

Editorial

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Racism strong Positive measures needed

"Of 24 black students polled, 78 percent said they have experienced some sort of racism at UNL."
—Daily Nebraskan, April 27, 1987

The numbers are frightening and not encouraging. Some may say 24 students isn't a good enough sample of the black population at UNL, but when you consider that in 1986 only 341 black undergraduates attended the university, the numbers indicate differently. Black students make up only 2.2 percent of the student population.

The comments made by those interviewed were ear-opening:

● "A girl accused me of stealing something. I didn't, but because I was black, she assumed it was me," said Tina Holley, a sophomore political science major.

● "Nebraska perceives black people as Doug DuBose and Bill Cosby. I want you to treat me as a person who happens to be black," said Stevie Wilson, a junior UPC member.

● "The only minority stand at UNL is the football team. Is that the only reason we're allowed here?" said James Morris, a freshman on the track team.

The statements above may seem sensational, but they're not. The students are voicing their feelings. Voicing a problem that is not always evident, at least to white students, but probably

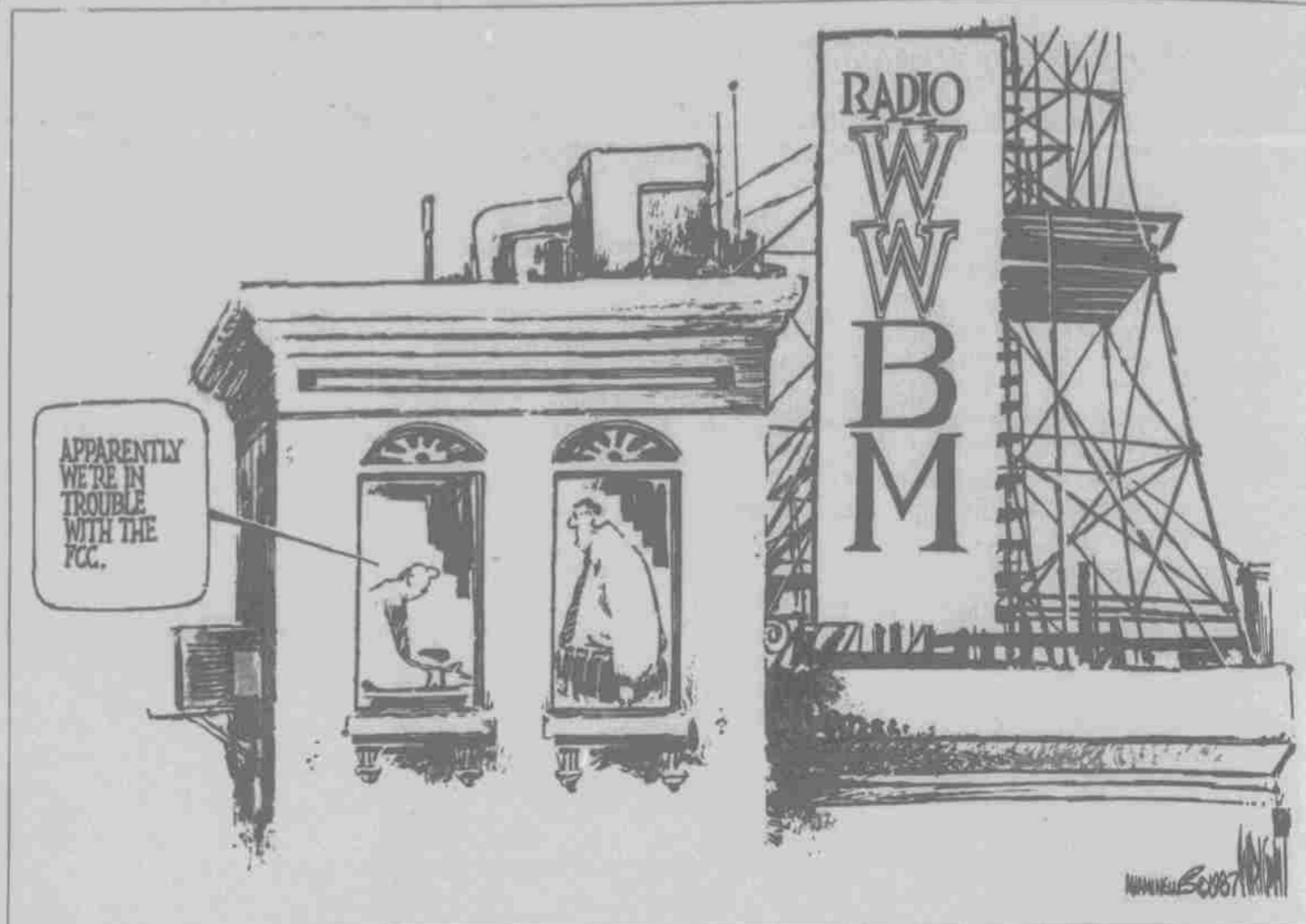
should be. Racism should be recognized, and efforts made to alleviate the problem. That requires the cooperation of white and black students as well as the administration.

Some steps have been taken, but few and far between. Programs created to help black students adjust include the Minority Assistance Program that offers counseling to help minority students adjust to college life. The Culture Center was set up for racial minorities.

There are so few programs because of a low number of minority students on campus, especially black students. Lisa Schmidt, coordinator of the Pre-admissions Activities Office, acknowledged the low percentage, but said there should be a larger minority population and more support services provided for them. She's absolutely right. She said the university offers scholarships to recruit minority students. But again, not enough.

According to the DN article, a preliminary survey indicated that more than money, scholarships and amenities are needed to improve the situation at UNL. Deep and lasting changes in attitudes and mutual acceptance are needed. The survey is part of preliminary research for a project on the problems black students have at UNL.

What the survey notes is nearly impossible to attain. It's difficult to change one's attitudes and that's what is so frightening.



Alternative format needed

KRNU could replace 'phantom' audience with loyal listeners

When I got this job last January, I promised to keep my columns substantive, about relevant and important political or social trends.

I've tried to be good all semester, but this is my last column until next fall, and there's something I want to talk about.

It's not earth-shakingly important, but it bugs me.

KRNU plays awful music. If you don't have any friends in the broadcasting department, you've probably never even heard of KRNU, UNL's radio station. KRNU is run by the College of Journalism's broadcasting department.

As a lab experience, KRNU works well and is quite valuable. But KRNU has a twofold purpose. It's supposed to provide a resource for the broadcasting department and provide programming not otherwise available in Lincoln.

Right now, that second goal is just a joke. Oh, it broadcasts Nebraska sporting events and the New York Metropolitan Opera, and it showcases different musical styles from 10 p.m. to midnight. But KRNU could be doing so much more so easily.

My beef with KRNU is the music it airs. The bulk of its programming time is devoted to tightly-formatted, middle-of-the-road, top-40 radio like the stuff you hear on KFRX and on every commercial radio station in town.

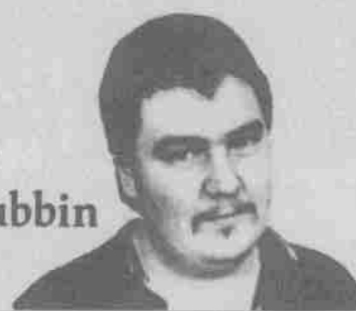
Meanwhile, all across the country, student-run college radio stations are known for playing new, adventurous, experimental rock'n'roll alternatives, as well as significant, new, non-rock genres like experimental jazz, reggae, industrial music and progressive country. KRNU could easily switch to an

alternative format, but it chooses not to.

Why should it? Who would listen to that weird stuff anyway?

But who listens to KRNU now? Who wants to listen to students and amateurs play music that can be heard played by a slick professional disc jockey on state-of-the-art equipment? Who wants to hear KRNU play Madonna's "La Isla Bonita," when over a couple of megahertz, they can hear a commercial station offering an all-expense-paid trip to San Pedro to the 73rd caller?

Chris McCubbin



Plenty of people in Lincoln are hungry for new, different, quality contemporary music programming. And these people would listen to such programming no matter who was playing it.

It's not impossible to find alternative rock in Lincoln. A couple of the commercial stations do weekly specials, and the culturally invaluable KZUM plays many hours a week of alternative rock, mostly late at night.

But wouldn't it be nice to have a station here in town that you could tune in any time and know you'd hear something new and challenging?

When I did a story last year on KRNU, they gave me several reasons for their format. I didn't think the reasons held

much water.

The best excuse the broadcasting department has for not changing KRNU's format is money. In these hard times, any radical shift in policy must be weighed carefully for cost-effectiveness. Alternative records generally are somewhat more expensive than mainstream music. On the other hand, independent record companies often consider alternative stations their most valuable promotional resource, and they ship a lot of freebies to such stations. A smart program director who's not afraid to write letters might actually save money with a progressive format.

The worst argument against making the switch is that broadcasting students at KRNU are playing the same thing they'll be playing when they have a job so they're getting better professional experience. This is so silly. Mojo Nixon and Glass Tiger play on the same machines. If KRNU really wants to provide a simulation of a commercial radio station, why aren't they taking chances and trying new things to carve out a loyal and appreciative share of the radio listenership instead of playing lets-pretend games in the studio, broadcasting boring pap to a phantom audience.

The broadcasting faculty that runs KRNU does a good job for the department, but it's asleep to the needs of the rest of the university. If you think UNL needs a real college radio station, drop a line to KRNU. If enough of us make ourselves heard, even the professors will have to listen.

McCubbin is a senior English and philosophy major and Daily Nebraskan Divisions editor.

Band has tendency to pass blame; image should stay with views

After reading the Daily Nebraskan article concerning the band Suicidal Tendencies, I felt confused about the band's purpose. Is it just out to earn some bucks or grab some fame?

Guest Opinion

Mike Muir, the band's lead vocalist, denies stories of violence accompanying the shows but recognizes that the band's manager encourages the non-truths because they increase record sales. The article presents Muir as an individual who claims to assume responsibility for his life, and yet Muir passes blame for the continuance of these "horror stories" to his employee. Come on, Mike, who's working for whom here?

But I will give the benefit of the doubt. Suicidal Tendencies is not a

band intent on catering to the "dark-side" of impressionable young people to build a financial and fame-filled empire. Instead, the band's intent is to provide a vehicle for the poetry, musical composition and subsequent performance of its members. Its intent is to express reactions to real-life experiences in an attempt to find others who understand. You know, share the moment. Sounds kind of tender, sensitive.

But, alas, the band has been given the shaft by a whole mess of narrow-minded skeptics. The press is picking on it for no apparent reason; people meeting band members are surprised at how "nice" they really are. This frustrates Muir.

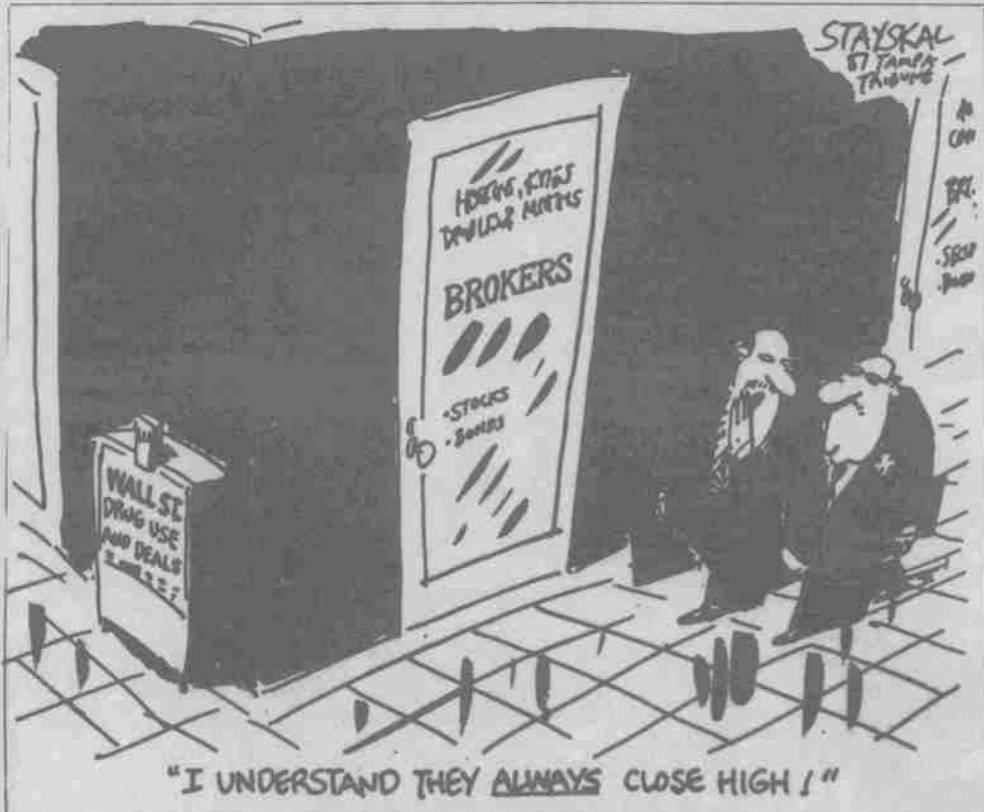
I find the frustration ironic in light of his interpretive revelations concerning the band's song "Prisoner." The DN reported that this song is "about some

high-school punks who dress or act so that they will be condescendingly stereotyped and then use it as an excuse for failure."

"Prisoner" sounds like a revamping of the adage, "you made your bed, now sleep in it," combined with the philosophy recently capitalized on in the best-seller "Dress for Success" that people will perceive you as you present yourself.

Perhaps the philosophies in the song "Prisoner" hold true for bands, for example, Suicidal Tendencies. If band members wish to be held in a higher regard, they must project that image. But until they can project an image consistent with their personal philosophies, give me the Boss.

Amy Ball
senior
business



Letter

Notes aren't substitute for attendance

This letter is in response to the Daily Nebraskan (DN, April 24). I realize that this paper was made only as a joke and wasn't intended to do any damage, but it did contain a contradictory announcement about Jon's Notes in the classified section. The announcement implied that if you were tired of going to class you could buy Jeff's Notes and "skip like a madman."

I would like to set the record straight and apologize to anybody who might be misinformed about Jon's Notes. The notes are not intended to be used as a substitute for class attendance, but are to be used along with the student's own notes taken in class. In fact, a study

was done, and it was found that the notes do not help very much if the students uses them in place of class. Jon's Notes are of great benefit to the student when used as a supplement.

Jon Donlan
Jon's Notes

Letter Policy

Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit all material submitted.

Anonymous submissions will not be considered for publication.