

Daily Nebraskan
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Amy Edwards, Editor, 472-1766
Lee Rood, Editorial Page Editor
Jane Hirt, Managing Editor
Brandon Loomis, Associate News Editor
Brian Svoboda, Columnist
Bob Nelson, Columnist
Jeff Petersen, Columnist

A call for openness

Critics overstate injustice in 'Confidential'

Defenders of the Nebraska football program's image have blown out of proportion the injustice of author Armen Keteyian's "blown way out of proportion" allegations in "Big Red Confidential: Inside Nebraska Football."

Coach Tom Osborne, in a recent press conference, said Keteyian blew alleged incidents of drugs, payments and other scandals out of proportion.

Osborne has based his defense on the fact that Keteyian's book is riddled with anonymous sources.

"If someone has something worthwhile to say, they'll usually say it," Osborne said. "But no one can press sources as to why they said something if no one knows who they are."

The Daily Nebraskan agrees. The book's use of anonymous sources is unnecessary and even may be dangerous in some places. But what Osborne isn't saying is that there are some people in the book who have very interesting things to say, and who include their names.

Keteyian names sources who said they sold steroids to players. He also names players who said they bought and used steroids while on the team and some who sold their family game passes for thousands of dollars each season.

In traditional fashion, Cornhusker fans probably will listen to complaints of anonymous sources and immediately dismiss everything in the book, attributed or not. They will look only at the faults in Keteyian's faulty book, and ignore the message that is successfully presented -- that there are certain problems inherent in college football itself.

Another allegation that has been leveled at Keteyian is that he offered money to potential sources, namely former quarterback Nate Mason. This charge is serious. It deals with a serious breach of ethics and deserves to be investigated. It also is a nifty way of diverting attention from the matters in the book itself.

Osborne said two other former players were contacted by Keteyian for interviews.

"They all called me and said the line of questioning was unusual," Osborne said.

Why did they call him? To alert him that the heat was on? Why did Osborne need to know what the line of questioning was?

The book shows Osborne and his staff as a group always trying desperately to cover up or minimize every incident, regardless of how small. The attitude of fans -- that of disbelief of allegations against the team -- probably perpetuates this pattern. If something works, there's no reason to abandon it.

But what if the energy spent keeping Nebraska players out of the papers instead was used to keep them out of trouble? Surely the coaches make efforts to keep their players in line. But more effort couldn't hurt. More frequent drug tests with automatic suspensions for violators might help.

Osborne, admirably, is readily available to the press for comment whenever a problem is disclosed. But he might do well to disclose any and all problems himself. If players know they're going to show up in the news if they screw up, they'll be less likely to screw up. Then journalists couldn't question that Osborne had the clean program he desires.

-- Brandon Loomis
for the Daily Nebraskan



UNL stalls parking solutions

NU Regents haven't learned anything from 1948 parking riot

"I'm mad as hell, and I'm not going to take it anymore!"

-- Peter Finch as anchorman Howard Beale in Sidney Lumet's film "Network."

Picture, if you will, the scene:

It's a typical Friday morning at the university as campus police begin towing illegally parked cars near 12th Street. A crowd of students begins to gather, at first heckling the tow trucks and eventually forming a human chain across the street to stop the trucks from moving.

A truck drives through the chain, scattering the uninjured students. Shouting begins, and students sitting in classes rush out onto the street to see what's going on. One history professor dismisses his class early, saying, "History is being made."

The growing mob begins an attack on the tow trucks, slashing tires and ripping out engine cables. Police try to disperse the students with tear gas and night sticks, but to no avail.

Before long, a mob of 4,000 students is marching on the state capitol, chanting, "We want parking!" and demanding to see the governor with a list of grievances. The students leave only after being assured by police that the governor was considering their demands.

The university issues a statement, calling the protest "a source of embarrassment to the University of Nebraska... The university is aware of the seriousness of the parking problem and is working conscientiously for its solution."

Some would call this fantasy. Some would say it's probably Chancellor Martin Massengale's worst nightmare. But truth is indeed stranger than fiction, for it really happened.

On May 8, 1948, the headline in the Daily Nebraskan read "Students Protest 'No Parking,' Police Use Tear Gas Bombs."

And now, more than 40 years later, the university is still "working conscientiously," so to speak, for a solution to the parking problem. Or at least they say so.

But to the average student, it seems they're not doing quite enough.

Ask most students if they think the parking situation on campus is better or worse than it was last year, and they'll tell you it's gotten worse.

None of them will have any figures or statistics to prove it, but they can feel it.

They feel it when they drive down 16th Street for 20 minutes, waiting for a two-hour parallel parking space to open. They feel it while driving through a commuter lot at 10:30 a.m., looking for a space and finding nothing but cars. They feel it when they get their third parking ticket of the week, placed under their wiper blade by what must be the most efficient parking enforcement patrols in the world.

The university by now sees the parking problem as an immutable fact of life, like long lines at the Office of Scholarships and Financial Aid, a losing basketball team or an ugly mascot.



Brian Svoboda

Of course campus leaders try to look concerned. Members of the Parking Advisory Board appointed by the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska will assure you, that "Yes, progress is being made."

And if one looks at it in a certain way, one would almost think that they're right. The last year has seen added student parking lots on the outer fringes of campus. And in a new twist, the university has begun to sell permits for "preferred lots," where students willing to cough up \$150 can be guaranteed a parking space.

But the parking problem remains. For the average student, the small steps taken by the university administration and the Parking Advisory Board are all show and no go.

For starters, the added spaces simply haven't been enough. The new student lots have been followed by increases in enrollment and in the number of students buying permits.

And the university's new innovative solution, the guaranteed parking spaces, is no solution at all. It solves the problem for some students -- those who are rich enough to pay the \$150 per year, that is. But for students who can barely afford the rising costs

of college -- the ones who have trouble getting loans and grants, or paying for books -- the guaranteed spaces make absolutely no difference at all.

The bottom line is that the university could solve the parking problem if it really wanted to. Period.

Article XIII of the Nebraska Constitution gives the NU Board of Regents the power to issue revenue bonds for "buildings or other facilities for parking."

The university has used its bond power to create facilities seen as necessary for the campus, such as the residence halls, the student unions and the health center. And they've used the bond power for less necessary things as well.

Recent years have seen the use of bond financing for the UNL Bookstore addition, the new Recreation Center and the Lied Center. One certainly could argue that adding parking spaces on campus would have served the students much better than remodeling the bookstore.

So the issue here is one of priorities. Does the university want a campus where all students who want a convenient, accessible parking space can have one? Or would it rather have a campus where every student gets a parking ticket instead? The answer seems to be pretty clear.

The question is not whether or not we have the wallet to solve the parking problem. It's whether or not we have the will.

ASUN and the Parking Advisory Committee should stop helping the university administration maintain the fiction that it is doing everything it can. Because it's not.

And nothing the administration is doing now will convince the average student otherwise. Students still are spending 20 minutes at a time looking for a parking space on the streets and in commuter lots. Parking tickets still are being laid on student windshields like clockwork. And for poor students, the new guaranteed parking spaces might as well be on Mars for all the good they do.

Maybe it'll take a mob of 4,000 students attacking tow trucks and chanting "We want parking!" to get something done. But then again, that didn't seem to work the last time.

Svoboda is a senior political science and Russian major and a Daily Nebraskan editorial columnist.

editorial

Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author.

The Daily Nebraskan's publishers are the regents, who established the UNL Publications Board to supervise

the daily production of the paper.

According to policy set by the regents, responsibility for the editorial content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student editors.

letter

Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Letters should be typewritten.

Anonymous submissions will not be considered for publication. Letters

should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted.

Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.