

OPINION PACES

Our VIEW

Time to get even Corrupt landlords need to be dealt with

After experiencing a few semesters of quartered living with hundreds of frenzied freshmen, moving to an apartment in the Lincoln ghetto of your choice can be a life-saving pilgrimage.

The move makes financial sense, too. Splitting rent, bills and food with a few roommates tends to be far less expensive than the ever-increasing cost of living in the communal "convenience" of a dormitory.

In the end, you're paying quite a bit less for a lot more freedom — usually.

A college town with campuses located in the heart of the city, Lincoln is a breeding ground for poor housing, dirty landlords and exploited tenants.

Most landlords demand a full month's rent as deposit, money many students will never see again. As many tenants may have suspected, landlords in Nebraska have little or no reason to give deposit money back.

Back in 1974, the state Legislature voted on a landlord-tenant act proposed by the American Bar Association, a provision of which rendered punishment for landlords who wrongfully withheld deposits. This came in the form of paying the tenant twice his or her due deposit. The goal was to stem the exploitation of the underrepresented property-renting population.

In Nebraska, the landowners successfully lobbied to have this provision mitigated — to the point where there are absolutely no penalties if a landlord decides not to give your money back.

And if you take them to court, all you receive for your efforts, if you win, is your money back. The landlord walks away.

Believe it or not, students are lucky. We reap the benefits of free legal service. Located in 335 Nebraska Union, the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska's Student Legal Services provides free consultations and advice for students, and if required, they will even represent you in court.

Shelley Stall, director of Student Legal Services, said landlords who wrongfully retain deposits account for a large proportion of their cases.

To accommodate, the office has created an easy-to-follow workbook, complete with pre-authored legal documents to send to negligent landlords.

Stall said that by following the booklet, students enjoy a high success rate of receiving wrongfully withheld deposit money.

The Daily Nebraskan staff thinks negligent landlords are newsworthy, and we are now collecting the names of landlords with a history of renter abuse. We need your help.

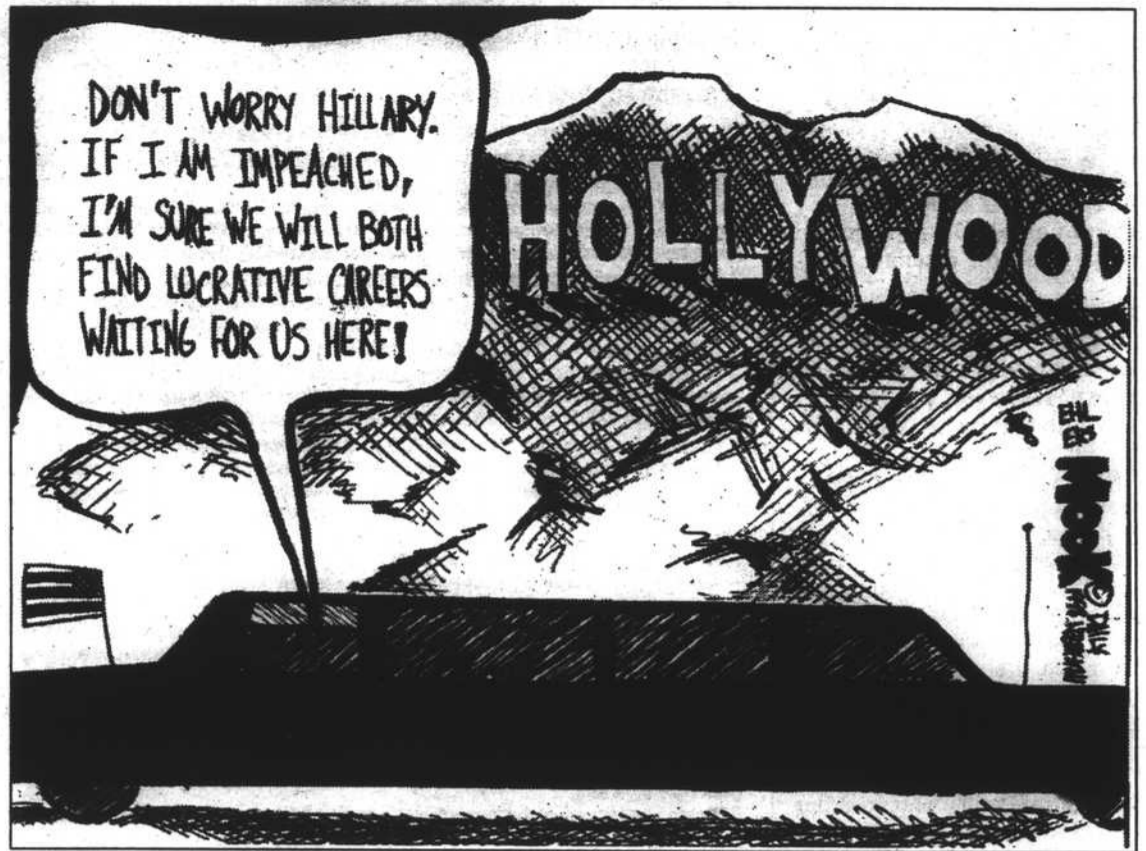
If you've had any experiences with unlawful or exploitative landlords, please submit their names, your name and your complaint as a letter to the editor. The letters won't be run right away, but a list of the complaints will be compiled and investigated. Portions may be published.

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Mook's VIEW



DN LETTERS

Honorless

Matthew Eickman seems to think that creating a new honors hall will cause high caliber students to come flocking to the UNL Honors Program. In my experience, being part of the program means little more than being allowed to take honors courses and getting free books. Among 400 honors students in my class, fewer than 20 will even complete the program. Instead of spending more money on a place to live for honors students who can't hack it, we should invest in creating a truly meaningful honors program. At present, it seems that the best students come to UNL not because of the Honors Program, but because of the quality education they receive as regular UNL students. My two best friends here, who decided against being part of the Honors Program, are the two smartest guys I know. If the program actually meant something, perhaps they would want to be a part of it. At present, the only use of honors housing is as a means for promoting elitism among students, most of whom can't back up their cocky nature.

Bryan Cooley
senior honors student
computer science and
math

Honorable intentions

Thanks for the interesting contrast of opinions on the opinion page of the Monday Daily Nebraskan. I would like to add a few comments to the views expressed by Mr. Eickman and Mr. Forkner.

We are now in the early planning stages for the Esther L. Kauffman Residential Academic Center for the J. D. Edwards Program in Computer Science and Management. Since the program was officially established last June, and building planning has only been under way since August, many program decisions remain to be made. I think the observations by Mr. Eickman — that the program will convince talented

Nebraska students to stay in Nebraska, and will bring many other talented students to Nebraska — are correct.

My experiences in the classroom convince me that having very good students at the university enhances the academic experiences for all students. They will definitely add to the UNL community through academics and leadership, just as is the case now with the UNL's Honors Program. Excellent students also help to attract and retain good instructors, in turn benefiting all students. Mr. Eickman also is correct in observing that this gift will create a beautiful building in the middle of campus, which will enhance the appearance of the university.

Mr. Forkner asserts that the new building specifically for honors students will have its own dining hall and that the honors students will never interact with other students. At this time, the planning committee is investigating the costs of having a dining hall in the new building. No decision on the dining and kitchen facilities has been made yet. Policies about how students will use the dining facilities

would only follow along after that decision.

In any case, the students in the J. D. Edwards Program will be taking about two-thirds of their individual degree program with other students at the university. This, together with the usual range of student activities, will allow for plenty of interaction with all the other students. I think the students in the J. D. Edwards Honors Program will be like students in the university Honors Program. The university Honors Program has changed the academic climate at UNL for the better. The trend will continue and be enhanced by the new Honors Programs and facilities.

Steven R. Dunbar
founding director
J. D. Edwards Honors Program
in Computer Science and
Management

Stop the violence

Every 15 seconds, someone in America is battered in a partner violence situation. These victims and their batterers come to work. Domestic violence costs businesses more than \$5 billion a year in medical expenses, lost wages, sick leave, absenteeism and lost productivity. Sadly, one cause of lost productivity is premature death — homicide is the leading cause of on-the-job death for women, and 20 percent of those who die are murdered by an intimate partner at the workplace.

Oct. 1 is national Work to End Domestic Violence Day, and it marks the beginning of October as Domestic Violence Awareness Month. Employers in your community and across the country will join together on that day to stand against domestic violence. In the workplace, these companies have policies that ensure employees are safe at work and have access to needed services. In their communities, these business partners, with local domestic violence programs, provide much needed assistance and support.

On Oct. 1, and throughout Domestic Violence Awareness Month, let us all be aware that ending partner violence is everybody's business.

Kimberly K. Wells
executive director
Corporate Alliance to
End Partner Violence



MATT HANEY/DN

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