

OPINIONPACKAGES

Guest VIEW

Speaking out

Victims of rape cannot continue with the silence

From The Daily Orange

SYRACUSE, N.Y. (U-WIRE) — If there is one fact statistics can clarify about rape, it is that rapists are not mysterious creatures who people only come to know when they are accused.

A rapist can be a friendly neighbor. A rapist can be a seemingly trustworthy relative. Rapists can be, and usually are, common people who women are in contact with all the time.

What is disheartening about the mystique that people have with rape and sexual assault is that it puts women in great danger and many simply do not know the threats that exist.

It is for this reason that cases of sexual assault should be known to the community. Community members, both women and men, are served significantly with information about sexual assault, but the public is not truly informed without examples to actually drive home the issue.

Reporting cases of rape and sexual assault to the public serves as a wake-up call to a populace that often knows painfully little about these dangers. Public knowledge is especially important with the increasingly common "date rape" drug — Rohypnol.

Rohypnol, or "roofies," dissolves easily in drinks and can induce a hypnotic-like trance. People under the influence of Rohypnol are often susceptible to suggestion and rarely can recall later the incidents that occur.

Indeed, rape and sexual assault are sensitive issues, but women should not be discouraged to come forward with their stories. Women are not the criminals in these cases, they are the victims. By feeling cornered and silenced, this victimization only grows.

And when women come forward with their cases, the assailants are brought out in the open, too. This helps dispel the mystique of rape and sexual assault.

This threat to women and to society will not go away unless it is dealt with honestly and looked at realistically. This cannot happen unless the public is adequately informed.

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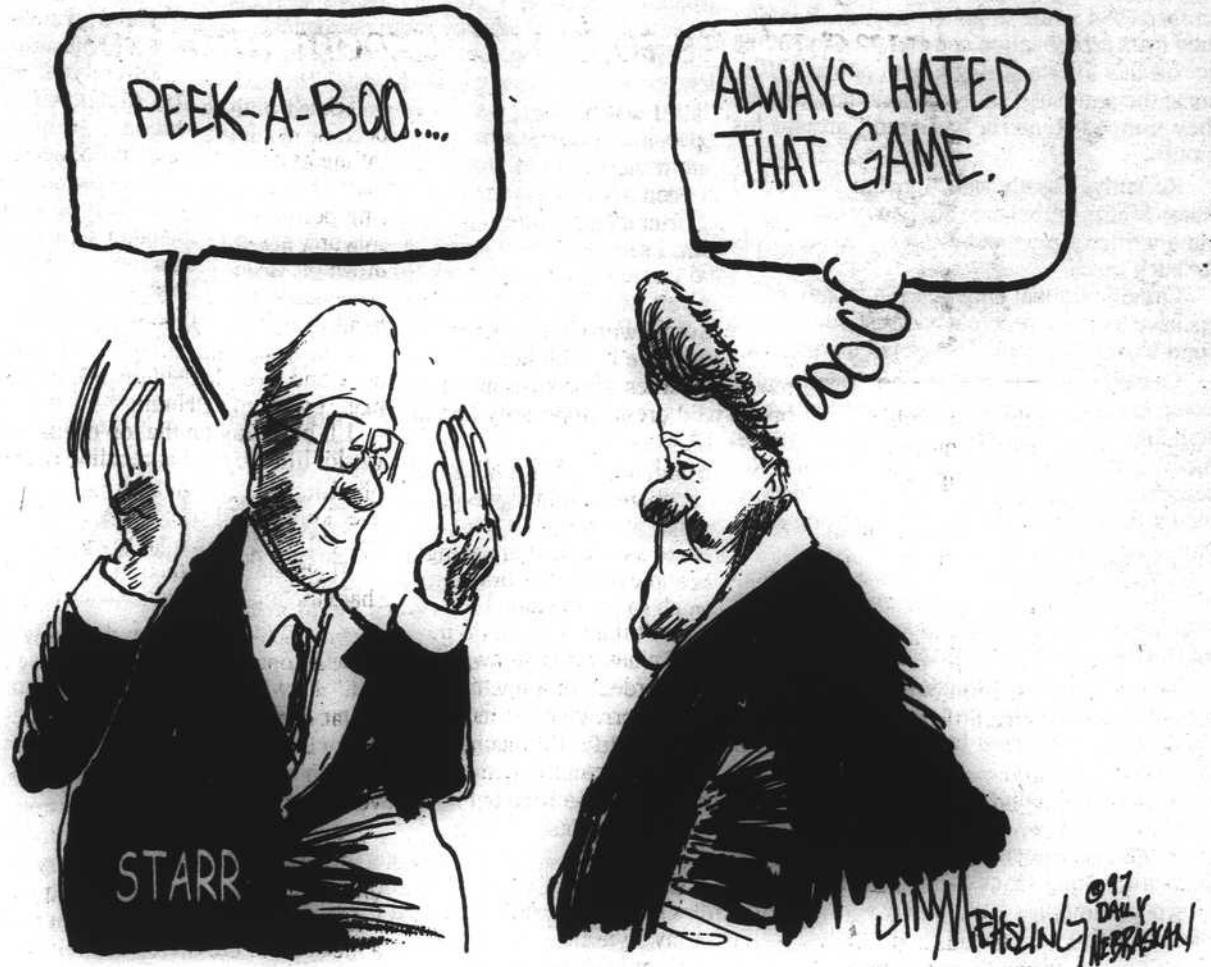
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Mehsling's VIEW



DN LETTERS

Strong Commitment

I fail to see why state Sen. Jim Jensen believes that gay and lesbian marriage would be a threat to marriage as an institution.

I also fail to see how lesbian and gay marriage would dissolve "the bond that keeps the family together," as he stated in the DN's article on Thursday.

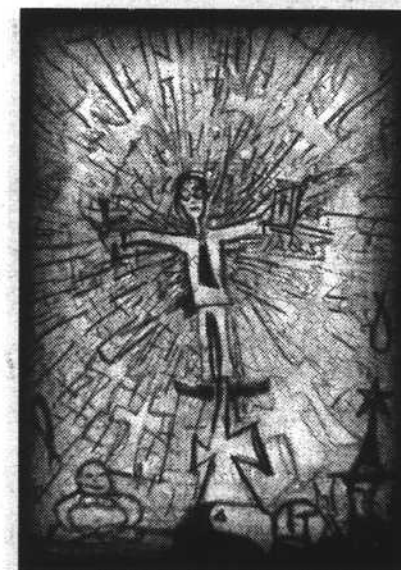
Doug Patton echoed those sentiments — yet when Sen. Ernie Chambers questioned him about whether gay and lesbian marriage would impact heterosexual marriage, Patton stated it would not. Guyla Mills tells us that our Unicameral "represent(s) people who believe in the Bible and its teaching against homosexuality."

I must remind Ms. Mills that the Unicameral also represents Nebraskans who do not believe in the hateful, uncivil and un-Christian teachings of the religious right.

There are plenty of Christian denominations that permit and allow the union of two women or the union of two men, such as the Unitarian-Universalist Church or the Metropolitan Community Church, to name a few.

The state has no business using the strictest possible religious standards to decide on this issue — especially in a country that aspires to maintain a separation between the church and the state.

If the reasons for the state to forbid two individuals from marrying one another come from religious principles rather than a genuine



JASON GILDOW/DN

state interest, then they have no business in our Nebraska Legislature. Sen. Chambers hit the nail on the head when he stated, "that more is involved in this issue than sex." Lesbians and gay men will have sex regardless of whether same-sex marriage comes into being or not, in spite of what Norman Dority and others opposed to it would like, just like heterosexuals will continue to have sex in and out of wedlock.

But gay and lesbian marriage is about more than sexual relations between two members of the same sex. It is about a caring and committed relationship between two people who love one another and will love one another for the rest of their lives.

Robert W. Anderson
graduate student
unclassified

Can't We All Just Get ...

I have definitely noticed a big shift in the Daily Nebraskan. A full page "ad" disproving(?) evolution? Why must you print such backward, neo-Christian babble?

The real fairy tale is that of the creation story. To believe that your god is the only and absolute thing in this universe is to disregard so many wonderful things. Like FREE WILL for example.

Every time the paper prints another vapid story by J.J. Harder, they move further away from journalism and closer to ignorant babbling. Come on, equal time doesn't mean give the Christians the run of things. What about the Buddhist view, the pagan view, the taoist view, the hippie view, the punk view, the queer view, and yes, the liberal view (which at one point in our history meant the free man's view)? UGGGGHHHHHH!!!!

Michael Svoboda
senior
English/film

Deadly Advice

Sonia Hollimon-Stovall suggested donating blood as a way to find out if you're HIV-positive in her column "Testing Courage" (DN, Tuesday).

No one who thinks there is the slightest possibility he or she could be infected should try to give blood. You can have a negative test result and still be infected. Using this "sneaky way," as Hollimon-Stovall puts it, could cost someone their life.

Julie Kinkennon
freshman
theatre

P.S. Write Back

Send letters to: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 "R" St., Lincoln, NE 68588, or fax to (402) 472-1761, or e-mail <letters@unlinfo.unl.edu>. Letters must be signed and include a phone number for verification.