

OPINION PACKAGES

Our VIEW

Standing down

Administration needs to announce new policy

On Saturday, two Daily Nebraskan reporters walked through the stands of South Stadium and talked to fans about the new policy requesting fans stand in the footwells, rather than on the bleachers of Memorial Stadium.

And although they found most students obeyed the policy, and most non-students was thrilled over students' compliance, some fans in section 12 were still causing a problem for the non-students seated above them.

In fact, that handful of non-students were downright livid that, although most students obeyed the new policy, the few who still sit in the little sliver called section 12 were so intent on inconveniencing the fans above them.

But when the reporter asked the first ones standing on section 12 bleachers why they were causing the most problematic chain reaction of bleacher-standing, those fans said they were visiting from Norfolk and knew nothing of the "stand down" policy.

Unfortunately, because these visiting fans sat in the student section, they made students appear responsible for causing the bleacher-standing inconvenience that could result in students losing their seats.

But can these Norfolk fans be blamed?

No. They didn't know of the new policy, not because they were ignorant, but because they had never been told by an authority.

To fault the Athletic Department, the policy has never been announced at a football game, and only students have received "stand down" warnings with their tickets.

It's enough to make students wonder if the goal is to keep non-students in the dark about the policy and cause student seats to move to the top of South Stadium.

If student seats do move because of a lack of information and enforcement of the policy, the punishment must fit the crime.

That crime was limited to the bottom, east side of section 12. Those students who now sit below these fans could be moved to the few seats they inconvenience.

According to non-students sitting in sections 13, 14 and 15, students below stand in the footwells of their rows and do not obstruct their view of the playing field.

Therefore, if the Athletic Department decides to move all student seats next fall without ever announcing the "stand down" policy at a football game, the move will be both unnecessary and unfair.

How ironic from an Athletic Department that displays its commitment to fairness in an inscription on the northwest wall of Memorial Stadium:

"Courage; Generosity; Fairness; Honor; In these are the true rewards of manly sport."

Haney's VIEW



Breaking the silence

Women, men must take night back



ALEXIA SCOTT is a senior biological sciences major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

Wednesday night I invite you to join in breaking the silence of Lincoln's streets. I encourage you to join in chorus with the voices of women who are tired of being told that they must live in fear. These voices will ring strong and proud as the Take Back the Night march and candlelight vigil lights up the steps of the Capitol.

This annual occurrence causes me to think about the parameters my femaleness places upon how I live my life. I have been trained not to be out alone at night, always to be aware of who is around me, to be alert for ways to escape a situation, not to trust the smile of a stranger. In essence, I have been repeatedly told that I am not capable of taking care of myself because I am a woman.

Amid all the messages that women are sent, the lesson of silence has always been stressed. This muting of the female voice results in only a frightening 10 percent of campus sexual assaults being reported. Why? Because women are told to withstand their pain and suffering, or endure the endless questioning of their actions and character, which may have led to their assault. Take Back the Night is about women voicing their anger, frustration and strength.

Why do we as a society allow for half our population to be imprisoned by the dangers that the darkness of night brings? Why do we not speak up to protect the very people who bring life into this

“Why do we as a society allow for half our population to be imprisoned by the dangers that the darkness of night brings?”

world? When will we stand in unison and declare that it is not acceptable for women and children to be beaten, raped, threatened and humiliated?

You have all heard the statistics: One in four college students will be the victim of a rape or an attempted rape. Most of these women will be assaulted by someone whom they know, and often trust, like a date, a friend, or even a partner. They will face the trauma of medical testing for HIV, pregnancy and numerous sexually transmitted diseases. They will agonize over decisions involving the morning-after pill and abortion. And they will do it in the confidence of an advocate from the Rape/Spouse Abuse Crisis Center and a close friend, if they are fortunate.

Think for a moment about what these statistics really mean. In real numbers, it means that of the 13,703 women at UNL last year, 3,426 will face a rapist in their lifetimes. That means 343 cases will be reported, but only seven of those cases will ever be prosecuted — leaving 3,419 women to suffer without relief, and that many attackers out on the street waiting for another victim. Look around your lecture room, your residence hall floor, and your pledge class with the knowledge that the lives of many of the women you see will be touched by this violence in the upcoming years.

Sexual assault is only the beginning of the violence that women face in our society. Between 1995 and 1996 there were 3,844 new cases of domestic violence reported in Nebraska. That is an average of 10.5 new cases every day in Nebraska alone. These reports

encompass violence that can occur over a period of years on a monthly, weekly, or all too often, daily basis. The women who suffer at the hands of this violence are cut, bruised, burned and shot — but more importantly, they are humiliated and devalued. Frequently, their children watch and live in this violence, often becoming part of the abuse themselves. And society turns its head, giving unspoken approval to the shattering of these women.

Take Back the Night is as much about men as it is about women. It is about men who are strong enough to stand up for their wives, mothers, friends and daughters. Men who embrace their responsibility to the women that they respect, honor and love, and boldly say that violence against women is not acceptable. To declare that women are valued in our world and that to abuse them is to not be a man.

So, with all the numbers staring us in the face, what do we do? Marching to the Capitol to take back the night is a beginning. From today on we need to make a pledge, woman to woman, that we will not live our lives in fear. We will not stand by while our sisters are tortured, tormented and killed. We will stop our children from witnessing this violence, and thus prevent its perpetuation. We will hold our police and courts accountable for the protection that we do and do not receive. And we will find the strength to do more than just survive within each other. We will not shroud ourselves in silent suffering.

Take Back the Night begins at 7 p.m. Wednesday outside the union. I will be looking forward to seeing and hearing you there.

Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials are the opinions of the Fall 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 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, NE. 68588-0448. E-mail: letters@unlinfo.unl.edu.