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Nebraskan  
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EDITORIAL

## Perots and cons

Good outweighs bad in NAFTA debate

Debates over the North American Free Trade Agreement have carried on for months. Both sides have argued about the pros and cons; even Ross Perot has waged his own war against the agreement.

But for Nebraskans, the good seems to outweigh the bad. Wes Peterson, associate professor of agricultural economics, said the agreement would create jobs in this state and help Nebraska's agriculturally centered economy.

The agreement would likely increase the price of corn about five cents a bushel, which would benefit farmers. This also means the price of food could go up, but this section of the country already pays a low price for food because its main industry is agriculture.

There is bipartisan support for NAFTA. President Clinton is pushing the plan, but it has also been endorsed by former President Bush. Members of both the Democratic and Republican parties agree NAFTA is a good idea for the United States.

Ross Perot has made an issue of opposing NAFTA. The 1992 presidential candidate is making a lot of noise but not a lot sense.

Perot has only come out in opposition of the agreement and not offered any reasonable, workable alternatives. It is much easier to oppose something and not change anything than to develop a new idea to keep the country progressing.

This agreement promises to cause more debates before it is passed. But free trade between Canada, Mexico and the United States is a good idea that should benefit all three countries in the long run.

## One step back

Clinton shouldn't forget his promise

After nearly a year of debate and controversy on the issue of homosexuals in the military, Congress is preparing to take a giant step backward and reverse the gains toward allowing homosexuals to serve in uniform.

President Clinton announced a compromise plan on July 19 that ended the policy of questioning recruits and service members about their sexual orientation. The policy, known as "don't ask, don't tell," still allowed the military to discharge homosexuals.

Clinton's compromise was to go into effect Friday. But the Associated Press reported Wednesday that the Pentagon might wait to enforce the policy because of congressional action.

Both the House and Senate have voted to enforce a stricter policy that discourages gay enlistment in the military. The harsher provision is attached to the fiscal 1994 spending plan and will become law if the president signs it as expected.

The Clinton administration has expressed no opposition to the policy, claiming it is not inconsistent with the compromise reached by the president.

This has been a controversial issue, and it is easy to see why Clinton would like to see it settled once and for all. But the president should not participate in the whittling away of the right of homosexuals to serve their country.

The president should oppose the congressional action on gays in the military and refuse to back down from the promise he made to bring equality to the nation's armed forces. The United States is not a bigoted country, and it should not act that way.

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.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

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.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Sexism

I hang my head in shame to call myself a feminist when women like Tina Lyles (DN, Sept. 27) use the same word.

Why? Because it scares me to see a feminist voicing such a loud opinion without thinking. Part of what I believe about feminism is intelligence, consideration and taking the time to think. If Lyles had read Matt Zimmerman's column and thought about what she was reading, and then taken the time to think about some of the other articles Zimmerman has written, she would have understood the satire.

The mode of rhetoric Zimmerman chose to use was called satire. It requires that you read, think and question what is written. I don't see how he could have spoon-fed his point more clearly. I laughed when I read the article. It made me think, "This is so absurd, there is no way he could be seriously for this issue."

I understand that you are voicing a very serious point about society's attitude toward violent crimes against women. As a woman and a minority, I try to approach society's attitudes with grace, humor and understanding. I think Zimmerman has done a wonderful job of taking that approach.

Ling Faith  
senior  
English

### Health care

I am writing to voice my displeasure of the archaic belief that we can get something for nothing. The health care plan being touted by Hillary Clinton is being well received by most Americans; however, there are some of us who feel that the plan will be very costly to us. I am in a unique position to criticize socialized medical practices, which is just the sort of system being proposed for the United States.

In 1990 while stationed in England, I was involved in an accident that fractured my wrist. Upon arrival at the hospital emergency room, I noted that the room strongly resembled a bus station. It was full of people with assorted injuries all waiting for treatment. I was given a number and told to wait until my number was called. When I was eventually treated, I was seen by a medical school class; I felt like a guinea pig.

The treatment I received was marginal at best when compared to American standards of quality. It was very shoddy according to the Air Force physician, who noted that the mistakes made on my wrist could have cost me my hand. It did not cost me my hand, but it did cost me my career. I never regained feeling in my palm and therefore could no longer perform my duties. Soon thereafter, I was honorably discharged for medical rea-

sons.

I contend that I would have feeling in my hand today if the original doctor who treated me at the hospital had an incentive to do a good job. I am very worried that this archaic system will be implemented here. This system does not work, and we should not take a wait-and-see attitude with the plan in the United States.

Todd F. Meedel  
senior  
business management



James Mehling/DN

### Accessibility

I had the pleasure of attending a speech by noted author Anne Finger on disabilities rights issues. There were too many issues to recap here, but I feel I should at least bring up the issue of accessible entrances.

UNL recently had a push to make all buildings accessible, but it is time to go one step further. Having only one accessible entrance is no longer good enough, especially with winter coming. Financial restrictions may not allow immediate improvements everywhere, but we need to set a goal of half to all entrances on all buildings be made wheelchair accessible. It is fine if we can work on only one entrance at a time, as long as we start today.

In a sense, this is not my fight. I can use any entrance, but it still upsets me at times that not everyone can. Separate entrances and facilities is what enraged racial minorities in the 1950s and '60s, and Finger said that anger at such things is a daily feeling for her. I think we are a better society and university than to let this continue.

If you've read this and agree with it, don't just nod your head. Figure out something to do about it.

Trevor McArthur  
senior  
teachers college

### Safety

P.G. Szczepanski, in commenting of the efficacy of gun control, asks, "Are the children of Belfast safe?" (DN, Sept. 24) The answer is, safer than the children of New York City. The latest figures available to this writer show that the murder rate for Northern Ireland was 6 per 100,000 when at a comparable time, New York City was 22 per 100,000, Washington, D.C., was 31 and Detroit was 59.

Peter T. Hoffman  
Professor of Law

### Green space

Every semester there seems to be at least one controversy that defies reason and is reshaped over and over without resolution. This semester it seems to be the proposed green space north of the Nebraska Union.

I begin to suspect that an issue is really silly when ASUN locks its jaws around it and starts foaming at their collective mouths, but the ultimate proof that an issue is trivial and inconsequential is when Ecology Now! goes public on the matter.

Previously I was a member, and at one time, leader of Ecology Now! In my opinion, there are no good ecological reasons to push the green space as a project. I'm not saying that the space wouldn't be a nice improvement for the student body as a whole, but it is in no way an ecological necessity.

So why is Ecology Now! pursuing this issue through its petition drive? Are they merely confusing aesthetics with ecology? Possibly, but from my experiences with the group, I see a much more plausible, although more disheartening, explanation.

Since Graham Spanier arrived at UNL, factions within Ecology Now! have courted his attention and expended considerable resources trying to establish a dialogue with the man. On one occasion, an Ecology Now! meeting was cut short so that a number of members could go and schmooze up to Spanier, who was speaking to students at another function on campus. There was no particular reason for any of us to want to speak with the chancellor at the time, but it was more a time to become chums with Spanier for Ecology Now!'s future use.

Ecology Now!'s current petition drive promoting the green space project suggests to me that Ecology Now! is more interested in helping Chancellor Spanier's pet project than promoting ecological awareness. This new tendency of Ecology Now! to worm its way into the back-room politics of UNL has driven more people, myself included, away from the group than they will ever realize. The environment deserves better.

James A. Zank  
senior  
art and English  
former president, Ecology Now!