

OPINION PACKAGES

EDITOR
Paula Lavigne

OPINION EDITOR
Kasey Kerber

EDITORIAL BOARD
Brad Davis
Erin Gibson
Shannon Heffelfinger
Chad Lorenz
Jeff Randall

Our VIEW

In too deep Outside help needed with racial problems

When federal officials arrive at UNL next week to examine its policies on race, all campus community members – not just minorities – should welcome them.

The representatives from the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights will make sure the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, like other institutions that use federal money, abides by anti-discrimination laws.

Their third-party, objective assessment should be an important eye-opener for those on every side of our engrossing conversations on race.

Federal officials selected the university because of its past controversies surrounding campus race relations. In other words, UNL was specifically picked as an institution whose policies may be unable to stop racial harassment or may cause more problems.

That's not news to the campus' minority students, staff and faculty members and the nonminority students who care about creating a safe multicultural climate.

Undoubtedly, many UNL administrators work diligently for the campus to welcome all races.

And after any embarrassing incident involving poor race relations, the university always declares that it will review its policies and see how those problems can be avoided.

But they keep happening, and that's proof that administrators need outside, expert help in improving these policies.

As a third party, the civil rights officials will be able to take an extensive, fair look at those policies and suggest strong changes.

It's a preventative measure that will help, not embarrass, the university by helping it objectively assess its race policies.

Such an approach is much better than insiders reacting to perceived racism or a lack thereof. Here at the university, the issue of race has simply become too personal and too absorbing for any insider to effectively assess and improve policies dealing with it.

Students and administrators can expect federal officials to suggest some real action-backed policies – ones they can demand to see at work when acts of racism flare on campus.

Although the media attention given to the federal visitors' seeming intrusion may make many campus members uncomfortable, it's fortunate that these Big Brothers are looking over administrators' shoulders.

It will bring solutions that many minority students have waited for, but an assurance that they never had.

And an objective light of truth shed on campus race policies will improve the cultural education of all campus members.

Haney's VIEW



DN LETTERS

Don't tread on my beliefs

In Monday's column by Katya Ovcharenko ("Who is He?"), Ovcharenko's statements indicate a shuttered mind that does not allow for any other religion than Christianity to enter.

By her words, she indicated that the largest belief system, Buddhism, is invalid. Muslim, another monotheistic faith that requires the same dedication to it as Christianity does to its god, is not tolerated. By inference, she degrades everyone else's belief.

Has anyone informed Ovcharenko that there is such a thing as freedom of religion in this country?

It is blithely assumed by too many people in this country that the United States is a beautiful block of Christianity that is only slightly peppered by those malcontents, like me, who try to spoil the brew. Well, sorry. Remember the melting pot? Well, it's still happening, and these people bring their religions with them.

Buddhism and Islam are just two that are coming in on a regular basis.

Most of these people aren't going to convert. Grow up and realize that fact. Christianity is a minority in the world picture. Other religions will steal the customs that Christianity stole from earlier religions, adapt them to their own needs and move on.

Welcome to the great cycle of life. It's the beauty of freedom of religion.

I also am offended by Ovcharenko's statements about leaving the Christian faith upon going to college, and her blatant invitation to return to the faith. I walked out of Christianity at the age of 18, when I came to college.

When I got out of that faith, I found for the first time people who would accept me as an equal. These people didn't care who I was or what I believed in; they would accept me.

I also found a philosophy and a belief system that finally made sense. I walked into the pagan world, and I haven't looked back.

In her column, Ovcharenko makes it sound like I did something wrong. She's lying. I did nothing

wrong. I did something very right for me. As she is not ashamed to show her faith, neither am I.

I am a Neo-Celtic pagan with ties to shamanism. This non-Christian won't be celebrating Easter, even though supposedly all nonbelievers do back in Ovcharenko's native country.

Oh, and Christians, don't pray for

you; you don't force us; we're all happy.

Lynn Baxter-Zimmerle
graduate
classics

On the other hand ...

I attended the "U" from 1969 to 1973, majoring in English and secondary education, and was very pleased to find your article outlining the activities that are planned for "Jesus Awareness Week."

Among all of the skills and experiences I gained while at Nebraska, the single-most important opportunity I was presented with was the opportunity to examine, and decide upon, the reality of Jesus.

In those days (boy, do I sound old!) everything in society was "up for grabs." The university was shut down because of a student strike over the invasion of Cambodia, societal mores were being re-examined, experimentation with drugs was commonplace and the so-called sexual revolution was in full swing.

There were no boundaries, no laws; nothing that could hold us back from righting all the injustices of the past. As you can see, that path didn't change much.

In the middle of this free-for-all, someone handed me a pamphlet about Jesus, and I was presented with a decision; a decision I urge all of your readers to make: Is what Jesus claimed the truth or a lie? It's just that simple.

In 1969, everyone had an opportunity to voice their views, no matter how "fringe" they might've been. Today's "PC" atmosphere seems to allow for every point of view EXCEPT for that of the Christian.

To stand for what the Bible teaches is characterized as narrow-minded, X-phobic or intolerant.

I urge you to stand your ground and deliver the message of Christ as clearly and with as much love as you can. Someone, like me, needs to hear it.

Tony Gevo
Doylstown, Pa.



MELANIE FALK/DN

me or others like me. It is offensive to us. It is just another part of the lies and the control that you attempt to do. Stop. At least have enough respect to allow us our own choices instead of attempting to manipulate us with your guilt trips.

Just leave us alone and allow us to make our own way. We don't force

Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials are the opinions of the Spring 1998 Daily Nebraskan. They do not necessarily reflect the views of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, its employees, its student body or the University of Nebraska Board of Regents. A column is solely the opinion of its author. The Board of Regents serves as publisher of the Daily Nebraskan; policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. The UNL Publications Board, established by the regents, supervises the 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 employees.

Letter Policy

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor and guest columns, but does not guarantee their publication. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject any material submitted. Submitted material becomes property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. Those who submit letters must identify themselves by name, year in school, major and/or group affiliation, if any. Submit material to: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St. Lincoln, NE. 68588-0448. E-mail: letters@unlinfo.unl.edu.

P.S. Write Back

Send letters to: Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 "R" St., Lincoln, NE 68588, or fax to (402) 472-1761, or e-mail <letters@unlinfo.unl.edu>. Letters must be signed and include a phone number for verification.