

OPINION

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Daily
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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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Red tape

New tuition deposit accomplishes little

Save your money this summer, students, because the University of Nebraska-Lincoln will come collecting in August.

A \$200 tuition deposit will be due the week before fall classes begin in August. This amount replaces the \$35 preregistration fee that once was due at the time of registration.

After a long summer vacation, this \$200 could come as a shock to students. But don't be alarmed. In a world of the ever-increasing university fees, the new \$200 bill isn't as bad as it sounds.

The university actually is trying to help students by charging this fee. The \$200 deposit due one week before classes will remind students to withdraw if their plans have changed, said Earl Hawkey, director of registration and records.

"We're trying to weed out the folks who aren't really going to come," Hawkey said. "With \$35, people were willing to pay in March when they registered, but they would blow class off and not withdraw."

The good news is, students, if you didn't save \$200 by the summer's end, you really don't have to pay the bill.

"We will not cancel students," said Bob Clark, director of student accounts. "To cancel students that abruptly is doing them a disservice."

So what's the point of it all?

This just seems like another layer of university red tape that students must cut through.

Another view

California's habitual-offender law is off to a shaky start. The law, dubbed "Three Strikes and You're Out," requires anyone convicted of three felonies, including one violent crime, to serve 25 years to life in prison.

The perverse result is that defendants up for their third felony in Los Angeles are refusing to plea-bargain for sentences, this clogging the courts with expensive, time-consuming trials.

Prosecutors in Los Angeles fear they may have to drop misdemeanor prosecutions, the kind of low-level street crime that, while usually nonviolent, harms the quality of life. Civil suits are already in holding patterns so that the strikeout criminal docket can be served.

Other states considering the California example may learn from the law's excesses. The demands a maximum sentence for a third felony, but only one of the crimes must be a violent one, leading to such absurdities as the recent long-term imprisonment of a man for stealing a slice of pizza from children, his third conviction.

The three-time-loser law is so loose that in Los Angeles County, only 4 percent of second and third felony prosecutions have been for violent crimes like murder, rap, kidnapping or carjacking, according to the court system's own study.

Final judgments are not in. The law's advocates say it will work better after further shakedown. San Francisco's prosecutors use the law more sparingly against selected defendants, which may show that it can be made to work. So far, however, California's vaunted get-tough policy has one strike against it.

— The New York Times

Correction

The general election for Lincoln city offices is May 2. A Tuesday Daily Nebraskan editorial listed an incorrect date.

Editorial policy

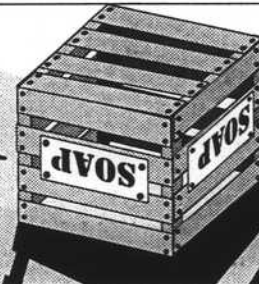
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Letter policy

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Decency Act

I do not agree with the Communications Decency Act of 1995. I can understand wanting to prevent pornography from being accessible to children. However, it is not the government's responsibility to monitor that. It is the parent's responsibility to make sure that their kids are playing appropriate computer games, watching the appropriate shows, etc.

I do agree that pornography shouldn't be accessible over the Internet, but there are alternatives to censoring everyone's mail. Censorship has to be all or nothing.

The government is always preaching family values, but by passing this bill, it isn't allowing parents to instill those values. If the parents don't instill these values, it would be hypocritical to complain if their children go astray. The government needs to let parents try to solve this problem before it jumps the gun and makes it worse.

Kelli Brust
freshman
education

Winston Crabb

In response to Christine Scudder's letter regarding the abortionist's "right to privacy": I object to your belief that the neighbors and community of Dr. Winston Crabb have no place knowing that he makes his living aborting unborn babies.

Just because abortion is a legal right now does not mean it is moral or right. Killing humans for an occupation is a sorry excuse for making a living.

Comparing your dentist's occupation of cleaning teeth (or your lawyer's coaching of little league) is not a logical comparison to Dr. Crabb's occupation. Abortionists kill babies! When your dentist cleans teeth, he doesn't snuff out the life of a small, helpless child.

And as for no one needing to



Bret Gottschall/DN

know what their neighbors are up to — I object. If they are playing a family game of Monopoly, that's one thing, but if a member of their family, on a day-to-day basis, kills babies, that's another. Not only the neighbors should be protesting ... the entire Lincoln community should as well.

If Scudder and the Crabb family are ashamed of his career choice to abort babies and don't like caring, concerned members of Lincoln stating just what this "doctor" is up to, then maybe they should re-think the morality of his practice.

As long as abortionists continue to kill unborn babies, pro-lifers will be standing on their sidewalks protesting, writing letters, forming groups, educating others and doing anything and everything to help end this holocaust.

Scudder and Dr. Crabb supporters: Get used to pro-life activists; we're here to stay. We're the voice for the small and innocent he's killing. And we'll be here until he chooses to help give life — and not take it away.

Sara E. Schlife
freshman
business management
president, UNL Students for Life

Religion and science

I am writing to give a different slant to Yousuf Bashir's column "Religion: the food we live on" (March 29). While I agree that there is a need for religion, I feel that many of his statements are misguided and simplistic.

To believe that "religion is something that human nature demands" is ridiculous. Human nature expresses desires for many things, including explanations for the phenomena we observe around us, a system of rules or guidelines by which to live and, in some cases, a purpose for our existence.

Religion has provided a useful mechanism for providing these things and many more. That is not to say that these things can only be found within the context of a religion; sometimes it is just nicer if someone else has thought it all out for you.

I also take exception to Bashir's comments that science has divided life into many compartments while religion unifies these departments into a whole. Physicists spend a lot of their time trying to formulate universal theories that describe all interactions from sub-atomic particles to galaxies, while biologists have found that every living organism, from viruses to humans, shares common structures, chemistry and history.

Compare this Gestalt approach with religion, where people (of the same species) are regarded as different because of the deity they worship to the point where it is OK to kill someone for believing in a different God.

I have no problem with Bashir's faith, but he really shouldn't try to prop it up with the kind of warped rationalizations he presented in the Daily Nebraskan.

Ben Gawne
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forestry, fisheries & wildlife