

Editorial

Media coverage slants campaign

The media, in its massive, sometimes blind, search for truth, tends to be a self-prophesier.

The media, true to its name, reports *en masse*. You see it every day. ABC, CBS and NBC air the same stories, often in the same order, often reported the same way. Newsweek and Time often have similar contents, their covers are similar, our newspapers often have the same top stories.

Just a word or two in one source leads the others to use the same words. A few words can have a devastating effect.

Take the presidential campaign. The networks, major news magazines and wire services all refer to Walter Mondale as the "underdog" or the "long shot candidate."

The Sept. 17 Time has a photo of Reagan and his wife smiling in the sun surrounded by a jubilant crowd. The caption reads: "Day in the sun: the President and Nancy Reagan wave to a Labor Day rally crowd of almost 50,000 at De Anza Community college in San Jose, Calif. . . . A seemingly innocuous outline. Next to it ran this one:

"Caught in the rain: Democratic Candidate Mondale and Running Mate Ferraro in Portland, Ore."

Mondale and Ferraro are shown under an umbrella — no people are visible. The writer and editors characterized the Democratic campaign as all washed up because they campaigned in the rain, and because they are 15 percentage points behind Reagan in the Gallup Poll.

Writers and editors subconsciously begin to think and write about Mondale as the loser, the underdog, even though a Gallup Poll of about 938 people is far from the last word on who will win. The representation they give molds the way we all think about the election, and many other issues. And the election is far from over.

What is needed is a little care and thought. Just cutting the words "long shot candidate" or "underdog" make the story objective without omitting any information. Writers and reporters should tell the story as they see it, not as the "pack" sees it.



Civil rights legislation offers 'chances' for achievement

Until this week, I never thought of the Olympics as a teaching event. The closest they got to a civics lesson out in Los Angeles, Calif., was the opening-night extravaganza when the dance troupe performed a historical pageant. After forming a human map of the United States, the "pioneers" from central casting pushed their covered wagons from west to east.

But on Sept. 11, the Olympics came eastward again with a slightly more educational purpose. A group of Olympians, including runner Mary Decker, volleyball's

champions at this breakfast.

Last February, however, in the Grove City College case, the Supreme Court re-read the mind of Congress. The justices ruled that Title 9 was written to be applied to a particular program. If a college was getting money only for business administration, it could legally discriminate in engineering. In short, if a school is lacking around some of its students, the government won't buy the school more shoes, but it will go on buying gloves or a hat.

In the wake of this decision, the Reagan Justice Department, never what you would call ardent in pursuit of discrimination cases, closed 23 civil rights investigations. It also served notice that 20 years' worth of civil rights legislation that protected women minorities, the handicapped, or the aged could be subject to the same narrow interpretation.

The House responded by rewriting the laws so that its intent to ban discrimination was absolutely clear, even to a myopic court. The representatives cheered the bill on (C.R.A! C.R.A!) last June by a vote of 375 to 32. Now a similar bill with 63 co-sponsors is stalled in the Senate, where it is opposed by Reagan stalwart Orrin Hatch and is up against a relentless stopwatch. The Congress is scheduled to adjourn Oct. 5. The Reagan administration has yet to take a stand on this bill.

But back to our breakfast of champions. It was remarkable to

hear Flo Hyman offering up thanks, not just to mom, dad and coach, but to civil rights legislation without which . . . "At a critical time in my life," she said, Title 9 "enabled me to receive a scholarship." Cheryl Miller later said the same thing: "There is no doubt that I would not be attending USC without a scholarship. I took Title 9 for granted."

Of the 200 women Olympians in the 1984 games, more than 170 received their training in a university or college athletic program that probably hadn't existed prior to 1972. This was something we didn't hear in the "Up Close and Personal" TV features.

Another medalist, Randy Snow of Houston, also spoke at the breakfast. Snow, who won a silver medal in the 1500-meter men's wheelchair race, said that he won for two reasons: "I trained my butt off for six months . . . and the Olympic committee recognized me as an athlete."

This is the crux of the matter. Gold medals are not the most important results of Title 9 or any other civil rights legislation. But they are peculiarly symbolic. Getting to the top, number one, the championship, is always an individual achievement, but you can't make it unless you're given a fair chance. That's what civil rights legislation is about, and that's what the Civil Rights Act of 1984 would protect: the chance.

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Letters

Romantic verse written by Marlowe

Dear Mona Koppelman:
You write well and I always enjoy reading your articles in the Daily Nebraskan, but I was disappointed when, in "Economics enter European's decision to co-habitate," (Page 1, Friday) you gave Shakespeare credit for something Marlowe had written. Now there are thousands of college men and women saying this romantic line to one another and feeling pretty proud about the

whole thing because they think they are quoting Shakespeare! Please accept this correction with the spirit in which it is intended:

*"Come live with me and be my love
And we will all the pleasures
prove..."*

— Christopher Marlowe, "The Passionate Shepherd to His Love"
Jennie Sehnoor
Senior English

Ellen Goodman

Flo Hyman and basketball's Cheryl Miller, starred at a Capitol Hill breakfast sponsored by Sens. Edward Kennedy and Robert Packwood. These senators are trying to press forward the Civil Rights Act of 1984 that would restore a broad interpretation of civil rights legislation. (Do I hear a chant of "C.R.A! C.R.A!?"

Title 9 was the legislation passed in 1972 to ban sex discrimination at educational institutions that received federal funding. Any school that discriminated against women anywhere — in employment or admissions, in the science lab or on the playing field — would lose all of its federal money.

The greatest measurable change under Title 9 has been in girls and women's sports. It's because of Title 9 that college athletic budgets for women have grown from one percent to 16 percent of the total sports budget. It's because of Title 9 that the number of women in intercollegiate athletic programs jumped from 16,000 in 1972 to 150,000 today. It's because of Title 9 that there were female

Letter Policy

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others. retains the right to edit all material submitted.

Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. Whether material should run as a letter or guest opinion, or not run, is left to the editor's discretion.

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Unsigned editorials represent official policy of the fall 1984 Daily Nebraskan. They are written by this semester's editor in chief, Chris Welsch.

Other staff members will write editorials throughout the semester. They will carry the author's

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The Daily Nebraskan's publishers are the regents, who established the UNL Publications Board

to supervise the daily production of the newspaper.

According to the policy set by the regents, responsibility for the content of the newspaper lies solely in the hands of its student editors.

Daily Nebraskan

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