

opinion/editorial

Moral advertising judgments not DN's job

Each semester the Daily Nebraskan is criticized for accepting various advertisements which some persons believe should not be printed. This semester, advertisements for X-rated movies and for the Central Intelligence Agency have come under especially heavy fire.

A letter to the editor in Monday's Daily Nebraskan, for example, charged that the paper, in accepting such ads, is "abdicating its social responsibility." It also claimed that the paper, accepts "any kind of ad which fills up a page."

The Daily Nebraskan, however, does not accept for publication any kind of ad. The advertising policies of this newspaper come from several sources.

Some of our advertising policies are set by the UNL Publications Board. The board, consists of five students appointed by the ASUN

Senate, two faculty members appointed by the Faculty Senate and two professional journalists appointed by the Chancellor. According to the Guidelines for the Student Press, adopted by the NU Board of Regents, the board acts as the Daily Nebraskan's publisher.

In that role, the board selects the Daily Nebraskan editor and the advertising manager and sets policies which must be followed by them.

One such policy forbids the Daily Nebraskan from accepting advertisements for over-the-counter contraceptives.

Another Publications Board policy sets guidelines for the format of political advertisements.

Policies concerning the remaining advertisements which appear in the Daily Nebraskan, are set by the editor and the advertising manager.

Because the editor changes every semester and the advertising manager every year, the policies change through the years, but historically have been liberal.

Although most local papers will not publish photos or art with ads for X-rated movies, the Daily Nebraskan editors believe that because the paper caters to a mature college audience, such restrictions are not necessary. Unlike the local papers, it is unlikely that children regularly will read the Daily Nebraskan.

The art, itself, is restricted however, so that it is not obscene. This is a subjective judgment, of course, but we try to restrict photos to show little more than cleavage.

The criticism that the Daily Nebraskan, by running such ads, is promoting sexism is erroneous. The Daily Nebraskan neither condones

nor condemns the productions and services that appear in its advertising space.

If the Daily Nebraskan were to reject ads for X-rated movies because the movies promote sexism, we also would be forced to reject ads for bikinis on the same basis.

The Daily Nebraskan simply cannot make moral judgments on every advertiser. If we could, we could reject advertisements for political candidates whose beliefs differed from our own—simply because we felt their ideas are detrimental to society.

Society is best served if it has a wide range of ideas from which to make its opinions and judgments. For us to impose our moral code on others by restricting that information would be the greatest abdication of social responsibilities imaginable.

letters

Many recent editorials and letters to the editor have dealt with the crisis in Iran. They have looked at the Islamic side, the American side and some have examined both sides.

Before I can make a qualified judgment on the situation, I need to know the answers to several questions. I can't believe Mohammed really taught that the deaths of 49 persons is more important than the life of one. Is this one of his teachings and what Moslems believe? I can't see that the shah has been any worse than the Ayatollah is now. He is advocating kidnapping, murder and extortion and worse than that, he's saying it's all OK because it's being done in the name of God. If that is OK for the present leader of Iran to do, then why shouldn't the shah be left alone?

How does the Ayatollah's disregard for human life differ from the shah's practices during his regime? It looks like one and the same to me.

I would also like to know who is trying these Americans as spies, the Iranian government, or the Iranian students who instigated the Embassy takeover? If the answer to this question is the students, then who is running Iran? As I understand the meaning of the word "student", they usually have nothing to do with the way a country is run, especially a dictatorship. And if this is true, who would be prosecuting the shah, the students? Again, I'm sure that students usually do not play that large a role in Iranian government in normal situations. Why should this change now?

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United States has misplaced humiliation

Washington—However the hostage crisis in Tehran is eventually resolved—by words or by guns—it needs to be understood that the past weeks have not been a time of national humiliation.

colman mccarthy

As we have watched the ayatollah and his mob—some burning the American flag, others carrying out the garbage with it—the heated cry has been, "They're humiliating us." No disgrace could be worse, it is said. The world's mightiest power stands by in mute helplessness while a deranged old man gives it the business.

The trouble with the humiliation argument is that for a nation to be humbled some authentic pride had to be present in the first place.

What is America proud of in its relations with the Iranian people these past decades? That our government engineered a coup in 1953, that our money and weapons went in staggering amounts to the shah who used them to

kill, imprison or exile tens of thousands of his countrymen, that we looked away when groups like Amnesty International repeatedly documented the repression, that we rejoiced that the shah and his Washington ambassador, Ardeshir Zahedi, were darlings of the international party circuit?

THOSE WERE MOMENTS for us to feel humiliation. Our ideals were disgraced. The wounds to the nation's honor were real, not the perceived shame of the past three weeks. If Khomeini has lost his senses, many Americans thought that Jimmy Carter lost some of his two years ago in his celebrated New Years' toast to the shah as "an island of stability in an unstable world."

Those who take pride in America's authentic strength—its impulse for generosity, compassion and justice—have felt humiliated before by our foreign policies. In the past 10 years, some of the tyrants bolstered by our weapons and investments have been so conspicuously brutal to political retaliation for inflicting an embarrassing defeat on knowing of them: Somoza in Nicaragua, Park in South Korea, the shah in Iran. Less known but still part of the American network are a string of other despots, from Videla in Argentina to Marcos in the Philippines.

When foul-ups occur and a government we have been propping up totters and falls—as in South Vietnam in 1975—we can revert to a mean-spirited foreign policy.

AS JAMES Wallis, the editor of *Sojourners magazine*, writes: "Since the war ended, the U.S. has pursued a policy toward Vietnam marked by vengeance and political retaliation for inflicting an embarrassing defeat on the most powerful nation in the world. The U.S. government has yet to take any responsibility for the massive destruction it caused, has refused any reconstruction aid, and has even sought to block aid to Vietnam from other countries and private agencies. . . This continuing political assault against Vietnam has exaggerated the country's already difficult task of rebuilding its war-torn land and has greatly contributed to the refugee problem."

In recent weeks, the Stone Age lobby—the inheritors of the Vietnam-era thinking that we should bomb Hanoi back to the Stone Age—has had all it could do to bite its tongue. It recalls how he-man Gerald Ford didn't let America be pushed around in the Mayaguez case. In that display of diplomacy by gunfire, Ford saved 40 captives—and sent 41 rescuers to their deaths.

THAT WAS TRUE national humiliation. A weak nation provoked a strong one into the greater weakness of irrational violence.

The fury with which many Americans are damning the ayatollah is a reminder that nations, as well as persons, often take refuge in painless finger-pointing rather than endure the anguish of self-examination to see where the blame really does lie.

The taking of hostages by the Tehran students was a blatant crime. And assuredly Khomeini is a violence-prone fanatic. But he is victimizing America, not humiliating us. His particular madness is part of the instability that has brutalized the poor and the powerless in Iran for decades. We are being burned by the fires our own leaders created. It is a moment not for humiliation, but awareness.

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