

Soul siblings

Munsons spiritually connect over Internet



TODD MUNSON is a senior broadcasting major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

"The future of America is, 'Get a gun and mount up boys 'cuz there's only so many women 'round and that thar other tribe wants ours.'" — Tim I. Munson.

I feel like Ed McMahon because each and every one of you who chose to come to school today have won a grand prize indeed.

I might I also note that I'm as giddy as a schoolgirl and it's not because of my new training bra.

It's because he responded. A while ago, I mentioned that way back in 1980 a fellow by the name of Tim I. Munson ran for ASUN president with the LSD party.

In reading about his exploits in the crusty and yellowed DN archives, I realized that the concept known as the Lincoln Vortex (no matter what part of the world you're in, you will run into someone with ties to Lincoln) went to a whole new level.

I'm not related to him, but still I found it very amusing that two Munsons have made crazed attempts at gaining control at student government. In comparison, the feats of the elder Munson made mine look like a lame imitation. He was a Transformer. I was a GoBot.

I also wanted to see what the future holds for Munsons who lose the ASUN election. An exhaustively time-consuming search on the 'Net informed me that he became a lawyer and had been living in Omaha and without a trace disappeared. The last hope was an e-mail account of his. I sent him a message explaining my business and waited. Out of the blue he responded, and boy did he respond.

The following is transcripts and quotes from an interview conducted via the Internet. Because of the anonymous nature of the 'Net, his statements could be entirely false.

However, Munson intuition says they are legit.

In the 19 years since the ASUN campaign, the elder Munson has "experienced life to the fullest." After law school, I took a legal position with a relatively large law firm and made incredible amounts of money. I drank more Beefeater's Gin than anyone alive and wore the finest suits and alligator Italian shoes. Then, I became anti-intellectual choosing to chase white-trash women, gamble on horse races, drink brown liquor and live in seedy dives. Finally, I decided I didn't want to do that any more and became like the Unabomber without the bombs.

You read correctly. I became a recluse and now live in the backwoods of West Central Wyoming. My cabin has no running water, electricity or useless amenities. I eat dried foods, fish and game. I like greasy salty, gravy-like food. I read extensively. I go to town sometimes and drink and get women. Now, the women seem satisfied — so I got that goin' for me.

If I'm the fly guy with the ladies, he's superfly with the ladies. I asked him to describe a typical college weekend.

Typical weekend: One 72-hour party with multiple women enjoying what I had to offer (which I will admit wasn't always much — but I only received a few complaints out of a sample of well over a hundred.)

Best and worst college memories? Best memories: Hmm ... Liz. Worst memories: Hmm ... Jail.

Can you say stud? Wow. As for his choice in ladies: I like redheaded women not too big on top and just right from a rear perspective.

This response alone prompted A&E editor and partner in crime Bret Schulte to comment, "It's a hole in the space-time continuum and you're talking to yourself, dude."

Forget the Death Star — the Lincoln Vortex is the ultimate power in the universe.

Fire back the Way Back machine to the 1980 campaign and Munson's memories of the LSD (Let Students Dominate) party are still coherent. In the DN, he was quoted in a big-ass headline that he would be UNL's Christ. Reading the story, it was impossible to gather any insight to the statement other than what's written.

"In comparison, the feats of the elder Munson made mine look like a lame imitation. He was a Transformer. I was a GoBot."

Munson let me know that it wasn't the second coming, but campaign monkeyshines.

That whole "Christ" thing was blown way out of proportion by the hacks at the Daily Nebraskan who were so puny and little that they gave a whole new meaning to the phrase "parasitical snot-nosed little punks." It was taken out of context and used for those creepy little goofs' self-esteem needs.

If writing this particular column gets me laid, I promise I'll try to feel guilty or at least put up a fight before having my "self-esteem" stroked.

I do not regret having made the statement, because it exposed the majority of University of Nebraska students as a bunch of naive-believe-anything-you-read frat kids, ranch kids and Omaha suburbanites, and it also permitted the rest of the university students to identify themselves and realize that there were others like them, i.e., non-joiners who felt good about themselves and where they came from and where they were.

In a way, we were on the cutting edge of what would become the very sick and warped politically correct movement. It's funny because we dared to be different and not give a hoot, and then all of a sudden people who were different deemed it wrong and unacceptable to have different ideas and speak things deemed wrong by the majority. It came full circle. The



Tim Munson (1980 photo)

weirdos became like the Daily Nebraskan, ASUN, Mortar Board and fraternity rats.

I am glad — I did not want or expect to win. That was not the purpose of the campaign. People who want to win political campaigns are self-serving, egomaniacal, sick individuals. Persons who really want to change things do so through other means.

Persons who really want power just attempt to take it and, if they are strong enough, slick enough or crafty enough, or if they are at the right place at the right time, they are successful. University government is for junior high wannabes.

One last question: As the clock

ticks past midnight on Dec. 31, what will Tim I. Munson be doing?

The year 2000 is a figment of Western Civilization — is that Christian fella still teaching that class and tellin' everyone that sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll brought down the Roman Empire? He was wrong, you know. What brought down the Roman Empire was the strife in the Balkans — boy how times have changed!

Bye now and go with the wind. What a cool guy. Do you think he ever noticed that his initials spell his first name?

Copping out

Police-related death law assumes incompetence of local government



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Gotham is ablaze, and the Nebraska Legislature is heedlessly tending the local coals.

Two months ago, four plainclothes New York City police officers approached an African immigrant in the foyer of his Bronx apartment building, perhaps because he matched the description of a serial rapist.

As the four white men approached, the 22-year-old black man appeared to reach for a gun and the officers opened fire.

When the smoke cleared, 41 shots had been fired — two of the officers actually emptied their 16-shot clips —

and the unarmed street vendor was riddled with 19 bullets.

The shooting death of Amadou Diallo has incited the outrage of the entire city and left the competence of New York's Finest in question.

It's the kind of story many have come to expect from the corrupt, seething mass that is New York City. In the past five years, however, the debate over police brutality has been ignited significantly closer to home.

Although the cases of Charles Jones Jr. and Marvin Ammons in Omaha and Francisco Renteria in Lincoln would seem relatively minor by comparison, the fact remains that each death and subsequent investigation struck a blow to the popular perception of local police departments and the ability of local governments to police the police.

A similar, though more subversive, blow was delivered last week by the state Legislature.

Prompted by the recent rash of police-related deaths and their suspect investigations, the Legislature proposed LB72, a measure that will require special prosecutors and hand-picked detectives to investigate such homicides, thereby taking these investigations out of the hands of county

attorneys and jurisdictional police detectives.

By taking these investigations out of the hands of county attorneys, the Legislature assumes the incompetence of local government to take responsibility for its actions. If local government is deemed incapable of policing itself, then replacing officials rather than establishing new ordinance should be the operable solution.

Douglas County Attorney Jim Jansen was replaced by a special prosecutor in the Ammons grand jury investigation, and because of LB72's passage, recently yielded to being replaced in the Jones case. Consequently, Jansen is one of the law's most outspoken opponents.

"I really take issue that there's a need to have a special prosecutor in every case," he said. "From an accountability standpoint, there is no one more accountable than an elected county attorney."

Jansen is right. If the county attorney is deemed incapable of dealing with such investigations, then that official is incapable of holding the office and should be replaced.

It is unclear just who will be responsible for selecting these special prosecutors now that this measure has

passed into law. But I question the ability of any public official to do a better job than the sort of public elections that install county attorneys. I'd also suspect that such hand-picked prosecutors would feel undue pressure to uncover incompetence and misconduct even when none may exist.

While the idea of selecting detectives outside the precinct under investigation seems reasonable at first, the unfortunate reality of inter-jurisdictional rivalry within police circles cannot be ignored; along with a strong sense of camaraderie, a certain degree of competition comes along with the badge. Detectives from outside jurisdictions would likely find the precinct under investigation less than cooperative.

The Legislature suspects that a conflict of interest exists between the county attorney's office and the local police force because of their close working relationship. But the true conflict of interest would seem to exist between the police force and the public it intends to protect and serve.

Police are increasingly being characterized as a force on communities rather than a force of communities. Popular culture has portrayed

police as corrupt and domineering villains, and with several high-profile mistakes in recent years — from Rodney King to Diallo — the police have been living up to their bad rap.

By questioning the competence of officers and their immediate administration, this measure assumes the sort of increasingly popular sentiment voiced at a community meeting following the dismissal of the Ammons' case, in which the officer involved was cleared of all charges.

"I tell my sons that when they see the police, get away from the police. They are murderers."

In order to be truly effective, local authorities must command the confidence and respect of the public. Compromising that respect inevitably places police officers in situations beyond their control and can lead to the sort of unfortunate incidents and perceptions alluded to above.

If the Legislature is serious about ending the recent outbreak of police-related deaths, it should improve community relations in order to inspire confidence in local authorities.

Undermining the authority of local government in these investigations, on the other hand, will corrupt the process as well as the populace.