

Daily Nebraskan

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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EDITORIAL

Break the silence

Public has right to know about autopsy

As Lancaster County Attorney Gary Lacey calls for a special prosecutor to investigate the Oct. 1 death of a Hispanic man, his office remains mute about the cause of the man's death.

Francisco Renteria died after a struggle with Lincoln and University of Nebraska-Lincoln police. Witnesses have said they saw officers hit and kick the 29-year-old, whom police mistook as a man wanted for violating a protection order.

Lincoln and UNL police departments say they did nothing wrong.

But actions coming from the attorney's office seem to indicate that the events surrounding Renteria's death are questionable. Information about the actual death has been kept secret.

State Sen. Ernie Chambers said on Tuesday that the autopsy indicated Renteria suffocated. "Unlawful application of excessive force" led to Renteria's death, Chambers wrote in a letter to U.S. Attorney Thomas Monaghan.

Tuesday, Lincoln Police Chief Tom Casady said he had one word about Chambers remarks: "Wrong."

Whether Chambers is right or wrong, the public has a right to know what happened to Renteria. The Hispanic community has a right to know whether one of its members died unjustly.

The county attorney's office should break its silence about the investigation and release the autopsy report.

OTHERS' VIEW

The media are calling it a backlash to the "Year of the Woman," saying women candidates will not be as successful in 1994 as they were in 1992. But has anyone considered the backlash might have whipped in a different direction?

It has. The media — which, let's not forget, coined the term "Year of the Woman," after women made amazing strides in the 1992 elections — are saying women won't fare so well in November. This might be true, but attributing this entirely to gender issues ignores the facts.

Has anyone considered that the reason might go beyond gender — that maybe some women candidates are not satisfying their constituents, or that most of them belong to the floundering Democratic party?

The fact is, women — and men — get elected because of their stance on certain issues; assuming anything less merely portrays the voting public as a herd of apathetic sheep that votes on single, inherent characteristics. Saying women made groundbreaking progress solely because they were women ignores the fact that their constituency agreed with their positions.

Assuming there is a homogeneous block of women voters who can carry a candidate's campaign is nothing short of myopic. It's time to move away from the labels and start concentrating on the issues.

— The Daily Illini
University of Illinois

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 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.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Affirmative Action

I want to thank Michael Justice for his thoughts on equality, diversity, and affirmative action on the UNL campus (DN, Oct. 5, 1994). I am sure his views reflect the beliefs of many students and faculty members.

Unfortunately, Mr. Justice incorporates the time-honored tradition of exploiting one or two discrepant events and generalizes to the whole. I do not argue that the possibility exists for errors in judgment by hiring officials. In fact, to err is all too human.

I do argue that poor employees exist of all shapes, sizes, colors and genders; but when that poor teacher, worker, or what-have-you, is a white male, no discussion takes place as to the reasons he was hired in the first place.

There is, I believe, a more disturbing issue, and that is the subtle and insidious bias to Mr. Justice's thinking. For my entire adult life, society has proclaimed that my accomplishments in life have occurred because of my last name. Going to college, getting my first teaching position, being appointed to boards and commissions, entering graduate school, and now becoming a UNL professor have all been 'gifts' meted out to an undeserving member of the outer edge of society.

Does Mr. Justice realize that in his mind-set, I, or women, or other people of color, carry no individual worth as human beings? Can we never take pride in our own accomplishments because we exist only as 'token material'?

I pray that Mr. Justice never rears daughters, or adopts children of color, for he can never give them the power of self-worth. They will always wonder, as I have wondered, whether they are really good enough to take their place in society.

That is the insidious nature of bias.

William Lopez
assistant professor
curriculum and instruction

Coming Out

Way to take a stand Jamie Karl!
Call off the queer festivities!
Anyone in the vicinity may be

risking their health just by listening to the speakers and breathing the same dirty air that THEY do!!

We certainly don't want to "educate and enlighten" those naughty homosexuals about safer sex and disease prevention. No! They need to know about a better, straighter, enlightened HETEROSEXUAL way.



Bret Gottshall/DN

We're not pushing anyone into a specific behavior pattern are we?! Of course not! In fact, everybody knows that no one in the heterosexual world advocates multiple partners, particularly the entertainment industry. None of US get AIDS; all of US practice safe, monogamous, moral sex. Right, Jamie?

Shoot Jamie ... next time, why not go even further back to get out-of-date statistics? I mean, who really cares that in 1978 the term AIDS was unknown to the gay and straight population? Even though your statistics are 18 years old, certainly no one in the gay community has taken notice and changed their sexual habits. They're not that smart, right Jamie?

You say "no one is doing anything to curb the behavior of those responsible." I'm not sure what the Nebraska AIDS project is, but I'm sure its got NOTHING to do with AIDS prevention. In fact, I bet it's a secret club where all those gays, lesbians, and bisexuals gather in their "celebration of sodomy" to plan new, improved diseases to spread to the heterosexual world.

So what can those of us who "truly care(s) for the present and future well-being of all its students,

both straight and homosexual do? MAKE IT GO AWAY!! Call the chancellor a coward for daring to challenge the heterosexual world order! Those Queer Festivities are going to grab hold of our youth and force them, without any free will, into an irresponsible and destructive lifestyle, dimming all hopes of a better, straighter life.

Tell THEM they won't be allowed to do any "educating and enlightening on OUR campus. What we can't see or hear doesn't affect us ... right, Jamie?"

Mary Hill
freshman

European studies/German

Opinion page

Boy the opinion page of the Daily Nebraskan sure was hoppin' and a-boppin' on Oct. 10. I particularly liked the juxtaposition of the Mehsling cartoon — clearly bigoted in its comment on gays and Coming Out Week and Liz Dodd's letter on homosexuality, not to speak of "DN Explained."

I applaud Ms. Dodds on the overall integrity and coherence of her letter. Sure, she perhaps didn't choose the best of terms ("ignorant fools") to describe homophobia: in a sense, she's preaching to the choir as far as the dominant UNL attitude goes, and she's certainly not making any pals at the Daily Nebraskan, which apparently hastened to distance itself from its student columnists' opinions in "DN Explained."

But, you know, most bigots are ignorant, and certainly no one could argue that bigotry applied is the act of a fool, or at least the act of someone who wants to be seen as a fool. As for the DN's statement on what it does and does not endorse — well, I go along in general with what was expressed. But a cartoon marked "Copyright 1994 Daily Nebraskan," and occupying the prominent position on the page it does? Come on guys, get real: accountability has to stop somewhere.

I count it as a fortunate accident that the last words of Ms. Dodd's letter "the stupidity and homophobia we deal with every day" — appeared directly under the Mehsling cartoon. Too bad they couldn't have been enlarged.

Tim Bryant
junior
water science