

Daily Nebraskan
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University of Nebraska-Lincoln

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EDITORIAL

Civil war

Leadership battles hinder NU's progress

In a time when the University of Nebraska needs leadership most, questions about whom should be guiding NU are undermining its ability to deal with an uncertain future. At the center of NU's most recent controversy is the Nebraska Coordinating Commission for Postsecondary Education. The commission was approved by Nebraska voters in 1990. It has the power to coordinate the activities of the state's public postsecondary institutions.

But officials from the University of Nebraska said Friday that the commission was overreaching its authority. At a meeting of the Nebraska Council for Public Higher Education, Graham Spanier, chancellor of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, said the paperwork the commission had requested had tied up valuable staff and resources.

"It's not a very good investment of energy on either end of these requests," Spanier said.

In difficult financial times, the University of Nebraska will always be a tempting target for the Nebraska Legislature. NU needs to be working as a team to avoid falling under the budget ax.

But instead NU is occupied with a turf battle. NU can only move forward when it has a clear leader. Instead, the NU Board of Regents, the NU president, the coordinating commission, the university chancellors and the Legislature are all trying to set policy.

The University of Nebraska's leadership structure needs to be reformed. NU's future cannot continue to suffer under a lack of leadership. One group needs to be given the authority to move the university forward and prevent the internal struggles that are common today.

Crying wolf

Storytellers deserve serious punishment

The Norfolk man who reported a possible abduction of a young girl by two black men near Pierce pleaded innocent Monday to charges that he made up the story.

Reports that Roy Suput fabricated the story came within a week of the initial report. Suput allegedly set the FBI and the Nebraska State Patrol on a pointless chase lasting 2 1/2 days.

Although there were no reports of missing children in the Pierce area, word went nationwide that a child was spotted. Families across the country with missing daughters had their hopes raised for no reason when they heard a young girl was spotted in Nebraska. All must have been heartbroken when they learned someone allegedly made up the story.

This story exemplifies the fable of the boy who cried wolf. Not only did the story waste the time of local police, the state patrol and even the FBI, it will make future reports of children seen struggling with possible kidnappers less believable.

The fact that the story involved two black men kidnapping a white child also perpetuates racial stereotypes of black men as criminals.

If Suput is found guilty of making up this story, he should receive the maximum penalty of one year in jail and a \$1,000 fine. Only serious punishments for fabricated stories about any crime as serious as kidnapping, and as sad as those involving missing children, will deter people from making up such stories.

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 1993 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents. Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author. The regents publish the Daily Nebraskan. They establish 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 students.

LETTER POLICY

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others. Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject all material submitted. Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. The editor decides whether material should run as a guest opinion. Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. 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.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Greek system

The greek system, as with any student organization, is for some people and may not be for others. I am not going to compare it to the residence halls or off-campus living because I have never experienced these lifestyles. But I do know why some students enjoy the greek system while others don't.

In a greek house, you must enjoy living with many students in open air — all members sleeping in a large open room — or in smaller rooms with perhaps more roommates than in a residence hall. This is a disadvantage if you dislike living with many people, are an introvert, or if you want a larger room. If you enjoy staying up with friends, always having the opportunity to socialize, and don't mind sharing, then a greek house can be an advantage.

You must be prepared to assume leadership roles as most houses require you to be on a committee within the house and an activity outside the house. This is a disadvantage if you don't want the responsibility that comes with being involved. This is an advantage if you want to improve your leadership skills and meet a variety of people.

The greek system is totally dependent on individual preference. But how can anyone say, "I would much rather pay less, lead my own life and pick my own friends than have mine outlined by my chapter," (DN, Nov. 22) when a greek house actually is the same cost as a residence hall, gives members the chance to get involved in activities they enjoy, encourages friendships outside the chapter through activities and thrives on the individualism of each member?

Kurt Ackman
junior
accounting, finance

Beating

It disturbs me when people make an association between two isolated incidents in an attempt to categorize others and their actions.

Biljana Obradovic (DN, Nov. 16) stated the Daily Nebraskan should think before printing any quotes, for they may somehow influence others. Obradovic felt the beating of a Malaysian student at Broyhill Fountain over Homecoming weekend and a quote from another person are related. Why? Because two individuals charged with the beating played on the Nebraska football team at one time or another.

The individual quoted was Kevin Ramaekers, a current football player. If Obradovic had read the entire quote, she would know that Ramaekers was in no way talking about the previous beating. He was upset about the football team and the controversy concerning it and a possible national title. So now Obradovic thinks all football players beat international students? Where did she get the impression Ramaekers was even thinking about

the beating when he said those words?

What we need to do as a community is move on. Stop pointing fingers. It won't change what happened. What we must do is learn from the incident and attempt to ease some of the tension that was caused. It's kind of hard for us to all coexist if we are blaming one another for things we did not do.

Jacqueline Ann Baez-Thompson
sophomore
communication studies, pre-law



James Mehlsing/DN

Assassination

Sam Kepfield, stop whining (DN, Nov. 17). You're just too young or too ignorant to understand why people still remember what they were doing on Nov. 22, 1963. It's not necessarily because they revered Kennedy so highly. The Kennedys were an attractive, young family, and they had surrounded themselves with some interesting people; but that alone is not what's crucial. And it's certainly not political.

The reason for the reaction that created memories of such longevity and power is that the Kennedy assassination marked the end of an age of innocence for many of us who lived through those moments. We were just waking up to a politics of possibility, and we felt invulnerable. We felt secure. We've never felt that way again. The security was a shadow, of course; and we needed to look beyond it. But it was a harsh light that dispelled that shadow, and we have never recovered from the shock. Perhaps we never will. Many commentators have remarked on the aftershocks — other deaths, wars, disappointments. Perhaps we just need to believe it all had some meaning. The wonderful thing about it is that we are all free to indulge ourselves once in a while — and we are all free not to listen to the things we don't want to hear.

So take a nap, Sam. It'll all be over in a few days.

Rosemary Bergstrom
College of Nursing

Atheists

Jay Yousling, what are you talking about? It was the church that suppressed Galileo (DN, Nov. 19). No one else. Blame can be neatly assigned. Case closed.

As for history showing us "that people who stubbornly reject Jesus are the most dangerous," what a wildly irresponsible comment! The church has a bloody history. I do not claim that there have not always been fine, peaceful folk within it also, but its history is punctuated with violence.

You have cited Stalin, Hitler and Mao as examples of your above-quoted statement. It is true they caused the murders of tens of millions. You have also identified each as an atheist. No doubt this is also true. Are these the alternatives, then: atheist or Jesus acceptor? Are Jews atheist? Moslems? Buddhists?

What of atheists? Most of my acquaintances are atheists. Should I live in fear?

Yousling, your by-line identifies you as a church pastor, but your perspective is narrow and bigoted. Do you also preach religious hatred? No, do not invite me to your church.

Robert J. Tobin
graduate student
geology

'Real answer?'

Of all the answering-machine messages I got in response to my short letter (DN, Nov. 16) — from hateful and reactionary to the guy who didn't leave his name but said I'd written a nice letter — my original question never got answered: What is the real, practical purpose of the greek system?

True, my letter was filled with negative stereotypes, but I felt the need to let those who would try to answer my question know my impression so far. I was told by many about the philanthropies and community service hours required of members of many houses, but no one could manage to tell me why, if one wants to do community service, become part of an organization with such a negative reputation that any good done is negated by all the bad things people hear. I'm positive there are many non-greeks who put a lot of their time toward helping their communities.

I'm for fund-raising and community service as much as the next person. I just don't understand what this exclusive, elitist organization has to do with making the world a better place. In my experience, you don't get picked from hundreds of applicants to serve soup at the People's City Mission on Thanksgiving.

To those of you who will call me: Don't get mad or vulgar, get articulate and prove me wrong, if you think you can.

Shawn Carlson
freshman
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