

Daily
Nebraskan
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EDITORIAL

Follow their lead

Greek support of hazing bill is admirable

If LB1129 becomes a law, hazing will become a crime in Nebraska. Individuals found guilty of hazing could face a maximum of six months in jail or a \$1,000 fine or both. Organizations could be fined \$10,000.

If hazing becomes a crime, it will happen with the support of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln greek system.

At a hearing before the Legislature's Judiciary Committee Tuesday, former Interfraternity Council President Scott Bunz and current President Nick Reifschneider testified in support of the bill.

The practice of hazing has too long been a part of greek life at UNL. Hazing does not encourage healthy camaraderie. It is abuse.

Although fraternities make valuable contributions on this campus, hazing weakens their position. It makes them deserving of less respect and a target for criticism.

By supporting an anti-hazing bill, fraternities show they are willing to progress and to evolve into stronger, more esteemed organizations.

Following Jeffrey Knoll's hazing and fall from a third-floor window at Phi Gamma Delta Fraternity, greek leaders have acted admirably. They have responded to outside discipline and have shown that they are also capable and willing to discipline themselves.

A bill outlawing hazing will make both UNL and the greek system stronger.

More than toys

Stronger efforts needed to help children

People who fight for children's rights are often labeled as radical. A push to guarantee the dignity of children is often labeled as an attempt to let children take drastic actions such as divorcing or suing their parents.

But the need for stronger efforts to help children was made clear Wednesday in Chicago. Police on a drug raid discovered 19 children living in an apartment littered with feces and crawling with cockroaches.

The Associated Press reported that five children slept on the bare floor in their underwear, while others fought with a German shepherd for food scattered on the floor.

The children were taken to a shelter for neglected children after being examined at hospitals. Six adult relatives of the children were charged with contributing to child neglect.

Children are not property. They are not playthings to be treated as casually as dogs. If found guilty, the adults in this case should be punished to the full extent of the law. They should not have custody of the children.

Advocating rights for children does not necessarily mean saying they should be free to do whatever they want. It can simply mean that children should not have to live in filth unfit for humans.

Tomorrow can only be as bright as today's children make it. The United States needs to take action to ensure what happened in Chicago can't happen again.

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.

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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

'Anti-choice'

I think it's funny the way Paul Koester (DN, Jan. 31) refers to the pro-life movement as "anti-choice," conveniently giving it a very negative image. It's also funny that while Koester used to be pro-life, as he became more "open-minded" and more educated, his opinion changed to pro-choice, implying that only closed-minded, uneducated people are pro-life. What's not funny are his stereotypes.

Not all people who are pro-life want to keep sex education out of schools. I believe that with more education, some of these pregnancies can be avoided.

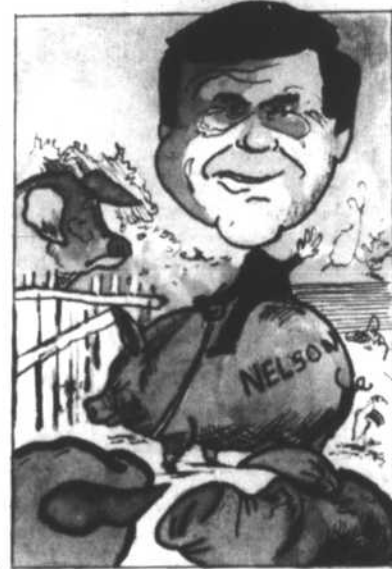
Not all pro-lifers are the radicals you see on the news, bombing abortion clinics and shooting doctors.

We are not trying to impose our morals on others; we are only fighting for the rights of the unborn children.

I also do not agree with the "there's no room for more children in this world so abort the unwanted ones" theory. An unborn child has just as much right to life as you or I.

However, Koester is right about one thing. Both movements should work together to prevent unwanted pregnancies. But we should certainly not end them.

Emily Bischoff
freshman
speech pathology



James Mehlsing/DN

No 'yes or no'

I would like to respond to Frank Emsick's letter (DN, Feb. 1). I find it very disturbing that he has reduced the complex moral issues of the world into simple "yes/no" questions. Everything is now reduced to a neat, computer-like equation, in which either a "yes" or a "no" is the result. How convenient. Of course this equation seems to be based on Christian morals and values. Fortunately, not everybody has, or is required to have, these same morals (much to the chagrin of some people).

I will now demonstrate the absurdity of such thinking, which I will call "the equation," by re-evaluating the questions posed by Emsick's letter.

"Is abortion right?" The equation says "no." What if the woman is gang-raped or is the victim of incest? What if the mother's health is in jeopardy? Does the equation provide for these things?

"Is it right to hurt someone?" The equation says "no." What if that person is on the verge of killing someone you love? It is okay to hurt that person to defend yourself?

"Is premarital sex right?" The equation says "no." If the answer is defended by some Christian-based morals, then I would say this answer applies only to the people who subscribe to these morals and not to the rest of us.

"Is God good?" The equation says "yes." I have to ask, does the equation know who or what God is? Is it Buddha, Zeus, Christianity's God — or Frank R. Emsick, god of infinite wisdom? It sounds like a question of human faith to me. But this equation is only a feelingless algorithm, incapable of reasoning, only producing a "yes" or a "no."

We all know that a yes/no equation could never answer any of these questions without clear definitions of such terms as "right" or "hurt" or "good." These things mean different things to different people, depending on their rationalization of the situation. Emsick may be thinking, "Well, it's my equation. I define right or wrong, good and bad, etc." Well, that's just great. Then Emsick can govern his life according to his equation, but he shouldn't presume to make these definitions for other people.

In his letter, Emsick states one can "rationalize ethics down the drain and see anything the way one wants to." Oh, how true. This is the only thing I can agree with. You see, the great thing about America is people are free to do just that, rationalize and think freely, although it appears the right-to-lifers don't want it this way.

Emsick's equation could not apply to everybody, or even a tiny fraction of everybody, because the beliefs of society are far too diverse. This is especially true because a great deal of the world's population is not Christian.

I have attempted to shed a little light on Emsick's questions. Unfortunately, most people will now see shades of gray instead of the black-and-white answers Emsick would like to see exist. This is how the world is. Most

things are not absolute. People who see things as absolutely right or wrong may not have their eyes closed, but it doesn't matter because they are already blind.

This leads me to my conclusion: Keep an open mind, set your own moral standards, and think before you write ridiculous letters to the editor.

Joel McClurkin
senior
mechanical engineering

'Good old days'

Before people rush to the voting booth to re-elect Gov. Nelson and all of the other Democratic incumbents, let's review the past four years. First of all, I don't see a Mercedes-Benz or BMW plant here in Nebraska. The reason we failed to attract these companies is not transportation restrictions; it is the unwillingness of the government to allow tax breaks and to provide a competitive package.

Millions of dollars have been cut from the University of Nebraska budget. Have people forgotten already the hysteria that dominated this campus at the prospect of losing classes and departments? When Kay Orr was governor, she gave yearly grants to the university. Nelson cut part of Orr's grant program.

While Nelson's trips abroad to promote Nebraska agricultural products have been commendable, he has fallen short of bringing new businesses to the state. While South Dakota, Colorado and Iowa attain more and more businesses, Nebraska has floundered. Nebraska has been unwilling to cut taxes, especially the property tax.

Travel and tourism has been abysmal compared to our neighbors. The demise of the film commission illustrates this. Just as the state was gaining ground in Hollywood, the budget was pulled from the office, and the state has lost millions in revenue.

As for Nelson's crime bill, the phrase that comes to mind is "Johnny come lately." Just as the Clintons are finally discovering the worth of family values, so Nelson is finally jumping on the bandwagon of crime prevention after years of Republican pursuit.

I still miss the good old days of Orr and Ronald Reagan, when people at all levels of the economic ladder, regardless of gender, race or religion, were prospering. Now Nebraska seems to be caught in the doldrums.

Hopefully 1994 will be the year that conservatism and common sense will free the people of the nation and the state to strive for better things and give us all a chance at the "good life."

Jason A. Beineke
Lincoln