

OPINION/PAGES

OUR VIEW

On a roll

Nebraska soccer team deserves fans' support

Created three years ago as a solution to a gender-equity imbalance, the Nebraska soccer team has taken the Cornhusker Athletic Department by storm.

After two relatively successful years and the expected growing pains that come with a new program, Coach John Walker's squad has run circles around the competition this fall.

Wednesday, Walker was named the Big 12 Conference Coach of the Year, and five members of his 19-0 team earned first-team all-conference honors. Walker should be commended, and he should be considered for national coach-of-the-year honors.

He has done an incredible job, leading this team to a conference championship and defeating several national powers along the way. This weekend in St. Louis, Nebraska will try to take its magic one step further by winning the first-ever Big 12 Tournament.

The Huskers' main competition will come from Texas A&M, which fell to Nebraska 1-0 in Lincoln earlier this season. The Aggies are a top-notch program, and because of NU's success this season, it now ranks among the nation's elite, too.

Nebraska and Texas A&M are likely to meet on Sunday in the tournament's championship game. The contest will be televised live on Fox Sports Rocky Mountain, becoming the first-ever women's collegiate soccer game to be televised live.

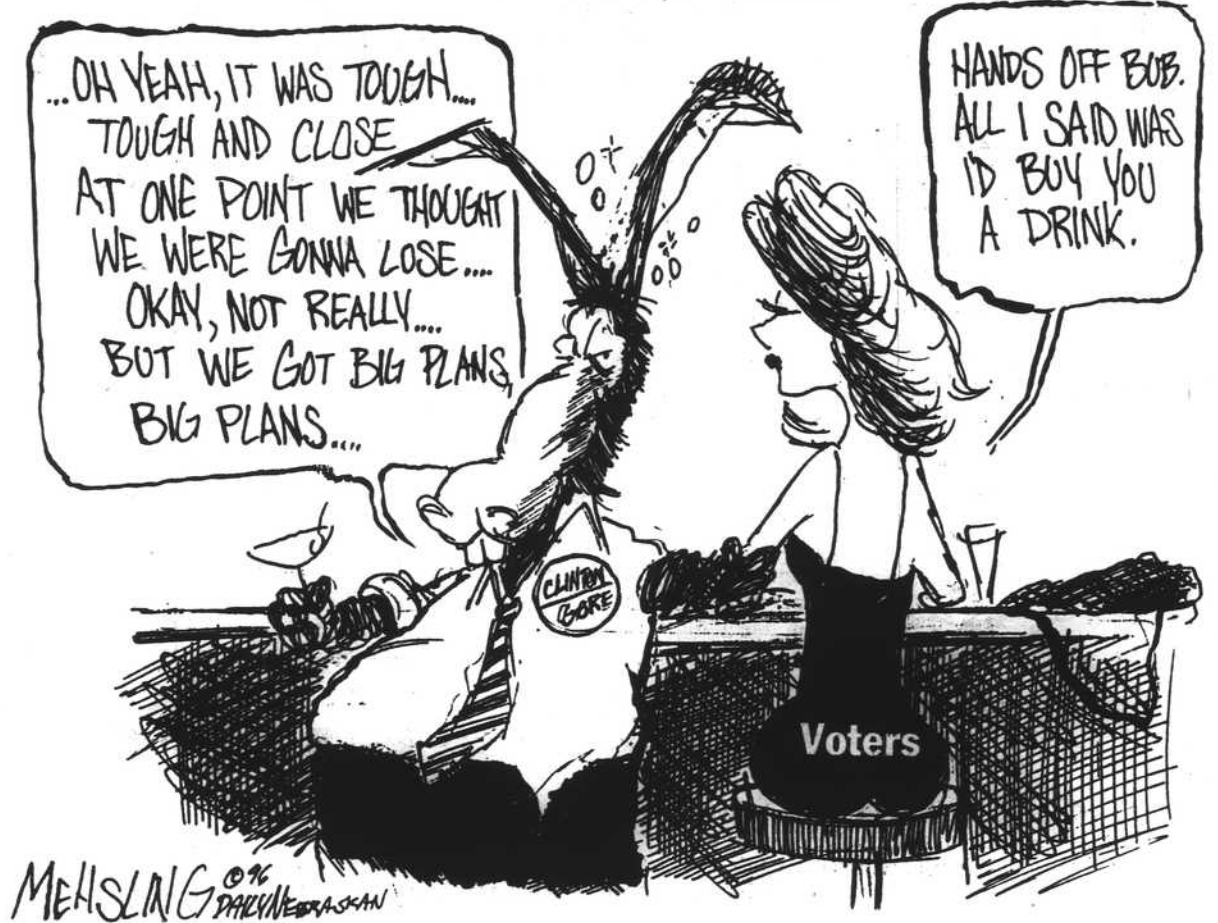
Three years ago, no one would have imagined Nebraska in this position.

Regardless of what happens this weekend in St. Louis, the Huskers are destined for the NCAA Tournament. They will play host to at least one game and perhaps as many as three later this month. Three victories in the tournament and the Huskers will be bound for Santa Clara, Calif., and the already sold-out Final Four.

In three years, Walker has given Husker fans an exciting product, a team that deserves the support of the entire community while playing in the NCAA Tournament.

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MEHSLING'S VIEW



GUEST VIEW

Todd ANDERSON

Family values the French way

Once again we have passed through another major election year during which the issue of "family values" repeatedly came up. Whatever effect debates on issues involving "family values" actually have on the outcome of the election, it seems odd to me that this term is used so heavily, because no one can really give a hard definition of what "family values" means.

All the same, conservative leaders and liberals alike generally bicker over abortion rights, gay rights, social security, family leave, etc. Our leaders talk about restoring the family to the way it was years ago, conjuring delightful images of Ward and June Cleaver for some and frightful images of a penal colony for others.

Family, or more specifically, those you include in your family, obviously is not set in stone. Generally, it means people to whom you feel close: friends, relatives, colleagues, etc.

However, the term values is easier to define, meaning something that is important or precious. How can we know what is important to us as a people, a society, or a culture?

I think we should look at "family values" on a more basic level, noting habitual actions and customs that signify what is really important in our world.

I am rather certain you and I are familiar with the culture and society of the United States. So, in keeping with the study-abroad-in-France theme, my job here is to mention the habits and traditions that point out values in French society.

Why is this significant? By contrasting and comparing the habits of our own culture with another, we can identify what we value and whether the way we express it is sufficient. Anyway, on with a few points of cultural interest:

- The French always greet each other with kisses and handshakes.



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Men greet each other with handshakes and a hello; men and women and pairs of women greet each other with kisses and a hello. Here in Angers, and in the region of Anjou, the people are known for always giving four "bises" or small kisses on the cheek to someone they know well.

- Weekends on campus in Angers are generally dead. Why? The University of Angers is a lot like UNL in that a large percentage of the students come from this area. The difference, however, is that most of the students travel home to visit their parents almost every weekend.
- The French make sure to take time for lunch and dinner. Generally,

the block of time between noon and 2 p.m. is reserved for lunch breaks lasting about an hour. Shops and banks close for lunch. It's common to sit down for a meal with friends, family or colleagues. Dinners are later than in the United States — usually around 7 or 8 p.m. — and the whole family is almost always present, though this is changing a little. If you are invited to dinner at someone's house, it is customary to bring flowers, an after-dinner snack, or a bottle of wine — even if the host is someone your age. The dinners are rather elaborate, consisting of an aperative and a five-course meal served by the host or hostess. The French love to host dinners in their homes; it is a gesture of kindness and a great way to get to know people better.

In my residence hall, there is only one phone to every floor, and outside calls cannot be made on those phones. We all have to use the public phone, and there are only four for the whole building. Anyway, on Sunday nights, after students have returned from home, and during the middle of the week, these phones are always busy with French students calling their parents.

In the United States, we have completely different ways of greeting people, building relationships and staying close to family. Neither culture is superior to the other because of these habits. The idea here is to reflect on our own culture and our own manner of expressing what we value at the most basic level.

Keeping this in mind, it helps to see more clearly what "family values" might mean and what place that will or should have during the next four years and in upcoming elections.

Anderson is a junior French and Spanish major and a Daily Nebraskan staff reporter who is studying in France this semester.

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