

Daily Nebraskan

Since 1901

Editor: Sarah Baker
Opinion Page Editor: Samuel McKewon
Managing Editor: Bradley Davis

Seeing red We'll forgive the Athletic Department ... this time

Every athletic department goes a little astray once in awhile.

And so it should be no surprise that the Nebraska Athletic Department, by all accounts a formidable college sports machine, overextended itself in the midst of program expansion that included several construction projects, going into the red by \$250,000. These things happen.

There's no need to overly chastise a department that likely feels worse than the Husker fan base does, or even we do, about the issue. A tightening of the belt is about to occur. It was bound to happen. As one coach said, certain people within the department spend money on whatever they want to.

The simple answer would be more revenue. Certainly, with an extra home football game next year, the revenue will be there. But revenue doesn't always come through - that's how NU got into a tough spot in the first place.

It was bound to happen. As one coach said, certain people within the department spend money on whatever they want to.

What happens if NU starts losing football games? Of course, this is rarely considered. The way fans see it, Nebraska will never lose more than four, just as sure as the sun will rise in the eastern sky.

College football is changing enough to where that might become a possibility. And what if Nebraska loses so many games one year that it doesn't make the bonus money from a bowl game? What then?

Looking at the baseball team is another flashpoint. A new stadium was built for the team that flashed brilliant potential in 1999. All points to Nebraska's staying strong. But if it doesn't happen - and it very well could turn out that way - how much money does Nebraska lose off its estimated ticket sales and merchandise profits? Winning is the key. Winning does not last forever.

Spending less is the answer. And that's a hard reality to face.

The department immediately cut a life-insurance plan and looked into getting cheaper cellular-phone packages. Maybe reworking the phone will provide the umbrella the department needs.

But, some tougher choices might have to be made with some of the sports, which all want to be among the best nationally.

Some sports, probably the smaller ones, may have to cut their travel budgets or take cheaper forms of transportation to events. This issue is further complicated when one tries to determine which sports, exactly, should get the cash.

Many of them are strong. There are a few just holding on, trying to stay in the top 25 of their respective sports.

There needs to be a definitive improvement in the department of basketball, specifically men's hoops, where the estimates were the lowest of all.

Athletic Director Bill Byrne seems to think the problem will be reversed next year.

We have no reason to believe otherwise; Byrne has been, if anything, shrewd with dollars and cents. But if we return to this point next year, there will be a different conversation involved.

Editorial Board

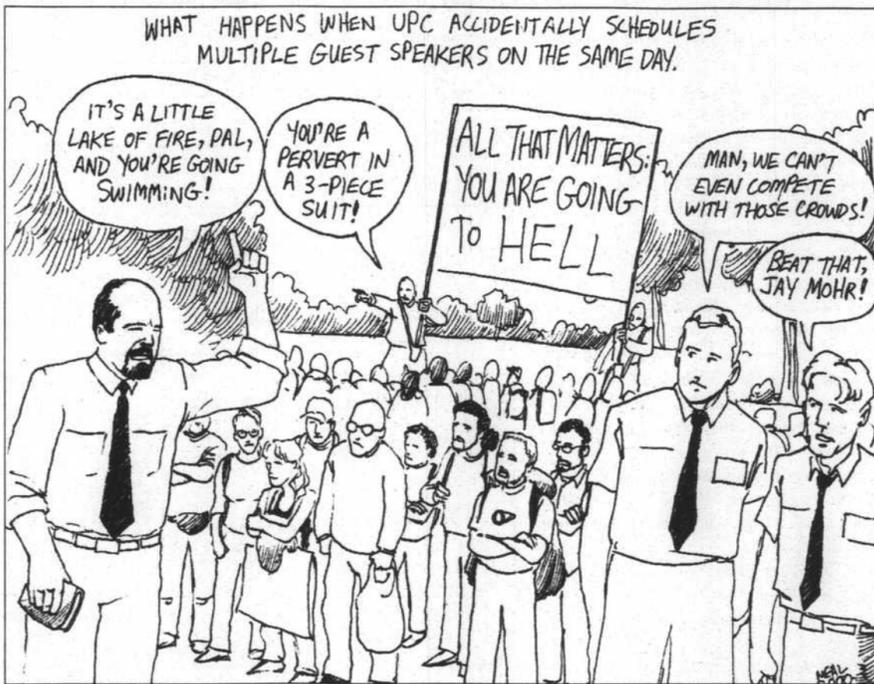
Sarah Baker, Bradley Davis, Josh Funk, Matthew Hansen, Samuel McKewon, Dane Stickney, Kimberly Sweet

Letters Policy

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes briefs, 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, 20 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St. Lincoln, NE 68588-0448. E-mail: letters@unlinfo.unl.edu.

Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials are the opinions of the Fall 2000 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; a cartoon is solely the opinion of its artist. The Board of Regents acts 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 employees.



Neal Obermeyer/DN



Shawn Ballarin/DN

'Open' minds not so open

The word homophobia has been tossed around for a few years and applied to so many people of so many different views on homosexuality that I don't think anyone could give me an accurate description of just what that word entails.

Homo means the same, and in this case, the same sex, as in homosexual. Phobia is a fear of something. In this, we're talking about fear of homosexuality. There. Is everyone ready to proceed?

I noticed this word 'being applied to people like myself as I entered high school in the fall of 1993. At the time, "coming out of the closet" was what you did when someone yelled "Ollie Ollie Oxen Free" during a game of hide and seek, and homo was an insult we all used but knew naught of its meaning.

People began using homophobia to describe the mass societal paradigm of the time: Homosexuals were curious and different, and therefore a little scary, and nobody really knew what to make of them yet.

Those who had either come out as gay or defended those who did said the rest of us were homophobic.

Consider also I was in ninth grade, and my eyes were not yet opened to the world as it really was. So if I were way behind the times in my observations, I don't care, because that's just what they were: my own observations.

Maybe the world was already way more accepting of gays than I realized, but I didn't know it if that was the case, so let's just move on. I'm trying to cover all my bases so I don't leave gaping holes in what this whole column is leading up to.

Homophobia was used when describing those who "disagreed" with being gay. We were homophobic, existing in the state of homophobia.

I can never remember being scared of a gay person. I have always been straight, and being gay isn't a disease that can be passed through toilet seats or shaking hands, so I never had much to fear.

I was curious about gays because I didn't know much about them (what made them a "them" in the first place? No physical attributes, no distinguishing personality traits, just some label that seemed to have nothing to do with who they were), but I was apprehensive about gay people in the same way I am apprehensive about appearing in front of people.

The first time I sat down and talked with an openly gay person was at my workplace, and we had a totally normal conversation about a totally normal subject. Work, perhaps, or politics. It was benign, and it's beside the point, which is, that I was not afraid. I knew he wasn't going to infect me with anything, so why should I any reason to be scared?

I found out, through the course of time, that the word homophobia had become, as it is currently, just a buzzword. A convenience for the unimaginative. I "disagree" with "being gay" for personal and moral reasons, but I am by no means and in no way scared of gay people.



Simon Ringsmuth

I 'disagree' with 'being gay' for personal and moral reasons, but I am by no means and in no way scared of gay people. I happen to hold certain views that have no bearing on how I handle myself during interactions with gays, yet I am labeled homophobic.

I happen to hold certain views that have no bearing on how I handle myself during interactions with gays, yet I am labeled homophobic.

My cousin prefers Chevrolets to Fords, but I don't call him Fordophobic. Yes, I realize that's an oversimplification, but it expresses my frustration with the situation so I will use that comparison and stand by it.

Society as a whole preaches tolerance. A good person must be open-minded, and if you have your own moral views you are labeled by society as unaccepting of others and subsequently not accepted by the mainstream, a condition in which I exist and find myself frustrated by often.

I dare you to go to the nearest coffee shop where open-minded types often hang out (I used to go to those places all the time,) and announce that you think it's wrong to be gay. You'll be shunned by the open-minded people for not being open-minded.

As a Christian, it is not my place to judge anyone, and that's why I do not stand in front of the Nebraska Union and damn the campus to Hell. Vengeance is reserved for the Lord, and in the meantime, it's my calling as a Christian to love my fellow humans as Christ loved us.

I cannot point a finger at anyone, whether gay, straight or bestial, because in God's eyes we are all equally in need of His saving love. Besides, what if I'm wrong about homosexuality?

But I digress. I lapse into theological arguments because, like I mentioned earlier, I want to cover my bases and explain why I am (apparently) homophobic.

The point is, shouldn't I be allowed my own set of beliefs and convictions? I, like a gay person, am not hurting anyone; gays are championed for their bravery in "coming out," yet I am ostracized for not being "open-minded."

Screw open-mindedness - I am proud to be opinionated.

Open-mindedness is a convenient excuse for ignorance and complacency. If you are going to be truly open-minded, then will you please let me wallow in my own homophobia?

If that's the way society wants things, then I'm never going to win, so why not go all the way?

Yeah, I'm downright terrified of friggin' gays and their gay ways of doing things. There, I guess I just "came out." Does that please any of the open-minded people? Probably not.

And please excuse me while I wipe off the toilet seat before I sit down. I don't want to catch no gay germs from some gay pervert.

Wisdom hard to find in graffiti

Thoughts of my travels to Rome, Brazil and England pale in comparison with my choice mecca. I want you all to share in the joy (because you can) of my favorite place in the entire universe.



Karen Brown

It's a place where you can be half-naked and free! A place with no pretenses and usually no toilet paper.

This mecca is the last stall in the women's lounge restroom in the Nebraska Union. My spirits rise when I have to urinate - the joy of reading "bathroom-door poetry" tickles me to no end.

The women who choose to pick up a pen and pee at the same time obviously did not come from a dysfunctional gene pool.

I've learned to sort of take the short prose and work it into my daily life, often chanting lines like mantras for character boosting and to let the world know (in a repetitive monologue) that someone loves Ben Shellhaas.

Someone loves him enough to write "I love Ben Shellhaas" on the door. The responses to this heartfelt "crush" are quite inspiring as well: "So?" "So, he's really cute!" "So are baby pigs."

The one above, as well as "PM5K rocks" and "no one sin is worse than another" would fall into the "this is a statement" category. These don't need an explanation or a contemplation or a response - unless someone wants to, and believe you me, someone always wants to respond.

Some people (armed with a pen and words) want to inspire those who have merely come to use the urinal for "natural means." Now, whether that means urinating or getting stoned is not my right to discern.

This is a place where personal philosophies can transpire from the mind to paper - or, er ... wood.

I mean, where else do I go to be inundated with my three favorite things: God, the Devil and Sin.

Church? Nah, they always leave out the Devil unless it's in a tasteless reference about a horned fellow that eats children's innocence. Whatever, dudes.

I'm proud as I read, "Anybody want a lesbian relationship?" The response is "I have one." Another is "Ditto! I'm in love beyond belief. Working on our third year together."

I cry and rejoice in the fact that there are other dykes out there! And they've sat their bums right where I have. How come I keep missing them?

I contemplate this and decide that only God can shower me with lesbians, but then I see "SIN" next to this nice pro-gay milieu. I decide that the people outside of our union right now holding up banners that say "All that matters is that you are going to Hell" must have written that on this door.

They're really good at writing one-liners that make one feel, well, downright crappy. (No poop pun intended.)

If you ask me, the one thing those sign-holders have taught me is that the Lord's girth is larger than any of us can fathom. Take that how you will - I was merely talking about the size of the signs' poles.

Back to the bathroom ... one of the most insightful statements is "Fags suck." God has taken over (or is it the Devil?) and made me realize this statement is true. "Fags suck" is my mantra today.

As my eyes scroll down, I see the response is "No, we lick," and I think once more, well, what's going on here? Who should I trust? The next line is "You're still sick, bastard."

Help me. Fags suck, then they lick, and then they're sick.

I haven't been this confused since the "A Hindu Meets Jesus" conference of '96.

I will take a deep breath and read on. Besides, there are always more responses: "Be careful what you write, the next 'fag' might be your best friend."

Ha! I'm my own best friend, and I'm a fag. Therefore, I'm all right. My reasoning skills are crystal-clear in the stall.

That's why I'd like to leave a little of my own advice on life for you heathens out there.

Here goes: "If you follow your dreams, you will always end up naked in the middle of a shotgun range, listening to New Age music and trying to figure out your Palm Pilot."

So, follow my advice and follow your dreams and see where it gets you. You'll be surprised at the results because my words of wisdom aren't rehearsed, half-assed and phony. They are God-sent, Devil-approved and Sin-tastic.

Or, you could listen to the one sound mind that has entered that last stall in the women's lounge in the Nebraska Union.

The one woman with a clear head through all of this wrote: "Don't write on the doors, you heathens."