

OPINION PAGE

Our VIEW

ASUN applause

Change could come with bill protests

OK, ASUN, it's time to get to work. Let's be honest, the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska has not exactly maintained a sterling reputation with students for quite some time. And while some of that blame is because of the students' own apathy and perceived elitism of the group, a substantial portion of the general populace's disdain for the University of Nebraska-Lincoln's student government is not unfounded.

In the coming months, that image, that perception, can be changed.

It's time for ASUN senators to do something worthwhile, and the Government Liaison Committee's proposed bill to protest Lincoln city ordinance 27.03.220 could be it.

The number of that ordinance may not sound familiar, but for many students, what it says is highly relevant.

City ordinance 27.03.220 states that no more than three unrelated people can live in the same house. And for many college students, that number is far too low.

A substantial portion of the students at this university and at all the other bodies of higher education in Lincoln have been directly affected by this ordinance or know someone who has.

Until you've been evicted from a house for violating a city ordinance that your landlord decided to ignore until it was too late, it's hard to imagine what an impact this ordinance can have on students. But try, won't you?

Imagine finding a college student's dream house, complete with a spacious front porch, three bathrooms, only slightly substandard woodwork and, above all, rent that will come to about \$150 per person once divided four or five ways.

Then, imagine moving in only to find out a few weeks later - in the middle of the semester - that you can't live there anymore.

In a city that receives a great deal of economic support from the university, an ordinance like this is a slap in the face for many students, especially an ordinance that is selectively enforced and that was developed as a response to residential parking woes.

Parking inconveniences are nothing compared to the hassle, drain and expense of breaking a lease, finding another dwelling and re-hooking up cable and phone service for exorbitant fees.

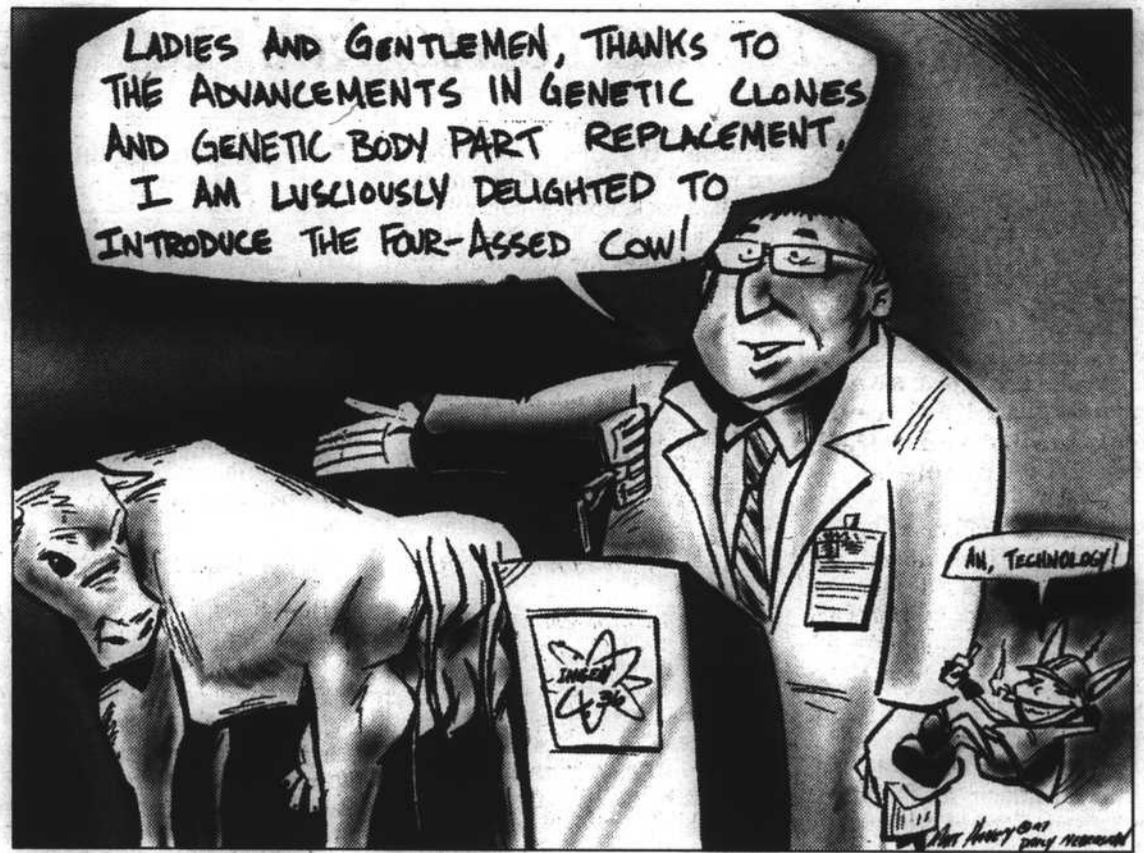
In other words, this is important to the students of UNL. And that means it should be important to ASUN.

Put the seating at Memorial Stadium and the desire to shave a few dollars off student fees aside for a moment, and resolve to attempt a significant change not just for students, but for all of Lincoln.

Make this proposed bill to protest Lincoln city ordinance 27.03.220 a priority, and you may be surprised by the number of students who will applaud your actions.

Frankly, it's about time ASUN earned some applause.

Haney's VIEW



DN LETTERS

Clarification

I would like to thank the DN for providing coverage of the GLBT Resource Center and the upcoming events for National Coming Out Day. However, there was something I would like to mention. Your article stated that the resource center provides counseling for GLBT students. While I wish we could, we are not qualified to do so. The most we can do is refer someone to gay-friendly counselors.

Alison Knudsen
president
GLBT Resource Center

Love the sinner

Mr. Haney's "caricature" Thursday left a funny aftertaste in my mouth. It portrayed a Catholic bishop declaring that the parents of gay individuals were now "permitted" to love and respect their children, but "only if" they refrained from homosexual behavior. I presume Mr. Haney was referring to "Always Our Children: A Pastoral Message to Parents of Homosexual Children and Suggestions for Pastoral Ministers," which was released Sept. 30. However, Mr. Haney, you have misunderstood both the bishops' statements and the teachings of the Catholic Church.

The Catholic Church has always viewed homosexual acts as contrary to natural and divine law, because they "close the sexual act to the gift of life" (Catechism of the Catholic Church, 2357). Hence, homosexual acts are intrinsically wrong.

But that's half the story. The church also states that "the number of men and women who have deep-seated homosexual tendencies is not negligible. ... (for) most of them it is a trial. They must be treated with respect, compassion, and sensitivity. Every sign of unjust discrimination in their regard should be avoided" (Catechism, 2358).

In other words, Mr. Haney, individuals with a homosexual orientation are to be loved and respected unconditionally. Don't get me wrong, for the love and respect that we are called to have does NOT imply or call for consent and agreement. This is the true position of any

bishop of the Catholic Church. In issuing the pastoral letter, the bishops did not change any teaching, but have merely reaffirmed the church's position, and extended help to gay individuals, their parents and the pastors they turn to.

Perhaps many of us will never be able to comprehend the pain and torment experienced by numerous Christian individuals who struggle to live a chaste life despite their homosexual orientation. Their parents and pastors who try to help them make it through every day have chosen to join them in this battle, and often suffer no less. I believe, then, that your work was an injustice both to these persons and the bishops.

I appreciate your attempt to color humor into the picture, Mr. Haney. Perhaps you didn't mean to be offensive. But surely, you must agree with me that it is one thing to misunderstand the religious beliefs of others, and quite another to misrepresent AND make fun of such convictions.

Wei Hsien Wan
sophomore
psychology

Equal time

As a gay atheist and ex-Catholic, I take issue with Nikki Oligmueller's letter printed in Friday's DN. Nikki, why do you think that the Catholic view of homosexuality "does not deserve to be discussed in an editorial cartoon?" Is it because you don't like to read intelligent critiques of your religion's irrational beliefs? Or do you think that more open-minded people should just shut up and accept your dogmatic beliefs without question?

Mr. Haney basically hit the bull's eye with his cartoon. The Catholic Church preaches "love" of gay people - yet STILL condemns them for expressing that love in a physical manner (i.e., by having sex). I personally do not feel "loved" when people tell me they think gay sex is "sinful."

Nikki's letter is, unfortunately, typical of far too many Christians. She, like countless others, screams bloody murder any time someone criticizes or exposes her religion's indefensible and blatantly ludicrous views, especially Christianity's mor-

bid obsession with other people's bedroom behavior. Maybe she realizes that if people actually SEE how silly their religion is and actually THINK critically about it, they might actually reject it as many of my fellow ex-Catholics and ex-Christians already have.

Nikki, if the views of open-minded people bother you, my suggestion to YOU would be not to "pray and pray hard," but to THINK - and THINK rationally.

Nick Wiltgen
senior
meteorology

Love, the underdog?

I would like to say something very simple: Love does not conquer all. It does not seem to be a hard concept to grasp, so why are so many people having so much trouble with it? If you don't understand the concept of love not being the answer to all of the world's problems, you are not alone. Many people don't realize that to have a lifelong relationship, factors beyond love are involved. This is because we have been taught by TV, books, movies, literature and society, in general, that love is stronger than anything else. To me this is no more than a scary fairy tale.

In real life, love is put to the test in hundreds of different ways every day, and we must face the fact that not all love is right. Take two famous movies for instance. In "Casablanca," Humphrey Bogart gives up his love for the good of his country, her country and his conscience. In "The English Patient," Ralph Feinnes ignores his duty to his country and his duty to himself to be with his love.

Love is about shared dreams, lifelong commitment, and doing what is right. As a practicing Catholic, I believe that homosexuality is not right. Consequently, I agree with Mr. Munson's story in the Monday issue of the DN. Homosexuals are people just like the rest of us. They have simply invested more heavily in the empty fairy tale of perfect love.

Erin Howell
freshman
civil engineering

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