

opinion/editorial

Single-issue groups harmful to candidates, voters

"And they're off. The race is on..."
 The campaign of the 1980 election has begun. And with this election year, again comes the powerful influence of single-issue political groups. These self-serving powerful influence of single-issue political groups. These self-serving organizations devote vast amounts of money, time and effort into defeating candidates who oppose the issue the groups represent.

Such groups are not new—abolitionists, prohibitionists and suffragettes all are examples from American history. Seldom, however, have the organizations been as powerful as they are today. Anti-abortionists welded considerable influence in the 1976 election, they are widely credited with the defeat of former Sen. Dick Clark of Iowa in

his bid for re-election last year; and they reportedly are gearing up for the 1980 campaign with a "hit list" of at least six more senators they have marked for defeat.

This year may see the rise of a new group. Many people believe anti-nuclear organizations may become the single most powerful influence in the 1980 races.

According to some theorists, such groups are strong because the political parties are weak and because so many voters are apathetic. Without knowledge of the issues or of the candidates, voters are easily swayed to one position or another. Groups such as the well-organized and well-financed right-to-life movement have the money to be persuasive.

Such influence is dangerous. There is a danger in electing people who know one issue but little else. We need elected representatives who are concerned about the needs of the entire country rather than the needs of a single group.

There also is a danger in having elected officials who are pulled in every direction by hundreds of well-financed groups—each of which is capable of posing a serious threat to the re-election bids of those officials. When an official tries to please all those groups, the voters are left with weak and ineffective legislation. The slowness with which Congress deals with energy proposals is evidence.

There are no easy answers to the problems these groups pose. They do have a right to express their views and to fight hard for them. In the end the responsibility probably lies with voters who should be alert to their campaigns. Voters should look at the candidates and judge them on the merits—on their stance on all the issues rather than on just one.

Reviewer's opinion one person's view

By Michael Zangari

If you have ever found yourself sitting at a table with a group of friends after a movie when you are the only one who really understands the deeper inner significance of the subplot, you have a general appreciation for the position of critics faced with publishing their opinions weekly.

ombudsman

No, this does not mean the critic is the only one on campus who can possibly dissect a given event. It means that the critic risks being the odd person out every time he sits down at a typewriter. In the back of every critic's head, there is a watery image of his readership. It appears like the caterpillar in *Alice in Wonderland*, expelling a lungful of smoke and asking *Who are you . . . ?*

The answer to that question may be the easiest part of the job. Having reviewed everything from blues to barbanzo beans, I can honestly say that the only thing reviewers can ultimately claim to be experts on is themselves. A reviewer who recognizes this and does not take himself too seriously is half way to being a good critic.

The reviewer has a responsibility to do some research into the subject which is being reviewed when it is possible. An informed opinion is certainly more valuable than one based on what the reviewer had for breakfast. Ultimately the reviewer is simply another set of eyes in the audience. What he or she comes away with may or may not be what you come away with, but the resulting review opens a forum for thought that is vital to the appreciation of any event. At a bottom level the reviewer might interest you in going to see the event for yourself because the reviewer's view of it interests you, or the description of it does the same thing.

A perceptive critic with a real feel for his or her subject is a very valuable thing. They might point out things that you have missed, or make you think. This doesn't mean you always have to agree with them.

On the other end of the scale, there is still something to be said for the critic who misses the mark by a country mile. A reviewer that gets a multitude of angry responses creates the same type of forum by route. It's good to be inate about your opinion; it forces you to think it through.

A review, at best, is only an essay. It is presented as one person's opinion, not a degree from the mouth of God (although some of my reviews have been divinely inspired.) Ultimately you, the reader, must make up your own mind, and that's the way it should be.



letters

Judge disappointing

We, the undersigned, students at the University of Nebraska College of Law, publically declare our disagreement with public statements made by Judge Hugh Stuart after the conclusion of the Erwin Simant's trial. Judge Stuart's remarks were inordinate and injudicious. His actions disappoint us. We expect that a member of Nebraska's legal community and one so vitally involved in the administration of justice show greater respect for the law and its processes.

We respect the First Amendment rights guaranteed all citizens, including Judge Stuart. Judge Stuart's remarks, however, show a lack of respect for the jury system and the difficult task which the jurors were called to fulfill.

We believe that Judge Stuart's remarks are a poor example of judicial discretion and hope that they will not set precedent for future trials in the state of Nebraska.

- David Hahn
- Robert Copple
- Jerry Abboud
- M. Therese Kennedy
- Chas. Sorenson
- Kay Ridenour
- E. Burke Hinds
- Jerry Soucie
- Karen Montee
- Dorothy Walker
- Victor Covalt
- K. Bollman
- James Broderick
- Danny McCarty
- Allen Brown
- Steve Krumm
- Eileen McBride
- Candy Marshall
- Sandra Hockley

- Larueen Van Norman
- Mary Fischer
- R. Bolley
- Elisabeth Davis
- Thomas Sullivan
- David Bergin
- Virginia Gilbert
- Tom Copland
- Greg Snyder
- Randal Brown
- Jene Gengenback
- Jackie Bailey
- Marie Ashe
- Carole Larson
- Pete Wegman
- Terry Uhling
- Kurt Hohenstein
- Deborah Weston
- Bruce Stephens

typographical errors, the review wants for a critical sophistication to adjudge for the reader the whys and wherefores of the production's success. The *Setzuan* review does no more than cite a few visual images and describes some events. It neither analyzes nor lends insight into the drama, its characters, the acting or the directing. I assume the grammatical and typographical errors are self-evident. Although in an era symbolized by the languishing of the term paper and the ascending electronic media, I may assume too much. The inconsistency of "Japanese characters" lettered on cloth found in "modern China" should have puzzled the editor, if not the reviewer. The Japanese theater is not "informal." On the contrary, it conforms to a disciplined regimen. Could there be a reason why "Much of the scenery, and its ideas, are symbolic?" How does the use of these symbols relate to Brecht and his ideas of Epic Theatre? Could this information help the viewer to better understand and appreciate the play and its production?

I realize a student newspaper must rely on volunteers and that their backgrounds may not coincide with their respective assignments. As a result, it may not be able to reflect a journalistic standard commensurate to the academic community it serves. However, I think it would strive to set a critical example to emulate, not mock.

George W. Loudon
 Graduate Representative
 Department of Theatre
 Continued on Page 5

Review needs improvement

While I appreciate the laudatory opinions expressed in the Daily Nebraskan's review of *The Good Woman of Setzuan*, (Oct. 25), I object to the poor critical standards exhibited in the manner of their expression. Rife in theatrical ignorance, inconsistencies, grammatical and

