Daily Nebraskan

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Support fair press

Public perceives reporting as biased

recent poll has revealed some depressing statistics about the people and the press.

According to a Times Mirror Center telephone poll taken in August, 68 percent of 1,507 randomly selected adults said the press tends to favor one side when reporting political and social issues, rather than fairly reporting all sides.

Four years ago, 53 percent of those interviewed in the poll said the press was biased in reporting the news.

Sixty-two percent (versus 53 percent in '85) also said news organizations are "often influenced by powerful people and organizations.'

According to an article in the Washington Post's National Weekly Edition, more people also are losing respect for their local newspaper. "In 1985, 16 percent rated the daily newspaper in their area as not believable; today, 32 percent said the same thing.

Researchers attribute the increase in those who rate news organizations as not believable to inaccuracy, bias and lack of independence from other powerful institu-

The poll doesn't paint a pretty picture for today's news organizations.

But sometimes the truth hurts.

It becomes increasingly difficult to keep the news unbiased when more and more big-name corporations and advertisers, with powerful interests at stake, dominate the economics of various news organizations.

It also is hard for journalists who are truly concerned with getting unadulterated news to the people to convince the public they are legitimate. With so many sensational news shows and newspapers these days, it's a wonder the press has sustained any dignity at all.

But the blame does not rest entirely on the news media. Because we live in a capitalistic society, news organizations need to stay profitable in order to survive. In order

to do so, they supply what the public demands. If a majority of the public wants to watch so-called "news" shows such as "Geraldo" or "A Current Affair," or read sleazy supermarket scandal sheets -- these media will survive.

And, to a certain extent, the public also can control the news media's accuracy. If people only read newspapers or watch news shows that strive for accuracy and fairness, sensationalist news fabricators will fall to their knees.

It is important to remember that news reporters are human. They make mistakes. They have opinions. And, for whatever reasons, some don't take their jobs as seriously as they should.

But good news organizations continuously strive for fair, accurate, thorough reporting. They may fall short on occasion, but they have the best interests of the public at heart. The public should reward those organizations with their support.

> -- Lee Rood for the Daily Nebraskan

opinionREADER

Reader says UNL residence halls serve 'slop' to diners

Although I have only lived in the residence halls for a short time, I seriously can't imagine any other schools with such a poor excuse for a food service.

The food is said to be high in nutritional value and all the meals make up a full-balanced diet. The only problem is, you can't stand to eat it. I have, on a number of occasions, entered the food service and passed by the entire food line without picking up one item. Everything tastes the same. They use the same sauce for pizza, spaghetti, lasagna, and a number of other dishes as toppings.

The price of breakfast is \$2.35, lunch and dinner are \$4.25. I feel this is an outrageous price for the slop they try to feed us. There should be menus posted in advance to let us know what will be served, then we could choose if we want to eat it. I also think that if we choose not to eat the food that we should be refunded at the end of each billing cycle for the meals we do not eat. If we are required to have a meal card, they should at least make the food edible!

> Jim McNally finance



Political upheaval exhilarates

Abolishing ASUN would end illegimate government, boredom

his campus is boring. Sure, a few theopaths soapbox by the fountain, a few snowballs are thrown, a few goalposts fall.

ADV.MAYARTON89

But, for the most part, University of Nebraska-Lincoln students just drudge along with the clock, passing time with a little study, a little beer and a lot of television.

What's worse, UNL students must watch TV and see that some people aren't as bored as they are. Every day, UNL students are forced to watch thousands of people frolicking in the streets of Prague and Berlin.

Students must ask, "Why are they having so much fun?"

But deep down, I think we all

know the answer.

Yep. Political upheaval is a blast. You see, East Europeans frolic because they get to overthrow gover-ments. UNL students don't overthrow governments. Therefore, they're bored.

So what should UNL students do

to stop being bored? That's right. Overthrow a govern-

Let's see, I don't think we can overthrow the national or state government. They have troops and guns. Just ask Ron Roskens.

We could have overthrown the university president or the regents, but someone's already done that

And Marty Massengale is too nice to overthrow

I guess that leaves only one alter-

native That's right, abolish the Associa-

tion of Students of the University of a group is bored, that doesn't neces-

Some would say that just because sarily mean it should overthrow a government. They would say that a government first must be found to be illegitimate before it can be de-

Bob

This is a terribly boring theory, but it must be addressed.

Last year, because of boredom, only about 2,500 students voted in the ASUN elections. About 25,000 students were enrolled at the university. Therefore, about 10 percent of the student body voted. Many of those

Nelson

who voted, one can assume, voted only to get the super-cool invisible ink stamp on their hand.

As of 1985, about 5 percent of the Soviet population was in the communist party. In 1989, IMPACT won the ASUN elections with 49.8 percent of the vote, or about 5 percent of UNL's population.

The Soviets don't use super-cool invisible ink stamps. That means everybody in the Communist party is a Communist. Thus, our government is less legitimate than a Communist government. If Eastern Europe revolts, so should we.

Also, the Homecoming Committee is part of University Program Council. The Homecoming Committee did not allow write-in candidates for Homecoming King and Queen. The ASUN president was a candidate for Homecoming King. Like ASUN elections, the Homecoming elections also used super-cool invisible ink. The Communist Party, prior to this year, did not allow write-in candidates. This year, Boris Yeltsin was elected in the Soviet Union by writein votes. Therefore, the Communist party allows freer elections than our

Homecoming Committee. If Eastern Europe revolts, so should we. If you read the last few graphs only

once, I think you'll realize we must abolish ASUN.

Oh yeah, one more thing, ASUN does absolutely nothing.

Another neat reason to do it. If we abolish ASUN, a new government could be designed by UNL's political science department.

This is only fair. Every other science department gets to do experiments. The political scientists should be given a chance to design and experiment, too.

The department could have a contest in which all Poli-Sci majors must enter a constitution for a new student government. The constitutions then could be judged by a board of professors with cash prizes going to the best

The winning constitution then would be submitted to the ABOLI-TION party. The 37 members of the ABOLITION party would run for executive and senatorial positions within the existing government. Once elected, ABOLITION members would vote to dissolve the existing government and replace it with the government designed in the winning constitution.

The reign of a pointless, unpopular and incestuous student government would be crushed, local political theorists would get needed experience and every student could feel the exhilaration of political upheaval.

Students of the university unite! Declare your independence! Let the

revolutionary fires of boredom rage! Yippee!

And for goodness' sake, don't forget to vote in March. The merriment of Eastern Europe awaits you . . and so does the invisible ink.

Bob Nelson is a senior news editorial major and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

editorial

Signed staff editorials represent the official policy of the fall 1989 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Its members are Amy Edwards, editor; Lee Rood, editorial page editor; Jane Hirt, managing editor; Brandon Loomis, associate news editor: Jerry Guenther, senior reporter; Bob Nel-

son, columnist; and Brian Svoboda, columnist.

Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of

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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 paper.

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

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers.

Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeli-ness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit all matefreshman rial submitted.

Readers also are welcome to submit

material as guest opinions. Whether material should run as a letter or guest opinion, or not to run, is left to the editor's discretion.

Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned.

Anonymous submissions will not be Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.

considered for publication. Letters should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted.

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