

OPINION PAGE

Our VIEW

Cultural cultivation Multiracial education could end stereotypes

On this campus, where race divides more than it jells, few doubt that racial stereotypes linger among us all – in private thought and conversations, if not in public.

Most campus members recognize that white students must be educated about American Indian, African, Asian and Hispanic cultures as well as others in order to succeed in an increasingly diverse world and to improve the campus climate for minorities.

But a new national survey shows there is a widespread need for the multicultural education of all racial groups, not only whites.

The poll, conducted by the National Conference, a nonprofit organization that promotes racial dialogue, and reported by The Washington Post, found whites share bitter feelings about minorities and vice versa.

But minorities tend to harbor even harsher views of one another, the poll found.

For instance, 25 percent of whites, nearly 50 percent of Hispanics and 40 percent of blacks agreed that Asian Americans were “unscrupulous, crafty and devious in business.”

About 66 percent of Asian Americans and 50 percent of blacks and whites agreed Hispanics tend to “have bigger families than they are able to support.”

Meanwhile, Hispanics were almost three times as likely as whites to agree that blacks “aren’t capable of getting ahead” even in the face of opportunity.

On the University of Nebraska-Lincoln campus, this means multicultural education cannot be stamped a white issue or a black issue or an Asian issue or any one race’s issue.

Multicultural education must include the avid participation and education of all groups in order to break harmful stereotypes that keep us all from advancing in political, social and economic arenas.

In other words, a student who chooses to move beyond a certain stereotype by attending one event sponsored by another culture or by studying one other ethnicity should not be lauded by his or her peers or used by the university as an example of a student with a well-rounded education.

Each student must study multiple cultures in order to claim to have multicultural education.

And any students truly seeking a thorough education must pursue cultural knowledge outside the classroom.

They could start by attending multicultural conferences or evenings of entertainment, such as the May 2 Asian Night. Or they could make friends from other countries and learn to listen to often uncomfortable realities of how students from some cultures feel on this campus.

But, regardless of how it’s accomplished, all cultures must step out of their comfort zones to learn about all other cultures.

Everyone needs a multicultural education. Everyone.

Haney's VIEW



DN LETTERS

It's a two-sided coin

I truly agree with the statement that diversity, “can only be achieved only when all people can contribute to the race relations discussion.”

Yet when I personally deal with racially motivated or discriminatory incidents, the only whites that I see partaking in these actions are the same few who are involved with all the other diversity events.

I would prefer to see the average student partake in these various events and offer their input in the decision making.

Within the Office for Civil Rights session that I partook in, there was a white male present who discussed his concerns with reverse discrimination in higher education.

I do understand that he may not speak for the majority of students among those on campus, but he served as a form of representation.

Case and point – having one minority member on a committee does not serve as diversity for that event.

The author implies that whites should serve an active role with the talk of diversity – but I hope they realize that they must practice this same philosophy within the predominately white organizations that they are members of.

Minorities also should be given the same opportunity to participate in the discussion of events that are primarily determined by these organizations.

Events such as the rise in tuition or housing are never addressed to minority students for input unless they ask for a ‘minority’s perspective,’ even though it has the same effect as on a white student.

From my experience the majority of the time that my input is asked of is regarding negative issues toward minorities.

I am rarely confronted on how I think the university can improve its

use of students’ funds unless it is associated with funding minority programs.

Therefore I state that whites should use this same philosophy when addressing issues that affect all students – including minorities.

N. Omar Valentine
chairman, Political Issues
Committee
Afrikan People’s Union

Don't damn the drink

In Tuesday’s edition of the Daily Nebraskan, there was a letter to the editor commenting on an article about drinking.

The young man went on to bad-mouth everyone in society who drinks and seems to blame every bad thing that happens to someone on alcohol.

You need to live in the real world and accept that people are going to drink and sometimes bad things will happen when people choose to drink irresponsibly.

In rapes cases, no means no, there are no excuses. Violence is going to happen when a person is sober or drunk and auto accidents will happen whether alcohol is involved or not.

The death of Laura Cockson was uncalled for and should have been prevented, but to expect everyone at UNL to quit drinking is completely unrealistic.

I drink because I want to, and I enjoy it. Don’t lecture everyone else who does drink just because you don’t. If you’re that against it, maybe you should volunteer to be the designated driver for everyone else.

Amy Sovereign
freshman
journalism

Dating dilemma

I couldn’t help but smile when I read Kasey Kerber’s column in Tuesday’s Daily Nebraskan.

Imagine my surprise when I, a small-town girl from Boring, Oregon, read about one of my friends from high school.

Joshua Harris and I knew each other through church when I was a freshman and sophomore. In fact, we even went on a “date” through the youth group.

I remember Josh as an attractive, funny, smart guy. When I heard a couple of months ago that he had written a book about dating, I was proud of him.

Kasey’s point is well taken: “people should make their own choices about life experiences.” I cannot speak for Josh, but I think he would probably say the same thing.

I understand the frustration with the dating “game.” Although some people make wise choices when it comes to dating, too many people jump in without thinking.

Yes, dating can be fun and you can learn a lot from the people you are with. On the other hand, something can be said for the decision to not date; Josh isn’t the first person to come to this decision.

Josh Harris is no fool. He wouldn’t make his own choice to not date, much less publish a book, without thinking through all the options.

You and I may make the decision to date someone – that’s great! But maybe someone else out there is just as tired of the game as Josh was when he made his choice; who knows ... that person may benefit from knowing that it’s OK not to date.

I highly doubt Josh wrote his book with the idea that it’s the only way to live your life; it’s simply an option that’s interesting to consider.

Oh, and Kasey, I’ll see what I can do to let Josh read your column.

Alaina Wood
graduate
music education

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