

Ex-Husker Shevin Wiggins pleads guilty to lesser charge

Former Nebraska football player Shevin Wiggins pleaded guilty Monday to a misdemeanor of contributing to the delinquency of a minor.

Wiggins was formally charged with a felony of sexual assault on a 14-year-old girl.

With his plea, Wiggins faces up to a year in jail and a \$1,000 fine, said Gary Lacey, Lancaster County attorney. If he had been convicted of the felony, he would have faced up to five

years in jail and a \$10,000 fine.

In a statement, defense attorney Terry Dougherty said the misdemeanor charge does not specify sexual contact but that Wiggins admits to being in a place he shouldn't have been.

"It was this error in judgment that he acknowledged (Monday) by pleading guilty to contributing to the delinquency of a minor," Dougherty said.

Sentencing for Wiggins was scheduled for April 13.

Gay, American-Indian student embraces identity

By Veronica Daehn

Staff writer

Daniel Justice is gay and an American Indian.

But you can't tell either by looking at him.

Justice, a doctoral student in Native American literature, spoke to a room of about 30 people Tuesday night about his ethnicity and his sexual orientation.

"I'm proud to be a Cherokee, and I'm proud to be gay," Justice said. "But the pride came too late."

Justice, a member of the Cherokee nation of Oklahoma, said he grew up not wanting to be American Indian.

When he was 3 years old, he found out his father was an American Indian over breakfast at a restaurant with his parents.

He was disheartened, he said, because the only image he had of an American Indian was the one portrayed in Bugs Bunny cartoons and western movies.

When Justice turned 21, he said he realized the importance of his tribal heritage and has since embraced it.

It hasn't been long that he's been

"When you are marked, you are always looking for safe zones and for allies."

Daniel Justice
graduate student in Native American literature

openly gay either.

Justice said he had known he was gay since he was 18 but didn't acknowledge it until last year when he was 23.

"To be gay in America today is not a happy experience sometimes," he said. "In high school, I was the school faggot, and I didn't even come out until last year."

UNL's campus environment isn't welcoming either, Justice said.

He never feels safe, not even in a gay bar where the purpose of going there is to feel secure.

"When you are marked, you are always looking for safe zones and for allies," he said.

Justice said the problem is ideological. The university has made a commitment to diversity, but it has a long way to go.

He said he doesn't expect people

to feel guilty about what happened to the American Indians or about how gays are treated.

"Guilt is like shoveling smoke," he said. "It doesn't do a damn bit of good. But it is an issue of responsibility."

Gays and American Indians have similar ties, he said.

They are the only minority groups that people still openly, unashamedly bash, he said.

People need to be responsible and stop practicing discrimination, he said.

Both groups are still striving for equality.

"We just want to live, exist and walk with our heads held high," he said.

"If the only way I can be safe is to walk around in shame, then I'm not going to be safe. I can't do that."

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