

Daily Nebraskan
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EDITORIAL

We need NASA

America should continue exploring space

The Hubble Space Telescope received the most expensive eye operation in history Wednesday. It is hoped the repairs will allow the telescope to see into the mysteries of the universe.

At a time when NASA is accused of no longer being vital to the United States, the Hubble repairs provided the space agency with a breath of relief. But the question still is whether the exploration of space is a goal we can afford.

While finding the answer to the mysteries of the universe is worthwhile, that effort must be balanced against pressing domestic challenges. The United States cannot spend what it once did on space exploration.

But the space program should not be abandoned. The benefits from the United States' efforts in space are countless. The technological innovations generated by NASA have improved the quality of our lives.

There are other benefits as well. Space can provide an outlet in an increasingly crowded world. There is nowhere to go but up.

The United States can no longer afford to pursue the stars as aggressively as it once did. Disappointments and setbacks must be endured. But we also must not abandon efforts in space.

The exploration of space is one of the next steps in the evolution of man.

Space efforts are difficult and expensive. They require the wisdom of a people capable of seeing long-range benefits. But they are worth the financial sacrifices they require. We can delay the exploration of space, but we cannot avoid it.

Whose values?

Media not responsible for state of society

President Bill Clinton and Vice President Al Gore separately have defended former Vice President Dan Quayle's criticism of single motherhood, and Clinton lectured entertainment-world leaders about the need for more positive role models in movies and on television at a recent Beverly Hills fund-raiser.

An Associated Press story about these comments asks, "What's going on here?"

Critics are saying that while Clinton was quick to criticize Quayle last year, now he's suddenly an advocate of family values.

But the important issue is not that Clinton and Quayle seem to have something in common. The issue should be that Clinton is focusing at the messenger rather than the message.

Clinton is wrong to think that because Hollywood portrays negative role models, movies and television are responsible for U.S. social problems. In the infamous case of "Murphy Brown," television is simply reflecting reality.

Clinton should spend more time trying to fix problems with his governmental powers than wanting movies and television to introduce positive characters. Regardless of the characters and programs on television, problems like single motherhood, crime and welfare will continue.

In an interview with Newsweek, Clinton said, "Wouldn't we be a better-off society if the babies in this country were born to married couples? You bet we would."

Perhaps the president is right. Regardless, the reality is that many babies are not born to married couples. The president and the rest of the government and society should face this reality and try to improve our country through the powers they do have, rather than concentrating on what the ideal situation would be. The ideal situation is not reality.

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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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Children

In the past we had decided not to expend time or energy on responding to Pat Hambrecht. This letter is not in direct response to his column (DN, Dec. 7), as he is obviously not worth the effort, but to other people who are more capable of critical thought.

We are two women who have individual ideas and desires about our reproductive futures. One of us is single with possible plans to have a child in her future, and the other is a married woman who has chosen to remain child-free. What Hambrecht holds to be the meaning of human life, having children, both of us find to be threatening and degrading to all women, regardless of their child status.

Hambrecht doesn't acknowledge the physical sacrifice and transformation women must undergo during pregnancy and child rearing. The time and energy required of the man during procreation is limited to 30 seconds of ejaculation. The man has the option to walk away anytime, including during the nine months of pregnancy and anytime during child rearing. He has fulfilled his meaning of life by passing along his genes in one fell swoop.

What Hambrecht succeeds in doing, in one fell swoop, is to devalue everyone. Children are reduced in meaning to genetic material, men are only as good as their fertility, and women are only worth their reproductive output.

The claim that "no matter what, a human life is pointless without producing children" is contradicted by the very existence of our academic studies. Was Emily Dickinson's life pointless even though she had no children? What is emphasized in history books about Abraham Lincoln? His parental status?

Could it be Hambrecht has really answered the age-old question of the meaning of life? If it is as obvious as he makes out, why has it stumped humanity for centuries? Why have so many artists, musicians, philosophers, writers, poets — everybody — dedicated so much of their time and energy in pursuing this age-old question?

Hambrecht has given us his reductionist and simplistic philosophy of life. We prefer a more complex, broad and enduring philosophy of what constitutes meaning in our lives. Happy procreating.

Thelma Ross
senior
women's studies

Nell Eckersley
senior
women's studies

Mother Teresa

I would like to commend the Daily Nebraskan for printing the story and photographs on Mother Teresa (DN, Nov. 30). It gives us hope in mankind to hear of such charitable works taking place all over the world. Mother Teresa and her order provide an incredible example for us all to follow: unselfish behavior, love for neighbor and perseverance for what is right all being rooted in faith.

Thank you for recognizing this modern-day saint and model for all.
Amy Kamphaus
senior
secondary education



James Mehlsing/DN

Student regents

I'm glad the student regents are so on top of issues important to their constituents, like demanding they personally get to go to the Orange bowl at university expense. Boy, that's showing them! Meanwhile, the regular student football seats are still in Douglas County, aren't they? No, I'm sorry, that's student parking. Student football seating is in the basement of Oldfather Hall.

The one unfortunate thing about ASUN presidents not running for a second term is that we cannot vote against them in huge numbers.

Trevor McArthur
senior
teachers college

Fijis

I'm very frustrated and disturbed with the portrayal of the Fiji house. The investigation is supposed to seek the truth and cover both sides of the accidental tragedy.

The first priority is the health, safety and continued improvement of Jeff's health. No one feels worse about this accidental tragedy than the young men directly involved.

The third priority is seeking the truth in the investigation so that it does not occur again at the Fiji house, other houses on campus and houses

across the nation.

No person is perfect, we're human, and no house is perfect because a house is only as good as the collective, diverse members that are affiliated with the house.

The Fiji house in Lincoln has a rich history and is traditionally strong. The house has molded individuals to become better, think for themselves and be responsible members of the community.

I do not appreciate righteous individuals putting themselves on a pedestal and being judgmental when they have their own closets to clean. The Treaty of Versailles comes to mind.

The proud current members and alumni who have done nothing wrong and know the difference between right and wrong and who have high moral standards will continue to hold our heads high while at the same time being humble for the gifts we have been blessed with. We will continue to support Jeff in his recovery. We hope justice prevails.

Todd Undeland
senior
marketing

Feminism

Thank you, Kathy Steinauer, for your insightful article on feminism (DN, Dec. 7). Just recently, during a conversation with a friend, the fact that I consider myself a feminist came up. The reaction I received was one of disbelief. You are right about the negative stereotypes associated with this movement, many of which came about during the conservative '80s and are perpetuated by Rush Limbaugh today.

Yet I have a hard time understanding what is so wrong about wanting equality. I do not believe women are better than men. I do believe women deserve the same opportunities and salaries as our male counterparts. If that can only be achieved through activism, awareness and law, so be it.

Jennifer Walters
senior
art history

Christmas

This year, as in years past, the true cause for celebration this time of year is taking the back seat to shopping, holiday specials and football.

We would be well to remember that the first six letters in Christmas are not "Target," but "Christ." Likewise, the greatest present to be found lies not under a Christmas tree, but in a manger. Especially this time of year, he should not come first in name only but for those of us who identify ourselves with him. I believe he beckons us to rise above the secularity of this season and prayerfully consider giving our father this greatest gift one can give — ourselves.

Brian Schwarz
junior
English