Activism on Campus

In regard to activism on our campus, it would be remiss of us not to address the new support group, UNK For The USA. It is pleasing to see some students taking a stand and actively participating in something they believe in. Unfortunately, however, that war must break out to waken our slumbering student body. None the less, these leaders are examples to every KSHS Student, expressing the need to inform yourself about the issues, examine your conscience and beliefs, and to play an active roll in life.

However, the rally that the group sponsored to support the troops left me feeling confused and disappointed. The rally had a theme similar to a high school pep rally, complete with banners displaying "CRUSH HUSSEIN!" and crowds of students chanting, "U! S! A!" This grossly oversimplified view gave the impression that the war is like a teenage football game, with a clear winner (U.S.) and loser (Iraq). With the irreversible environmental damage, tragic human loss, and the possibility of Hussein becoming a "hero" in the eyes of the Arab World, just for living, the rally select people with select slanted views regurgitated on a crowd silenced into saying only three words, "U! S! A!"

This behavior I call "blind patriotism," is equally as dangerous as "blind peace activism," both of which include large mobs of people who have deserted their senses in an exchange for an oversimplified raw emotion, usually anger. This somehow seems a step in the wrong direction. During the debate on the First Amendment Rights, Nat Hentoff, a renown liberal activist and writer for the Village Voice, presented that "without the freedom of speech, nothing can change." If change is what we're looking for in the Gulf (which I think everyone agrees on) then we better start letting people speak.

So if you want to graduate from this high school mentality, what can you do? Well, the first theme any genuine college must nurture is free thought. This is the ability to internalize opposing views or ideas, search yourself for a personal belief that you can stand behind, and actively stand behind it.

How do you begin the quest for free thought? Education is a good place to start considering you are attending a liberal arts university which freely uses this word as its main purpose. This is not the type of education that you might be accustomed to from classes where you sit lethargically numb, only to mindlessly memorize 10 year-old notes at 1:00 A.M. on the day of a test. Unlike class, this education would demand active participation by exposing yourself to many different views with a wide open mind.

Once armed with information, you, as a veteran free thinker, can weigh this knowledge against your belief system with the end result of a genuine, home-made opinion. This opinion can then be actively applied to your community in the form of formal speaking, chatting with friends, demonstrating, or writing letters like the one you are reading. Whatever you choose to speak long and loud and remember, as a true free thinker, you must constantly revaluate your position and allow your mind to change.

If the earth were only a few feet in diameter, floating a few feet above a field somewhere, people would come from everywhere to marvel at it. People would walk around it, marveling at its big pools of water, its little pools and the water flowing between the pools. People would marvel at the bumps on it, and the holes in it, and they would marvel at the very thin layer of gas surrounding it and the greatest wonder known, and people would come from everywhere to marvel at it. People would think of it, to be healed, to gain knowledge, to know the beauty and to wonder how it could be. People would love it, and defend it with their lives, their own roundness, could be nothing without it. If the Earth were only a few feet in diameter - author unknown
I'm tired of the bullshit, dishonesty, self-centered selfishness and "I don't care unless it's for me!" Apathy. Because of this valueless sense of value there are great injustices being committed. I'm not talking about the world with all of its woes. I'm talking about injustices right here in Kearney and all of its population. It's a subtle form of injustice deeply seated in our minds, philosophies, theologies, and daily life. I'm talking about attitudes, beliefs, and responses to the homosexual population; the secret society, the closet people, the invisible minority, the one in ten people who live in fear of being found out. They live in denial because society, church, and state, which have verbally mandated homosexuality is wrong, a moral evil, and a criminal act and worst of all; to be rejected by family and friends...the loved ones who we hoped would understand or at least accept us and help us realize that we are loveable and ok.

I need to be fair here. There are no longer laws against homosexuality, but there are reported cases of Kearney Police harassments against several gays who did appear to be violating no law except societal convention that two men should not be sexually interacting with each other or be in love.

The Church (main line denominations) have made great leaps of faith, both in their theology and approach to homosexuality thus willing a sense of justice and welcoming them to their congregation. However, there is a strong and fearful voice from others who do not believe and can not accept homosexuality as a possible lifestyle being made also in the "image and likeness of God"; but instead insist and teach that homosexuality is a "intrinsic moral evil" which then breeds hatred, fear, and close mindedness in the believers.

I need to be fair with family members and friends of the homosexual. There's suffering, questioning, and a multitude of feelings, especially frustration because they didn't understand and can not explain when a "closet person" comes out in the light and destroys the "secret" with open and honest truth, "I'm gay." Yes, there are families who reject and disown the gay person; but most try to understand and accept the truth. Family members and friends fear one thing: society and its attitudes which are anti-homosexual and they know the gay out of closet is a moving target for verbal assaults, and physical attacks on their property as well as physical attacks on them and it has happened here in Kearney (without getting reported because there is the fear of how the police might respond to their sexuality).

Don't get me wrong about the police department. There are outstanding officers in the department who seek to be just for all. It only takes one to tarnish the departments' reputation.

Speaking for myself and talking to other gays, homosexuals and women, most of us just want to fall in love, have a sincere relationship with a special other, try to make a life for ourselves and be productive members of society.

I hope you readers realize that as homosexuals, we are a product of the heterosexual world. We have always been and will always be "just like you." I ask that you let us "be" and exist with you, being productive members of society, "just like you."

Here is the injustice I encourage each of you to evaluate in your own life. It's the attitudes, values and thinking that you carry around, which you judge the world by; never evaluating if it is right or wrong, just or unjust, true to charity and care... but false because of fear and ignorance.

And it all limits us. The truth is that each person is more than their "closet secret"; it is just one aspect of their whole being. Many of us reject that person by this one aspect. Please be aware of your thinking and the language you use. I don't expect to be fully accepted but should I be punished for it?

-Angry but Hopeful

The Church

The comrades and I have uncovered a not so startling fact which we feel needs expression.

This institution has no think tank. No place for students to gather, unconditionally, at any time of the day. A place centrally located, without "shh's" and "shut-ups." A place that doesn't discriminate against people living off campus. A place that's warm and comfortable and free and filled with authentic human conversations. The kind that inspire and change simple thought into raging monsters. An intellectual coffee shop of this description is commonplace on most universities so why not ours? A question some might rather leave unanswered. Is it the administrations attempt to divide the free thinkers and squelch us from developing past their own level of ignorance?...Perhaps.

Now I'm whispering, so listen up close administration. I am tired of being an insignificant pest under your collar. I am a student consumer of KSHS and will not go another day without such a place; I will go seven. After seven days, be prepared for the dedication of Kearney State High School's new 24 hour think tank; with or without permission. I'll leave the details up to you gyps to discuss over donuts but get this idea-the Antler Snack Bar can be locked on all sides but the outdoor entrance. Of course coffee, pop and other study aids will be available, but you can accumulate these necessities in due time.

Now I'm shouting so pay attention Students! On Thursday, March 7, the former Antler Snack Bar will become THE CAVE, A 24 hour coffee shop for you! The dedication begins at 10:30 p.m., so don't miss it!

-Angry but Hopeful
Our pieces are created with respect for Mother Earth and her citizens using no materials from ecologically or politically sensitive areas. Three percent of our profits are donated to the Rainforest Action Network.

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The Bucket

Dear Cindy,

You have invaded my bucket. This aggressive behavior will not be tolerated by me or the rest of the pottery class. You must unconditionally and immediately remove all your clay from my bucket. This withdrawal will not allow you any face saving condition such as saying you did not know it was my bucket. I will not allow you to link this act of aggression with any other problem in the Art Department.

I have appealed my case to the other bucket owners in the class and formed a coalition against you. We have implemented sanctions against the bucket allowing no clay to go in or out of the bucket. If after 24 hours of these sanctions and 5 minutes of conversation where I will not budge from my position in the slightest; the coalition of allied art students will physically remove your clay from the bucket.

It will start with a strategic lid offensive on the seal of the bucket without damaging it. Then we will "soften up" the surface of the clay preparing for the physical withdrawal. Removal will take time and it might get "messy", but I know those bucket owners who are allied with me will "support" me the whole way. Although I have support from the coalition of bucket owners, I will do most of the work in removing the clay because I have the strongest hands and need the bucket much more than the others. (Sometimes I wonder if those others only support me because they are afraid of my strong hands.) Then, after the janitor has come in to mop up the mess on the floor and dump it down the drain, I will be the winner.

Then I will buy you a brand new bucket.

Anonymous

The Constitution of the United States
Amendment I.

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press, or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.
War is the grand horror that has haunted mankind from it's beginning. It's massive destruction has taken the youth of nations for centuries and the United States is no exception. But there is no justification for it's terror when peace and talks are still alternatives. Herodotus, the Father of History, once proclaimed, "No man is so foolish as to desire war more than peace; for in peace sons bury their fathers, but in wars fathers bury their sons."

I stand against this war and no, Mr. Shultz, your rhetoric of "dope smoking flower children" doesn't include me, in fact, before I came to Kearney State High School, I was serving my country in a two-year enlistment to help pay for my education. I was in a detachment of the service which was openly and covertly attempting to stop the drug flow from reaching the Marion Berry in our society who liked to play Donald Trump for thirty minutes. The reason I am telling you this information is so when we eventually go public, the Young Republicans, (the ultimate oxymoron on campus), and a lynch mob of Blind Nationalists don't come pounding my door down because I refuse to buy a "These colors don't run" t-shirt.

My views of Bush were already negative before World War III broke out. The man is one of the greatest hypocrites of our time and this is evident in his Drug War; the multi-million dollar plan to show the parents of America that the government really does care that their children are messed up on drugs. This is a 180 turn around from something the C.I.A. has been doing for years; bringing drugs into the country in order to gather cash funds on weapons from the Contras and other so called "freedom fighters for democracy". The plan was simple, let the drugs of society pay for the C.I.A.'s dirty work. They didn't count on the epidemic that would follow: college students, high school kids, grade school children, mayors, and every aspect of this would also be affected by this grand covert policy. By the way, George Bush was the head of the C.I.A. A at one time.

I find it hard to believe that the founding fathers of this great nation would have their own sons and daughters committed to a war in order to defend a monarchy, liberate another monarchy, and crush a revolution. There is so much talk now of how Hussein has used chemical weapons on his own people, the Kurdish, (agent orange?). Where was the sympathy of the students on this campus and the western world when Hussein gassed the Kurds in the waning days of the Iran / Iraq war? There was no sympathy in the western world because we were making money off our own little devil Hussein. But the great difference between the Kurds and Kuwaityes is the Kurds are poor and have oil, while the monarchs of Kuwait can afford to hire the mercenaries of the west to liberate them.

Is Hussein another Hitler? No, but it sure strikes the fear in the public eye. The man couldn't even beat Iran after eight years of fighting. He has never mentioned Mein Kampf, a "Fourth Reich", or the establishment of a master race to rule the world.

The Middle East supplies the West with 15-20 % of it's oil and this will increase over the next decade, but how many people must die to support our glutonous societies addiction to oil? How many new technologies for renewable energy and conservation could be developed with every firing of a million dollar cruise missile?

Who is going to pay for this war? My friends, the answer is you and I and the rest of our generation. This war will add to the already staggering economy and it's the home front that will pay. We have so many problems in our inner cities and other segments of society that need to be taken care of. Long after George Bush is gone, our generation and our children's generation will be paying off the ever climbing deficit thanks to the cost of Vietnam, the Regan Administration's trillion dollar defense budget, and now this war. Not to mention the years and years of terrorism and tension this war will release onto the world.

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Like most wars, this one was avoidable. Four months isn't a long wait in the sand when tens-of-thousands or even hundreds-of-thousands of lives are in the balance. Desert Shield and U.N. sanctions were working on Iraq.

Now Bush criticizes "Hussein of Jordan" for taking a mediator stand on the war. Couldn't this be an answer to ending the conflict?

We all must stand behind our soldiers in the Middle East because they are our flesh and blood, but the only humanitarian way to a "kinder, gentler nation" is through peace. Bush proclaims this is the beginning of a "new world order" but who is he to give orders to the world?

This war joins the United States "war immoral" list. From the slaughter of the Indians in the last century to Vietnam, our nation is famous for defending it's dark side with "blind patriotism". I support the peace movement and hope for the quick and peaceful return of my brothers and sisters in arms. Don't be an apathetic slug and support the safe return of our soldiers.

-Phaedrus