

Opinion

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Calling the kettle black

Demand for Japanese apology for WWII neglects U.S. acts against citizens

World War II veterans want an apology from Japan. They hope this apology comes through for them in the form of LR298, a resolution that would ask the Japanese government to admit the atrocities committed against American prisoners of war during the years 1941-45. The Legislature's resolution is part of a nationwide movement to get a Japanese apology.

We don't see the point. Furthermore, we think there are many more apologies to be made before we ever consider furthering this cause.

Some of these issues have been brought on the legislative floor. Sen. Ernie Chambers pointedly brought up that the U.S. government has yet to apologize for slavery or the numerous civil rights violations against African-Americans.

And maybe this should come before anything else does. There are other apologies that ought to be made, mostly to our citizens.

But what about the numerous atrocities our American government has committed? Before anywhere else, we must start with World War II itself, and the thousands of lives lost in the Hiroshima and Nagasaki atomic bombings.

Don't get us wrong: We are all well aware of those bombings' purposes and the studies that have shown it saved millions of lives in mainland Japan. But the fact still remains: The U.S. government willingly incinerated and blew away innocent people – including many children.

The United States has committed other offenses too numerous to list. The government has not apologized for the Vietnam War and often fails to recognize some tragedies of the Gulf War. So we are in no position to force an apology.

Besides, after all this time, is there a definitive reason? The United States has been Japan's military watchdog for some time. The two countries have friendly relationships. Is there any reason to force the current Japanese leadership, none of whom had anything to do with World War II, to lose face over an apology?

No.

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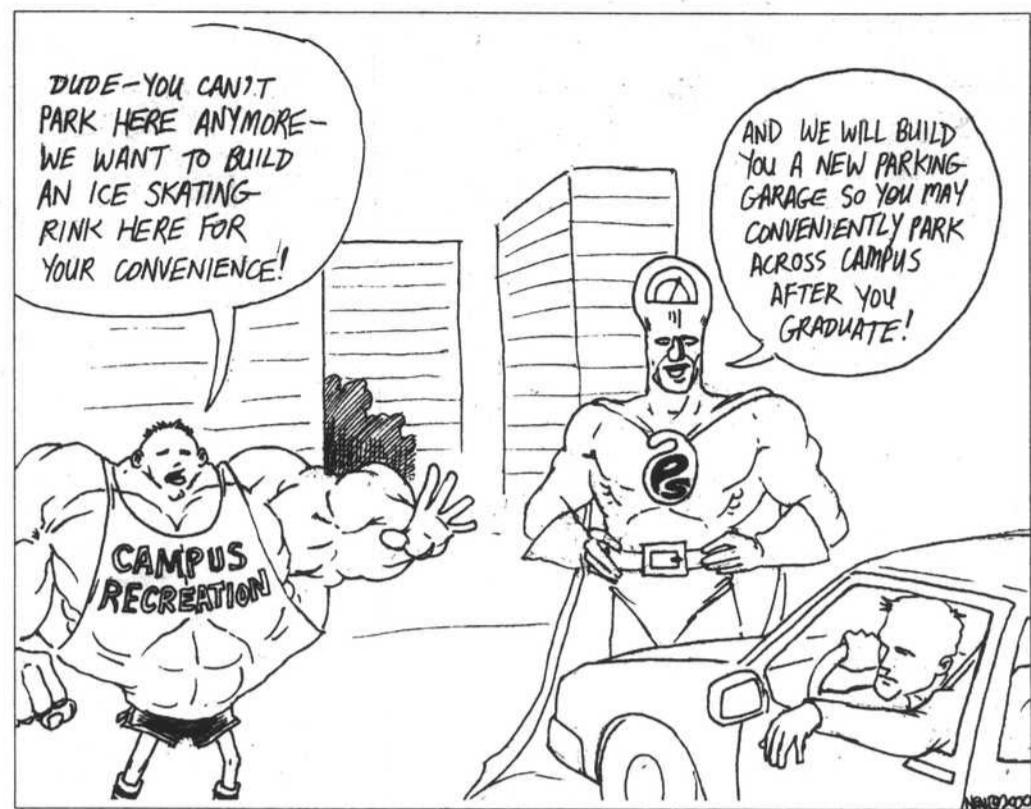
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Obermeyer's VIEW



Letters to the EDITOR

No UNL Browns

American Indians have made it clear that using ethnic images for team mascots without consent is offensive and hurtful. Into this mix comes Neal Obermeyer's cartoon portraying Eddie Brown, a distinguished African-American student at UNL, as a team mascot.

It is hard not to perceive Obermeyer's cartoon as racially offensive and hurtful. In response to complaints from the community, Tom Matas rudely dismissed this as free speech and nothing more. I'm wondering how this political science senior could not know that along with free speech comes the responsibility not to libelously insult people.

Yelling "fire" in a crowded theater and spouting racial hatred in a publicly-funded newspaper are irresponsible and should not be allowed. The DN appears to be rubbing the entire community's nose in the filth of racial hatred and intolerance.

The only winners in this ugly episode are recruiters from other universities. When competing with the University of Nebraska, the works of Obermeyer, Matas and the smug DN editors are likely to be laminated and prominently displayed on recruiting visits.

Steve Lerrick
community development
coordinator
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Token apology

No, Mike Nelson (DN Letters, Feb. 11), you are missing the point. The cartoon would not have used a Caucasian because the underlying issue is regarding Eddie Brown's usefulness as a *student of color* at a predominantly white institution. I believe the DN staff is upset that Mr. Brown is being *used* by UNL as a *token*, to show just how progressive it is. This is more tokenism than racism. Don't lose sight of that.

Peggy Jones
UNL alumna 1993

Dehumanizing 'toon

After seeing the cartoon in the Feb. 9 Daily Nebraskan, I was embarrassed to say that I attend the University of Nebraska. It was sad to see that this university doesn't appreciate and congratulate students of color for their accomplishments.

Instead, the newspaper that is supposed to represent the students mocks the involvement and leadership of students of color.

To compare a human being with two cartoon-like figures is very dehumanizing. If the person who won this award were a Caucasian, I am almost positive that his or her face wouldn't be outlined with a dotted line and scissors next to Lil' Red and Herbie Husker. It is incidents like this that make students of color feel unwelcome at this university.

Rheadina Foster
senior
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Uptight Moeser

Of all the issues currently going on, I find it rather amusing that the chancellor decided to voice his opinion on a cartoon. I am referring to Chancellor Moeser's letter in reference to Obermeyer's View, which portrayed Eddie Brown as a mascot.

Chancellor Moeser's response would have been unnecessary had he thought it through.

Eddie Brown is sort of in the same limelight as both Lil' Red and Herbie Husker. I first saw Eddie as an NSE leader in 1997. Since then, he has been ASUN second vice president, a Scarlet singer and involved with the Culture Center (also a front-page story), just to name a few. He is extremely involved and a good guy. He is all over campus and represents the type of person this campus should have. A mascot per-se.

Chancellor Moeser seems so uptight about the racism on this campus that he can't see clearly. Earlier this year, the student body was racist because nobody said "hi" to one another. Last year it was the black culture section's being on the back page of the paper. I'm not saying that racism does not exist on campus, but people, such as the chancellor in this case, make an ignorant assumption to what is and isn't racism. Cross-burnishing: Yes. Obermeyer's View: No. Sorry, Chancellor.

The chancellor and the rest of the university never would have mentioned this issue (or lack of an issue) if the person being mocked were Caucasian rather than African-American. We have delved so deep into believing everything is a racist act that we don't realize that poking

fun at a person does not constitute racism.

I feel no apology is necessary to Eddie Brown from the DN, Neil Obermeyer or anyone who thought the cartoon was rather amusing. With so much else going on in the university, it is very hard to swallow that the chancellor took time out of his busy schedule to waste our time with this letter.

I only hope that if I rub elbows with someone of a minority tomorrow, the chancellor doesn't breathe down my neck for an apology. He'll run out of hot air.

Joseph Scharfbillig
sophomore
advertising

Two cartoons?

In response to Chancellor Moeser's letter: He has proven his ignorance once again! To say that Obermeyer's comic was racist is a ridiculous accusation. Obermeyer was simply pointing out that Eddie Brown has become a "big man on campus" as much as Herbie Husker and Lil' Red are. He represents much of what the university stands for; his presence is felt often and everywhere, and I would think it pays a compliment to him. This is how I understood Obermeyer meant it the same way; racism has nothing to do with it.

Being chancellor of the university should involve maturity and understanding and not allow for childish judgments and ignorance concerning students' perceptions of publicly outstanding citizens, both within our school and coming from outside (for example, Tom Green).

He didn't understand Tom Green's antics but criticized him anyway; he didn't understand Obermeyer's cartoon, but he felt it necessary to ask for a public apology from Obermeyer for having an opinion, both public displays of ignorance by our chancellor.

Perhaps we should have two Obermeyer comics printed every day; one for the students and one on the level Moeser can understand.

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