

# OPINION PAGES

## Our VIEW

### Sound off

*Coaches should be able to speak freely*

You go, Frank. A few weeks ago, after NU's 24-20 loss to Texas, Nebraska Coach Frank Solich did the honorable thing: He told the truth.

He told a jam-packed room of reporters that referees officiating the Huskers-Longhorns matchup dropped the ball. A few calls that came in the fourth quarter particularly stung NU's chances in the game.

In the sports world, that's a no-no. You can't criticize officials, the NCAA says. President Clinton, yes. Movie stars, yes. Ghandi? Fair game. But referees? Heaven forbid.

For his comments, which Solich reiterated on his Sunday football program, he received a public reprimand. Next time he does it, the university gets fined, and Solich will get a suspension.

Various sports organizational bodies won't allow critiques of the nature of work by officials or umpires. They say it's detrimental to the game and that, at best, officials can only guess at what they think is right. It is entirely subjective.

Referees can control a game. They can call as many or as few penalties or fouls as they choose. They can shrink a strike zone. They can ignore things, such as Eric Crouch's facemask against Kansas State. And there are no public repercussions for that. Solich should be allowed to call officials out on these incidents. Enough people do it in their living rooms at home already.

Officials claim they have an internal review system. Solich, for example, can turn certain plays in at the Big 12 league office for review. And so the office reviews them. It still creates the aura that, in public, officials are beyond review. Show them up, and they shut you down.

Solich and thousands of other coaches deserve better. Coaches should be able to vent their concerns without worry of losing money or the chance to lead their team.

Everybody has to answer for their mistakes and not behind closed doors. Every Saturday, that's what officials do. They cannot be challenged on the field. They cannot be challenged in the press. In a sense, they are untouchable, as their bosses are former referees themselves. Refs should have power in a game, yes.

But they shouldn't have such power and be immune from public criticism as well.

Sure, coaches, if permitted, would mouth off incessantly. Sometimes they'd even be wrong about their assessments. That hasn't stopped any other critic elsewhere in society.

So why shouldn't coaches, like all others, be allowed to look like loudmouthed jerks - sour grapes is no one's private property.

Frank Solich ought to be able to speak his mind about any subject he likes.

## Obermeyer's VIEW



## DN LETTERS

### Violence breeds Violence

As a therapist who formerly worked in a maximum/supermaximum security prison, I applaud the candor and candidness of "Lost Man's Alibi" by Trevor Johnson (Oct. 28, DN).

This story took a tremendous amount of courage to pen, and Trevor's conclusions are completely accurate.

The common denominator between the inmates with whom I worked was not race, socioeconomic status or IQ - no, it was this fact: More than 90 percent of these men had abusive fathers or other males (i.e. mom's many boyfriends, male relatives, camp counselors, etc.), and nearly all of them lacked positive male role models in their lives.

I've worked with sex offenders, serial killers, bank robbers and perpetrators of other violent crimes. I do not recall ever talking to a single inmate (population was 500) who had a positive family background.

This does not excuse violent behavior. It does indicate some (not all) reasons for it.

The point Trevor made about counseling for men is also well made.

The problem is somewhat twofold; men are much less likely to seek out counseling than are women, and, also, there are not as many support groups available to them.

I believe that mentor programs (such as Big Brothers and Tom Osborne's Teammates program) offer a solid bridge between such gaps.

Incidentally, girls who have abusive or absent fathers and who lack positive male role models in their lives are far more likely to be sexually, physically and/or emotionally abused, suffer substance abuse problems at early ages and are more likely to exhibit promiscuous behaviors at younger ages.

Wendy L. O'Connor  
academic adviser  
UNL Independent Study High School  
East Campus-Nebraska Center

Invaluable  
This is in response to Todd

McCoy's letter (Tuesday, DN) concerning his view of human life as not valuable, particularly the comment, "If people want to abort their mistakes, more power to them."

Aside from the fact that this is an ignorant and callous way to view life, especially innocent pre-born life, McCoy is advocating the very behavior he seems to be so annoyed with - irresponsibility.

He is angry at spoiled fraternity boys who've never had to take on adult responsibilities. He is angry that irresponsible parents raise irresponsible kids who wave guns around because they have no morals or values to enable them to contribute to and function responsibly in society.

If he is so angry with these human behaviors, which are obviously the result of the failure of people to ACCEPT RESPONSIBILITY, then how dare he make such an irresponsible comment!

He is only contributing to the problem.

Jason Fredregill  
East Campus



Jennifer Dean  
junior  
sociology

### ACLWho?

Let me get this straight: The ACLU will bend over backwards to get an image of the great leader, Moses, removed from a seal, they will bend over backwards to represent the Ku Klux Klan, and they will bend over backwards to represent so-called "patriots" who stockpile guns in the hopes of taking over each state one by one - but they won't represent a man victimized by sexual discrimination?

When that happened to me, I wrote them letters, went knocking on their door. I was ignored. I submit a possible name change - the FICLU, the Feminists and Ignoramuses Civil Liberties Union.

These are, after all, seemingly the only people the ACLU represents.

Jason Fredregill  
East Campus

### Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials are the opinions of the Fall 1999 Daily Nebraskan. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, its employees, its student body or the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. A column is solely the opinion of its author. The Board of Regents serves as publisher of the Daily Nebraskan; policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. The UNL Publications Board, established by the regents, supervises the production of the paper. According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student employees.

### Letter Policy

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor and guest columns, but does not guarantee their publication. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject any material submitted. Submitted material becomes property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Those who submit letters must identify themselves by name, year in school, major and/or group affiliation, if any. Submit material to: Daily Nebraskan, 20 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St. Lincoln, NE 68588-0448. E-mail: letters@unl.edu.

### P.S. Write Back

Send letters to: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 "R" St., Lincoln, NE 68588, or fax to (402) 472-1761, or e-mail <letters@unlinfo.unl.edu>. Letters must be signed and include a phone number for verification.