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Week after week, my mug shows up on Thursday's Daily Nebraskan opinion page.

And each week I voice my opinion on various issues to whomever decides to read my column. My column is usually directed to anybody and everybody: those who agree with me and those who don't. Based on occasional letters to the editor, there are certainly people out there who don't always agree with what I have to say.

But that doesn't stop me from posting my opinion, complete with my name and my picture.

There is someone out there who this week decided to grace everybody who happened to walk the

Come out, come out

Chalk vandals hide behind anonymity

campus sidewalks with some opinions on homosexuality. The only difference is that the person remains anonymous.

So this week, I have decided not to address this column to anybody and everybody. Today I offer an open invitation directly to the person or people who decided to write hate messages on the university walkways. I invite you to take my place next Thursday so you can have your spiteful opinions attributed to you.

I offer you my column for a week.

Your name. Your face. Your responsibility.

Call me. 472-2588.

Journalism students learn from their first classes that what somebody says cannot hold water unless that person is identified. If you are an educated and informed individual who has some insight as to why we should hate homosexuals, then be proud of your opinion and stamp

your name onto it so the entire DN readership can better critique the validity of your opinions.

You must be proud of your opinions, otherwise you would have kept them in the closet where they probably belong. After all, that is what Coming Out Week is all about: pride. I'm talking about the type of pride that brings people to terms with themselves and the rest of the world so that they can be open about who they love despite having to put up with people who hate - like yourself.

Yes, this is surely a week that stresses pride, but where is yours?

Unless you take up my offer and voice your opinions with your name attached, then you must truly be ashamed of yourself. You are a scared person who doesn't even have the backbone to let people know what you really think. You don't have enough pride in yourself to let people know that you hate the way you

do. Even Hitler had the guts to announce his fear and hatred toward people who were not like him. It is swine like you who endorse Hitler's theories, but you do it behind a wall of anonymity because deep down, even somebody as intolerant as you realizes that your hatred is wrong.

Otherwise you would claim your sidewalk poetry as your own. I would if I had enough wit to come up with "Deer Season? Queer Season?"

Your statements like "Got AIDS? FAG?" are far from profound: They are profane. Until you publicly claim your actions, how can anybody believe that you are anything but an ignorant, unenlightened, backwards individual with no sense of responsibility of your actions?

If you do decide to take my offer and appear in your very own column, I have a couple of questions I would like you to address:

1. How many first-graders did

you beat up when you were in the second grade?
 2. What was the first thing you bought with other kids' lunch money?
 3. Have you always been pro-hate?
 I apologize if I have you pegged wrong. You probably weren't a bully in elementary school. That would require you to be face to face with your opposition, something you apparently are too spineless to do. You are probably pretty tough on the outside. I bet you like to brag to your friends about all the attention you are getting right now. But on the inside you are afraid to let anybody outside of your peer group know who you are.

Time to fess up.
 But there is one other issue I would like to hear your opinion about. You have hurt a lot of people. You have added to the hatred in this world. My last question is why should this university tolerate somebody with your lack of tolerance? Why should this university accept somebody with your lack of acceptance?

In tradition of Coming Out Week, leave the confines of your closet and let the world see who you really are.



Discriminatory deeds

Democracy damaged by hatred

KLAUS MARRE is a junior broadcasting major.

Voltaire once said I do not believe in what you say but I will defend your right to the death to say it!

That is what I believe.

I and many others were disgusted by the display of hate, immaturity and ignorance that was showcased on the university's sidewalks on Tuesday morning. Hate speech, no matter at whom it is directed, has no place at an institution of higher learning.

I believe in the First Amendment of the Constitution, and that any person has the right to express himself, but the freedom of one person ends where someone else's freedom begins.

In many ways, the United States is a very progressive country. It has brought democracy to the world and shown everybody how to make it work. Our planet has benefited from the American way. It has taught us to "Just do it," but it seems that it has lost its edge.

Now I see the dark side of this country rearing its ugly head.

Can you only "Just do it" if you are white, male, straight, not overweight, not handicapped and somewhat wealthy? To us it sometimes seems that way. It is appalling to see that a group in this society is being discriminated against because they are "different."

On Tuesday that group was homosexuals.

They had, in a mostly humorous way, expressed their feelings with colored chalk. They did not write

"Hey, you straight bastards, what is your problem?" or "Heterosexual love is disgusting." Instead they inspired us to think. Is this not what a university should be about?

Are not our minds supposed to be challenged to make us better and more diverse people? Why the wall or backlash when the initial chalking was not hostile?

I encourage people to go out and respond in kind - that is, in a creative and civilized manner - to create a forum of free thought and communication. It seems that some members of our society are unable to look beyond their hatred.

I have news for some of you: Being different does not mean being wrong, and showing pride in one thing does not mean putting something else down. There is no particular "correct" way of living just because it is the road most traveled, and the people who are on a less-traveled path should not be condemned because of it.

I do not blame gays in this country for not coming out of the closet because it must be tough to endure the hatred of a society such as the one in which we are living.

Imagine that you are part of a minority and one day you are greeted by derogatory statements wherever you go. Could you even imagine being in a situation in which you are confronted with such open hostility?

I am not talking about bad-mouthing someone behind their back. Instead we are dealing with screaming "I hate you because you are different" in their faces. Honestly, I could not live with myself if I were that kind of person.

Could you?

Judge not ...

To the students, faculty and staff of UNL,

So quickly we are to judge something we know little about.

This fall semester I've been confronted with several instances of discrimination concerning sexual orientation. In just the last few days, I've had to face this display of bigotry in a lecture hall, at the Husker football game, on a KRNU talk show and, most recently, walking to class.

The hateful epithets written on our sidewalks are another clear reminder of the lack of unity we have on campus. Everyone is affected by the different forms of oppression. Without respect for one another, our individuality suffers. Hate breeds negativity and inhibits us all.

Education is the key to understanding. Fortunately for us, we belong to an institution of higher learning. So, to the people making slanderous comments on another minority, try being inclusive with your thoughts.

Before judging others do our community a favor and educate yourself.

Dan Ulrich
senior
geography

Sin, sin, sin

I am getting tired of hearing people condemn homosexuality on the basis that it does not help continue the species and is therefore contrary to natural law. By that argument, celibacy is also a sin, and priests and nuns are no less "sinful" than gays.

Lane Phillips
junior
computer engineering

DN LETTERS

Bad hosts

As a journalism student at this university, I am embarrassed and disappointed by the actions of the students who are hosts of the "Three Men and a German" show, which airs on our college's radio station.

As a bisexual woman, I am hurt and angry. I have to ask myself: How can I exist in a field where ignorant radio announcers encourage homophobes to act out by providing the means (in this case, chalk) to write hateful messages against me? One of the hosts of the show claimed in Wednesday's DN that he told the counter-chalkers "not to be derogatory." In my mind, homophobia equals hate, and hate is derogatory. There is no denying this.

As journalists, our job is to represent what goes on around us, to keep people informed and, hopefully, to contribute to positive changes. I'm hoping to see a resistance to irresponsible and damaging statements made in the name of journalism.

I expect these issues will be discussed in journalism classes (and every class, for that matter) so that our collective point of view can expand and so that our work can improve. Professors and students: Please remember that there are non-straight students in your classes. We deserve to feel comfortable here. I think you'll find that any efforts made to address these concerns will be met with appreciation and enthusiasm. Start today.

Erin Hansbrough
junior
women's studies and
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Come out

The anti-gay sentiments expressed were an ignorant and childish way of sharing the opinions

of the chalkers, who are equally ignorant, offensive and hurtful.

Gay and lesbian students are a minority on campus. This week offers these students a chance to feel welcome and equal. It is a celebration of their courage.

I was shocked to read "Queers, thanks for AIDS." It displays an opinion that is uneducated. This kind of hate speech should not be tolerated. As many of us know, in the past couple of years, people on campus have had to "tolerate" some very horrible displays of discrimination. Many of us have spoken out against these hate crimes, often to an unsympathetic community.

Minority students will tell you that they do not feel equal, welcome or safe. They will tell you that crimes of discrimination and hate continue. It seems impossible to punish these crimes unless serious physical injury is involved, and even then they may go unpunished, and certainly they are not prevented. Remember the murders of Francisco Renteria and Tina Brandon? Gay bashing should not exist on a university campus, or anywhere for that matter. It should be considered a crime, however it is not. Perhaps the persons responsible for hate speech on campus were not afraid of getting in trouble. I want the persons responsible to "come out," accept the responsibility, and claim their hateful opinions. Are they afraid? Are they cowards? After all, they are entitled to their opinions, right? I dare these people to admit to their ignorant, uneducated, bigoted and hateful beliefs. And furthermore I dare them not to be white, fraternity members.

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