

J.J.  
HARDER

# ... and discrimination for all

## Political correctness fans flames of hatred

OK, here's the scene: A bunch of white college boys dressed up in Confederate garb, playing with Civil War weapons and burning a cross.

Sounds like the very foundation upon which to lay a brotherhood of men. No, not a fraternity. I was thinking more along the lines of say ... the Ku Klux Klan. Oh, wait a second, everybody calm down. They didn't have the hoods on after all.

The recent "historic ceremony" that occurred as a function of a certain fraternity on campus did not in any way help to show that racism is dying.

Regardless of whether or not the incident was racially motivated does not matter — it obviously came across as having prejudicial insinuations — and from the ensuing reactions it is evident that racism is alive and kicking today in America (as if you couldn't already tell).

We need to face up to the fact that some people are going to be racist no matter what happens.

Racism has been around almost since the beginning of time, and it is not going to cease in the foreseeable future. People naturally look at others and notice differences and similarities, and probably, always will.

However, people are now finally trying not to discriminate against others based on their respective racial and gender differences.

When I was about 4, my family moved from an all-white small town in Kansas to a good-sized city in Iowa where for the first time I saw a black person.

I said "Mom, what's wrong with him?" pointing to a black male, and "Why is he colored like that?"

I received a lengthy talk from my mother



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and learned how God had created us all with our differences in colors, shapes, sizes and all sorts of other aspects.

Now I understand, but I still cannot look at a black person and not notice that he or she is black!

"Whoa!" you say, "It's not 'black,' it's 'African-American.' Come on, get PC!" I'll tell you what you can do with your PC! If we are all going to be PC then I guess that I am 'Iranian-German-English-Irish-American!'

Now how does that sound? I don't think that I am going to be putting that on every job application for the rest of my life!

"No, wait! You're white!"

What? Why can I be referred to on the basis of my skin color unlike others? How is that fair? If we're going to discriminate, let's discriminate against everyone fairly. If blacks can have the United Negro College Fund, why can't I have the United White Kids College Fund? I'm not advocating discrimination, but if some are going to do it, what the heck, join the party!

So what is discrimination truly about? It's about certain people saying exactly how everyone is separated. We are all different, just quit pointing it out at every place! Don't be PC and ask for your 'server' at dinner. Ask for your waitress if she's a girl, and don't insist that things be referred to as 'human-made' rather than man-made.

These types of literal accuracies are just asking for everyone to analyze each situation until we have a nation of individuals and not an indivisible country. If some people are racist and others want their minority status to bestow upon them extra advantages — let 'em try! Tell our PC world that the majority doesn't want to discriminate or be racist in any form, even if a few want to anyway.

As for all of the fraternities out there considering bringing back certain rituals for tradition's sake, you might want to be a bit less hasty in making your decisions.

Just because we used to beat, rape and ridicule blacks doesn't mean that we should have an "educational event" to show a "strength of brotherhood" in the form of National Slave Day. Although for Sigma Chi, I bet that Jan. 23 would do just fine.

Harder is a sophomore broadcasting major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Guest  
VIEW

# Splittin' hairs

## Bible, literal don't mix

HOUSTON (U-WIRE) — If Minnesota is the "State of 10,000 Lakes," then Hawaii surely must be the "State of 10,000 Lucky Pierres." Ever since a Hawaii judge ruled in favor of same-sex marriages, every homosexual from Kalamazoo, Mich., to Yazoo, Miss., has moved there to take advantage of our 50th state's lax social mores. Their lustful, sinful behavior is a shame to us all.

Homosexuality is wrong. It says so right there in the Bible. Leviticus 18:22 clearly states, "Thou shalt not lie with mankind as with womankind; it is abomination." Lest we think God is merely joking, he repeats himself in Leviticus 20:13, this time with a curse that "they shall surely be put to death."

One could, of course, split hairs by pointing out that homosexuality per se is not forbidden, just homosexuality between men. (Does this mean "Heather Has Two Mommies" is acceptable Sunday school material?)

And then there is Matthew 5:29-30. "And if thy right eye offend thee, pluck it out, and cast it from thee; for it is profitable for thee that one of thy members should perish, and not that thy whole body be cast into hell. And if thy right hand offend thee, cut it off ..."

If the Bible is to be taken literally, then every red-blooded American male should be walking around without his pecker and, (let's be honest, because lying is a sin) his right hand. But whoa, careful with that ax, Eugene! Before you Bobbitt yourself, read Deuteronomy 23:1 - "He that hath his privy member cut off shall not enter into the congregation of the Lord."

But circumcision is also commanded (see Genesis 17:11, among other verses). But what if the rabbi is careless and, "Thwack!" lops off the whole thing? Should we abide by the Old Testament philosophy of "an eye for an eye" (Exodus 21:24), or should we turn to the New Testament and "turn the other cheek" (Matthew 5:39)?

OK, so even the devil can quote Scriptures ... I'm not the devil, but I am a Republican, so I can certainly understand the confusion.

Does this mean I support gay marriages? No. I'm still something of a traditionalist, and I strongly believe that marriage should consist of "man and wife," not "manly woman and wife" or "two guys" or whatever else could come up.

If this means I'm sanctimonious about the sanctity of marriage, so be it.

Nevertheless, I do believe homosexuals ought to at least have the right to nest. So call it something else. That way the gay community gets what it wants, and is happy. My fellow Republicans get what they want, and are happy (or as happy as Republicans can be). And every legally wed gay couple I meet will be spared the indignity of having me ask them, "So which one of you guys is the wife, anyway?"

—Eric Pennell  
The Daily Cougar



JIM MEHSLING/DN

Patrick  
MACDONALD

# Handcuffing the system

## Numerous questions abound after Renteria settlement

The Francisco Renteria case has certainly tested the waters of Lincoln's law enforcement, emergency response and legal systems.

At issue is the question of racism, excessive force and improper treatment of an individual whom police had attempted to question regarding a disturbance.

This case should not be about racism, although racism is easy to justify. It should be about appropriate behavior for law enforcement personnel when apprehending someone for questioning regarding a crime, and when excessive force is justified.

According to Lincoln Police Chief Tom Casady on Oct. 30, 1994, Lincoln Police were called to respond to a disturbance in north central Lincoln.

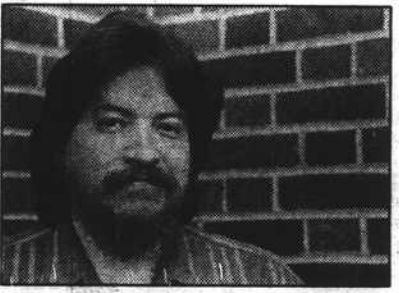
The individual causing the disturbance was Chico Martinez who was in violation of a protection order. A member of the University Police department also responded to the call because she was in the area. She approached an individual matching Mr. Martinez's description. This individual was Francisco Renteria.

When approached and asked to stop, Mr. Renteria responded, then attempted to flee. The UNL officer moved in front of him and was "bowed over." At this point, Mr. Renteria became combative.

Lincoln Police officers responded to the scene and a struggle ensued that lasted for two-and-a-half minutes. During the struggle, police radioed for assistance three times, before subduing Mr. Renteria. According to the records, Mr. Renteria had been subdued using a lateral vascular neck restraint, more commonly known as a sleeper hold.

After being placed in the back of a squad car, an officer noticed that Mr. Renteria was having trouble breathing and immediately rendered assistance. The response of police, fire and ambulance crews was timely, but Mr. Renteria eventually suffocated and died.

As a result of Mr. Renteria's death, a number of lawsuits were filed by the Renteria family. The city of Lincoln recently made a



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\$200,000 settlement. According to Bill Austin, the Lincoln city attorney, there were a number of reasons for the settlement.

First and foremost was the cost of preparation of the city's defense. To date \$40,000 has been spent on outside legal defense and \$25,000 to \$30,000 has been spent by the city attorney's office just to address the mountain of motions filed by the Renterias.

Beside the costs, there was the risk of loss to the city due to a sympathetic jury — which is always possible in a case of this magnitude.

The City Council also had to deal with the potential loss and burden to the taxpayers and the continued disruption of the city revolving around this case. Consequently, a settlement was deemed appropriate.

Regardless of the monetary issues, the Renteria case is really about crime and punishment.

While I sympathize with the family regarding the loss of a loved one, and

knowing that the family was only seeking justice in their loved one's death, seeking financial gain from this unfortunate situation only raises more questions about Mr. Renteria's attempted flight.

But if an individual is approached by police regarding a criminal act and the individual attempts to flee from police, isn't his flight an admission of guilt?

Why would he choose to confront police and flee — when all they wanted to do was question him? Simply telling the police his name would have precluded his eventual death.

Police need the support of the community and the City Council to remain effective in combatting the ever-increasing threat of crime.

If this includes use of excessive force to bring criminals to justice, then police should be able to use force when the situation warrants and we, as members of this community, should stand behind their decision.

If their actions were racially motivated or excessive force was not called for, as many people believe, then we can no longer tolerate force for the sake of force, and these officers should be held accountable for their actions.

This should include criminal prosecution to the fullest extent of the law. Police are, after all, not above the law, but they have to be able to enforce it unimpeded.

The courts have already determined that the officers involved acted within the authority and protocols of the Lincoln Police Department and have cleared the officers of any wrongdoing.

We cannot continue to reward people for criminal acts. If we do, crime will become more appealing than honest labor. We might as well declare moral bankruptcy now and get it all over with.

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