

Daily
Nebraskan
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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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OTHERS' VIEW

Growing concern about the potential harm of violent video games has led to discussions concerning a ratings system for computer games. A simple ratings system is inadequate. Game manufacturers should include information about a game's content on the game's package.

The U.S. Senate has introduced legislation to pressure the video game industry to come up with its own ratings system. The system under consideration by the Software Publishers Association would grade video games by their appropriateness for particular age groups, which include all ages, children 12 and younger, children 17 and younger, and adults only.

This ratings system is not enforceable. Because it is a voluntary system composed by private enterprise and not the government, retailers do not have to heed it. Because it is not enforceable, the system is worthless.

Even if Congress were to draw up legislation that enforced these ratings, a ratings system would not be enough. Parents, not the industry, are the best authorities to decide what is appropriate for their children. Parents should and must be able to make informed decisions about what games their children play.

Computer software companies should include a brief synopsis of the objectionable content of video games on the outside of game packages. Alerting parents to excessive violence, adult situations or other contents involves more than a simple, vague rating system.

—The University Daily Kansan
—University of Kansas

QUOTES OF THE WEEK

"This whole gang thing is as farfetched as you can get. If gangs want to get into a place, they'll get in. It's just like a shopping mall on Saturday."

—Don 'Doc' Sanders, operator of Aftershock youth dance club, responding to fears that his club would incite gang violence.

"Let these evil people, masters and slaves alike, end their illusions and let them not miscalculate again."

—Saddam Hussein, Iraqi leader, referring to the West and Gulf Arab states that joined the allied fight against Iraq.

"A lot of people may think this is off the wall and maybe it is, but I'm doing something I choose to do. That is following one of the dreams I had when I was a kid."

—Michael Jordan, retired basketball player, explaining his attempt to join the Chicago White Sox.

"There are no elevators to the top."

—Graham Spanier, UNL Chancellor, addressing university's need to eliminate ignorance that breeds prejudice, fear, hate and violence.

"I may be a little rough around the edges sometimes, but overall, I think I'm a good person."

—Tonya Harding, figure skater, on ABC's "Good Morning America" denying any involvement in the clubbing attack on rival skater Nancy Kerrigan.

"The period of market romanticism has ended for us."

—Viktor Chernomyrdin, Russian prime minister under President Boris Yeltsin, following Yeltsin's appointment of a more conservative Cabinet.

"Whatever he wants to do ... I didn't do anything wrong."

—President Clinton, indicating he would be willing to be questioned about his Arkansas land deals by Special Counsel Robert B. Fiske Jr.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Spring 1994 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.



AKRON BEACON JOURNAL 1994

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

EPA 'fiasco'

I knew it! I knew the university would eventually get hit with Environmental Protection Agency fines for its inadequate measures in coping with hazardous waste. Besides the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus, the University of Nebraska Medical Center has also been cited for mishandling its waste. They were incinerating hazardous waste at the Med Center in an unlicensed, unregulated boiler. The EPA made the potential fines to the university almost a year ago. What was done by the Board of Regents or other university officials to cope with this problem? Nothing as far as the public can see.

President Martin Massengale said publicly the university will not ask the Legislature for money for the cash fine and the chemical tracking computer system needed to help correct this problem. (Never mind finding a new facility to dispose of UNL's hazardous waste.) He claims the money will be reallocated internally to cover the costs. The question is, how are they going to do this? Another jump in tuition costs? Cutting more staff positions? Raising lab fees? Perhaps they'll just try to ax an entire department again. In any case, something in the university will be hurt by the reallocation process.

Chancellor Spanier and the Board of Regents railroaded a green space down the university spending track last semester, and for what? The aesthetic value of the campus will be enhanced. Money and energy will be put to bad use, at the expense of coping with real problems and needs.

Enough I say with half-baked plans to redecorate the UNL campus. As a student, as a taxpayer, and as an environmentally conscious citizen, I am mad as hell, and I won't take it anymore. Budget cuts happen all too frequently at this university for us to fritter funds away on new landscaping projects. This hazardous waste fiasco should serve as a wake-up call for those who finance higher education through tax and tuition dollars.

The students and citizens of Nebraska deserve a much better university. Isn't it time we watch those who are supposed to be serving the best interests of our community?

James A. Zank
senior
English

Birthday wish

In response to Sam Kepfield's editorial (DN, Jan. 19, 1994), I wish to inform him that my birthday is Jan. 22, the anniversary of the Roe vs. Wade decision. I have one birthday wish. I wish that Kepfield and his fiancée would go to social services and ask for

the most unwanted child. I don't care if it's a crack baby, a mentally retarded child, an AIDS baby or just a garden variety juvenile delinquent, preferably nonwhite. After Kepfield and his beloved do so, I will respect his editorials about abortion and single motherhood.

Camrin D. Emmons
senior
Russian and history



James Mehling/DN

Park 'em

Let the bicyclist do as motorists do: Get to campus and then walk.

I resent the necessity of having to look behind me before I change directions, lest I be killed.

We are fortunate that buildings have steps and doors. Otherwise I'm sure we'd be dodging these irresponsible solipsists in the halls, too.

Frank Riggs
graduate student
math

'Imaginative facts'

In his Jan. 17 column, Paul Koester claims the "number one problem in society" is overpopulation. In itself, this is a statement of personal belief which is legitimate in an editorial. But in support of his views, Koester listed quite imaginative facts. The worst facet of his column was his exploitation of starvation, that world hunger was an unsolvable condition proportional to the world's population.

Koester contends agriculture is unable to support the increasing population. Actually, the amount of grain grown alone would provide every human being with 3600 calories a day, and according to the book "World Hunger, Twelve Myths," agricultural production is ahead of population growth by 16 percent.

Koester also said, "Worldwide most

remaining arable land ... is under increasing pressure to be used for urban projects..." Again reality is much different. According to the book "Eco-Scam," China — with nearly one out of every four people, 22 percent, of this planet — now supports its population with only 7 percent of its arable land.

I am not denying ecological problems or the potential problems of population growth. In fact, I do agree solidly with one point Koester alludes to: the tragic problem in food distribution. This obstacle caused the terrible and intensely localized famines of recent history. There are a plethora of causes: brutal tyrants such as Ethiopia's General Mengistu, the Cold War arming of the Third World, tribal wars exacerbated by political lines left by colonialism, and so on.

In order to alleviate the needless torment of deprivation, these are the problems that should be focused on, not the mythical apocalypses the extremists recite.

Karl Serbousek
B.A. in history
senior
mechanical engineering

Abortion

In response to Sam Kepfield's editorial (DN, Jan. 19, 1994): Because liberals generally support the rights of minorities and the right to choose, I doubt these people would abort a baby because it was gay. On the same note, a pro-lifer wouldn't abort a baby if it was gay. Therefore, abortion due to the "gay gene" would not occur.

I don't think most pro-choice advocates feel an unborn fetus is not a child, but those who get abortions have to make a difficult decision about the environment into which they will bring the child. An unwed, impoverished mother must consider what it means to bring a life into this environment. To ignore the repercussions is irresponsible and in the end more self-defeating than an abortion.

And what if the woman was raped? People continually forget that if an abortion is only allowed in the case of rape, the woman must first prove she was raped. This, as we know, is a long, timely and inexact form of justice.

Yes, India has a very large, ghastly problem with women aborting girls, but abortion is not the problem. Thousands of years of religious, social and economic prejudice are the cause.

Saving children is important, but let's save them by trying to change society and quit trying to penalize and restrict women's rights.

Pamela Hagman
sophomore
fine arts