

# OPINION PACKETS

*Our*  
**VIEW**

## No loitering

*Chicago hopes law will halt gang violence*

The U.S. Supreme Court soon could decide the fate of anti-loitering laws by handing down a decision on one Chicago case.

The case in question is *Chicago v. Morales*, which the court has agreed to hear this session. And the question is whether the city of Chicago, with strong support from parents in poor and minority neighborhoods, can enact an anti-loitering law in an attempt to curb gang violence.

Under the law, a police officer can order anyone to move along if he or she is "reasonably (believed) to be a criminal street gang member loitering in any public place with one or more other persons."

Anyone who resists can be arrested. Officers have arrested 40,000 people for resisting the law since it was enacted in 1992.

This is not a youth curfew; it is a restriction against any people gathering at any time in a public place, regardless of whether that gathering is peaceful or not and regardless of the individuals' actions — be they eating sandwiches, voicing unpopular political opinions or planning gang-related crimes and violence.

The sole determining factor of whether people will be allowed to gather in a public place under the law is their appearance and assumed affiliation. We believe this restriction is an unfair restriction of some civil liberties, but it may uphold others at the same time.

This law seems to pit one civil right — the right to peaceably assemble — against another right established in the founding of the United States, which is the right of citizens to willingly give up some individual liberties in order to empower the state. The state then can effectively protect and govern its citizens.

The Supreme Court, during the Civil Rights Movement, established a right to loiter. Otherwise, neighborhoods, counties and states could prohibit activists from gathering peaceably. In theory, the Chicago laws could do the same.

The laws' intent is to curb gang violence, but the laws attack civil liberties instead of the root problem, which is the development of gangs as social and economic units that provide for their members, as well as terrorize their enemies and neighborhoods.

For some teens, gangs replace a lacking family structure. For others, gangs provide ego-saving status and income that staves off poverty.

Gangs and gang violence are serious symptoms of an ill society. But their poison cannot be salvaged by a quick-fix anti-loitering law that pushes the problem out of the public sight without addressing it.

We don't claim to know the appropriate antidote to gangs in America, but it cannot be a reduction of liberty and justice for all.

*Mook's*  
**VIEW**



## DN LETTERS

### Quiet the Hooters

Regarding Tasha Kuxhausen's defense of Hooters in Monday's Opinion section:

Actually, it isn't amazing that community members would be concerned that Hooters is a sexist establishment. Sexism is the oppression of one sex by another. In a patriarchal society (like the one in which we live), sexism is the oppression of women by men. Sexual objectification of women is dehumanizing, and therefore oppressive.

It is true that men are from time to time objectified sexually, but not nearly to the extent or with the institutional reinforcement that women are. Such is the nature of patriarchy. The problem is not that Hooters' servers' uniforms are going to incite large-scale sexual assault. Sexual violence against women is already large-scale and has been for millennia. Establishments such as Hooters and slightly more blatant strip bars only give credence to the idea that women are sexual objects, thus contributing to the culture of rape.

If men are taught to think of women as base, sexual objects (as they indeed are), sexual assault is more likely to occur. As Ms. Kuxhausen pointed out, rape is a power issue, not purely sexual. But the oppression inherent in this rape culture is by definition a power issue. Sex, or sexual assault and domination, rather, is the vehicle for this wielding of power-over. Rape is the final, most explicitly violent manifestation of patriarchy. Hooters, and similar businesses, are crucial to the reinforcement of rape culture precisely because of their (I use this word grudgingly) subtlety. I don't find any aspect of rape culture tasteful or entertaining, and I think it is insulting to make such a claim.

Hooters is sexist by the very nature of its concept.

Andrew Ascherl  
freshman  
women's studies

### Munson-mania

So here's the thing. I just read the opinion column in today's DN, and it was absolutely twisted.

Having said that, I probably should add that I read it eight more times for kicks, just because it pleased me that much.

As I sit here pondering my daily ritual of going through the DN and looking for anything from Todd to read first (and then proceed to read the rest of the fine examples of journalism held within), it occurs to me that I may actually be a Munson Groupee. Go ahead and laugh. I did.

The fact of the matter is that sometimes I look through the pages, and upon not seeing anything from the demented planet of Todd, I close the paper and set it on the desk next to me and sulk.

I am not a psycho. I do not normally gush like this to people whom I don't know. I just thought I had been enjoying Todd for way too long without him actually knowing about it (damn, that sounded perverse).

Congratulations on filling

the days of UNL's student body with laughter and entertainment, and I hope that the pages of the DN continue to hold these warped messages until hell freezes over, or at least until I graduate, which incidentally, may actually be the same day.

Mikaela Charbonneau  
senior  
middle grades education

### Hootin' habit headed off

Kudos to Erin Reitz.

O.K., I give up ... As a long-time customer at Hooters (from Hawaii to Florida and all points in between) I must admit that I've felt a certain guilt about my patronage. Yes, I know it's sleazy (upscale sleazy though), and I know it's discriminatory (note the bounty of Barbies and the lack of Oprahs). These things I do recognize. In fact, I ate at one in my adopted hometown of San Antonio, Texas, just last night.

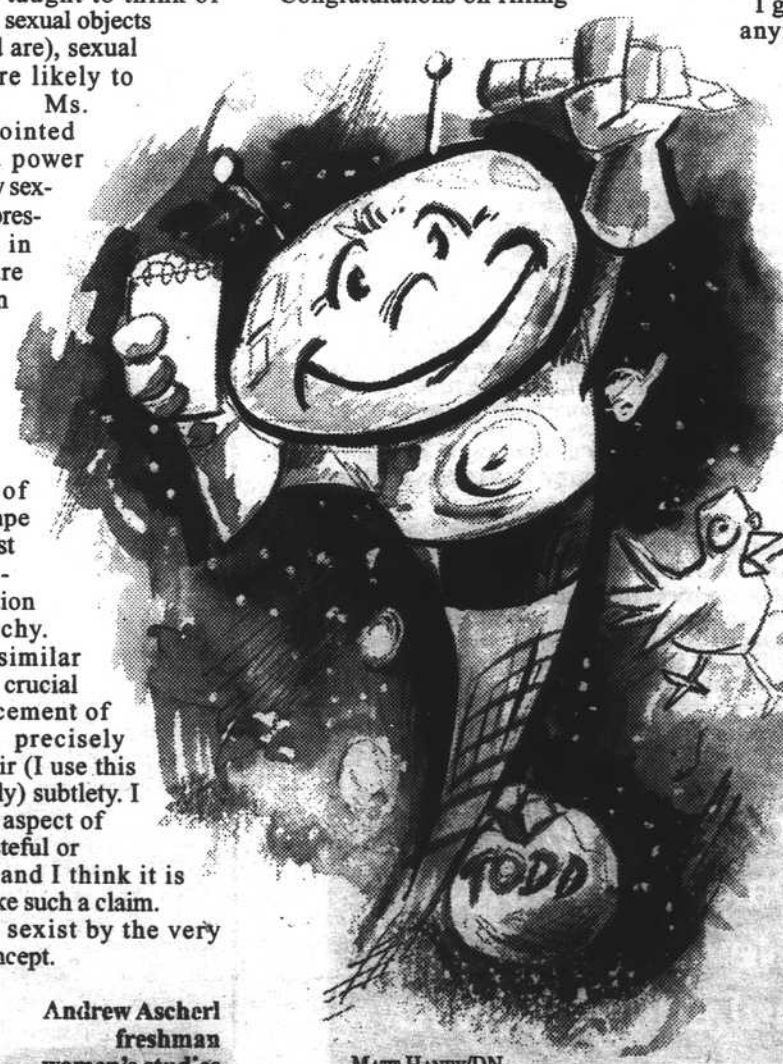
But for the love of God you have to believe me when I tell you, THEY ARE REALLY GOOD WINGS!!!!

I guess I just don't know anymore ... While my

fiancée hasn't told me that I can't go to a Hooters, she has made her opinion (scarily similar to yours) very clear to me. If there's anyone on this planet whose respect I want more, I can't imagine it. So this I pledge to my fiancée, my mother (Susan Hilt, running for Lancaster County Clerk [Rock the vote!!!]), my sister (Shannon Hilt, Kappa Delta & a student at UNL) and of course to you, Erin Reitz, Hooters will not receive another penny of my hard-earned wages. ...

There I've said it. Now, about that subscription to Playboy ... You know I really do buy it just for the articles.

Brett S. Baker  
reporter/prod. cer  
Air Force Television  
News



MATT HANEY/DN

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