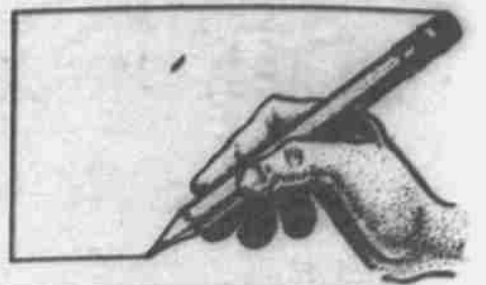


# opinion



## Last T.V. debate topped football

By Arthur Hoppe

"Well, David, that wraps up—the historic fifth Great Television Debate of the presidential campaign. I thought it was the best of the lot by far."

"Right, John. The first three by Mr. Ford and Mr. Carter were about as exciting to watch as elm blight. And I can't say I was surprised when the fourth one between Sens. Mondale and Dole was beaten in the ratings by Celebrity Bowling."

"No wonder the polls show that less than half the electorate plans to vote. The candidates may have saved

## innocent bystander

our democracy by consenting to this unusual fifth debate—and particularly to limiting the topics to sex and pot."

"Well, John, those are the subjects our two debaters tonight have proved most expert on. And speaking of them, who do you think won—Mrs. Ford or Mrs. Carter?"

"I'd call it a toss-up, David. I thought Mrs. Ford scored heavily in the sex division when she said she still wouldn't be surprised if her daughter had an affair."

"That's right, John all poor Mrs. Carter could say is that she would be surprised if her daughter did. But that didn't shock anyone. I thought she did better on pot, though, when she said she was sure all three of her sons had smoked it and she wouldn't be surprised if her mother-in-law was on hashish."

"Yes, and all Mrs. Ford had was Jack. That could cost the Fords a lot of votes. But what did you think of the two ladies' responses to the question, 'Does your husband wear pajamas?'"

"It was an interesting question, John, considering the background. As you know, Mrs. Ford has pledged several times to continue sleeping in a double bed with Mr. Ford if he is re-elected."

"What happens if he's not, David?"

"She hasn't said. But Mrs. Carter has only promised to sleep in the same room with Mr. Carter, if he goes to the White House. The polls show her lack of explicitness on this issue has hurt her husband's chances."

"Then you think the way she replied to the question with a mischievous smile and a 'Yes and no' helped?"

"Certainly. If that means sometimes, what times? Or did she mean just the bottoms or just the . . . Well, it gets people thinking."

"You're right, David. And while we have to admire the honesty of Mrs. Ford's response, we must also ask ourselves how many voters still consider a nightshirt and a nightcap sexy?"

"Yes, all in all, it's hard to say who outshocked whom, but . . . Hold it, John. The ratings are in. And, just as we thought, this debate actually outdrew Thursday Night Football!"

"Wow! Who says the public isn't interested in politics? And wait till next week when Susan and Amy meet face to face on the question, 'Who Is the Most Adorable?'"

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## Team defense

While reading the October 8, *Daily Nebraskan*, we became disturbed with Pete Wegman's article *Four and Twenty* concerning four varsity sports at UNL—baseball, tennis swimming, and cross country. The entire article presented the idea that these "less than competent" programs are foolishly funded by Nebraska taxpayers' money. As members of the cross country team, we feel a response in defense of not only our team, but the others, too, is necessary so the taxpayers Wegman is so concerned about get the facts.

The headline of the article indicates that the Nebraska taxpayers carry the financial burden of these four sports. This is true only if the said taxpayers attend UNL athletic events and pay admission. In the ten years cited by Wegman these varsity programs have been entirely funded by the UNL Athletic Dept.—a financially independent institution. Not one penny of valuable tax money has been used for these sports.

The annual budget figures presented—\$80,000 for baseball, \$45,000 for swimming, and \$20,000 for tennis—do not include a figure for cross country. That's because there isn't one! The entire amount spent on cross country in 1975 amounted to approximately \$500, which came out of the track budget. If this program received only a small fraction of the "hundreds of thousands of dollars" indicated by Wegman, the Nebraska team might be the best in the conference.

The cross country program at UNL is not a letter sport and is designed primarily as a fall conditioning program for indoor and outdoor track. Unlike other Big 8 schools, UNL does not recruit athletes for cross country. That means no scholarships. The team is made up primarily of middle-distance runners—milers and half-milers. The main reason for Nebraska competing in Big 8 cross country is to give these athletes a taste of competition before the winter track season begins.

The record of the cross country team was given as four last and one seventh place finish in the past ten years. What were the finishes the other five years? Not a lovable "winner", but not a team to be ashamed of.

The new fieldhouse recruiting crutch indicated by Wegman will in no way help either cross country or baseball.

The last paragraph of the article calls for these programs to show drastic improvement or be dropped. Who is Pete Wegman to say these programs should be cancelled; We would ask how much of the students' and taxpayers' money is being spent to fund a newspaper that presents less than competent journalism. Good reporting includes obtaining all the facts and presenting the complete story—not writing an article to suit a particular reporter's point of view. Some drastic improvement in reporting by such personnel of the *Daily Nebraskan*

orion



Linda Porter

# Media suffering from Woodward and Bernsteinitis

By L. Kent Wolgamott

Campaign 76 is the most boring, issueless race in recent history but it is not the fault of the candidates or their campaign staffs. Both Ford and Carter have shown themselves well prepared to deal with the issues and willing to answer reporters questions about relevant issues. But, the American people have been denied access to these issues by our illustrious national media.

In place of asking the candidates about issues, the national media has chosen to concentrate on mistakes by the two men. Carter has been plagued by the Playboy interview, which if read in context is not as damaging as the press made it out to be.

By his misstatement of median income on tax reform Ford has been plagued of late by his brilliant statement about Eastern Europe, allegations about misuse of campaign funds, and charges that he was the Nixon administration's chief whipping boy on the House floor.

It seems to me that most of the national press has Woodward and Bernsteinitis, they all want to be the superstar journalist who uncovers the next Watergate. The press who cover the candidates from day to day don't care about the issues or what the candidates say about them, they want something which will make page one copy. This holds true for the electronic media, also. They are not bringing an issue-oriented speech to the

American people, they look for a "47 second confrontation" between the candidates. The national media seems to have forgotten their obligation to inform the populus about some things more relevant than personal attacks about the personal lives of the candidates and their families.

This is not to say that investigative reporting is not necessary and that it should not be pursued, but it seems to me that it should not become the entire work of the journalistic community covering the presidential candidates. I don't know what can be done to counteract this trend but if it is not changed we will lose perhaps the greatest advantage given to the people in freedom of the press.

I do think reporters need to be limited to the conventional stylized method of political reporting, based on the mistaken concept of objectivity, a concept which by its very definition cannot and does not exist. If a reporter abandons this constraining, limiting device and writes what he sees and what he thinks, then we begin to find out what actually occurs and can make a choice. In 1972, the people of the U.S. were given this "subjective journalism" on a national scale in Hunter S. Thompson's *Fear and Loathing on the Campaign Trail* series published in *Rolling Stone*.

Thompson and others (John Dean, recently) do not

have to worry about journalistic purity or making front-page headlines. Rather they admit their biases and don't worry about them. When this type of attitude is accepted

## grownups game



within the journalistic community our newspapers will improve and become more informative and less superficial.

These changes will not take place between now and Nov. 2 so if you are interested in the issues and the candidates stands on them you must get the information yourself. I know that the Carter-Mondale organization is more than eager to supply information on the issues to interested voters both from the Young Democrats' booth in the Nebraska Union and from the headquarters at 118 So. 11th St. The relevant information on Ford and his running-mate Robert Dole is at the county Republican Headquarters in the Anderson Bldg.

The national media will continue to exploit the mistakes of the candidates as major decisive news.

## letters

should be shown, or the taxpayer's money used to fund this program be channeled to a more useful one.

Instead of criticizing UNL's sports, we think encouragement and support would be more in line with the position of the *Daily Nebraskan*. And speaking of supporting the athletic program; the sale of football programs by varsity lettermen is a substantial fund-raiser for not only the Athletic Dept. and lettermen, but also provides a large contract for a local print shop—taxpayers. The sale of *First Down* by obnoxious and inconsiderate peddlers does not help the sale of the official programs. We do not mean to say that all sales-persons are of this nature, but the rotten few spoil the reputation of the majority.

In the future, we hope the reporting of the *Daily Nebraskan* will develop and give its readers something they can rely on.

With regards,

Matthew Reckmeyer  
Mark Fluitt  
Keith Whitaker  
Harold Stelzer  
Pat Colburn

## And furthermore . . .

Pete Wegman's closing remarks on Big 8 conference sports at Nebraska seem indicative of that type of thinking we are far too infected with already:

I, for one, think the role of athletes in the educational process at UNL receives far too much emphasis already. Football, in particular, has acquired all the trappings of a "profession" and is accorded importance and prestige far in excess of its contribution to the educational process. Still it seems that what should be given the most consideration in evaluating athletic programs at NU should be the reactions and evaluations of the participants as to the value of the experiences gained and the contribution to those experiences by the coaches.

The Athletic Dept. is or is close to being economically self sufficient. Because of this it seems reasonable to me that the football program be able to subsidize other athletic programs which, though less profitable financially, provide equal value to participants. Wegman advocates that "less than mediocre" programs should be denied funds unless their records improve. It would interest me to know what he would recommend as a use for these funds. Perhaps "salaries" for football players?

It seems to be it would be better for this university and Mr. Wegman to begin to regard and evaluate athletics less as a business venture (with its extensive recruiting and emphasis on profits in the form of ticket sales and "wins") and more as an aspect of learning and recreation.

Linda Porter