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## Gay bashing at Notre Dame

by Heidi Schlumpf

NCR Today

As an alum and former writer for the student newspaper, I'm embarrassed to report that the *Notre Dame Observer* recently published an anti-gay cartoon, for which the editors have since apologized.

The Jan. 13 cartoon, "Mobile Party," depicted a conversation between two figures, in which the first one asks, "What's the easiest way to turn a fruit into a vegetable?" The second responds, "No idea." The punchline, in the third panel, is "A baseball bat."

According to the cartoonists' blog (since removed), the newspaper's editors changed the original punchline, which said "AIDS."

The cartoon evoked a strong reaction from the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation (GLAAD), alumni and some students. Two days later, the editors issued an apology and dropped the cartoon, and the managing editor resigned. Some are calling for the cartoonists and editors to be expelled.

As the adviser to a student newspaper at the university where I teach, I understand that student journalists make mistakes, which can become opportunities to learn. But this, combined with the university's refusal to give official recognition to a gay/straight alliance group, raises real questions about an intolerant and homophobic culture on campus.

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