

Daily  
**Nebraskan**  
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## Certain death

*Mandatory execution impractical idea*

The slaying of Omaha police officer James Wilson Jr. has saddened and angered the Omaha community and Nebraska law enforcement.

Last Friday, the day of Wilson's funeral, Gov. Ben Nelson said he would propose to the Legislature a mandatory death sentence for cop-killers.

Was Nelson's announcement an attempt to soothe a grieving community, a solid proposal or an attempt to grab headlines?

In the past, Nelson has sided with the politically popular capital punishment platform.

His pro-death penalty stance has most certainly helped his large public approval. And he is a strong candidate in the 1996 senatorial campaign. Any positive press he can get now as governor is a plus over any unestablished candidates.

But maybe it's a good idea? Why shouldn't we kill our cop-killers?

And while we're at it why don't we kill our teacher-killers, our accountant-killers and our tourist-killers?

Whether you're for or against the death penalty, this should be seen as a bad idea.

First, mandatory sentencing has been an ineffective means of reducing crime.

Second, a mandatory death sentence takes any discretion away from judges. And in the most serious of all cases, where a life may be taken, the ability to make an individual decision on an individual case is absolutely necessary.

Nelson has jumped on an idea that is likely to be politically popular in Nebraska, but not practically sound. And worst of all, he used the funeral of a fallen officer to grab some extra press.

## Reasonable doubt

*Accused stand innocent in eyes of law*

In Omaha, the police are one man short. If there is such a thing as "social contract," we have a debt to pay.

We ask these men and women to risk their lives to keep the peace. In turn we resolve to find and prosecute, to the fullest extent, those who would threaten those lives.

Every person has the right to a day in court and nothing can be decided until then — "innocent until proven guilty" is more than a noble sentiment; it is the law.

Today, a handful of young men are accused of killing a cop. But no amount of accusation will make them guilty.

We've seen this in operation, from the opposite angle, in Lincoln for ourselves.

When a handful of officers, and a fire chief, stood trial in the death of Francisco Renteria, the prosecution brought evidence and eye witness accounts before the court.

It was not enough. It left "reasonable doubt" and that's all it takes.

Today, those accused are free — they stand innocent in the eyes of the law.

There will be evidence and witnesses in Omaha, too. Will these young men receive the same fair treatment as our own officers and fire chief?

### Editorial policy

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 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.



### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### So long Herbie

Good riddance to Herbie — he was such an ol' frowney face.

Julie Teeters  
Secretary

Department of Plant Pathology

#### Shannon Faulkner

In the military, I and my fellow classmates will be better cadets than Shannon Faulkner would ever have dreamt of becoming. That is for one reason: We will be going to defend the precious freedom of the citizens of the United States.

I personally will not be going as a Caucasian female but as an American citizen, a member of a team.

Does it matter if I go to West Point, The Citadel or our own UNL? As long as I am receiving the same training, expertise, do the best I can do, and get the job done; I don't see the difference!

Military training is what you put into it, not trying to make a point of it.

Oh, Faulkner made a point of it all right. A point that she can't get up and run with the best of them at 5:30 a.m., or that she can't pass her Physical Fitness Test, or running between classes makes her heart beat too fast!

As for the "Hell Week," you can find that anywhere.

Basic training is meant to separate the weak from the strong. If one's heart and soul is into the military (or anything else), one will overcome all obstacles.

Obviously we found out where Faulkner's heart was, and that was in the spotlight and the record books.

When I go through my training, it will not bother me to have numerous males (and females) screaming inches from my face, forcing me to do push-ups. To me they are not a gender but an Officer or Drill Sergeant preparing and training me to do my job correctly and efficiently.

If I go through life expecting things to be handed to me on a gender basis (like entrance to school), I have degraded myself as a human being!

Thank you Shannon Faulkner. You did pave a road (sort of) especially for a more professional, competent, strong willed female to go forth and succeed where you didn't.

And I know somewhere out there one of my sisters will make it through and I will see her and the rest of the team on the battlefields of war and life.

Leah Davis  
Freshman  
Meteorology

#### Macho men

I am writing in response to Mr. Grone (Women and War, Aug. 23) who indicated that women were unfit for combat. I disagree.

I spent 10 years in the service, as a cadet, paratrooper and an Armor Officer. Mr. Grone is most emphatically wrong.

Personally, I believe that women generally handle emotional stress more directly and in a healthier fashion than most men — particularly those men attracted to the service.

Furthermore, as a combat arms officer, I felt that most leadership failures were the result of poor communication and poor interpersonal relationships: generally machismo.

Robert Tobin  
Graduate student  
Geology

#### War of attrition

In response to Ms. Ahl's assertion (Women as disease, Aug. 24) that I've compared being a woman to having a disease, I wish to point out that I chose that metaphor to illustrate that I do not find women inferior to men. I too am no longer fit to serve in a combat environment, and I certainly do not find myself inferior to those who can.

In response to Mr. Hearst (Women and war, Aug. 24) I would agree that women are capable of serving in combat support roles, and indeed they have. But grant me this. Sir, there is a difference between combat and combat support.

Admission of women to the School of Infantry or to The Citadel will do one of two things:

It will result in high attrition among women. I know all too well the monetary costs of attrition to the government and the personal price one pays who goes through this.

The other possibility is the lowering of graduation standards.

Mr. Hearst, if you truly understand the nature of war, you know as well as I — attrition comes sooner or later.

Ryan Grone  
Sophomore  
General studies

#### Jamie Limbaugh?

Once again Jamie Karl's protruding brow ridge graces the pages of the DN. For another semester we are treated to ditto-headed Limbaugh-like "social commentary" from this clod.

If he is shooting for Limbaugh's style, he is succeeding. Karl's latest "gem" (Mantle, Garcia live on in history, Aug 23) is ehock full o' knee-jerk reactionary statements, half truths and distorted facts.

The statement about "fans who tore down fences or attacked security guards" was rather intriguing. There has been a platoon of security guards testifying to being smacked in the face with beaded necklaces or being stomped by vicious bare-footed 19-year-old girls. Sounds scary to me.

Keep up the brainwashed distortion, Jamie. Maybe you too can get some air time. Try cable access right after Ron Kurtenbach's spot.

Sean T. Green  
Sophomore  
General studies

Post it

...to the

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