

# OPINION PACKAGES

## Our VIEW

### Plug-in prof? Internet can't replace personal instruction

Sit down in front of a computer and ask it to explain the finer points of molecular chemistry in layman's terms or explain why you can't grasp the political theory of ancient Greece and it'll probably just beep and whir.

It won't pull up a chair and chat, or grab a piece of chalk and sketch out the details on a chalkboard. For that kind of attention, you need more than a virtual vacuum.

You need a professor.

The Internet and World Wide Web are great resources for college students, but without professors to make sense of the information, the technology is just a tool or toy.

In the race to be in the lead of the technology stampede, the university should not trample on those professors who make the information worthwhile.

Technology can't do what people like John Gruhl can. Gruhl, a UNL political science professor, recently won the Outstanding Teaching and Instruction Creativity Award for his personal attention and desire to make students understand.

While it's admirable that NU is funneling funds into a virtual university and a new information science and technology college, it should not assume the Internet is going to replace the accomplishment of professors like Gruhl.

It's exciting to spend money on new technology because the innovation opens up so many new opportunities. With every dollar spent, the university seems to be moving further and further into the future.

But if this money is spent at the expense of luring quality professors, it is money spent in vain.

There is no way, as progressive as it may seem, that all classes can be successfully taught by plugging in to a computer where they — and 6,000 other faceless students — watch a 10-inch professor being beamed into their classroom.

With as many people as can be reached with the Internet, you can't expect to plop a student down in front of a computer and expect him or her to be enlightened.

Students learn best with personal one-on-one attention. As the professor-student ratio decreases, the amount of material retained should increase.

To keep this personal attention and student retention, the university should continue — even strengthen — its commitment to hiring quality teachers.

To get quality teachers means flaunting an attractive salary and incentives, which can't be done if there's no money set aside.

If a disproportionate amount of money goes to fiber optics rather than faculty, or software rather than salaries, then the University of Nebraska is going to have more information than it knows what to do with.

But it's not going to get that information to its students in a way they can use it and learn.

## Mehsling's VIEW



## DN LETTERS

### Question Of Semantics

I apologize that in Jason Fredregill's eyes I am but a lowly, "stupid freshman," I only hope you don't hold this against me.

I recognize and respect Mr. Harder's attempt to religiously support the termination of life; however, I don't understand his lack of any logical consistency.

In the response to his first question, Mr. Harder assumes himself to be a deity when he states, "God is displeased" and "knowledgeable of the holiness of life."

Unless Mr. Harder is the God to which he refers, he has the journalistic obligation to properly attribute God's responses to these questions.

The response to his second self-answer question also contains fallacies. Execution, by definition, is not a "response to murder."

Webster's Dictionary will clarify this for the misinformed. The definition limits execution to the inflicting of capital punishment. I would like to remind Mr. Harder that in the early part of this century, rape was also considered a capital crime and executions did occur as punishment for this horrible crime.

His continued support of killing utilizes Hebrew word origins and reduces life to a matter of semantics. I call capital punishment murder. Mr. Harder calls capital punishment execution. Adolf Hitler called the extermination of Jews a purification. If one has been murdered/executed/purified, that individual doesn't care what it is called — that person is dead.

By agreeing that those who oppose the death penalty "place a great value on the murderer's life," Mr. Harder contradicts everything he promotes. Each life has value — granted by God or humans.

Mr. Harder incorrectly assumes if the frequency of the death penalty is increased, the value of life will grow and the number of killings will decrease. This is empirically not true. In 1993, states that have carried out executions have a murder rate of 9.35 per 100,000 people. States without a death penalty — 5.22 per 100,000 (source



MATT HANEY/DN

"Crime in the U.S.," FBI).

I respect diversified opinions and the right to proclaim and publish these; however, I cannot give assumptive and fallacious support any credit.

Chris Begeman  
freshman  
undeclared

purpose of a newspaper is so that its readers can have a source of information that caters to their interests (hence, the very informative series of beer articles).

Another purpose, found in the letters to the editor section, is to provide its readers with the opportunity to address topics of interest and concern (in other words, bitch) as I am doing now.

Why should the interests and concerns of first-year students be made out to be any less important than those of someone who has "actually been out in the world?"

I suppose that Jason thinks he has been out in the world. What would 80-year-olds say to that? They would laugh in his face, that's what they would do. The reality is that we ALL have been out in the world for a while and we ALL have interests and concerns to share, whether we are 18, 22 or even 80 years old. Geesh. Get down off you high horse, will ya?

Sarah West  
senior

English/secondary education/ESL

### Take A Chill Pill

In response to Jason Fredregill's letter regarding the seemingly high amount of published letters from first-year students: Jason, get a grip.

Just because a person is young or in his/her first year of college does not automatically spell out "moron." Nor should these people (commonly known as froshes) be made to bear down under the glaring light of a sign that says "WARNING: Unsubstantiated opinions and banal beliefs found here — DO NOT MENTION ABORTION OR CAPITAL PUNISHMENT."

No, some of these youngsters actually DO have important things to say to the world, even though they may not be as worldly and wise as you.

Also, it seems that you miss the point of what it means to have a college newspaper. Part of the

### Ultimate Retribution

In his column Wednesday, Michael Donley emphatically states "that retribution is not part of the laws of our land."

His statement has no basis in reality. Retribution is an integral part of our judicial system, evidenced by the millions of dollars awarded as punitive damages in civil trials.

These punitive damages are retribution against the person who commits a crime. Fines imposed on people convicted in criminal cases are also retribution. Donley should refrain from making statements that have no basis in fact and could be misleading to readers uninformed with the workings of our legal system.

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### EDITORIAL POLICY

Unsigned editorials are the opinions of the Spring 1997 Daily Nebraskan. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, its employees, its student body or the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. A column is solely the opinion of its author. The Board of Regents serves as publisher of the Daily Nebraskan; policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. The UNL Publications Board, established by the regents, supervises the 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 student employees.

### LETTER POLICY

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor and guest columns, but does not guarantee their publication. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject any material submitted. Submitted material becomes the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Those who submit letters must identify themselves by name, year in school, major and/or group affiliation, if any. Submit material to: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St. Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448. E-mail: letters@unlinfo.unl.edu.

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