

Editorial

Daily
Nebraskan

University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Jeff Korbek, Editor, 472-1766
James Rogers, Editorial Page Editor
Lise Olsen, Associate News Editor
Mike Reilly, Night News Editor
Joan Rezac, Copy Desk Chief

Quips and quotes ASUN election: taste, trash

Monday night, Tim Burke, Eric Lambert and Andy Ketterson announced themselves as write-in candidates for the ASUN elections under the party name of NOFAG. They said that homosexuality should be prevented on campus.

Obviously, the party and its platform is a joke and in poor taste. Others feel the same way; the Daily Nebraskan received several calls. But the DN's printing of the article was not condoning the party's platform. The DN's job isn't to stop people from offending others. It's election time, and these people had something to say. The DN tried to provide accurate and equal coverage during the election.

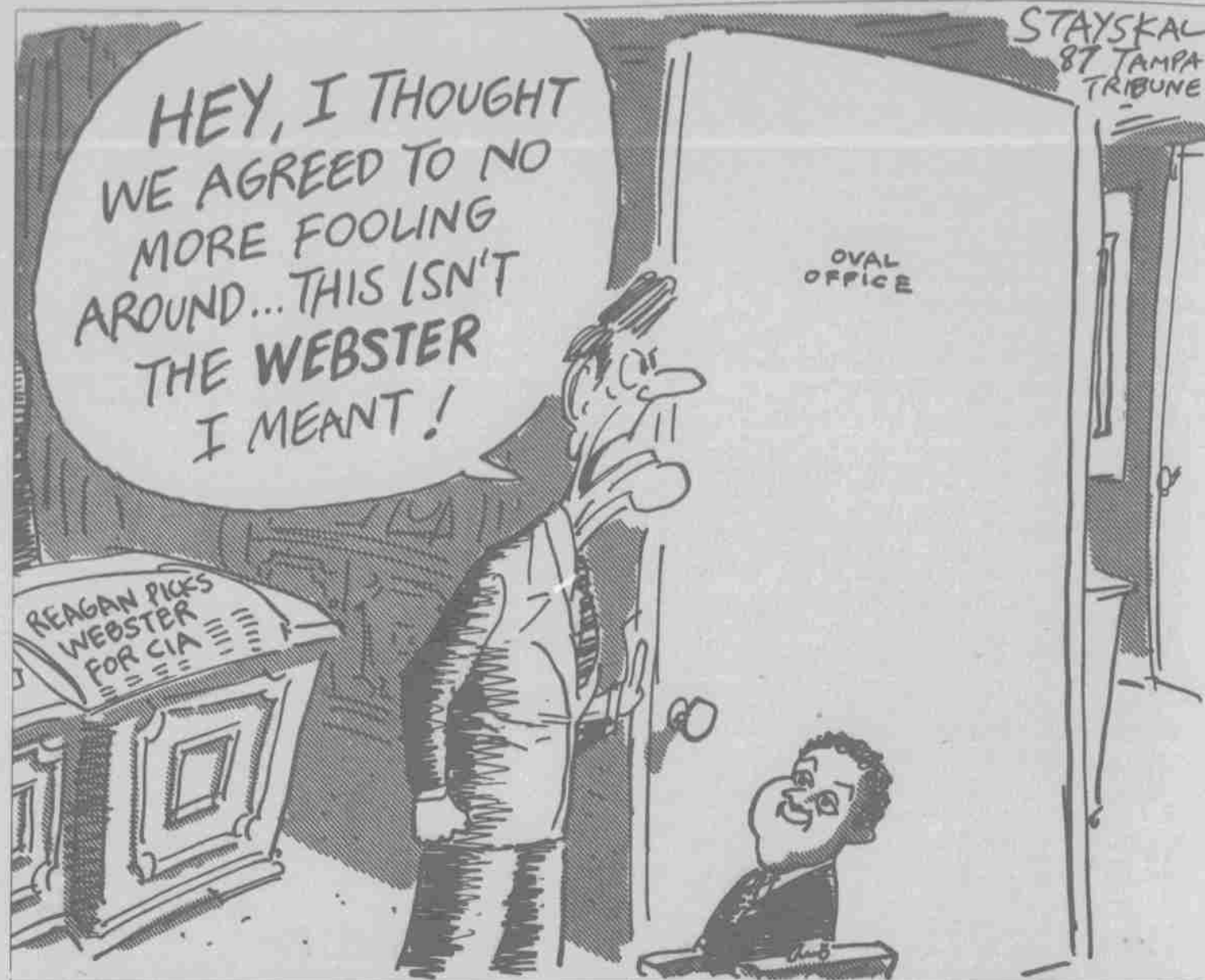
● A Nebraska State Student Association flyer also is decried in poor taste. The headline on the flyer read, "Piss off ASUN... Note for NSSA, March 11." Other flyers supporting NSSA can be seen around campus and are done more tactfully. There's nothing wrong in seeking support for an organization, but it shouldn't be done at the expense of another.

● In Tuesday's editorial, "Support Unite," the following sentence may be interpreted incorrectly if not read carefully. The

sentence read: "Special-interest groups including minorities should lobby the governing body, not be a part of it." For clarification, the sentence didn't mean that minorities should be excluded from senate, but that spots designated for minority groups should be. The ASUN Senate should not be composed of groups such as the Interfraternity Council, Residence Hall Association or Gay/Lesbian Student Association.

● Older students may have noticed that salaries for ASUN executives was not included on the Fund A survey on this year's ballot. Student authorization is needed for ASUN to recommend allocation of money from Fund A to organizations. For about the past four years students have voted down salaries for ASUN executives. They probably felt they didn't have much of a chance again this year.

● The DN encourages representatives from the parties to pick up the litter covering the campus. Every year on election day the campus is "trashed" with party flyers. If students have the time to hand out the leaflets, they have the time to pick them up.



Baptists, rockers at odds

Single-minded subcultures ignore standard of criticism

Athenian: Well, shall we give the name bad now to the man who is defeated by pain, or to him who is defeated by pleasure as well?
Clinias: I think it belongs more properly to one who is defeated by pleasure. And I imagine all of us are readier to say that one who is mastered by pleasure is shamefully self-defeated than to say it of one who succumbs to pain.

Plato, "Laws"

rude enough to point out the ridiculous tunes backing up (sometimes) some of the most majestic and noble words ascribing greatness to the most holy God, one is curtly told, "Well, then, focus on the words."

Choirs become social events where everybody is encouraged to come out, "even if you can't sing." After all, so the thought goes, "God doesn't care how it sounds." Well now, if God doesn't care how it sounds, how come all the hymnals have notes in them?

The real bone I have to pick with rock artists and their genre defenders is their insistence (be they secular or religious) that themes are "neutral" and that they are good or bad depending only on the pleasure they evoke from any given listener. That is, their implicit aesthetic standard is a hedonic standard.

Thus, Bach cantatas are supposed to be on the same level, qua aesthetic experience, as any other tune — depending on the "taste" of the listener. In this sphere of aesthetic relativism, there is no objective beauty or ugliness.

Yet this position hardly accounts for the profoundly "spiritual" (for want of another term) backdrop of this visceral form of communication called music.

As the Athenian argued in Plato's "Laws," "when a man tells us in music pleasure is the standard of judgment, we must refuse to accept his statement. It is not this type of music, if indeed there could be such a type, which we should make our serious object, but that other which retains its likeness to the model of the noble."

Now this is not to say that there is no modern music (or rock music) which is not objectively beautiful. Rather, it is to say that there is a standard of criticism that can be applied. Discussion of music is not vitiated by the bland assertion, "You like what you like, I like what I like." There is a common ground, though perceived and understood only dimly, and thus a ground for real discussion and debate.

Rogers is a graduate economics and law student and Daily Nebraskan editorial page editor.



Jim
Rogers

Certainly congregational singing is not to be measured by the same standard as art music. After all, all God requires of the congregations, as the psalmist puts it, is to "raise a joyful noise." Now I can do that. But art music is supposed to encompass a symbolic form which musically points to another, higher reality. Bad artistic reproduction hardly advances this cause.

When we turn to rock artists, many defend their lyrics (since that's all the Baptist cares about) from the assault by arguing you can't understand them anyway. That could be true, but then the obvious question is: Why are any words included instead of, say, guttural sounds (which seems to be many a rock singer's native tongue off the stage).

As with so much else, it seems, our public discussions about art — and music in particular — are impoverished. The rather curious ongoing discussion between rock artists and Baptists highlights the reductionism of both camps. As with all instances of intellectual reductionism, neither side encompasses a reasonable approximation of truth because of their single-minded insistentcies.

Now, the Baptists argue that the words of many a rock song are quite vulgar (which they are). The rock artists, in turn, respond that nobody listens to the words anyway; they listen to the tunes. And even if they do listen to the words, what business is it of the Baptists anyway? Both expressions reflect the emphases of the respective subcultures.

For example, go to any Baptist church (or even any evangelical church) and one cannot help but be struck by the severely impoverished nature of the music. Many of the tunes would fit better in a circus arena or a sappy easy-listening music station. If a person is

Visit proves monumental failure of sanctions against South Africa

JOHANNESBURG, South Africa — This is my eighth visit to South Africa in the past 25 years. This time I am one of about 30 journalists and educators on a fact-finding tour organized and financed by the Rev. Sun Myung Moon's World Media Association.

We will be spending two weeks talking to spokesmen for just about every imaginable position on South African affairs, from President P.W. Botha and U.S. Ambassador Edward Perkins to Soweto firebrand Nthato Motlana and Zulu chief Mangosuthu Buthelezi. Our group itself boast a variety of talents and spectrum of opinions, including as it does former assistant secretary of state Stefan Halper, Southern Christian Leadership Conference national

vice president John Nettles and former Hudson Institute president Dr. Max Singer, to mention only three of my colleagues.

William
A.
Rusher



Not even the jet age has managed to bring South Africa really close to American shores. Our trip involved a seven-hour flight from Washington to London, another five and a quarter hours en

route from London to a refueling stop on Ilha do Sol in the Cape Verde Islands (where we watched a Soviet transport plane take off for Angola with a fresh supply of Cuban troops) and a final eight-hour haul southeastward to Johannesburg.

We have spent the trip's first several days in this capital city of South African business, and naturally I seized the opportunity to inquire what effect U.S. economic sanctions against South Africa, imposed by Congress over President Reagan's veto, are having. Precisely as predicted by those of us who opposed them all along, they are having almost every effect save the one intended

See RUSHER on 5

Letter

Memory-improvement questioned; program participation discouraged

Bob Kittell, a Utah businessman, is in Lincoln today through Saturday conducting memory-improvement seminars at the Clayton House. The cost is \$25 for a two-hour session, which includes a 10-page workbook. While I don't want to discourage anyone from attending, some of Kittell's claims made personally or in an accompanying flyer are dubious at best and bear close scrutiny.

The existence of Kittell's company, Memory Improvement Systems (assuming the logo implies companyhood), is suspect. No such business is listed with the Utah Better Business Bureau.

The testimonial of Dr. Paul Timm, a BYU professor, about the value of Kittell's memory seminar, is suspect. Timm works for Prime Learning International, a company that organizes seminars on memory improvement and secretarial stress. It is probable that Kittell also works for this company as a presenter, since his name and phone number are available through them. In any event, Timm's testimonial should be discounted as highly biased.

The claim that Kittell "developed" this system of memory improvement is suspect. Mnemonics have been around since the time of the Greeks, and the pen-and-ink system of enhancing short-term memory is not much younger. Most likely, Kittell uses a variation of methods described for free on audio-cassettes or in books available in any major library.

The claim that Kittell memorized a page out of the phone book in four hours using "his" system is suspect. Assertions like this are made all the time by genius and idiot savant alike. While there is no sense arguing over whether such a feat is possible (not

knowing how many columns the page had or how large the print was), only a person of preternatural ability or extensive practice with "Kittell's" system could accomplish such a task. Even then, this "impress your friends" pronouncement smacks of hucksterism.

Kittell's cloaking of the memory input process in the guise of meditation/mysticism (re the trance-like state entered into upon being given a number and associated object is just plain goofy. If the method is valid (which it is) and easily explained (which it is), why introduce elements of voodoo (except to sway gullible listeners)?

Granted, these discrepancies seem picayune for something like \$25. I acknowledge that I know very little about this field, nor have I ever attended Kittell's seminar. In all fairness, Prime Learning International is a legitimate company, Kittell is a polished performer, and, if he's at all competent, attendees will learn simple constructs for vastly improving certain aspects of recall and have fun at the same time (forming chimeric images or scatological mnemonics can be quite humorous). For students averse to reading a book or spending time in the library, Kittell's lecture is probably the least painful way to expand your mind (something like attending a Talking Heads concert).

For participants who learn to associate a tie with carrots (or Kittell's permutation thereof) to help remember what's first on the shopping list and find this a less-than-startling revelation for \$25, don't say you weren't warned.

John Osborn
chemistry