

OPINION

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Daily Nebraskan

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Culture shock

NEA should be preserved, supported

In 1799, scientists unearthed the Rosetta stone — a tablet of black basalt engraved with Egyptian hieroglyphics — which unlocked the secret to deciphering ancient Egyptian writing.

Without the stone, much of Egypt's culture would be locked in the past.

So far, unlike ancient Egypt, the importance of our artistic expression has not been lost over time. However, if a proposal in Congress passes, this could change.

House Speaker Newt Gingrich has proposed to cut most, if not all, federal funding for the National Endowment for the Arts.

The amount of money the NEA gets from the federal government, \$167 million, is less than .0002 percent of the national budget. Cutting it would have a minuscule effect on the deficit. But \$167 million is not a price tag the private sector can pick up.

Members of Congress like Gingrich are using the NEA as an example in their efforts to cut government spending. The NEA is viewed as a liberal organization and is therefore an easy target for the Republican majority.

Gingrich and others — including all of Nebraska's senators and representatives — have said some cuts are justified because the NEA supports "controversial" works.

What they fail to see is that only 40 of the roughly 100,000 programs that the NEA funds have generated controversy, according to the Endowment.

Because of media hype, the NEA's entire scope was limited to three or four grants that offended a small number of people.

What people aren't shown are the artist-in-residence programs that the NEA brings to rural towns. Without that support, most children in those areas would not have access to the arts.

Apparently Gingrich and the rest of the GOP don't see the benefits of the arts:

The Omaha Magic Theatre, in cooperation with domestic-abuse counselors, toured Sarpy County High Schools with a production showing the realities of domestic violence.

After every performance, the domestic-abuse hotline phones in Sarpy County rang off the hook.

Perhaps Gingrich also forgot that many of the NEA's largest grants go to metropolitan operas, ballets and symphonies.

But the Endowment's funding is not limited to elaborate symphonies with petit fours and champagne at intermission. Such organizations do thrive on high ticket prices and wealthy patrons.

It's about the struggling artists in Smalltown, U.S.A. It's about arts-education programs at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. It's about the inner-city children who will never see the Mona Lisa smile or hear Dizzy Gillespie play the blues.

Some countries — like Australia, which spends up to \$12 per person — give more support to the arts. Americans spend \$.64 per capita to preserve its heritage. That's about the price of a cup of coffee.

The Egyptians relied on painted figures for their language. American Indians communicated through dance. African tribes used drums to "speak" to other tribes.

Ours has been an era of violence. We will obviously be remembered by our wars, but we should also be remembered for our music, art, theater, film and dance.

Our culture.

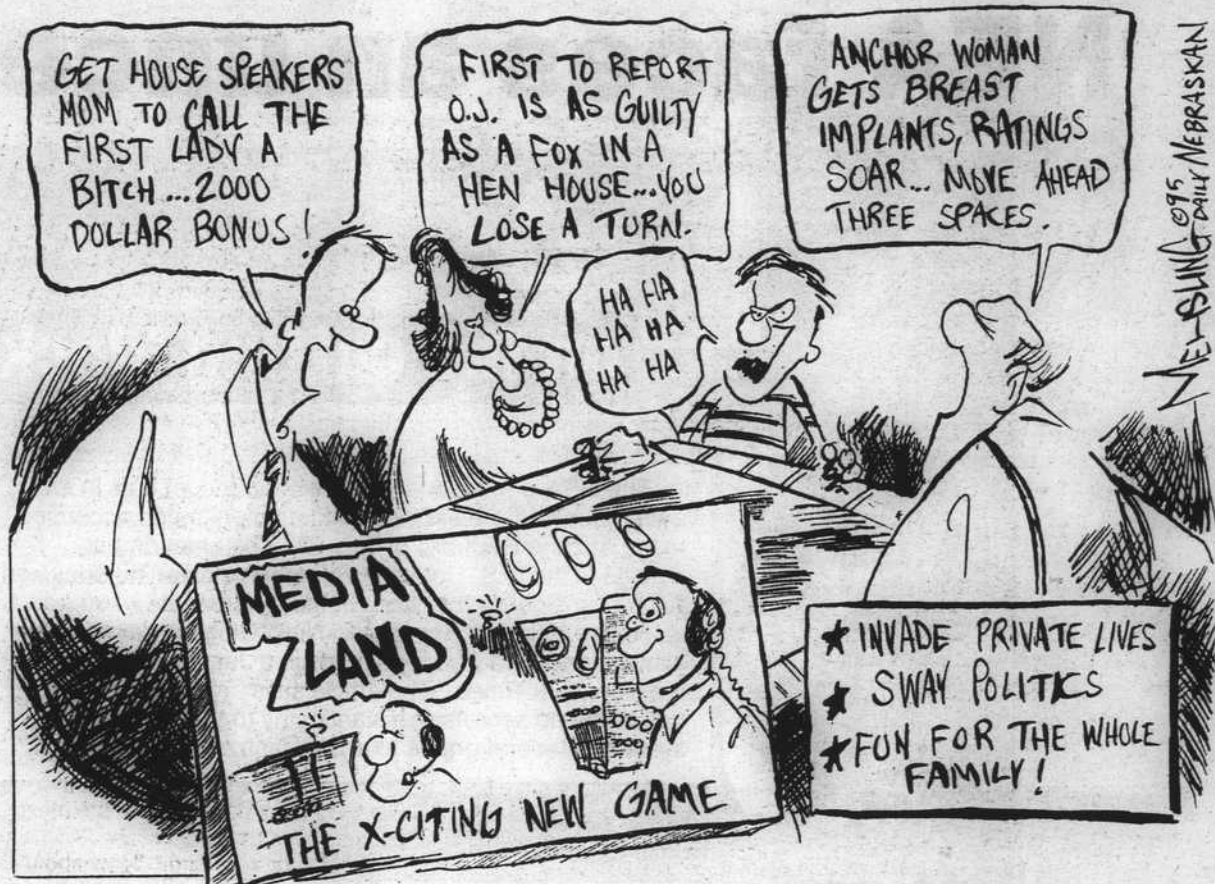
It's time we abandon political rhetoric and save it.

Editorial policy

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Spring 1995. 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.



Daily Nebraskan readers say:



Send your brief letters to:
Daily Nebraskan, 34
Nebraska Union, 1400 R St.,
Lincoln, Neb. 68588. Or fax
to: (402) 472-1761. Letters
must be signed and include a
phone number for
verification.

RHA policy

I can't believe that I have to do this again this year. One, if Chad Pekron wants to have an influence on residence hall policies, he should run for RHA. Two, Pekron has served on the RHA Senate since April and we have heard nothing from him about cohabitation. He doesn't serve on the Residential Enhancement Committee, and he has not submitted any resolutions or proposals to us to tackle this issue.

Is it really an issue? In my five years in the halls, I have not heard anything but support for our visitation policies.

Women don't want their roommate's boyfriend spending the night every night. Men don't want girls in their rooms every night.

The policy outlines that a same-sex guest can stay for up to 96 hours in a month. UNL Housing, as well as other living facilities, has similar policies. It is to prevent what happened last semester with a friend of mine who didn't get his contract in early enough, then moved in with his girlfriend (who had a single) and stayed there for a semester rent-free.

If we didn't have this policy on guests, people who blow their loan money at the bars would be staying in our rooms.

Why doesn't Pekron do something with the position he currently holds (Neihardt president) to change things his residents elected him to do: get rid of the no-flame policy, improve food service and provide more programming. When you do that, maybe this Neihardt resident will even vote for you.

Andrea Casart
RHA president



Arny Schmid/DN

Life or death

Cindy Lange-Kubick's pro-choice column in the Daily Nebraskan was beautifully written. She obviously took care and time in compiling her thoughts, so I assume the column to be a valid expression of the pro-choice mentality. In her own words, however, she unwillingly screams decibels of truth that many pro-life organizations have attempted to convey for years.

"I believe a fetus has a soul. And I (have one) too," Lange-Kubick wrote, "and no one is going to tell me which soul matters most." She is right. In choosing abortion, you have indeed decided which soul is most important.

Yet earlier in her column, she wrote, "I love (my children) more than my own life." I don't understand. The only way for both of her statements to hold true is to assume that the fetus in her womb was not her child. But it was her child, and

now he or she is dead as a result of a choice.

This is absolutely not in any way a condemnation of Lange-Kubick. What she has or hasn't done can't be judged by me. It takes great character and courage for her to say what she said. But children are being butchered, burned and torn apart even as this letter is being read. If one is not prepared for a (or another) child, then a child should not be created. We must stop this irresponsible behavior and start defending life.

One day the thoughts of men's hearts will be laid bare. In your heart, Mrs. Lange-Kubick, there obviously is much beauty and truth. We all need to seek this and use it to choose life, not death.

Tony Fulton
senior
mechanical engineering

Big Red peace

One more word, please, about The Game. For those of us who remember the Huskers' last national football championship (and the myriad of heartbreaks since), this year has been especially rewarding.

I have kept a Daily Nebraskan column by Bob Nelson from a few years ago that nearly perfectly defines two decades of what has been, regardless of wins and losses, a fabulous roller-coaster ride. I can now remove it from my bulletin board.

Congratulations to the team and coaches for a tremendous victory that is well-deserved. Bob, wherever you are, I hope that you, too, have found peace.

Kelly Downing
graduate student
agricultural engineering

P.S. Write Back

The Daily Nebraskan wants to hear from you. If you want to voice your opinion about an article just write a brief letter to the editor and sign it (don't forget your student ID number) and mail it to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R Street, Lincoln, NE 68588-0448, or stop by the office in the basement of the Nebraska Union and visit with us.