

OPINION

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Daily Nebraskan

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EDITORIAL

It's time to act

UNL officials are turning their heads

After years of "awareness," sexual assault is still not being reported or dealt with as seriously as it should be.

University Police Chief Ken Cauble has said that only 13 sexual assaults have been reported at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln in the past four years.

Cauble said the number of actual sexual assaults that have occurred here would be about 260, if it held with national statistics that show only one in 20 assaults is reported.

Judith Kriss, director of the UNL Women's Center, said one of the biggest problems was that society's view of the crime still has not progressed.

"Because society blames the victim, we as women, tend to internalize that and blame ourselves — particularly when alcohol is involved."

This belief is reinforced in many cases by the way the university has dealt — or more specifically, has not dealt with — sexual assault cases.

A year ago, one woman talked to the Daily Nebraskan about having been sexually assaulted by a student. She was upset by the red tape the university put her through and by the fact that no action was taken against the student on the university's behalf.

The woman was ultimately uncomfortable going through with a story about the incident for fear of how the university community would view her.

Since then, the Daily Nebraskan has learned the university has not taken action under the Student Code of Conduct in a number of sexual assault cases involving university students.

Because of student confidentiality, the university is not allowed to release specific information on individual cases.

University officials contend many of the cases occurred off campus and that the university did not assume jurisdiction over the cases.

In addition to legal action against sexual predators, we believe any student who has been found to have committed a sexual assault against another university student — on or off campus — should be punished to the full extent that the Code of Conduct allows.

University inaction in such cases is unforgivable.

OTHER'S VIEW

The Republican party has signed on the dotted line. The GOP has a "Contract with America."

Republicans signed a contract encouraging the people to kick Republican congressmen out of office if they fail to work for the best interest of the general population.

This is a refreshing change from the past when both parties based campaigns on the apparent faults of their opponents.

But unfortunately, the GOP failed to camouflage the intention of its contract. The American people do not need the signature or permission of congressmen to vote them out of office.

All they need is to register to vote and show up at the polls. Bad politicians have remained in office because U.S. voters have become apathetic and uninformed.

What America does not need is a contract from its employees allowing the employers to fire them.

— The University Daily Kansan
University of Kansas

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

Comparison

In response to Tom Ead's letter Monday, the comparison of the Gerald Schlondorf arrest to the Francisco Renteria arrest is a valid one, even if there were significant differences. The most obvious differences are simply that Schlondorf tried to kill an officer with no provocation.

Francisco was spotlighted as he walked down the street, called "Chico" when the officer tried to verbally confront him, and, after not responding to a name not his own, was grabbed by the arm by that officer. We know what followed.

Given the circumstances, I think it is legitimate to question the motive and tactics involved. As for motive, I can only speculate. But, had the initial contact officer used better discretion (maybe through knowing the public she serves better), it is very possible the whole situation could have been merely inconvenient rather than fatal for Francisco.

If Francisco had been hearing-impaired rather than brown and Spanish-speaking, would the confronting officer have identified this and tried to accommodate? I don't know. What I do know is that when you confront someone aggressively, you not only immediately limit your options for reacting, but you tend to provoke like responses.

The bottom line with the comparison is that police would have been perfectly justified in killing Schlondorf, who was putting the public in significant danger.

The police chose to give him time. Francisco is the one who should have been given the time to understand what was happening ... And he wasn't endangering anyone when the fatal night began.

Michael Eisenhauer
junior
general studies

Marijuana

The Daily Nebraskan editors must have been short on letters to the editor when they decided to print 'Marijuana.' That letter wasn't worth the paper it was printed on next to putting it in the newspaper!

Not only did they put it in the paper, they even put a drawing depicting the ignorant statements made in the letter. Supposedly, the letters are chosen on "clarity, originality, timeliness, and space

available." Stereotypical insults are hardly original!!!

Chad Kudym
sophomore
environmental studies



'Small differences'

"Nurture! Well, maybe not nurture, but certainly not nature. OK, I don't really care — I just think it's weird." (My take on Shane Tucker's column (DN, Oct. 15, 1994).)

It seems that the debate of nature versus nurture won't be settled any time soon. The statistical research offered by Mr. Tucker to show that homosexuality is learned (such as, only 11 percent of adult male

homosexuals enjoyed boys' activities in their youth) appears to be circular in form.

The argument can be reversed to imply that you didn't like to play army because you didn't inherit that gene with the affinity for those little green plastic soldiers.

So if the research is out on nurture, why not consider nature — which, as a biologist, would be well within Mr. Tucker's area of expertise? Mr. Tucker's assertion that even if it could be nature, then homosexuals should "control (their) personal actions."

This makes as little sense as lumping homosexuals into the same category as those practicing bestiality, pedophiles and necrophiles: gerbils can't consent, children can't consent, and the dead aren't exactly in the best condition to put up a fight. Why is Mr. Tucker so concerned about the private lives of consenting adults?

If Mr. Tucker's argument is that homosexuality is weird, I can live with that. We the culture define the

meaning of weird and normal. And as individuals, we have our own interpretations and differences with our culture's definitions. No logic necessary, just feelings, beliefs and values. I respect Mr. Tucker's right to his interpretations and hope that he respects my right to mine.

I think gay people just want the same in return. That's where the law usually comes in handy. Generally, it protects everyone's right to live as we choose, as long as we don't cause harm to anyone or to the state. The case wasn't made in Mr. Tucker's article that homosexuals are causing harm, just that some members of our culture don't like it.

Debra McGuire
UNL staff

Renteria

This letter is in response to E. Hughes Shank's column on the Renteria death, or should I say murder? After all, isn't this Shank's implied accusation?

I took off my rose-colored glasses ten years ago when I joined the U.S. Army. In the course of my four years of service, I witnessed every kind of racial and gender bias; I also saw every kind of racial and gender reciprocity, so I know that both do exist and for an individual to say that they do not would be extremely naive.

However, given Mr. Shank's argument, I guess we should all assume that any interaction between differing cultures or genders must be motivated by bias. Now doesn't this seem close-minded to some of you?

While there are (unfortunately) still plenty of "good-old-boy" attitudes out there, they are certainly not as prevalent as they once were. Sadly, people are not acknowledging this. As a result, we are seeing unjustified condemnations based on old stereotypes.

Until an investigation is completed, Mr. Shanks, we have no right to pass judgment on these officers. After all is said, you are guilty in your column of the same thing you accuse these officers. Not everything is as evil as it may look, but if we assume it is, more of the circumstances such as your own personal one in New Orleans will certainly continue.

As for myself, I'll base my judgment on my experience with each individual I meet, not on one experience.

Mathew Baker
senior
English