

Justice served, for a price



Aaron McKain

"Hell, what's one more dead American ideal."

Why are we so positively awful at choosing our crusades and naming our martyrs? The same crippling logic that made 2 Live Crew the center of the freedom of speech debate has now cast Orenthal James Simpson's pound of flesh as an indictment of the American Judicial System.

There it is, the dead horse that once was the stud we rode in the name of Justice. It's been thrown into a barrel to be bitched will corruption and god Money; hand me the stick son, and let me get my whacks in.

As the Nostradamus-esque Jello Biafra once wrote: "We live in a country that provides liberty and justice for all those who can afford it."

Halls of justice painted green. Once you've gone this freakshow, there is no turning back. Regardless of whether he actually committed the crimes or not, a good chunk of Americans were willing to go to bat and say he did. What was needed to heal the country was a calm, clean, conclusive, defense, not Vaudeville scare tactics, genocide references and rampant conspiracy theories resembling mescaline-induced Oliver Stone out-takes.

Johnnie Cochran can sit back now and claim that the race card was not played, but the cameras made sure that we all saw it in the deck, sandwiched between Frederick Douglass quotations and asinine calls for jury nullification. Contrary to popular belief, the trial was to see whether O.J. Simpson murdered his wife, not to determine whether he or the LAPD was the more evil entity. Some cops are fascist, racist, pigs. See, I can assert that and it still does not precipitate the guilt or innocence of O.J. Simpson.

The whole thing boils down to bad algebra. No matter how many times Mr. Cochran would like to

push it into our skulls, there is no correlation between X and Y. Mr. Simpson's acquittal will not change anything and I pray, against all reason, that the jurors were not so gullible as to believe the claim that their ballot would equal a reform of the legal system.

If you're a minority thinking this media circus furthered your cause, think again. Revenge, the other white meat. I'd hate to be a black man awaiting trial on a domestic abuse case in the South this week. They'll be lynching so hard it'll make the reconstruction look like "We Are The World."

Congratulations to those who bought T-shirts with the winning side, but don't expect O.J. to be inviting you over for Monday Night Football anytime soon. 200 years of misery, struggle and perseverance changed into a cheap Get Out Of Jail Free card. Yeah, he's just like the common man, give or take a few million dollars.

Bear with me O.J. supporters. Even if he was not responsible for the deaths of Ronald Goldman and Nicole Brown Simpson, what does this mockery of a trial really prove? That twelve people, when lied to and told that their ballot will

somehow radically change the racist police state that is L.A., will desperately cast their vote for reform? I can't blame the jurors, my faith in mankind is too shallow.

In a Nixon linkage nightmare, guilt became associated with a powder keg of racial upheaval no one wanted to be held responsible for lighting. Would I have been able to vote guilty once convinced that my decision would

- 1) possibly start a riot and
- 2) serve as an affirmation of the police's totalitarian chokehold on the citizenry.

Hell, what's one more dead American ideal.

I don't know what the jury voted on and we will never know exactly what they ingested during the long trial, but I do know that various pollutants should have been kept out of the courtroom to prevent possible delusions from developing within their minds; to keep their decision from being trivialized and easily discarded by a section of the American public.

America is going to have the life expectancy of a narc at a biker rally if we don't legitimize our system by finding a mysterious killer who stepped in, slaughtered two people and then disappeared into the night. We also really need a motive as to why Mark Fuhrman, rather than picking a random black man off the streets to subdue his racist wrongful prosecution fix, decided to frame one of the few people who would beat the rap.

You can't find justice, it'll find you. Murder for fun and profit. Between book deals and pay-per-view specials, it's beginning to look like crime, excuse me, being wrongfully accused of a crime, pays.

I smell a Jack Ruby overtime play.

McKain is an undeclared sophomore and a Daily Nebraskan columnist

The **N** Stands For Knowledge

by James Zank



Freedom should flow online

"Innocent Images." It was the name of the investigation, but it didn't describe what the FBI found on Michael Shasky's computer.

Instead, they found illegal child pornography. What some may find startling is that Shasky serves as a State Patrol Trooper in the Ogallala area. The FBI found the material after a nationwide search of over a hundred homes and offices.

The FBI certainly were within their limits when they searched Shasky's computer. The images they confiscated were legally obtained and will be used against Shasky when he goes to court later this month.

But the overriding question deals not with the FBI's search but this — who can access what you have on your computer?

The answer is disheartening. The services and access we pay for, down to the last e-mail transmission, do not actually belong to us.

Computer bulletin boards and Internet use provide us with almost instantaneous connection and information. There is no arguing their usefulness. Yet we often take their privacy for granted.

I know I've never questioned any of the letters I've sent hurtling down the information superhighway. Most people haven't. But the fact remains that even material we consider harmless could be censored.

Most of it isn't, of course. America Online and Prodigy probably won't bother with my letter to a friend vacationing in Germany or care about any law school information I might download.

However, these services do reserve the right to remove mail, examine bulletin boards and even discontinue service if they feel a user has overstepped their bounds.

If Exon and others have their way, some of this material will automatically be off limits to the younger members of our society. We will see services such as "Net Nanny" take over for parents who



Krista Schwarting

"Better that several offensive statements go uncensored than one truly original idea go unnoticed."

don't have the time or interest to regulate what their kids tap into on the computer after school.

Anne Wells Branscomb, in her book "Who Owns Information?" states for once and for all that we can't take privacy for granted, even in the comfort of our own home.

If you use a UNL e-mail account be aware that the university has the right to examine your mail periodically if it wants to. Again, it probably wouldn't without good reason, but it's within its rights.

Any business has the right to access your e-mail sent or received at work. The reasoning is simple; when you log onto their system, the first thing you're likely to see is a one-sentence release asking you to accept their use conditions before continuing. The same applies even with services you pay for the right to use.

With the vast, largely untapped resources of the information superhighway stretching out before us, it's ludicrous to think that it all can be controlled. I don't believe it can. At some level, people still have to have the freedom to write what they want in their e-mail and check out just about anything

floating around on the World Wide Web.

When I first heard about what the new technology could do, I thought it might be one last chance at an uncensored environment. I was, naively, wrong.

I don't have a problem with a service, either free or paid, watching over what happens under their auspices. Branscomb clarifies that such supervision can actually protect users from having unwanted mail stuffed in their box.

I think there isn't any place where free speech could exist more freely than online. Although the First Amendment continues to protect our rights to speak and demonstrate, the Internet would provide that service in a relatively anonymous and comfortable environment.

A service needs to be instituted for people to speak without any chance of censorship. It means that people who log on must take the chance of being offended by something that is said without chastising the owner of that service.

Better that several offensive statements go uncensored than one truly original idea go unnoticed.

It's not a practical theory. But as we type into the great wide open, it would be helpful to know we stand no chance, even a small one, of having our words removed before others have a chance to read and respond. I'd be willing to risk being offended if it meant being heard.

My idea certainly isn't PC, and it still wouldn't prevent people like Shasky from their illegal activities. Those who favor regulation would say such a service opens up the risk for other illegal actions like drug deals.

Like the justice system, we have to look at the balance. Freedom of speech always poses risks. But are they risks we're willing to take?

Schwarting is a graduate student in broadcast journalism and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

