

# AKRON BEACON JOURNAL

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## DEGREES OF JUSTICE



# AN ACADEMIC RESPONSE

## University of Akron supports student's suspension

Story by John Higgins  
Beacon Journal staff writer

Photos by Ed Suba Jr.  
Beacon Journal photographer

In early 2004, the University of Akron arranged for a 35-year-old felon code-named Hulk to live in its residence halls and find students willing to sell him drugs.

It was part of a cooperative effort with campus police and the Summit County Drug Unit, a multi-agency task force, from November 2002 through August 2004 "to attempt to rid the campus community of any illicit drug activity and make it a safer place to study, work and socialize," according to the university.

Hulk was a key witness against a graduate student, Charles Plinton, who was acquitted of drug trafficking by a jury, but found "responsible" by a university panel.

He was suspended for the fall 2004 semester. Plinton never returned to the university and took his own life on Dec. 12, 2005.

The Beacon Journal asked to interview president Luis Proenza about the practice of using confidential informants and the

Please see **UA A4**

**SUNDAY:** The story of what happened to Charles Plinton in Akron.

**TODAY:** Answers to questions the Plinton story raises.



Frances Parker Robinson, whose son Charles Plinton killed himself in December, blames a University of Akron disciplinary action for spurring his suicide. More, Page A5



Master's degree student Charles Plinton, who lived in the University of Akron's Wallaby Hall (above), committed suicide after the school suspended him. He was banned from campus after drug-related charges were made, even though a jury found him not guilty.

## Do campus tribunals wield too much power?

Some experts say yes, object to their secrecy, but rules also vary from school to school

By John Higgins  
Beacon Journal staff writer

A Summit County jury found Charles Plinton not guilty of selling drugs to a confidential informant in 2004.

A few weeks later, a University of Akron disciplinary board found him "responsible" for "selling drugs to a confidential informant."

The difference between those

two words - guilty and responsible - may not sound meaningful to the average person.

But it's a distinction that begins to explain the secretive world of college justice in which campus committees may re-try the facts of serious crimes after criminal courts have already decided them.

Please see **Campus, A4**

# Abortion opinions haven't changed

Majority of U.S. public still conflicted, new poll finds

By Nancy Benac  
Associated Press

WASHINGTON: For all the recent tumult over abortion, one thing has remained surprisingly stable: Americans have proved extremely consistent in their beliefs about the procedure - and extremely conflicted in their views.

A solid majority long has felt that Roe v. Wade should be upheld. Yet most support at least some restrictions on when abortions can be performed. Most think having an abortion should be a personal choice. But they also think it is murder.

"Rock solid in its absolutely contradictory opinions" is how public opinion expert Karlyn Bowman describes the nation's mind-set.

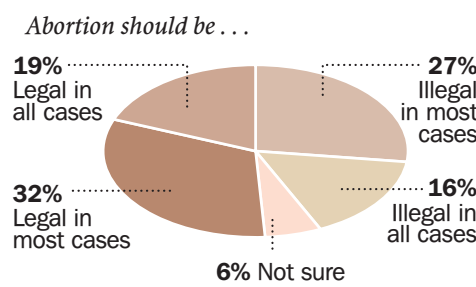
If public opinion is stable, the political landscape is anything but. The arrival of two new justices on the U.S. Supreme Court has stoked speculation about how abortion laws could be affected.

Please see **Abortion, A8**

Ap Ipsos Poll

## Most think abortion should be legal

A new poll shows most Americans think abortion should be legal in certain circumstances.



SOURCE: Ipsos for AP

Associated Press

# Newspaper chain will hear its fate

Knight Ridder to announce acceptance of McClatchy's bid for \$4.5 billion in cash and stock

Knight Ridder Newspapers

PHILADELPHIA: Knight Ridder Inc., the nation's second-largest newspaper chain, has agreed to sell the company to the McClatchy Co., The New York Times reported Sunday night, quoting unnamed people involved in the negotiations.

An official announcement was expected today, the Times said, of a deal it reported to be worth \$4.5 billion in cash and stock.

Officials of McClatchy and Knight Ridder had no comment on the news report Sunday night. Senior officials of Philadelphia Newspapers Inc., parent company of The Philadelphia Inquirer, said they had not been notified of a sale.

**Ohio.com:** Read a timeline of Knight Ridder online.

Please see **Bid, A7**

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**Today's weather**  
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## Plavix increases risks for some

Some people taking the blood thinner Plavix in addition to aspirin to prevent heart attacks, as many doctors recommend, now have good reason to stop.

The drug combination not only didn't help most people in a newly released study, but it unexpectedly almost doubled the risk of death, heart attack or stroke for those with no clogged arteries but with such worrisome conditions as high blood pressure and high cholesterol.

Nothing in the study changes recommendations that people who recently have had heart attacks or a procedure to unclog an artery take those medicines.

Other medical news is on **Page A3**.

# Kent State fans hoop it up

Read more about Kent State and the NCAA tournament. **Sports, C1**

Crowd cheers after learning that No. 12 Flashes will play No. 5 Pittsburgh Panthers in NCAA tournament Friday

By Gary Estwick  
Beacon Journal sportswriter

**KENT:** Four-year-old Sara Day took two small steps toward Kent State guard Armon Gates and looked up.

"She wanted to shake your hand," her father, Scott, told Gates. "She's enjoyed watching you play."

"Oh, thank you!" said Gates, as he

honored her gesture.

The next time Sara sees Gates play will be in the NCAA tournament. The No. 12 seed Golden Flashes will face No. 5 seed Pittsburgh on Friday in the tournament's Oakland regional at The Palace of Auburn Hills, Mich.

Please see **KSU, A8**

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