

# OPINION

Monday, April 17, 1995

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## Daily Nebraskan

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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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## Reality bites

### Homeless deserve fair treatment

Welcome to the real world, kids.

Here in the real world, in case you haven't figured it out for yourself, life is hard. Some people aren't happy; others struggle to get by.

And some, in the richest nation in the world, don't have homes.

Once again, there has been some talk by officials about trying to rid the Nebraska Union of the homeless. Daryl Swanson, director of the Nebraska Union, said he was working with police to prosecute vagrants for panhandling, consuming alcohol on campus and causing public disturbances.

Of course, criminals should be arrested.

But our concern is that those people, who just happen to not have homes, will be harassed by police and made to feel like criminals by students in the unions, even if they have done nothing wrong.

And many of the homeless people who use the union do nothing wrong.

What better place than the union for people who have nowhere to go? The union is a public building at a public institution.

If a professor in the department of mathematics were to stagger drunkenly into the union and yell at a student, would union officials be talking about prosecuting all math professors in the union?

The narrow focus of the union officials' ire begs a question about how much respect is given to homeless people on the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus.

Do the homeless deserve any less respect than a high-level administrator, only because they do not have homes? We say no, and any argument to the contrary is a shallow, materialistic one at best.

The university gives its students lessons in life, along with lessons in academics. In students' lives, they are going to have to deal with homeless people. Unfortunately, many will have to deal with criminals in one capacity or another.

The criminals are not always going to be homeless — the homeless are not always going to be criminals.

Some homeless people have college degrees, were senior-level executives and members of a family at one time in their life. Circumstance is all that separates anyone from being homeless.

The homeless are people and deserve to be treated as such. Criminals are criminals who also deserve to be treated as such.

Don't blur the line that separates the two.

### In one breath

Opening Day has come and gone. It's great to see the boys of summer back in action. But let's not ignore reality. The players and owners still don't have a permanent agreement. They should come to one soon so we can avoid further strikes or lockouts.

#### 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: 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.

### Higher education

I found Beth Finsten's commentary (April 13) a breath of fresh air. It's true that the style and structure of the majority of classes offered have their foundations firmly set on the concept of quantity instead of quality of the information presented, and that students cram their heads full of facts and figures only to forget them prior to or (if they're lucky) immediately following the exam.

It is a candid and honest admission that the typical grading scale not only helps to maintain a high GPA, but also in just passing the damn class.

But Finsten misses the real point behind her undergraduate education. The bachelor's degree has replaced the high school diploma as the minimum level necessary to land a lucrative service-industry job. The diploma you one day will receive will primarily signify that you can complete a required task, and little else.

Sure there are classes and instructors that are helpful and entertaining (and actually encourage the student to think), but by and large, the majority, like their counterparts in the administration building, are nothing more than track attendants who set up hurdles in your path.

Alan M. Green  
senior  
political science

### Rodeo

I was quite surprised and disappointed to see the front page of the Daily Nebraskan promoting a "sport" that thrives off the blatant exploitation of defenseless animals.

Rodeo is cruel, it is sick and it is archaic. Peggy Anderson, in her letter (April 14), discussed this exercise in testosterone-flexing as "a time-honored tribute to our country and its colonization ..."

So too is the legacy of the African slave trade and the ethnocide of Native American Indian tribes. This "tribute" to our



great nation is the purest example of man displaying his pathetic dominance over nature.

Performed in the name of sport, glory, masculinity and tradition, rodeo is nothing more than a fool promoting desensitization, destruction and dominance — aspects all too rampant in American culture.

We don't need to live this way.

Nick Myers  
senior  
secondary education

### Pro-Bill Byrne

I have to respond in Bill Byrne's defense to the editorial "Learn from legacy" in the Daily Nebraskan (April 14).

Yes, Bob Devaney was a great coach, a good athletic director and he did create the great tradition that is Nebraska football. But unfortunately, college football today is all about money. Without the almighty dollar, Nebraska football would quickly slip into mediocrity.

That's where Bill Byrne comes in. In his short tenure, he has brought Memorial Stadium into the 20th century. Sure, he may have raised the cost for group seating, but that's what it takes to maintain a program like Nebraska's.

So before anyone criticizes Bill

Byrne, they should look at the package he brings to the table. He is a great money-maker, and he is the best thing to happen to Nebraska athletics since Bob Devaney.

Gary Bazis  
junior  
teachers college

### An apology

I would like to comment on Martha Miller's letter (April 11) about Brent Bartu's involvement in the "stolen sax" case. First, I realize Brent was put in a very unfortunate case, as well as the others involved. And I would like to apologize for all the hurt and inconvenience I have caused to him and those involved with the UNL School of Music.

In a case such as this, where I was formally charged with unlawful theft and then given the opportunity to have my charges dismissed through the pre-trial diversions program, Brent Bartu, as well as anyone else who was involved, is guaranteed restitution.

What I have done was extremely wrong and I regret every decision made to instigate the situation with the saxophones. But I made a contract with the diversions program and Brent Bartu was made well aware of it.

Diversions is programmed to give individuals who've had no prior criminal record a second chance. Yes, I made a terrible mistake and I can only extend my apologies to those I have involved.

It's time to let this issue settle.

Gail Tvrdy  
former UNL student

Gail Tvrdy was charged in connection with an incident in which three saxophones were stolen from the Westbrook Music Building and pawned at Lincoln shops. Brent Bartu is the owner of Banner Music Co., 1239 S. 14th St. He has said he purchased one of the instruments, not knowing it was stolen.

— Editor