

OPINION PARAGRAPHS

Our VIEW

Avoidance advertising

Campaigns make art of skirting issues

Jon Breslow doesn't like gay people. And if voters were to rely solely on TV advertising, namely Breslow's latest campaign ad, that's all they would know of the gubernatorial candidate.

In this advertisement, Breslow's only message is that, if elected, he will not allow same-sex marriages to become a legally recognized union.

Wow.

Breslow's ad is another example of one of the latest and most-disturbing trends in American politics.

A politician's ability to skirt issues and avoid difficult questions used to be a talent that was reserved for public debates and testy reporters.

Nowadays, however, more and more politicians are avoiding addressing society's most pertinent questions by focusing on hot-button issues that really don't matter in the grand scheme of things.

Politicians on both sides of the ideological fence have used flag-burning amendments, attacks on Hollywood and sex scandals to overshadow the discussion of issues they either don't understand or don't feel comfortable discussing. Issues such as health care and welfare reform have been surreptitiously removed from campaigns in favor of so-called family values.

And even worse, many politicians (Breslow included) have spent their campaign dollars and air time waving flags for issues that they will never have the opportunity to touch while in office.

Same-sex marriage is a perfect example in Nebraska.

Breslow can have commercial after commercial saying he wouldn't allow men to marry men or women to marry women, but the truth is that he really has nothing to do with it.

And he wouldn't have anything to do with it if he were elected governor.

Governors don't make laws, state senators make laws. And in the bastion of conservatism that is Nebraska, the chances of a bill supporting same-sex marriage are virtually nonexistent. Unfortunately, many voters have fallen into the traps set by these candidates, lining up for rallies and wearing badges proclaiming their allegiance based on the same minute issues.

So we really can't fault the campaigners for their behavior. The public has endorsed it with its voices and votes.

And until the American people demand true substance in their political campaigns, the politicians will continue giving us more of the same, which isn't very much.

Haney's VIEW



DN LETTERS

Try it ... you might like it

Klaus Marre, I was impressed with your logic and reasoning in your latest editorial ("To believe, or not to believe" Daily Nebraskan Monday).

You bring up some very popular beliefs - and misconceptions. A big problem for theists and atheists alike is pain and suffering. Why would God let this happen?

The answer is simple: because He loves us more than we could ever imagine and has a plan incomprehensible for any of us to understand.

To appreciate suffering we must first understand God's gift to us, free will. Without this we would be no more than pieces on His giant chessboard. How could we truly have love in a relationship like that?

He gives us free will and allows us to make mistakes, even big mistakes. But God is not just sitting back somewhere up and heaven and simply admiring His creation - he wants us to thank Him and ask for supplications through prayer so he can bestow His abundant graces. The help is there for the asking.

Blaise Pascal once said, "Infinite reward is worth a finite wager."

Try his wager out for a year; honestly try to believe in God, pray, follow the Ten Commandments and if you feel no different than you do today maybe God doesn't really exist. You may just have eternity to gain.

God bless.

John Rutledge
junior
biology

Pick a theory ... any theory

I am glad to see that questions concerning religion and the lack of it

are being brought forward.

I find it sad, however, that Malcolm Kass, given the opportunity to defend his faith, could not come up with better support for his position.

He begins by stating, in effect, that since the universe underwent the big bang, and will never contract again, that this proves their must have been a trigger which began the process.

To begin with, Kass ignores many scientific theories in his assumptions, including the idea of dark matter, which would imply the exact opposite of what he claims. He arbitrarily picks a theory that supports his hypothesis and accepts it. This is not good science and it is not sound reasoning.

Ignoring this, let us look at his argument. He claims that a god would be necessary to cause the creation of the universe. This seems logical, if something is created than it must have a creator.

The problem is then: Who created God? If all things need creators, God must also.

If you answer that God has no creator, than it is just as plausible to say that the universe doesn't either.

If you say God did have a creator you create an infinite pantheon of creators and, in essence, a mess. Kass' assumption that a creator is necessary for the universe to exist is sloppy and inconsistent at best.

Next, Kass tries to prove God through evolution. He claims that humans have evolved at a rate far exceeding other animals, such as dinosaurs and insects. Once again Kass ignores those scientific theories and facts that he does not like.

First of all, dinosaurs did continue to evolve throughout their reign.

Basic archeology will show you this. If anything, their evolution was slowed only because of their dominance. They didn't need to change.

Secondly, it is thought by many scientists today that evolution happens in large leaps as well as in small changes. Such theories easily undermine Kass' argument.

Lastly, Kass attempts to show that humans are far superior to all other life, and therefore are gifted by God. Such a statement doesn't prove God, it proves that anthropocentrism and egotism are alive and kicking in the nineties.

Whales sing beautifully crafted songs with "stanzas" that last for hours upon end. Some anthropologists now believe that gorillas and other primates may indeed have language, culture and that they pass knowledge down from generation to generation.

We may be the smartest species we know of, but we are not the only species with intelligence or with beauty.

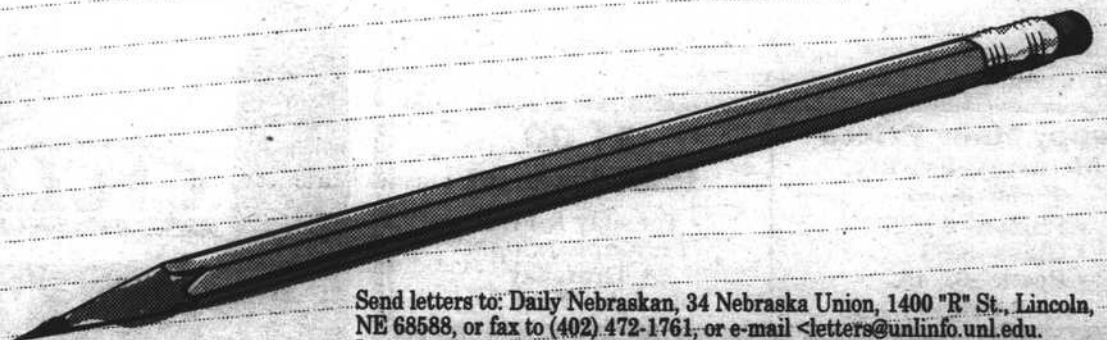
If God does exist, it is an insult to his creation to assume that we are somehow gifted and more special than any other animal that exists. We are different, not necessarily better.

As is often the case in papers such as these, Kass doesn't analyze the evidence and then decide which hypothesis works best.

Instead, he picks and chooses the evidence that will best support his claim, while ignoring the other side of the issue.

Jason Nord
sophomore
philosophy/ English
president of Campus Atheists
and Agnostics

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.

Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials are the opinions of the Spring 1998 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.