

# OPINION

Monday, October 2, 1995

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Daily  
**Nebraskan**  
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## Justice on trial

### Simpson trial puts system in hotseat

O.J. Simpson may be on trial in Los Angeles, but all across the United States, as the public peered into the Los Angeles County Courthouse and watched defense and prosecution lawyers wrangle in front of the jury, Americans have been judging the criminal justice system.

The O.J. Simpson trial has showcased the uglier side of the U.S. court system.

Criminal justice in America was set up to allow a certain amount



Jason Gidlow/DN

of freedom for the accused — innocent until proven guilty, judgments made only on the evidence allowed in court, freedom ahead of security.

Money isn't supposed to be a factor in justice; neither is race. But in this trial both are.

Can anyone argue that O.J. Simpson's wealth has not bought him a better-than-average shot at an acquittal?

The makeup of the jury and the strategy of the defense has made race central to the question of guilt or innocence.

No matter what verdict is handed down, it will not be accepted by certain segments of the populace.

If Simpson is found innocent, many will cry that he

bought freedom and that the system is corrupt.

If he is found guilty, others will say he was framed by racist police in Los Angeles (lest we forget Rodney King), and that the system is corrupt.

Most Americans see grandstanding by the two sides in this struggle, with the winner being the team that can put on the best act in front of the jury.

Some might argue that the intense media coverage is what has turned the trial into a sideshow. Certainly throughout the trial, the defense, the prosecution or Judge Lance Ito have said things intended as much for the viewing audience as the courtroom jury.

But does that blame fall on the cameras bringing the trial to the rest of the world or on the criminal justice professionals aiming their statements outside of the halls of justice?

Perhaps, this is no different than Clarence Darrow and William Jennings Bryan in the Scopes monkey trial, the trial of Bruno Hauptmann for the murder of the Lindbergh baby or any of the other "trials of the century."

The attention focused on high-profile cases like the O.J. Simpson trial give the American public a skewed perspective of the American criminal justice system.

Don't believe everything you see on TV.

Ours is a fairer system than any on earth.

#### 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.



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#### LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

#### Smart farmers

As a student who has directed much of my time and effort at this university doing research, I find the recent comments by Nebraska regent Drew Miller about research narrow-minded and short sighted.

He was quoted in the DN ("Resolution to determine NU research", Sept. 29) as having said that, even if NU research led to a new theory of relativity, it would be hard to justify that research to a Nebraska farmer.

I grew up in a small rural town in northeast Nebraska, and most of the people I knew were farmers. The farmers Regent Miller talks about do not sound like the farmers I know.

If Miller were to stop farmers after a hard day of work and ask them if they favored spending their hard earned money on research that wouldn't clearly benefit them, he might well get the negative answer he is looking for.

But sometimes actions speak louder than words. A few years ago Clearwater, my home town, voted "yes" on a school bond issue to build a new school, and it passed with overwhelming support.

The farmers who voted yes did so knowing full well that most of their children were not going to stay home after graduating and remain farmers. Many do, but most don't.

They voted to give their children the best education they could afford, even though that education would not always directly benefit the farming community. Those farmers do not sound like the narrow-minded people Regent Miller thinks they are.

If I am right, I hope they express their displeasure at the condescending and insulting remarks made on their behalf.

Mark Hankla  
Senior  
Psychology  
via e-mail

#### Message mixer

I would like to cite the words of Todd Crossett, Assistant Professor of Sports Management and Sociology, as published in the Oct. 2 issue of People Magazine:

"In suspending Lawrence Phillips from the Nebraska football team, Coach Tom Osborne has delivered a clear message that violence against women will not be tolerated. If he

reinstates Phillips, he'll be sending a mixed message."

Pamela F. Starr  
Associate Professor  
Music History  
via e-mail

#### Bitter truth

I am writing in response to Rolin E. Lemon's guest editorial concerning violence against women and its effects on men ("Violence to women victimizes men too," Sept. 27).

Unfortunately violence against women is one of the many serious issues that men do not take seriously until it affects them directly. It is also an issue that men do not usually talk about even when it does directly affect them.

For many reasons most males cannot break out of their macho shells long enough to discuss the pain that they inflict and the pain that is inflicted upon them as a result of violence against the women they know and love.

I would like to personally thank Mr. Lemon for sharing his pain in the hopes that more members of the male gender can begin to deal with and talk about this issue.

Tom Sanchez  
Graduate Student  
Sociology  
via e-mail

#### One hand clapping

Two thumbs up and a standing ovation for Jamie Karl's column ("English needed to unite states," Sept. 27).

Coming from Los Angeles, a place where I have lived my entire life, it was refreshing to see an article like this.

In L.A. this article would not have even made it to print because of the controversy it would stir.

Nicole Markota  
Freshman  
Criminal Justice

#### King of Cupps

In response to Jamie Karl's arguments for English as the national language, Rodney Cupp (Letters, Sept. 28) responded:

"I suggest that Karl is, in fact, 'simple' and 'uncultured,' is out of place on a university campus, and should go the hell back to where he came from — some backwater, I imagine."

Is Cupp suggesting that only

nonsimple and cultured folks should be found on a university campus?

Surely he does not meet these criteria because, for example, no cultured graduate philosophy major would abandon one of the fundamental precepts of philosophical debate: to attack the argument, not the person.

Perhaps a retaking of Philosophy 101 is in order for Mr. Cupp.

Tom Eads  
Senior  
Political Science and English  
via e-mail

#### In his Cupps

Thursday's letters to the editor reveals a telling example of academic pomposity. In arguing a very reasonable point Rodney W. Cupp tries to baffle the masses with his "analytic" approach to the United States' discourse on multilingualism.

Instead of insulting our fellow discussers in public debate and trying to wow us with his analytical philosophy, Cupp should engage his opponents honestly and in terms which the public will understand.

Individuals such as Cupp only give academia a bad name and will result in the kind of professors who make college a limiting experience. Cupp demonstrates academic slop.

Dan Pojar  
Graduate  
German  
via e-mail

#### Cupp runneth over

I submit to Mr. Cupp that the use of logic will cause you to form the same conclusion that Mr. Karl reached when he wrote his article on language in the United States.

You yourself use no logical discussion, nor provide alternative solutions, but rather resort to the grade school mentality of name calling.

In fact, you almost got the gist of Mr. Karl's article:

Yes, we need to stop spending tax dollars on such programs, but not because of the amount of money, but rather of the illogical use of such monies.

Mr. Cupp, and other liberal name callers out there, should stop and use a little logical thought on the political issues of the day.

Gene Paulsen  
Graduate Student  
Mechanical Engineering  
via e-mail