

Daily
Nebraskan
Editorial Board
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Jeremy Fitzpatrick Editor, 472-1766
Kathy Steinauer Opinion Page Editor
Wendy Mott Managing Editor
Todd Cooper Sports Editor
Chris Hopfensperger Copy Desk Chief
Kim Spurlock Sower Editor
Kiley Timperley Senior Photographer

EDITORIAL

Small piece

L.A. beatings signify larger racial conflict

The verdict is in on another trial in these recent years of controversial courtroom cases.

Two African-American men, Damian Williams and Henry Watson, were acquitted of most of the felony charges in the beating of Reginald Denny, a white truck driver who was pulled from his truck and beaten in the first minutes of Los Angeles riots in April 1992.

The jury in the Denny case deadlocked on some counts, and the defendants were found guilty of some lesser charges, such as misdemeanor assault and a felony charge of mayhem.

Ironically, the beating of Denny occurred after the verdict came in from the Rodney King trial in Los Angeles. Then, white policemen were acquitted of charges in the videotaped beating of Rodney King.

The Reginald Denny beating also was videotaped. The tapes allow the public to come to its own conclusions about the guilt or innocence of the defendants in both cases.

After watching the Denny beating, it does not appear that justice has been served in this case. The defendants may not have intended to kill Denny, but Denny certainly was a victim, both of the beating and of being in the wrong place at the wrong time.

The King and Denny trials are only symptoms of a larger racial problem in our society. The racial aspect of these trials seldom is seriously discussed, but plays an important role in these cases.

These beatings occur because of frustrated racial relations, and it is only through relieved racial strife that we can begin solving problems that escalate through race riots and beatings of both blacks and whites.

Volunteer work?

Gas emission reduction requires legislation

President Clinton will release the details of his plan today to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the United States. The Associated Press reported that the plan would rely heavily on voluntary steps by private industry, but will also require greater energy efficiency.

Clinton is announcing the plan to keep a promise he made on Earth Day to reduce greenhouse gases in the United States to their 1990 levels by 2000. President Bush rejected the move as bad for industry.

But apparently Clinton hasn't gone much further than Bush. His plan reportedly relies heavily on the voluntary cooperation of business to invest in energy-saving techniques and other measures that will reduce greenhouse gases.

The plan calls for the government to commit about \$250 million a year through 2000 to programs designed to help businesses reduce greenhouse gases. Large businesses with parking also will be required to provide a cash equivalent reimbursement for non-driving employees.

Clinton's program for greenhouse gas emissions is a start, but it is not enough. The United States cannot seriously hope to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions if its plan to do so is largely voluntary.

If businesses were willing to reduce greenhouse gas emissions on their own, there would be no need for legislation. Unfortunately they are not, which is why Clinton needs to come forward with a stricter plan to protect the environment.

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.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NAFTA

I find it the ultimate in ironies that I as a socialist should be agreeing with a capitalist billionaire about an issue relating to the welfare of workers. However, Ross Perot is absolutely correct in his opposition to NAFTA.

There is a saying that those who do not learn from history are doomed to repeat it. There is in history another free-trade agreement — the Open Door Policy in China. The foreign capitalists who built factories there paid no attention to the environment or the health and safety of workers in those factories. Little children worked 16 hours a day in factories where they were often locked in at night. They were considered nothing more than an expendable input into a product.

Supporters of NAFTA say a similar situation couldn't occur today because child-labor laws exist and environmental organizations have power. Well, judging from the maquiladora factories, I think they are being overly optimistic. Pollution near these factories is so bad that children are being born without brains and with numerous other terrible birth defects.

NAFTA, in my opinion, is nothing but a smoke screen for exploitation. American workers will lose because high-paying manufacturing jobs will be moved to Mexico and be replaced by service sector jobs paying \$5 or \$6 an hour. Mexican workers will lose because of pollution, low pay, bad working conditions and no benefits. It is a lose-lose proposition for everyone except the American capitalists who take advantage of NAFTA to increase their profits.

Gary Sudborough
Bellflower, Calif.

Triangles

I hope I can clarify some misconceptions concerning the pink triangle stickers.

The triangles are intended to be a sign of support for gay and lesbian students. Not displaying a sticker does not indicate you are homophobic and unsupportive.

To many gay and lesbian students, a displayed sticker signifies a person who can offer positive support and guidance during the students' coming-out process. Not displaying a sticker is not a sign you are homophobic. It simply means there are others more comfortable discussing the issue of sexual orientation.

The intent of the stickers was not to divide faculty, create a blacklist of homophobic professors, not to advance a political agenda. It was simply to create a more comfortable atmosphere for gay and lesbian students on this campus, and for this we support Dr. Jolly's conviction on this issue.

David Bolkovac
co-chairman
Gay/Lesbian Student Association



James Mehling/DN

Oppression

Mr. Beineke — another poor, disillusioned, young, white heterosexual male — in his missive to the editor (DN, Oct. 18) failed to observe that while he has the right and the privilege to file a complaint regarding unfairness in employment, others like myself are not extended that courtesy simply based on sexual orientation. Unlike Mr. Beineke and others who whine incessantly about their dwindling privilege to oppress, I can lose my job, housing and livelihood based on a bigot's whim. In fact, rights that all Americans supposedly have — or are born with, according to Beineke's letter — are in reality reserved for those with characteristics that mirror his own. If you don't get it, maybe a course in history will illuminate the situation.

The people involved in the gay and lesbian rights movement are not seeking "special rights," only fairness. Mr. Bolte, time will tell, was fired based entirely on his perceived sexual orientation, not his job schedule. Is this really an extension of American values? The same values that are purported to exist? There is neither fairness, justification nor righteousness in discrimination. Yet this is the value held dearest to America's heart.

If oppression did not exist in the forms of racism, sexism or homophobia, there wouldn't be a need for "special interest" groups clamoring for rights and offending the ear of the oppressor.

While we all may have been created equally, gay and lesbian people certainly are not accorded that in our daily lives and I, for one, plan on clamoring until my rights are secured. Perhaps if Mr. Beineke stepped out of his fear, anger and ignorance, his ability to clarify might be enhanced. It's a long shot, but I suggest it.

C. Douglas-Ybarra
graduate student
sociology

Athletes

I wish to share with you one of the most uplifting experiences I have had with UNL student-athletes.

Today I met two members of the UNL football program who were visiting residents of the Milder Manor nursing home. The fine, young men, Larry Townsend and Jared Tomich, were visiting with a 94-year-old lady who has been a friend of mine for several years. It surprised me that these pleasant young men would take time off from studying or watching NFL football on Sunday afternoon to spend with those often-forgotten by the rest of us.

My hat is off to Larry and Jared for selflessly giving of their time as they have. We all need to hear and see more of the good things our student athletes do off the field or court.

D. Scott Steen
Lincoln

Gay rights

Well, Jason A. Beineke (DN, Oct. 18), I am sick and tired of people with your kind of attitude. You will never comprehend the apparent reasons and needs for things like affirmative action.

Since you will never be a minority, you cannot be a credible speaker on their needs. Have you ever been deprived of something that is rightfully yours because you are black, a woman or gay? Being a "young, white, heterosexual male" with ignorance for justification will get you absolutely nowhere.

Members of the gay and lesbian community feel there is a need for legislature to protect their jobs if in danger because of their sexual orientation. If someone fired you just because you were a young, white, heterosexual male, wouldn't you want protection?

You have a special-rights platform to stand upon and scream. And that is if you are fired because of discrimination, you have the right to restitution. Everyone should have that basic right. But are we all living in the real world? Until we can all live under the same magnifying glass, one that doesn't discriminate because of color, creed, gender, sexual orientation and so on, this system will have to do. Complaining won't help the situation.

Being gay or lesbian also doesn't lessen your ability to wait on customers. If you think people who are open about their sexuality have no place in the work environment, I wonder how you feel about ethnic groups and women. But obviously they have an open-door policy for bigots.

Jacqueline Ann Baez-Thompson
sophomore
communications studies/pre-law