

# OPINION PACKAGES

## Our VIEW

### Top priority Diversity involves all at the university

Last Friday, in a forum held by the Chancellor's Commission on the Status of People of Color, a participant said university programs on cross-cultural communication and understanding were attended by a very selective audience.

UNL's human resources department frequently holds diversity training programs free for all interested university faculty and staff. But those attending mainly hold supervisory roles at UNL, the forum participant said.

Cross-cultural understanding cannot exist as only a top-down effort. Supervisors are a small percentage of the university and should not be expected to make substantial progress in diversity alone.

Yet we continually look to the administration and supervisors to speak out on diversity efforts on behalf of the whole university and to tell us which direction to move next in diversity efforts.

It is essential our university leaders continue to train themselves to be better cross-cultural communicators and better at understanding and appreciating differences.

But leadership should not be accountable for all diversity training and efforts.

Faculty and staff must also actively participate.

No one in an institution of higher education is exempt from the lifelong process of cultural understanding and appreciation.

Certainly a small devotion of time on behalf of faculty and staff—a half-day for a diversity workshop—is worth the extended insight gained into understanding cultural differences that often can form a barrier between doing a job and doing a job effectively.

Effective work in a university community must include helping diverse people learn from and of each other, through both education and meaningful communication.

At the national level, a host of ambassadors and interpreters attempt to cross the boundaries of culture and language to form effective foreign policy for the United States. Even these well-trained, lifelong professionals often do not succeed.

Every member of the campus community must make diversity a priority. Every member of the campus community must welcome diversity by showing a willingness to learn skills, including communication, that facilitate enhanced diversity.

This learning can start with a simple phone call to human resources, which will put each caller on a waiting list for the next workshop. When the next workshop happens, those on the list will be called and asked to attend. There is a workshop about every two months.

The process is easy to start, and for faculty and staff, the result could mean the difference between making a lecture or a phone call and making a connection.

## Mehsling's VIEW



## DN LETTERS

### Freshmen are stupid

I've noticed that you seem to be reluctant to publish letters to the editor from anyone other than freshmen. It's good to know our futures are in their hands—after all, according to you and your staff, they have all the answers.

Otherwise, you might publish a letter here or there from someone who's actually been out in the world for a while—maybe even letters from a real journalist. No, better not. Your audience might find out what they're missing.

Jason Fredregill  
film/video producer  
Lincoln



MAIT HANEV/DN

I think that there might have been a message buried somewhere within Ms. Tom's article but because of how poorly and haphazardly it was written that message is lost among irrelevancies, sexism and racial slurs. This is hardly a worthwhile addition to this great "festival of ideas" which we call college. I hope you will find something better to fill this space in the future than some bimbo spouting off about her hormones and "X-File" fetishes.

Christopher Ross  
first year  
law student

### Tapped out

Was Wednesday that slow a news day? I am referring to your so called "article" on that ever exciting subject: beer. Was there no other story of consequence that could have been just a tad more important? Or is your publication devoted to encouraging drinking like it appears to be?

Suggesting that beer has some viable form of nutrition, no matter how true that may be, is simply promoting the consumption of it and nothing more.

Taking this further and advising the best ways to "ease (the) pain of hangovers" is appalling. This is in effect, giving an OK to binge-drinking and then making light of the situation that it brings about. I LOVED the stories from some of our more intelligent students about puking and bursting of blood vessels (sarcasm in its purest form).

Stories about the death of a student or innocent driver caused by drinking and driving are not funny, but are definite realities. We should be working at solving this dilemma and helping those who are addicted, not promoting the reckless use of this evil drug. Why not next week, run an article on the advantages of marijuana over cigarettes? Then provide a simple "how to grow your own" series?

Ryan Targoff  
Lincoln

### Just plain confused

I am writing about the "Guest View" column in Tuesday's DN. I read the DN editorial page every day over here on East Campus and often find it to be thought provoking, informative, sensationalistic, etc.

However, "Sexy or Psycho?" just left me confused. Usually there is a reason for using a guest columnist (besides a slow news day) but I could find none for this one. What is Ms. Tom advocating, what is her point?

We go from alien abductions to the bar scene to her sex life. At one point she strikes a blow to feminism by perpetuating sex role stereotypes and at another point she advocates dangerous and irresponsible sexual escapades and at yet another she compares her entire plight to that of historical Jewish persecution.

Yes, I caught the reference to Shakespeare's "The Merchant of Venice." Shylock, a Jewish moneylender, who can find no justice for his persecution makes the stirring speech, "If you prick us, do we not bleed? If you tickle us, do we not laugh? If you poison us, do we not die? And if you wrong us, shall we not revenge?" This is hardly the metaphor that I would use to describe Ms. Tom's dilemma (maybe she missed "Schindler's List" last week).

### Personal decision

Bless Sonia! I am a divorced single mother who did not get pregnant until (shortly) after I was divorced. I faced the breakup of my marriage and the resulting stigma of being a 21-year-old divorcee, and shortly thereafter was faced with the superhuman challenge of being responsible for another life.

In the wake of questions from acquaintances such as, "How do you get knocked up in the age of condoms?" I had to find something that I could count on to help me through it. That thing was the life that I had created and everything I had ever hoped for was realized the moment I gave birth. Sonia, be happy in the knowledge that you have made the best possible decision for yourself—not to bow to others' expectations, but to do what you know is right in your heart.

Having only one parent who loves a child more than anything is so much better for them that to have two parents who are distracted by their indifference to each other. If you are in a relationship, more power to you, but if not, that does not automatically make you a bad parent.

Sometimes it's the best thing. By the way, congratulations.

Kerry Childe  
senior  
international affairs

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