

OPINION PACKETS

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Our
VIEW

Decision time

Supreme Court needs to settle gun debate

Got guns?

A new system began last Monday that would allow Americans to buy a gun right away, no waiting involved, because the background check would take place almost instantaneously. The second phase of the Brady Bill, making thorough background checks necessary, began Nov. 30.

Laws have come up regarding assault weapons and concealed weapons. People have debated them. Some of them have passed, some of them have failed.

And so far, the Supreme Court hasn't said anything.

It's time the Supreme Court takes a long hard look at the Second Amendment. Most people know it gives people "the right to keep and bear arms," but what does it really mean? That's a question the Supreme Court should have answered a long time ago.

Every few decades, a law comes up that seems to conflict with the Constitution. Eventually, it is challenged and brought all the way to the Supreme Court, which makes the final decision. As of late, however, the Supreme Court has avoided dealing with the Second Amendment.

When the right to freedom of speech was challenged, the Supreme Court had no hesitation in passing judgment. Just ask Larry Flynt.

The Supreme Court has an obligation to deal with legal issues as they arise. Just because the two opposing forces have a lot of influence doesn't mean the issue can be avoided.

The court's hesitation is understandable, of course. The National Rifle Association has a lot of financial power to flex. Gun supporters are very vocal.

That doesn't necessarily make them right or wrong, though.

The U.S. Constitution was left open-ended so it could be interpreted as time changed. It wasn't written with ground rules set in stone, but more as a collection of guidelines to help keep the United States on track.

It's the job of the Supreme Court to do that interpretation. It has the final word when it comes to determining the current interpretation of the Constitution.

But for it to interpret the Constitution, it has to hear the cases around the issue. It can't pass over cases that could hold long-term impacts on not only the Americans of today, but the Americans of the next several generations.

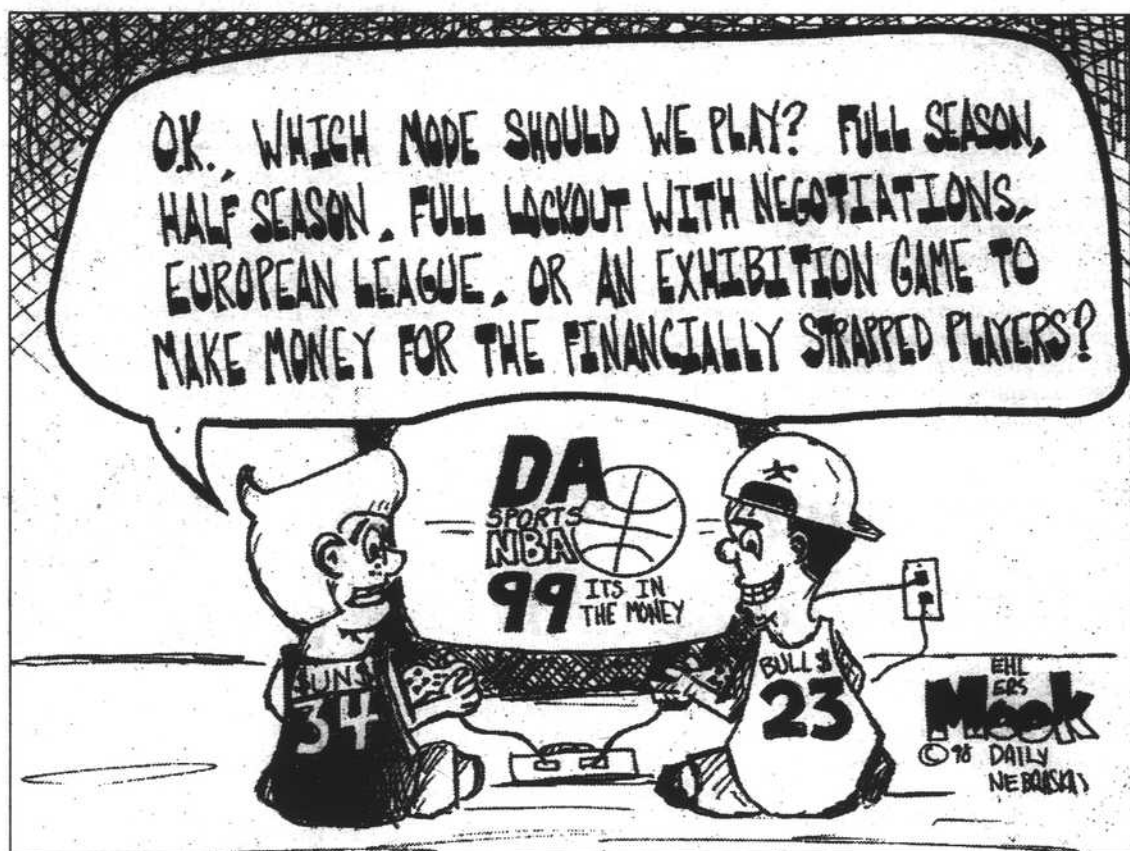
Now is the time for a new interpretation. No more avoiding the showdown.

The NRA vs. the Brady Bill.

The right to bear arms vs. the right to not be shot.

Let the court decide.

Mook's
VIEW



DN
LETTERS

Finding the right roles

I appreciated Adam Klinker's column ("Male-order pride," Tuesday) about the difficulties men are experiencing as they strive to define themselves. As women's roles continue to expand, it is apparent that men who define "masculinity" as "anything not feminine" will find their identity shrinking. I propose that instead of continuing to define our differences as a "war between the sexes," we declare a partnership and vow to help each other define relationships and roles that are healthy and positive for all of us.

I will facilitate a gender issues discussion group next semester through the Women's Center. If you are exploring the kinds of questions Adam wrote about, I hope you'll consider participating.

Jan Deeds
assistant director
Student Involvement

Right on, Rutgers!

It is amusing and somewhat ironic that Tony Smith ("Rutgers 0000," Tuesday) accuses Rutgers 1000 of not doing its research when he obviously hasn't done his own.

Suspecting misinformation, I went to Rutgers' home page: <http://members.aol.com/rutg1000/colonial.htm>.

Rutgers 1000 is not at all against collegiate athletics, as Mr. Smith expertly asserts; they are against involvement in the IA division. They want Rutgers to be part of a non-athletic scholarship division, namely the Patriot League or some other IAA division conference. They want athletics to be at an appropriate level. They don't want to eliminate it.

Mr. Smith thinks academics come first here at UNL. I disagree. When I work during the summers and tell complete strangers I attend UNL, almost

always they ask, "Do you go to the games?" (I usually respond, "What games?"). Or, if I tell them I'm a music and math major at UNL, they ask, "So are you in the (marching) band?" (They actually say, "THE band," as if there were only one, but there are, in

fact, three, and also an orchestra, which is like a band, only with stringed instruments.)

Or, you can look at our own DN, which offers maybe one story of national importance every day, and then two pages of local drivel and two, three, sometimes four pages of sports. If the DN caters to student's interests, what does this tell us about the students? Or even look at the way Mr. Smith refers to himself — as a track athlete who goes to school here. Does he mention he is a geography student? Nope.

Mr. Smith thinks the university doesn't make it easy and there exists a dedication to excellence. I'm sorry, sport, but this isn't true. Need I mention my CSCE 230 class, which, after the first exam this semester, put the professor on a public trial because he gave a question on the test he didn't explicitly cover in class (Gasp — the students had to THINK!). Or, perhaps, my 400-level math logic course, where the professor felt it necessary to slow down the rate he covered material because the students weren't "getting it." Or, perhaps, my CSCE 156 course, where the professor had to adjust his grading scale TWICE so less than half the class would fail.

These were all great professors. It's just that academic rigor is lacking. While I don't necessarily agree with Rutgers 1000 that professional sports programs and lower academic standards are causally related, I do think there is a correlation. Maybe if the state weren't so focused on the Huskers and the absurd trips to children's hospitals and other PR events, they would be a bit concerned we're pumping out a bunch of students who don't give a damn about learning anything.

So why, you may ask, am I still here? Because I want to start a tradition of excellence. Doing so will make it harder for me, I know. I might actually have to start studying

and maybe even drop a major, but I think it can be worth it. And then maybe we won't be so concerned about those skyboxes that cast a shadow over the university.

Jacob Glazeski
junior
music and math

Shame on you ...

I was disappointed to read in the Tuesday DN that someone would stoop so low as to steal a Christmas tree by going out and cutting one down on the UNL campus. That disappointment turned to infuriation, however, when I went on to read that the culprits were two UNL fraternity boys.

Even more insulting was the response of Chi Phi's President Jason Hardy when he had the gumption to say the fraternity did not give permission for such an action. Yeah right. How stupid do you take the general student body to be, Jason? How can a tree just appear in your house, and you, the president, have no way of knowing how it got there or where it came from? If anyone is stupid, it is the members of your fraternity for what appears to be the second time police were led right to your front door.

It frustrates me that the university allows actions such as these to happen with little or no punishment. Fraternities break into and destroy the property of sororities, and they are still here. Fraternities get caught with minors drinking on their property, and they are still here. There are secret racist greek societies, and they are still here. Fraternity boys fall out of windows because of hazing, and they are still here. Fraternities are caught burning crosses, and they are still here. And now a fraternity gets caught cutting down a tree on campus, and it is still here. When is it going to be enough to make the university realize the greek system needs to be either altered or done away with entirely?

Jason, your fraternity reflects poorly on the character of the university. The student body doesn't want or need you or your house. Your fraternity's actions are just another example in the already too long list of reasons why the university should do away with you, your fraternity and the entire greek system.

Ben Wolfe
senior
geology



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