

# Editorial

## Perfection: Too easy to attain?

Fans have a right to boo and hiss if they think a performer has performed badly or been judged harshly. They have that right just as they have the right to cheer, clap and spring to their feet in a standing ovation. However, at the men's gymnastics event of the 1984 Olympics Tuesday, the fans stretched their right a little too far.

These fans booed not the athletes, who showed extraordinary talent. On the contrary, they booed the Olympic judges in support of the athletes. The fans booed the judges more than once for giving some athletes 9.95 points on a 10-point scale. A 9.95 isn't something to clap and cheer for? Obviously these fans expected nothing less than perfection.

They had seen perfection earlier, in the preliminaries. Many gymnasts received 10s, and the fans expected more of the same in the actual competition.

And perfection they saw, with three perfect 10s, from performances by U.S. gymnasts alone. The Chinese team also had its share of 10s.

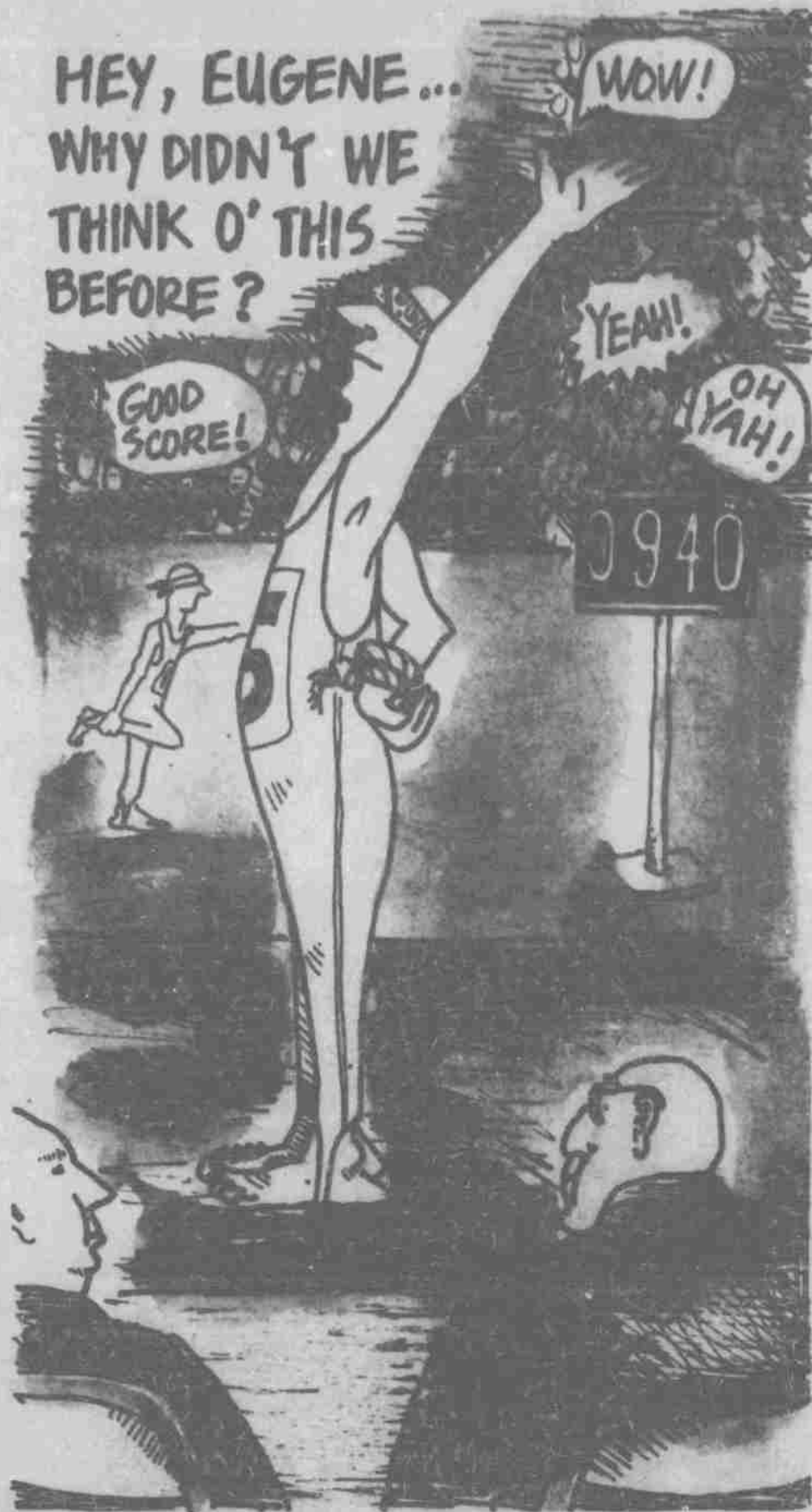
But where do athletes go once they achieve perfection? Do they keep getting more and more perfect?

No, the judges just keep giving them perfect or close-to-perfect scores. Perfection becomes easier to attain.

The judges are in a bind: Ever since they gave Romanian gymnast Nadia Comaneci 10 points for four performances in the 1976 Olympics, the crowd has expected more of the same, or at least close to that. Now when the first gymnasts perform, they usually get scores of more than 9 points, closer and closer to 10 points. Because of rules judges must follow, the following scores must be in range of the first.

One ABC commentator remarked Tuesday how amazing it was that the athletes had so outdistanced the scoring. That is true. It is amazing that so many perfect athletes exist. Unbelievable, some people would say.

If the athletes have improved that much since the last Olympic Games, maybe it's time for the scoring to be reworked. Standards of perfection should be tougher as the athletes get better.



## Letter

In reference to the Miss America editorial (Daily Nebraskan, July 27), Lincoln isn't "drooling" or "licking its chops" over the nude Vanessa Williams edition of Penthouse magazine. People should approach the situation realistically — something many journalists stray from and defend those who were simply curious about the photographs.

Curiosity of both men and women stemmed from the media's bombardment of stories over the ordeal. Many people asked themselves, "Just what is in those photographs?" Even William Raspberry, a respected syndicated columnist, looked at the photos and wrote an editorial about them. Yet, those of us who dare look at Williams in Penthouse were scornfully branded by the Daily Nebraskan as "droolers" over the idea that "women are sex-starved, passive objects who like to run naked through the dew and eat red pop-sicles."

Did our curious peek at Williams really make us degrade all women? Of course not.

No doubt most of the people who supposedly defiled themselves by viewing pictures were shocked. They are simply unbelievable and very sad. After looking at them, I can't say I feel sorry for Williams. However, I do feel sorry for the Miss America pageant, a fun, harmless American tradition.

Many times journalists get too caught up in the significance of events. How can the Daily Nebraskan realistically say that all the people who looked at the photos are "droolers" and have "degraded women?" They simply acted in curiosity, spurred on by the press and by talk about the event. Yet, some will even argue this point. They should take this test: Look at the photos of Williams, set the magazine down, and ask, "Did I just degrade all women in society?" Then, check for drool on the pages.

Jeff McCormick  
senior, finance

## Editorial Policy

Unsigned editorials represent official policy of the summer 1984 Daily Nebraskan. They are written by this summer's editor in chief, Lauri Hoppie.

Other staff members will write editorials throughout the summer. They will carry the author's name after the final sentence.

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CHAIRPERSONS	Nick Foley, 478-4981
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## Former Miss America sold herself

The controversy over former Miss America Vanessa Williams raises some important questions. However, all of the hoo-ha and hullabaloo can be minimized if we understand a very important social fact: there are black people who can look black but who can be white in their attitudes and their actions. This contradiction then, is at the base of the issue, and explanation follows.

### Matthew Stelly

In the first place, environment creates personalities. Therefore, it is almost impossible to be born in a racist society and not be racist, either consciously or unconsciously. In like manner, many blacks are born into white communities, taught white values and principles. This exposure leads to a kind of "anticipatory socialization process" whereby parents and other significant individuals literally "program" the black youth into believing in and acting out white values and attitudes.

At an early age, Williams was forced music by both of her parents who were school teachers. She had to study music until her 18th birthday. Along the way, she picked up all of the values of her background in New York's township of Millwood, and even latched on to a white boyfriend.

Williams went to work as a receptionist for the photographer who eventually took the nude photos. According to him, Williams saw him taking pictures of two other women and wanted to be involved in a similar scenario. To this day, she has not denied these allegations.

In my view we have a simple equa-

tion: rejection of one's black past plus inculcation of white values plus a misguided "success ethos" equals exploitation. Purely and simply, Williams pimped herself and ain't no need in nicknamin' the truth!

As her own pimp, she decided to enter the Miss America pageant, and agreed that she would uphold the principles of the pageant — which she did. The Miss America pageant is the biggest pimp of all. This involves money — money made for those other than the individual who has the body and who performs the acts.

So then, Williams' biggest pimp, the pageant, finds out that another pimp, the photographer, has decided to move into the pageant's territory. Outraged, the pageant committee decides that Vanessa has somehow besmirched the crown, has somehow violated the "wholesomeness" of the pageant.

How could she? The real issue is simple: as long as she prostituted herself solely for the pageant, she was a "call girl." But when the photos were revealed, she lost her lofty status and was reduced to a mere "streetwalker." However, the fact that few seem to understand is that in both cases she is still a prostitute.

Williams deserves all the money she can make, because she has sacrificed so much to get where she is today. Giving up the crown means nothing, because her exposure as a top-rated "call girl" enables her to command higher prices for her future roles as a sex object. Williams can now do movies, she can go on the lecture circuit, and she can make big bucks because she represents what America's perception of women is all about: breasts and no

brains, thighs but no thoughts and bootie and beauty devoid of a sense of duty.

The "controversy" is not so new or nerve shattering once the entire context of the situation is analyzed and understood. Vanessa, like the rest of us, is a prostitute. And we need only assess the scope and power of the "master pimp" to see that this is the real issue.

