

# OPINION PAGES

## Our VIEW

### Hands off

#### Cell phone law not right accident solution

Right idea. Wrong approach. Talking on your cellular phone while driving through Brooklyn, Ohio, could land you a \$3 fine. Not a lot for a first offense.

Subsequent offenses can go as high as \$100.

Maybe it's just another small-town solution and has no ramifications outside of that small town.

But maybe it's bigger than that.

The law, believed to be one of the first in the nation, prohibits using a cell phone while driving unless both hands are on the steering wheel.

Exceptions are made for emergency calls, using a phone in a parked car or using a speakerphone.

Maybe it's your right to jabber on the phone while you drive - after all, you can switch radio stations or check out your mug in the rearview mirror, and it won't cost you a dime.

Unless you get in a wreck.

And drivers talking on cell phones are more likely to get in a wreck.

A 1997 study in the New England Journal of Medicine found that talking on a phone while driving quadrupled the risk of an accident and was almost as dangerous as being drunk behind the wheel.

And according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, cell phones were a contributing factor in 57 fatal crashes in 1997.

Serious numbers.

It's a serious problem.

We like the idea of keeping the roads safe. But there's a better way to do it.

Trying to solve the problem by making it a crime won't work. It may only make people resent law enforcement for infringing on what they may see as a private right.

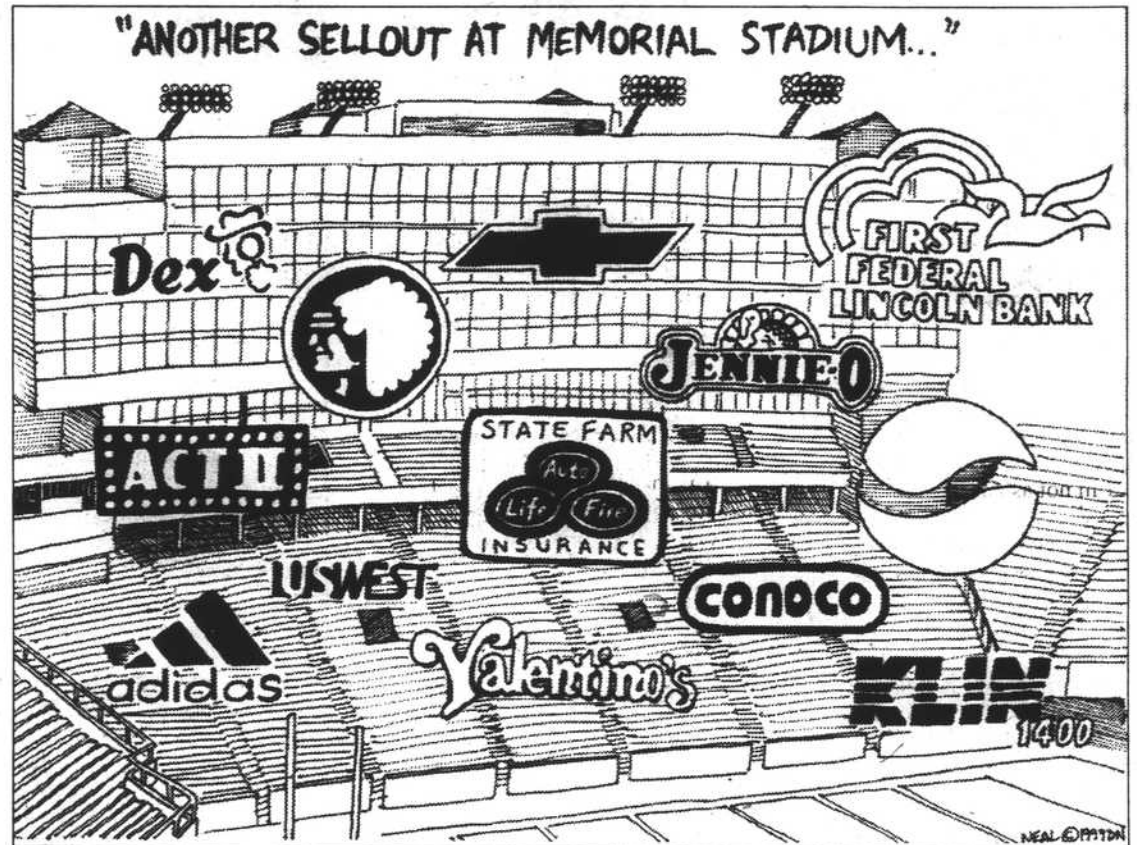
So steer away from enforcement and punishment and head toward the private sector.

Look to the car manufacturers. Give them tax breaks, whatever it will take, to get them to install hands-free cell phone technologies in new cars.

Market the hands-free cell phones like they are Ricky Martin and the Backstreet Boys. Make people love them.

It's a technology issue, not an issue for the police.

## Obermeyer's VIEW



## DN LETTERS

### Bugs in His System

Graham Johnson never ceases to amaze me. After reading his Friday opinion article, I must ask where he gets this stuff!

Does he have any evidence to back up his inane, epithet-dependent drivel?

Even the part about McDonald's in France is misrepresentative: the "protests" (I call them defacement and vandalism) are directed against Americanization, not just globalization.

Furthermore, has Mr. Johnson proof that pesticides approved by the same FDA that won't approve thousands of potentially life-saving drugs are hazardous?

Is he just an ideologue, or is there actually a poison threat in biotechnology?

He mentions associative economics. Obviously, he is no economist if he believes food ridden with bugs at low quantities is better than safe, larger, juicier, higher-quality (and quantity) food.

Bryan Gordon  
visiting student  
German,  
economics and math

pus, neither should the alumni or other adults.

Jana Bartels  
senior  
business education

### Driving It Home

In reference to Lane Phillips' letter on Thursday:

I think you are missing the point of students' complaints about the parking problem here at UNL.

The point being made is that we students have paid around \$100 of our hard-earned money in order for the university to provide us with a place to park our "poison-gas" producing cars.

For many of us, that money is going to waste.

All that my parking permit has given me these past few weeks is a sign in my car to show to the people of Lincoln that I am a student at the university.

Joel T. Peck  
senior  
criminal justice

### Another Straw Man

Dear Mr. Rost,  
If God told you to sodomize your

dog with a fork, would it be moral? No?

Then obviously, there is some judge of morality higher than God.

Or maybe this question, like your question about being told to kill your mother (letters, Wednesday) is the product of a sophistry that doesn't deserve to be taken seriously.

Mark Buhrdorf  
senior  
classics

### Turkey in the Straw

"Would it be moral under the condition God told you to kill your mother?" (letters, Wednesday)

Read Genesis, chapter 22.

Ask yourself the question: Was it moral under the condition that God told Abraham to sacrifice his son?

I think you'll find the answer to be yes.

If God told someone to "kill his mother," the "thinking Christian" would be justified to do so and the action would be considered moral.

Matt Boettger  
senior  
computer science

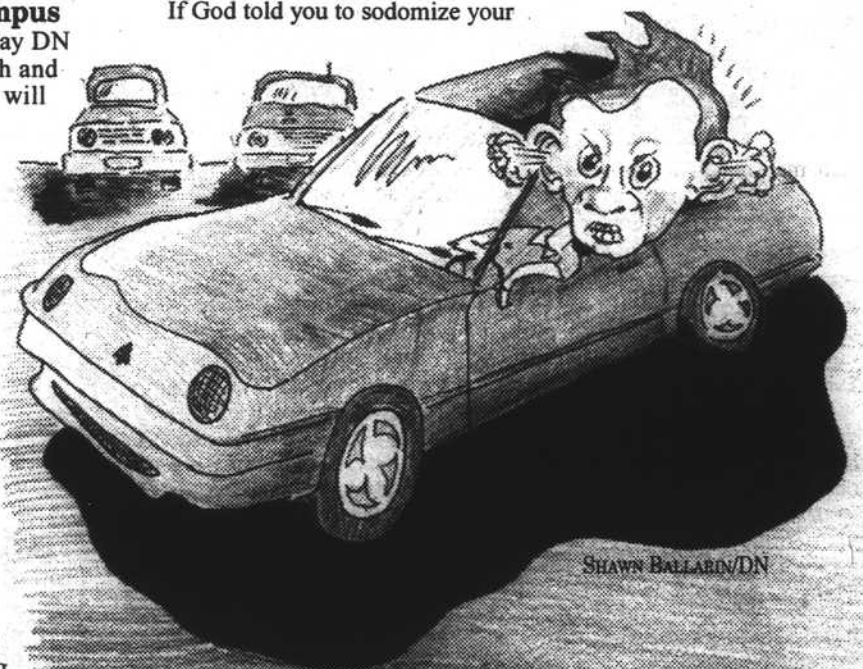
### Wet Bar, Dry Campus

I just read in the Friday DN that UNL President Smith and UNL Chancellor Moeser will be appearing in newspaper ads across the country to promote the awareness of binge drinking on campuses.

That is great, but Friday morning my husband read me part of an article in the Lincoln Journal Star about the pregame party at the Wick Alumni Center (on campus) that had a cash bar.

I think if alcohol is permitted at one function, it should be available at all functions. Isn't that fair?

Personally, I don't have a problem with UNL being a dry campus, but if the students can't drink on cam-



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