

To serve and protect?

NYPD needs to take a close look at recent problems

The police department of New York City has got to take a serious look at its officers.

On Friday, the four police officers accused of murdering African immigrant Amadou Diallo were acquitted. The forewoman of the jury, who is black, said Diallo's race was not a major issue in the case.

Does something strike you as off-kilter here?

For those unfamiliar with the details, Diallo was gunned down by four police officers who believed he looked "suspicious."

It isn't the first time NYPD has had problems related to race. Perhaps you heard about the broomstick incident a few years back?

When an African American had a broomstick lodged up his ass by the NYPD, it was announced officers would attend 'sensitivity training.'

So far, the call for action has been loud, yet somewhat ineffectual.

■ The officers have been acquitted of the charges, but the Department of Justice is looking into the matter.

■ The New York Civil Liberties Union is pushing proposals for police misconduct reform.

■ Rev. Al Sharpton's National Action Network is looking into which companies supplied the officers with funding for their legal

counseling, so those companies can be boycotted.

Hillary Rodham Clinton has pleaded for New Yorkers not to be divided by this issue.

But, in the end, the officers are free, and Amadou Diallo is dead.

While police mistakes have been high profile in the last 10 years, they are not totally indicative of a system gone wrong — it's merely a few bad apples spoiling the bunch.

Still, when these events come up, they must be dealt with decisively and effectively.

NYPD has had a problem with this in the past few years.

When an African American had a broomstick lodged up his ass by the NYPD, it was announced officers would attend "sensitivity training."

You can't brush over these kinds of issues with "training." Problems like these shouldn't be occurring.

The NYPD needs to get to the bottom of why these problems are occurring and fix them before another tragedy happens.

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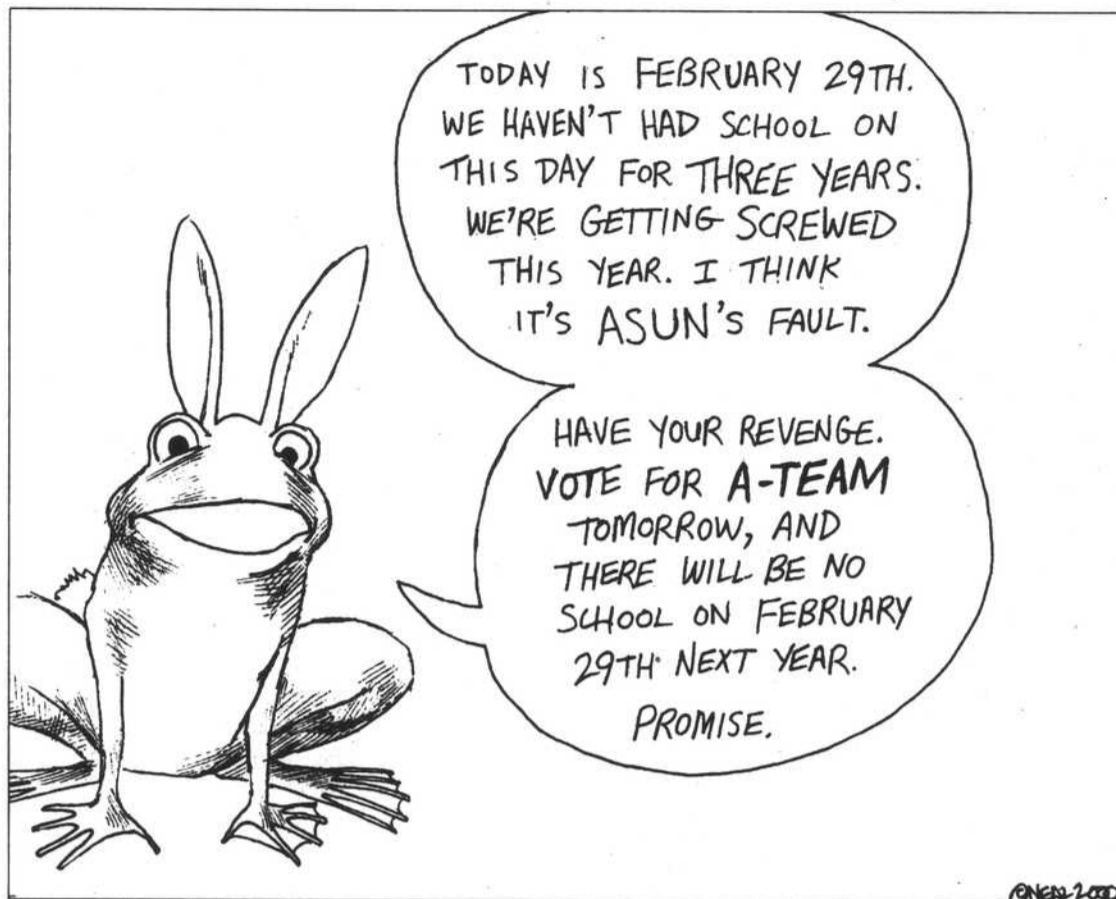
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Obermeyer's VIEW



Letters to the EDITOR

Racial rift

It is disheartening to see another rift between people caused by race.

In Lesley Owusu's "Injustice System," (DN, Feb. 28) I feel several facts were left out. I would like to challenge the opinion that things would have been different if the trail would have been in the Bronx. There were four African Americans on the jury along with eight whites. How would the addition of more African Americans have changed things? The four African Americans who were already on the jury found the officers not guilty. If it would have been a hung jury, things might have been different.

Another fact left out was that according to reports, two officers initially confronted Diallo. These officers are the ones who thought Diallo was pulling a gun and yelled "gun." The yell was confirmed by an "ear" witness, and the officers opened fire. Just as these events happened, two other officers arrived.

I ask, if you, as a cop, came upon fellow officers in the above situation, how would you react? I believe that I would have reacted the same way they did and would have opened fire also. For this reason I do not believe the latter two officers are guilty of anything.

As for the blame in the shooting, only the testimony of the officers is available, and it seems that if Diallo did not stop when ordered, darted into a building vestibule and then reached for something behind his back, the blame shifts more toward Diallo.

The law requires that in order for someone to be found guilty, his or her guilt has to be proven beyond a reasonable doubt. It appears that there is very much a doubt. If the standard for being found guilty were just, "I think he did it," O.J. would have been found guilty, but there was evidence that pointed out several doubts, and therefore he wasn't found guilty.

Why can't people listen to the facts to decide guilt, rather than make a split-second, careless decision that was reckless according to 12 people on a jury?

Greg McFarland
UNL alumnus

A minority message

In an age of mandated diversity programs, quota-laden hiring policies and a culture of victimization, Dinesh D'Souza stands firm as a voice of reason.

The former Reagan senior policy analyst and New York Times best-selling author will address our campus tonight (Tuesday, Feb. 29) at 8 in the Nebraska Union.

His message will come on the last day of Black History month. His message, however, will not be one you'd typically hear during February.

D'Souza, while acknowledging that racism still exists, insists that it is not minorities' major burden. His is a message aimed at the actions taken by minorities, and he emphasizes personal responsibility and self-reliance. These are themes we seldom hear from the self-proclaimed liberal leaders of minority communities today.

If you're interested in hearing a more reasonable take on racial preferences and racism

than you've been hearing from the emotion-driven, liberal pooh-bahs among you, come on out tonight and listen to what Dinesh has to say.

Jason Wiggins
UNL College Republicans
chairman
junior
accounting

Santa and Einstein

Evolutionists have a theory that is supported by countless observations; the only evidence creationists have is a book. Being a creationist should be a handicap to getting a degree in the sciences because it means one is willing to ignore data that disprove one's theory, and that is just plain unethical.

Having a biology professor who believes in creation would be like having a physics professor who believes Santa Claus drives a sleigh pulled by flying reindeer.

Lane Phillips
senior
computer engineering

