

Good intentions, poor execution

Local entertainment task force lacks solid planning

The best shows don't come to Lincoln. Concert-goers are forced to travel at least to Omaha, if not hundreds of miles farther, to catch their favorite acts in concert.

That is the way it has been for some time, but now the mayor would like to change that.

In January, the mayor formed a task force to determine how to improve concert and entertainment opportunities in Lincoln.

That's a nice idea — we'd love to have better shows closer to home — but it has been poorly executed.

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The 23-member task force includes representatives from the major venues in town (Pershing, Devaney, the Lied Center), local promoters and advertisers and the University Program Council.

Our sole student representative is former ASUN President Andy Schuerman, who may do a fine job, but what does he know about concerts?

Local performing artists, who might know about booking shows in the area and the constraints of touring, were omitted from the task force.

The mayor's task force also excluded representatives from Lincoln's smaller venues (Duffy's Tavern, Knickerbockers and The Zoo Bar) even though they feature regular concerts. Sometimes they bring in nationally-known acts.

If anyone would know why Lincoln can't attract big-name acts, it would be these bar owners. They have the expertise.

Not only were representatives from The Zoo Bar and Knickerbockers initially excluded from the task force, they didn't even know it existed until a Daily Nebraskan reporter contacted them last week.

The task force's chairman said it doesn't matter if Duffy's or Pershing is involved, because they face the same issues.

It demonstrates a lack of thought and effort that the most active participants in Lincoln's concert scene did not even know the task force existed.

Better concerts must be built from the bottom up. If a promoter sees that Lincoln can't sell out shows at local bars, the major acts will never come.

Not everyone involved in Lincoln's music scene needs to be on this task force, but the experts need to be consulted. Without them, this task force's recommendations will be worthless.

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Obermeyer's VIEW



Letters to the EDITOR

A few left off

Jacob Glazeski, I was reading your column on Friday and thought of a few groups you were leaving off your "evil" list. For instance: fraternities. Or how about campus sports teams? How about the university itself?

You see, these are all agents of "political socialization." All of these "gangs" prey on "vulnerable and lonely individuals." Your family is probably the worst because they get you when you are just a wee little baby; the rest get you when you come to college in probably one of the most open-minded stages of your life. They all teach "values" (read: evil) and build powerful relationships within their groups. And I can't see how any of these are evil.

So, Glazeski, you are a hypocrite. You are using the same tactics that these "Gangs of Faith" use. Calling something "evil" is perhaps the easiest and laziest way to make a point. You think that you could do a little more in a half-page article than call people names.

Some agent of freedom you are! You seem to like everything about the first amendment — except that nasty clause that allows religion to exist.

Joe Fraas
junior
English

'My answer is YES'

In "Time Served" (DN, 4/6), Cliff Hicks poses the question, "Is it really fair to prisoners who have served their time... to be haunted by their mistakes until their lives become a living hell, regardless of whether they will ever commit another crime?"

My answer is — YES!
I was a victim of sexual assault as a child. The "mistake" that my attacker made has haunted me ever since and will continue to do so for the rest of my life. No amount of therapy or support will ever take away the pain. I am left to deal with this for as long as I live.

Meanwhile, my attacker, who was sentenced to one year in prison (but was released after six months) wanders around my hometown and lives his life as though nothing ever happened.

If Megan's Law will keep even one child safe from a repeat attacker, then this law has succeeded. There is always a chance that this law will be abused. Every law is; that's why we have a penal system.

No, our legal system is not perfect, and it never will be. But instead of condemn-

ing a law that actually works to serve the good of the community, why not attempt to answer the real question: Are we serving to punish criminals, or are we out to rehabilitate them?

Name Withheld

Glad we're around

In response to Jacob Glazeski's "Gangs of Faith" (DN, Friday) Joyce Minor from the University of Alabama School of Law once asked, "How many hospitals, universities, orphanages, homeless and abuse shelters have been founded by the ACLU or American Atheist Society?"

Now, aren't you glad we "thumpers" are around?

Jason Bresley
sophomore
aviation

No hypotheses

I am writing in response to the editorial by Betsy Severin (DN, Friday) on the scientific value of "scientific creationism." It is unfortunate that the debate between evolution and "scientific creationism" is mostly just that: a debate, where the most convincing speaker with the most palatable argument wins. People outside science seem to feel they cannot judge the merit of either side because they are not experts in biology or geology.

Luckily, all of us are capa-

ble of judging science and non-science. Science is a rational process that involves testing a hypothesis, creating the potential for others to repeat the test and making predictions about the system under study. Science is a self-correcting process because ideas and conclusions are reviewed by other experts in the field, who use these criteria and their expertise to judge the merit of a scientific idea.

We can observe evolution occurring all around us, from antibiotic-resistant bacteria, to mutating viruses, to corn varieties that resist disease, drought and pests. Hypotheses about how evolution works are constantly being tested, tests are being repeated on different organisms and situations and are helping humans by their predictive power.

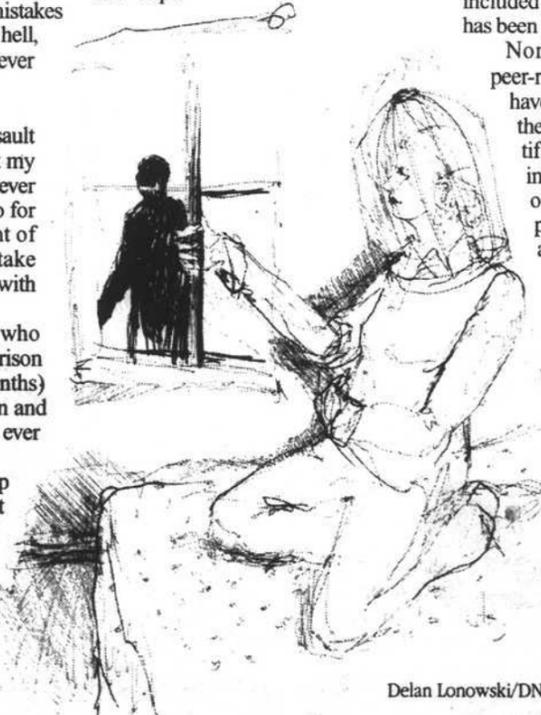
The development of flu shots is a good example. Researchers collect data on what strains are virulent and spreading around the world, and using a hypothesis, predict which one is going to get us that year. Usually they're right, and those of us who get flu shots don't get the flu. If this didn't work, researchers wouldn't do it, since it wouldn't help and would be a huge waste of money.

Proponents of "scientific creationism" have not developed any working, testable hypotheses. Biology textbooks contain huge numbers of references to peer-reviewed scientific papers, are often written by researchers who have done much work and hypotheses are included after a great amount of work has been published.

None of Severin's sources are peer-reviewed, and although I do not have them in front of me, I doubt they contain references to scientific papers. I encourage anyone interested in this debate to focus on the scientific criteria of the publications, rather than attempting to figure out if the arguments make sense to them or sound appealing.

Severin and I seem to agree on one thing: it's important to keep asking questions and increasing our knowledge.

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Delan Lonowski/DN