

## Commentary ignores 'free speech' while defending it

I would like to address a few points made in Kim McGee's commentary, "Entertainment industry is not to blame for society's demise."

To say that the media has no effect on the way people think is ludicrous. Billions of dollars are spent on advertising campaigns because the advertisers know that if they shove their product in your face enough, you're likely to buy it. Mustn't the same thing be said for violence, sex, profanity and the rest of the trash that billows forth from our idiot boxes every day?

You claimed to have been "violated" by the ad you saw in the Sunday funnies. Imagine how some people feel when they turn on their TV sets hoping to find a

suitable program and they are assaulted at every stop on the dial by murder, rape, illicit sex, beatings, etc., ad nauseam.

If you are thinking to yourself, "Just change the channel or turn it off," think back to your own article. You had the same options when you saw that ad. Couldn't you have "just turned the page"? But you didn't. You read it, were outraged and wrote an article.

This is the case with the American Family Association (which ran the ad). They felt that they needed to make their opinion known. The implication of your commentary was that they had no right to take out that ad and "violate" you. You seem to be crying "free speech" and advocating censorship in the same

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breath. I guess "free speech" only applies when the speaker agrees with your position.

You say that you're "frightened" that life might be like "Little House on the Prairie." I guess you would rather live in a world where you have to lock your doors every night, where you can't walk across a parking lot without the fear of being raped, where 8-year-old kids carry knives and guns to school. "Little House" looks pretty good

comparatively.

Does the entertainment industry only "feed society what it craves," or is it creating a need for society and then filling it, much in the same way the tobacco companies created a product and an addiction with one fell swoop?

While I agree that parents must take active roles in monitoring their children's television viewing, like you said, "a parent cannot always be there to censor." You added, "It's important that a child understand what they are taking in, and understand morals and the value of human life." Please think about whom you are talking. Do you really think that a child is equipped to make those kinds of judgments? Of course it depends on the age of

the child, but children of all ages are subjected to the TV.

Does your right to view whatever you want outweigh my right to watch something that is in my opinion wholesome and uplifting? I guess my only alternative is to not watch anything. This is the option I have chosen, but it's the fact that many people are still allowing the industry to fill their heads with filth that scares me.

Rob Weidenfeld  
junior  
art

## Letters to the Editor

Letters to the editor submitted to *The Rebel Yell* should be 250 words or less in length.

*The Rebel Yell* strives to publish all student submissions. However, we reserve the right to edit letters as necessary.

Please send letters to:

The Rebel Yell-STS  
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## Africa may not be origin of AIDS

Whenever there is a disease epidemic in the world, Africa is always cited as being the origin. Some years ago, three new, or newly diagnosed diseases—Lassa fever, Marburg virus disease and Ebola virus infection—were reported by western scientists to have originated in Africa. Soon after that came the acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS). Again, fingers were pointed at Africa, as being the origin of this deadly disease.

The question every concerned African is asking is, "Must there be an African connection for every disease?" Since AIDS was discovered, different clues and theories have been published by both the American and the European scientists to link AIDS with Africa. Theories like, "AIDS had long existed as an undetected disease in a remote area of Africa and then spread when thousands of people moved from rural to urban areas after countries gained independence." Another theory has been that "the AIDS virus's natural home is in an animal, possibly the African green monkey and that somehow

the virus jumped species to infect humans." But, so far, no concrete evidence has been found to support these rather interesting theories that AIDS, indeed, originated from Africa.

It's true that, like in America and in Europe, there are cases of AIDS reported in Africa. But should the finding of AIDS in Africa make it an African disease? If it is true that Africa is the origin of AIDS, how did it spread to the U.S. and those countries in Europe, where thousands of AIDS cases have been reported? Also, who are the group or groups of Africans identified to have spread this disease?

Has it ever been thought by the so-called AIDS researchers that tourists from around the world may have introduced AIDS to Africa? Or that the United States and the European countries, through export of blood products, may have been the ones who brought AIDS to Africa?

According to scientists, the AIDS disease is associated, in the most part, with homosexual and intravenous drug practices. These practices, as the American and the European AIDS researchers would attest, are uncommon in Africa.

If there is no concrete evidence to support the theories that AIDS originated from Africa, and no explanation is offered as to how this deadly disease was brought from Africa to other parts of the world, and the homosexual and intravenous drug practices associated with AIDS are uncommon in Africa, how then could it be true that AIDS originated from Africa?

Friday A. Odong  
UNLV student

## Prison article expressed ignorance regarding 'punishment'

It is tragic that Phil Maiorano's "Prison means punishment, not playtime" represents widely held views. Citing the same old cases that other fear-mongers have cited for years, he urges you to treat everyone caught in the American justice system as a violent sex offender and/or cold-blooded killer.

For almost five years I have

observed the United States Bureau of Prisons from the inside. I'd like to share my point-of-view. Cold-blooded killers like Horton and Harris make-up the vast majority of headlines, but only a tiny fraction of offenders. In fact, the vast majority of offenders are non-violent, generally drug dealers.

Regardless of what you think of these people, let's talk about punishment. According to prison ministries, over 90 percent of marriages fail in the first year an inmate is incarcerated. Your divorce, your ex-wife's remarriage, your children calling someone else "Daddy," when you call at Christmas, THAT is punishment! Living out of a tiny locker, sharing bathrooms, phones, and sleeping quarters with two or three times the number of people they were designed for, pales in comparison to attending your father's funeral in handcuffs, with guards. I could go on and on.

The reason prisons don't want overcrowding is well-known. Simple multiples in population result in exponential increases in violence. I personally know of an 18-year-old kid, thrown in a maximum security cell block—because of overcrowding—who

was beaten and gang raped. They dropped his DUI charge. Maiorano is right, I'll bet that cured "the kid" of drunk driving. It didn't make the newspaper though.

Maiorano should pray rehabilitation works. Over a million people reside in U.S. jails and most will be out one day. Many of these people have lived in a culture where violence and criminal behavior are the "norm" for five, 10, or 15, or more years. They benefit from no education, skills, career, or family and not much of a resume. Do you think they'll work at a McJob, or call an old cell-mate? Inmates, like college students, network. Chances are, in that network, they won't be non-violent offenders next time.

The real importance of good-time and other release mechanisms is to place inmates in society before they are institutionalized, in the hope that we still have a chance to rehabilitate ourselves.

Antony C. Delyea  
UNLV-extension student  
Nellis Air Force Base

## Student Spotlight

### How do you feel the J.R. Rider scandal is affecting the university?



Eric Gray played as a sophomore on the 1990-91 Final Four squad. He averaged 16.1 ppg in regular season play this year.

ing against dou much taller opp...  
Gray who busted up his true position and forewent attention to let Riders are putting too ability and congen on one person.  
of a lottery candi spending more  
Yes, lonely Grpects of the uners often neglectinkit's affecting with a blank gaze all.  
At the Big We

Joe Calvan  
junior  
nursing  
It is unfortunate that some activist special interest group would sacrifice the integrity and reputation of our university for their own selfish reasons.

Amee Sears  
junior  
health & recreation  
I feel that it has taken credibility away from the university and basketball program.