

COMMENTARY

Wednesday, February 8, 1995

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Distance doesn't lessen love

My Dearest Ma,
As-salam Alikum!

I hope this letter of mine finds you in the best of health and brings you all the happiness of the world. I am well by the grace of thy Lord in this faraway land, but am missing you very much.

I have been receiving all of your comely letters, full of love and wisdom. I am sorry that I have not been writing to you as I promised, merely due to my otiose nature. But do not doubt my love for you even for a second, as I love you very much and miss you more than anything in this world. I know you shall forgive me for my torpid behavior.

Dearest Ma, my health is great. I am exercising regularly, eating meals on time and sleeping well. Doing exactly as you told me. I go to the mosque every Friday and am trying to keep up with my daily prayers as well. Studies are good and within months I'll finish school.

So, Ma, don't worry about me at all. I have all the worldly comforts here, but I wish you were here with me. At night I cuddle up in the blanket you sent me and look at your pictures, and long for the days when I was at home. Sometimes it makes me cry. As the tears roll down my cheeks, I close my eyes, dream about you and go to sleep.

I still remember the nights, even when I was 18 or 19 years of age, when you used to sing me bedtime stories and comb your fingers through my hair and stayed until I slept. I used to be embarrassed, but never said a word because I enjoyed it very much, and now I miss those nights. No matter how old I get or how gray my hair is, I'll still be little Yousuf to you, and



Yousuf Bashir

your love shall always be the same.

Thank you so much for the delicious food you cooked and sent to me. I loved it. Unfortunately, it didn't last more than a week. Please don't send me anymore food, for now I hate the food here and loathe my cooking as well.

It was great talking to you on the phone last week. I had my eyes closed while I was talking and felt your presence right next to mine. Your sermons, advice and caring thoughts seemed to have penetrated into my mind. Hopefully, those days are not far when I shall be among you again.

Dearest Ma, I never did tell you, neither do I have the words now to thank you for, all you have done for me. I recall the nights when I used to come home late, and only you would be up, praying and waiting for me. I know you used to be upset and worried about me, but always greeted me with a smile, put me to bed and then slept. Only you, Ma. Only you. No matter what I did, you never stopped loving me.

I always have seen and received your selfless love; you have not demanded anything in return. I am so sorry that I have done nothing for you. I was a spoiled little selfish brat when I was there, and now when I should be with you, I am far from you.

And you still don't complain! Only a mother can have a heart that altruistic, full of love and forgiveness for her children. No doubt that mothers are Allah's masterpiece, the best gift to His beings, and their love an everlasting miracle.

How is Papa doing? I received his letter the other day. Tell him that I shall write to him soon. I hope he is in good health and eating regularly. I miss him very much and looking forward for your visit this summer.

I know that Papa hates my long hair. Just tell him I have it for spiritual reasons, and that all the Prophets had long hair. I don't think he'll buy this, but there is no harm in trying. Tell him not to worry too much about my appearance. Give my love to him.

How is my grandfather doing? Papa wrote about his health, but not in detail. I pray for his health and long life. His love for me is infinite. He expects a lot from me and I would never let him down. I try to always make him proud of me. Tell Grandma I said hi, and don't let her work too much, as she over exerts herself and gets sick.

I hope my sisters are missing me also. But I haven't heard from them in ages. Give my love to both my angels of love and laughter; that is, Mariam and Sarah.

Everything else is fine. Achi Bhai and Zedi Sahib are doing great and sending their regards. If you need anything from here, just let me know. Give my love to all at home. Take care and write back soon.

Your loving son,
Yousuf

Bashir is a senior food science major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Foster must foster right kind of sex ed

The nomination of Henry W. Foster Jr. to replace Joycelyn Elders as surgeon general is another sign that the Clinton administration has completely failed to understand the message of the last election. It continues to impose on this country people and policies rooted in a philosophy that has proved to be an utter failure.

Foster was less than forthcoming about his views and how many abortions he has performed. Even the pro-choice Kansas Republican Sen. Nancy Kassebaum said she was disturbed by the misleading information given to her by the White House concerning Foster.

But there is more to this than misinformation and disinformation. Foster has close ties to Planned Parenthood, which has a view of sex and education that has exacerbated, not solved, one of the major problems our country faces. Planned Parenthood is not interested in changing sexual behavior, but rather in avoiding the unwanted physical consequences of premature sex. Yet one has to wonder why it has failed so miserably in achieving that objective. California may be the best state to judge the results of the philosophy held by Planned Parenthood and its devotees, who include the nominee for surgeon general.

Mike Males, a graduate student in the doctoral program of the School of Social Ecology at the University of California-Irvine, has studied tabulations from the California Center for Health Statistics covering 46,500 births among school-age (ages 18 and younger) adolescents in the state in 1993. In 85 percent of these births the fathers' ages are identified. The statistics show two very different types of "teen-age" motherhood.

The first involves peer schoolboy partners, ages 18 and younger, who average about one year older than their girlfriends. These are the targets of the Elders-Foster-Planned Parenthood condom squads and the focus of the chastity vs. condoms war. Boys in this category accounted for about 13,400 births among schoolgirls in California in 1993, only 29 percent of the total.

In 33,200 births among California girls ages 11-18 (71 percent of the total), the father was a post-high school adult man averaging more than 22 years of age — five years older than the mother, on average. These adult fathers, who are responsible for



Cal Thomas

nearly three-fourths of the 40,700 births among senior high girls, average nearly 23 years old. The adult men who father half the 5,900 births among junior high girls (ages 11-15) average 22.1 years of age, six and a half years older than their mothers. In 6,000 births among California schoolgirls in 1993, the fathers were over age 25. Also surprising was that one-fifth of the births fathered by schoolboys (about 3,000) were by adult, post-school women.

As Males notes, this isn't about "children having children" or "teen motherhood." It is adult sex with school-age youths.

For more than 30 years, Planned Parenthood and its disciples such as Elders and Foster have targeted elementary school children with their brand of sex education. Elders wanted to teach elementary kids how to masturbate and use condoms. But in California in 1993, elementary schoolboys fathered no children. Senior high boys, though, were responsible for 41 percent of the births and adult men fathered more than 50 percent of babies born to girls between ages 11 and 15.

We are deceiving ourselves when we think we can make adolescents behave differently than the irresponsible adults who surround them and who pump sex into everything from movies and television to music and advertising.

We would be far better off working to reduce the 71 percent figure (post-high-school adult men fathering children with teen-age girls) than focusing on the 29 percent figure (peer schoolboy partners).

Foster isn't really "Elders Lite," he is Elders reincarnated. Her ideas have been proved not to work. His are just more of the same. We deserve a surgeon general who will focus on the real health needs of the country, not condone those whose behavior is detrimental to our society's well being. When is this administration going to get it?

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Bar bill to benefit the awake

Imagine, my fellow students, what our weekends would be like if the bars in Lincoln stayed open an extra hour. That's one more hour of interpersonal socializing, one more hour to exercise our consummate drinking abilities and, of course, one more hour to enjoy the best night atmosphere our college town has to offer.

A bill proposed by Sen. Tim Hall of Omaha would extend alcohol sales an additional hour in Nebraska. According to Sen. Hall, Nebraska is losing money because people go to Iowa after the bars close in Omaha.

I wasn't at all surprised to hear the overwhelmingly positive response from fellow students, considering the bar-fond town that Lincoln appears to be. All you have to do is drive down O Street on any weekend night.

Personally the whole policy wouldn't affect me. I tend to think the bars are overrated as it is, and adding an extra hour wouldn't make much difference. Also, I have a difficult time staying up past 11:00 on any given night.

I realize there isn't much to do in Lincoln, but I tend not to find these bar subcultures any more exciting. While attending the university, I've come to realize that either you choose among the various congregations of individuals or you sit at home and watch a movie.

There are the discriminating individuals who enjoy passing an evening in a quiet, more accommodating bar. Perhaps they could be described as the intellectual, coffee-house-type individuals who care to sip their drinks over stimulating philosophical conversation.



Lara Duda

And then there are individuals who prefer to spend their evenings standing in long lines to eventually get pushed and shoved into some crowded, hazy-aired, toilet paper-lacking bar. Some may call this the meat-market branch of college bar night life.

The most interesting subculture, or fad as it may also be referred to, consists of those individuals who congregate so they may regress back to the days of blue eye shadow and bell-bottoms. I'm sure we've all fallen prey to this scene at least once in the way of a '70s theme night.

I, however, try to keep my disco attempts limited to the exclusive viewing of my closer friends. And I am no more willing to get primped up so I can stand in a sweaty, loud hole in the wall than am I capable of pretending to be an intellectual.

But to get back to the proposal, the whole thing is set up for economic reasons and not to enhance the night life at Nebraska universities. And since the majority of students would benefit from the policy, I'll try not to let my personal frustrations interfere anymore with the majority's overwhelmingly positive view of the bars.

If you are part of the majority, don't get excited yet; this proposal

has been tossed around the Nebraska Legislature for the past seven years and continues to be temporarily shoved back in the cellar.

Another argument by Sen. Hall on the positives of the policy was that if drinking establishments were to stay open an additional hour, patrons would be supervised by bar employees and the patrons' drinking would be in a controlled environment.

That means that after we get that extra drinking hour, we'll go home to bed instead of hitting the after-hours parties, right?

Sure. Maybe. It's a nice thought anyway.

However, the part about being supervised by the bar employees proposed a sort of diverted pleasure for me. I don't know about you, but from the bar employees I've encountered, I don't get the feeling that they're supervising the well-being of their customers. Actually, they seem more like irritated babysitters who are sick of dealing with dyslexic-sounding, child-like adults trying to keep themselves from falling over.

Not that I blame these people. But it is a little far-fetched to consider them a preventive source against drunken driving.

However, if Sen. Hall thinks that we patrons would be in a safer environment, more power to him.

If the bill helps those students who can stay up past 11 p.m., then I guess I'll be climbing on the bandwagon.

Just wake me up when we get there.

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Mike Luckovich