

Daily Nebraskan

Since 1901

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Safe space?

Abel's pink triangle is just a hollow image

We think gay students are safer in Abel Residence Hall because of the pink triangle stuck on the hall's office door. We also believe the religious zealots outside the union are really Catholic priests, and Tom Green may just get asked back for another homecoming pep rally.

Come on. This is Abel Residence Hall, people, the party dorm. The place where mom didn't want you to live and the dorm that reminded dad of his college days.

This is Abel, where Saturday mornings usually mean alcohol-induced vomiting in the bathroom.

This is Abel, where words such as inclusion take a backseat to, say, keg stand.

Yet, last Tuesday, the Abel Residence Association passed a bill that made the dorm an Allies safe space, a place that, in theory, is supposed to be accepting of gays.

These kind of attitudes are exactly why Abel Hall and a pink triangle go together like a square peg in a round hole.

This despite the fact that Abel does not exactly exude an aura of welcoming to gay students.

The pink triangle posted on the Abel office door is supposed to promote a spirit of acceptance.

It is a hollow symbol, even a false one. Abel Hall isn't a safe space.

It isn't inclusive. It's just a Nebraska residence hall with a little bit of a wild streak and, we're sure, its fair share of people who do not accept sexual orientations that are different from their own.

By posting a pink triangle and calling the residence hall a safe space, members of the Abel Residence Association are doing both residents and NU's gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered community a disservice.

The pink triangle is unfair to everyone. High school seniors unsure of their sexuality may visit Abel, see the pink triangle and mistakenly believe the residence hall is accepting.

Students would quickly become disenchanted when they realized the safe space envisioned does not exist.

In addition, we know many Abel dwellers do not want the pink triangle anywhere near their residence hall.

This fact was more or less confirmed by Kate Grafel, the Abel senator who wrote the bill and then amended it so the pink triangle would be displayed only on the office door and not on all entrances as previously desired.

Why, you ask? "Some people were worried that Abel would be labeled as a gay dorm, and nobody would want to live there," Grafel said.

These kind of attitudes are why Abel and a pink triangle go together like a square peg in a round hole.

Let's save the safe-space designation for deserving places, places more openly committed to gay rights.

We're talking about places that actually care about the meaning behind the pink triangle, places the opposite of Abel, where there is no deeper meaning.

The triangle is little more than a shape at Abel, a sign. It's a sign that will be heeded about as much as the signs demanding residents attend floor meetings and not have alcohol in their rooms.

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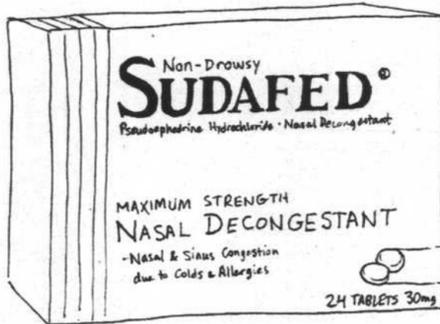
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ALLERGY SUFFERERS AND ROMANIAN GYMNASTS AGREE:
SUDAFED REALLY KNOCKS YOU OUT.
IN MORE WAYS THAN ONE.



THE OFFICIAL DECONGESTANT OF THE
2000 OLYMPIC GAMES

Neal Obermeyer/DN

Seriousness of the word 'ridiculous'

I have a 3-year-old nephew who is just learning the difference between opposites.

He started off with black and white, then wrong and right. His favorite opposite now is contrasting the ridiculous with the serious. He often can be heard saying, "This is redicweous" then "This is surius."

I asked him if there was anything between ridiculous and serious or if there was anything that could be both serious and ridiculous.

He just looked up at me, shrugged his shoulders, knitted his brow and said, "I don't know." Then he played with little metal tractors.



Dane Stickney

I prepared for chilly weather as I walked out of Andrews Hall, but what I immediately noticed was yelling.

"Can't you see?" a loud female voice said. "You are all going to hell."

Students walked by her. Some laughed, some sneered, others just looked straight ahead. I felt compelled to walk towards her even though I should have been walking the other way.

"You want to learn at college?" she says to people walking by. "We're standing right here with the answers. Jesus Christ is the answer." The lady was wearing a white shirt with bright pink nylon pants. She had blonde hair, and her possibly calm features became gnarled when she spoke. She was holding a large wooden cross with a hinge so it could be folded up.

I walked by her, but she didn't look at me or speak to me.

As I began to walk toward the union, I heard a loud male voice shout: "Shut the fuck up!" Then he laughed. I shook my head.

Two girls with their ponytails protruding out the back of their hats—one from the Gap and the other from American Eagle—looked at the lady shouting. One of them tipped her chin toward her chest and said, "Nice snowpants." They both laughed with wide smiles, an antithesis to the lady with the cross.

When I reached the cement area in front of the Nebraska Union, the scenes were taken to a higher level. A man with camouflaged pants, a black shirt and a blue hat turned backwards was standing at the bottom of a massive sign. He had one of the sign's yellow poles in his hand and a woman held the other pole. In large letters, the sign read: "All that matters—you are headed to hell."

He was talking about how people cheer when a football inflated with air moved up and down a football field, but laughed at a religious man full of God's knowledge.

Once the words left his mouth, a student started chanting, "Go Big Red! Go Big Red!" Other students joined in. Others laughed.

"See, your heads are filled with air, and you have no integrity," the man holding the sign shouted. "Do you think Jesus doesn't know that?" He then proceeded to continue to talk about similar topics, while a large group of students began to gather. "You use unclean speech and you have unclean morals," he said, his stoic expression never moving.

A group of four male students stood a ways away from the man holding the sign and laughed. They nudged each other and laughed. One student pretended to hold a sign that was blowing in the wind, and he laughed.

At that moment, an overweight student wearing a gray Nebraska football sweatshirt, turned toward me and gestured to the path near Love Library.

"Look," he said. "Crazy chick is back." The woman in the pink pants walked up the path with her wooden cross slung over her shoulder. Every few steps, she'd hand a piece of paper out to a student passing by.

I walked toward her and asked her what religion she was representing.

"There's no religion, just Jesus Christ." Then I asked her where she was from. Defensively, she replied, "From a higher kingdom." She turned her head.

When I looked back toward the man with the big sign, I couldn't see him, only the sign. A crowd of nearly 100 students had congregated around him. A girl in a blue shirt was yelling at the lady holding the other pole of the sign. A male student with long, pink hair was standing face to face with the man holding the sign yelling, "Look me in the eye and tell me I'm going to hell."

Two Asian students walked toward the scene. The man posed in front of the sign, while the woman snapped a picture. He looked at the sign and gave a thumbs up. A pencil came flying from the crowd and almost hit the man holding the sign. A half-eaten pear then flew by and came to rest near the feet of the lady holding the sign.

A student whom I lived near last year broke my attention. "Man, can you believe this?" he asked. I shook my head.

He chuckled and said, "This is ridiculous."

I turned from the scene, ready to leave. "This is serious," I muttered.

Letters to the editor

Wheels a privilege

This is in reply to a letter by Patrick Hesse in the Sept. 25 edition of the DN.

Imagine this, Patrick: A University of Nebraska student is on his way to class when he decides to pick up a copy of the Monday Daily Nebraskan. Flipping to the Opinion page, the student notices a short letter to the editor from an industrial engineering major.

Hoping to gain some knowledge from such a well-educated source, the student reads a heart-wrenching story about a fellow responsible UNL student who was refused service by NU on Wheels because "he doesn't have his ID with him." Yet, the reader is somewhat confused as to how a student "trying to be responsible" has "drank way too much to drive himself or anyone else home."

Furthermore, the reader is perplexed as to why the student did not just bring his ID in the first place.

See the irony Patrick? NU on Wheels is a privilege, not a right.

Furthermore, the program was not started to provide you with an excuse to get wasted on Saturday nights and then complain about not having a ride.

The program has undoubtedly saved many responsible UNL students from DUIs and other charges, all the while making both the streets of downtown and the campus safer places.

NU on Wheels has advertised many times that you need to have your ID with you to show the driver that you are in fact a UNL student and not just some free-riding person.

Next, I suppose you will request that NU on Wheels provide you a cell phone to make your drunken requests for a ride.

Rory Kay

Political Science and Business Administration
Junior

Body chemistry

Contrary to the thoughts of simple broadcasting "major" Tony Bock, chemical engineers are DAMN sexy!

Jessica Cepek
Chemical Engineering
Senior

Pride and prejudice

I am constantly amazed at how much people do not get what heterosexism and homophobia are about, or that there is a distinction between prejudice and discrimination.

But then again, there is nothing like experience to make something real. Yes, everyone has the right to be prejudiced. No, that does not give people the right to discriminate (unless of course, you are the Boy Scouts or it is based on your religion).

The reason why heterosexism is a problem is, well, if you are heterosexual you are entitled to all kinds of rights granted by the government, institutions, etc. So, you don't like being called homophobic just because you don't like gay people or think they deserve equal rights.

The reason you find the word a problem is because gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people and their families and friends are tired of the discrimination and are speaking up.

Believe what you will and extend everyone the same rights, privileges and respect and presto ... homophobia & heterosexism won't be a problem anymore.

At the same time, we live in a state with the motto "equality under the law" that is trying to amend the constitution to make sure that gbt people are not treated equally under the law. Go figure.

Pat Tetreault
UNL Staff Member

Temporal musings on life

A brief nod to my accompanist, I set my oboe to my lips, and I begin the countdown.

4-e-&-a-1-e-& ... The notes are familiar to me. I note the accents, the crescendos and accelerandos. I am so familiar, my mind begins to wander. I think not just about the music but also the purpose of it, the pacifist sentiment of the composer, the recurrence of the minor-second-major-sixth interval throughout the work, the necessity for wide dynamic contrast throughout.

Also: The purpose of this exercise. A Sunday evening, pounding out a few notes with an accompanist I have worked with so long we understand each other non-verbally. Further: to prepare for a competition and later, a recital in October. Beyond that, I don't know.

Hold this note longer, look at Kim and ... nod. Now. Wait for the high G, tune down, accent, play the fives like so ...

Being a music major isn't all fun and games. I'm not talking about the long hours in the practice room (or for the oboist, the reed room), or the furiously subjective homework assignments. (How many times I have wished for something as easy as fill-in-the-blank!) I'm talking about beyond.

No one is listening to the music I'm learning to play any more. Or a smaller number are. With federal funding decreasing, there's less money out there and fewer orchestras, and the ones that remain pay less. But universities still pump out students, flooding the market, and I am but a tuna in the deluge, if that.

Du-uh da dummmmm ... accent, short on the last note of the triplet ... come down to crescendo later, accent, lots of air for the low grace notes, prepare the low D.

Not that I didn't flirt with other majors. Five years is a long time to ask yourself "Why's" and "How's," and I have had more than my share. But yet, I have remained with music. It is the ultimate in vicarious living—the musician doesn't need to have a social life, because he encounters the same emotions everyone else does through the involvement with music, and perhaps with 10 times as much color.

In the back of all this is the notion of the "life-work," where every action is made to achieve a higher, beautiful goal of life. As a sculptor may take away from a marble block while creating the beautiful figure of a man, I might take or add from my own life so as to create a not-so-beautiful man's elegant portrait.

In the end, I will ask, "Was it worth it?" I want the



Jake Glazeski

answer to be unequivocally: Yes.

Yes, Kim, keep up the tempo. Watch ahead one bar here. Staccato, staccati-ti-ti-ississimo, quick breathe out! And in! ACCENT!

And in the end, there is no denying that, no matter how aesthetically satisfying it is to create art for a living, I must still satisfy my corporeal needs.

Despite Beethoven's aspirations to the contrary, at base all art is driven by two human needs: the need for food and the need for sex. How one satisfies those needs, that is the essence of the life-work.

And while the endeavor of living may prove more challenging for someone who is bound to have a McDonald's-equivalent salary, I suppose it is something we all must face, regardless of major. Do we have what it takes? Are we getting the tools we need to create a life worth living?

Damn, missed that spot again. I'll have to relearn that. Keep loud, keep support up as you go down ... shhh. Okay, 3-e-& ...

I suppose there's only one thing for me, for any of us, to do and that is to prepare. Life seems a bit like a performance, then. You prepare as best you can and then you walk out onto the stage of the real world. You recite your lines, you move your hands, you sing with excellent diction and take it all as it comes.

Performances are never perfect. There are always regrets, mistakes made that shouldn't have been made, last-minute revelations that might have changed the course of the evening.

And in the end, there is a judge—mystical or psychological—which will assess it all and rank you coldly. Did you succeed in your attempts, or did you fail? For lack of an hour, an evening could be lost.

Waltz, and such a weird waltz. Watch the cues, trust your ear. Rrrrruuubato. Slow down more, but keep rhythmic integrity; subdivide.

So the only thing to do, in anticipation for that assessment, is to prepare, prepare, prepare. The only cure to stage fright is to perform. You cannot fear life, you can only live it.

Each second passes with the stamp of your signature; can you be proud of every moment with your name on it?

Polka, then resolution. Big atom bombs, play loud and listen for the piano. Resolution in destruction, opening the world up for healing and opportunity, albeit with dried tears on our cheeks.

The question occurs: I value the musical life at the cost of the social life; will I value that assessment later? Could it be the decisions I am making now are actually hurting me and my final life-work assessment? What values, finally, are absolute?

Is there room for doubt in performance? Ah well. That's what Schumann is for.