It's hard to feel power over a woman — which is what rape is about, not sex, but power and violence — that one has just thrown on the ground to abuse or rape when one has a couple of smoking .45-caliber bullet holes in one's chest. Those enticing curves and bulges women have would take on a whole new meaning if one never knew which was the butt of a well-oiled 9mm.

Yes, there would almost surely be some innocent men shot or killed, but no one seems to have any problems with the one out of three women that are raped or the conviction rate of less than one in five. And then the women who aggressively pursue the rectification of this problem are called "femi-

Nazis" by the so-called great thinkers of our time.

The increasing problems associated with guns are not going to go away by simply ignoring them or by censoring television or music. The problem isn't in the words we read or hear or in the images we see; it's in the very fabric of our society. Rape isn't going to stop because it's not seen or talked about on television. Neither is any of the violence associated with guns. Until men are socialized to abhor violent acts against other human beings the way women already are, maybe women should be given the chance to mete out the swift and sure justice that Mr. Kepfield talks about for themselves.

Christopher Hoffmann  
sophomore  
art

### Green space

A positive thought by Graham Spanier: more green space! My response to the people worried about walking another couple of hundred feet to their cars is that they realize that Lincoln is a city with one of the lowest crime rates in America. UNL's City Campus, compared to many other city school campuses, is quite quiet and well-protected. With the new hotline phones around, safety is enhanced. As for harsh winters, should we sacrifice comfort and convenience for a mere few-hundred-foot walk? I myself enjoy a brisk walk before class and also enjoy seeing more green space than pavement, which is representative of a commuter campus.

When beauty is in question, to be pushed aside for convenience at a school of education, do the people attending this institution want to learn or be comforted?

Peter Chant II  
senior  
psychology, art

Graham Spanier: Would you listen to the students for once? No green space!

Dave Glatte  
senior  
business education

black  
P.S. Write Back  
The Daily Nebraskan wants to hear from you. If you want to voice your opinion about an article that appears in the newspaper, let us know. Just write a brief letter to the editor and sign it (don't forget your student ID number) and mail it to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 'R' Street, Lincoln, NE 68588-0448, or stop by the office in the basement of the Nebraska Union and visit with us. We're all ears.