

# OPINION

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Daily  
Nebraskan  
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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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## True justice

*Ceiling on punitive damages is wise move*

The U.S. House of Representatives Friday dumped coffee in the lap of the growing history of outrageous punitive-damage awards.

The House passed a legal reform bill that would limit punitive damages to \$250,000 or three times a victim's monetary losses, whichever is greater.

Part of the legal reforms contained in the Republican "Contract With America," the legislation gives businesses and professionals a way to put ebb the tide of litigation-mania that has been coming in to the court system.

Supporters have said the bill would help stymie the flow of personal-injury cases flooding the courts and the potentially crippling damage awards that go with them.

Opponents fear the legislation would hurt the rights of consumers and middle-class citizens.

But in most cases that don't involve doctors or hospitals, injured persons will still be able to recover actual losses such as medical costs and missed wages.

Many of the outrageous awards being handed out have nothing to do with actual losses and go far beyond justice.

Many of the jurors involved in handing out large punitive-damage settlements are too easily caught up in the emotion and drama of human suffering so well staged by today's trial lawyers.

The easiest way to get rich is to hire a good lawyer, sue somebody and split the winnings. That's not justice.

Civil litigation should correct neglect or wrongdoing — instead of giving people a way to find a pot of gold at the end of a rainbow.

## Another view

The latest Gingrich-led Republican initiative on Capitol Hill is the re-evaluation of a decades-old program that was created to fix a problem that is centuries old.

Affirmative action programs were started in an attempt to balance minority opportunity with those of mainstream white America. Unfortunately, the United States has not advanced enough in the race-relations realm to warrant the ending of those programs. Affirmative action is ripe for re-evaluation in order to examine its progress and its most successful methods, but must not be eliminated.

This issue does not call for a blanket law to fix problems. Rather, conflicts with affirmative actions must be dealt with in a discretionary manner based on the dynamics of each individual situation. Several prominent liberal Democrats have come out supporting re-evaluation of programs, when they once were unconditionally in favor of them. Even the White House has announced that it has started reviewing affirmative action programs.

The issue is sure to be a central theme of the upcoming presidential election, but the politicians involved must proceed carefully. Congress and the White House must ensure the situation is evaluated in a realistic light, instead of a political one.

Despite the efforts of affirmative action programs, a deep stratification based on race and ethnic groups remains prevalent in America. The majority of major corporations are controlled by white males, and a glass ceiling still limits possibilities for minorities.

By removing affirmative action programs, opportunities have little chance of increasing for minority workers, and a stratified America will have little chance of balancing out.

— *The Daily Collegian,*  
*Penn State University*

### Editorial policy

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### 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.



SORRY SHAQ .... MICHAEL'S BACK.

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.

### 'Discrimination'

I am writing this letter to vent some of the anger that I am feeling toward the forthcoming career fair. Many of us graduating seniors were not informed of this upcoming fair, for we do not meet the requirements to attend. This career fair is only for minorities: "whites need not apply."

This is outrageous, for if we were to have a whites-only career fair, it would be called an act of racism.

I am really sick of this crap. The university is obviously practicing a policy of reverse discrimination. For isn't the exclusion of a particular group due to their skin color racism? Well, that all depends on who you ask.

Certain races were treated unjustly for many years and deserve the same opportunity as the rest of the community. But how long must the white society pay for its sins of the past?

I do not ask for preferential treatment toward one particular race. I ask that the playing field be leveled. I also petition all non-minority readers to attend this career fair, for it should be academic merits that are important, not skin color or gender.

Todd Meedel  
senior  
management/economics

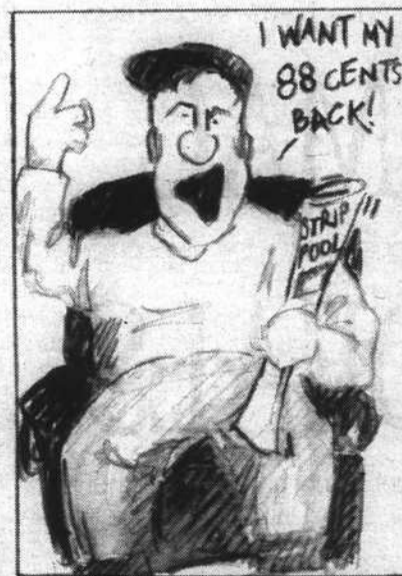
### Advertisements

For the past few weeks, I have been reading with somewhat numbed surprise the multitudinous responses and counter-responses to the advertisement of Bimbeaux Video's "Strip Pool." I must confess my own surprise at first seeing the ad, and remarking to myself and others that "storm clouds are indeed gathering in the horizon."

I must also confess my own perturbations at seeing this advertisement in the Daily Nebraskan, but I also believe in the free market, so I, as a reasonably intelligent individual simply exercise my own form of self-regulation and continue

on with my reading.

All the while that this quagmire has been raging, I fear we may have turned a blind eye to something equally troubling. I refer to an advertisement also contained in the Daily Nebraskan in Section 300 of the want ads. It reads as follows: "MALE MODELS For Playgirl and other National Magazines and advertisers. Some nudity may be required. Must be 18-35 with solid muscle-toned body."



Amy Schmidt/DN

Maybe it's just the fact that I'm a dumb Republican conservative ditto-head, but I can't help but ask the question that if we are so offended and upset over women who choose to drape of undrape themselves in pursuit of the almighty dollar, where is the cry of "foul" over an advertisement tempting men to do likewise? Hmmm?

I will grant you that these advertisements have distinct differences, but they both seek the same outcome. I defy anyone to tell me that the two women in the "Strip Pool" ad didn't answer an identical advertisement somewhere.

Whether we like it or not, there are those who will make it their life's mission to sell anything people

will be tempted into buying, and there will be those who oppose them. I ask you which is the greater of two evils, to sell a product that some people consider offensive, or to make a product that some people consider offensive?

Daniel L. Howell  
graduate student  
undeclared

### Abortion debate

In response to recent and ongoing debate on abortion, I felt a few things needed clarification. Before the editorial wars began, the Daily Nebraskan recorded Chris Funk, the executive director of the Lincoln chapter of Planned Parenthood, as having said, "I think we should require all priests to take History 101. They should be reminded this is not a theocracy, and this country has its roots in the separation of church and state."

I would like to ask Chris Funk where in the Constitution it states that an individual, upon taking up a religious office, must lay down their political voice. Her insinuation is that an individual must sign their political and moral will over to the priest or minister before being admitted to the sanctuary.

Secondly, Planned Parenthood and other local abortion supporters are attempting to play on the public's sympathy by bringing up the loss of livelihoods that may be the result of a pro-life boycott. Planned Parenthood is again ignorant of American history.

The boycott is a time-honored vehicle of democracy and political change. The boycott was effectively used during pre-revolutionary America, to gain suffrage for women, and during the civil-rights movement. Pro-abortionists have even employed boycotts in their own political agenda.

Suzanne Cimino  
sophomore  
agronomy