

## Animosity check

*Slumber party to test goodwill*

No matter who wins Friday's showdown between football rivals Oklahoma and Nebraska, the aftermath of the game will be a test of new world order close to home.

Andy Massey, president of the Association of Students of the University of Nebraska, has invited Oklahoma students to take part in a slumber party, of sorts.



Robert Borzekowski/DN

Any University of Nebraska-Lincoln or University of Oklahoma student may present a valid student ID card to spend the night in UNL's Cook Pavilion for free after the game. The only other requirement is a sleeping bag.

Massey said he made arrangements to open Cook Pavilion because UNL residence halls,

fraternities and sororities are closed during Thanksgiving break.

"I want students to be able to go to the game," he said. "If I lived in Chadron and I lived in a residence hall, I wouldn't want an eight-hour trip home after the game."

The decision to include Oklahoma students should boost the number of sleep-over participants. But Ken Cauble, chief of the UNL Police Department, doesn't expect too many problems.

Because students must check in by midnight and no alcohol is allowed, problems should be minimal. Unfortunately, security officers can't force students to check the rivalry at the door.

But if the slumber party keeps students from drinking and driving, it will be well worth the extra security effort.

Husker-Sooner games require a certain degree of friendly animosity. Throwing of oranges and cups are some signs of animosity gone too far at Memorial Stadium games of the past.

For Cook Pavilion Friday night, here's hoping the animosity grows no stronger than alternate strains of Boomer Sooner and Hail Varsity.

—J.P.

## LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

### Students betrayed by policy makers

I feel that we have been betrayed by the policy makers at this university. It is obvious that they have no sense of responsibility to the students who attend, only to their own agendas. They are not bothered by cutting programs that students have made a commitment to. This is disconcerting, because any small program could be eliminated at the drop of a hat.

The objective of not awarding credit for ROTC courses is to send a strong message to the Department of Defense about policies regarding gays and lesbians. It would be fine if they did not hurt students currently involved in the ROTC program. How-

ever, policy makers have overstepped the bounds of fairness. In their crusade against the military, they have treated these students much like pieces in a chess game. There isn't any concern for the pieces except for their role in "winning" the struggle. No one asks the pieces whether they want to get involved.

Although I'm not an ROTC participant, I am concerned about the program-cutting policy at this school. Who will be next?

Eric Naby  
sophomore  
general studies

## LETTER POLICY

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

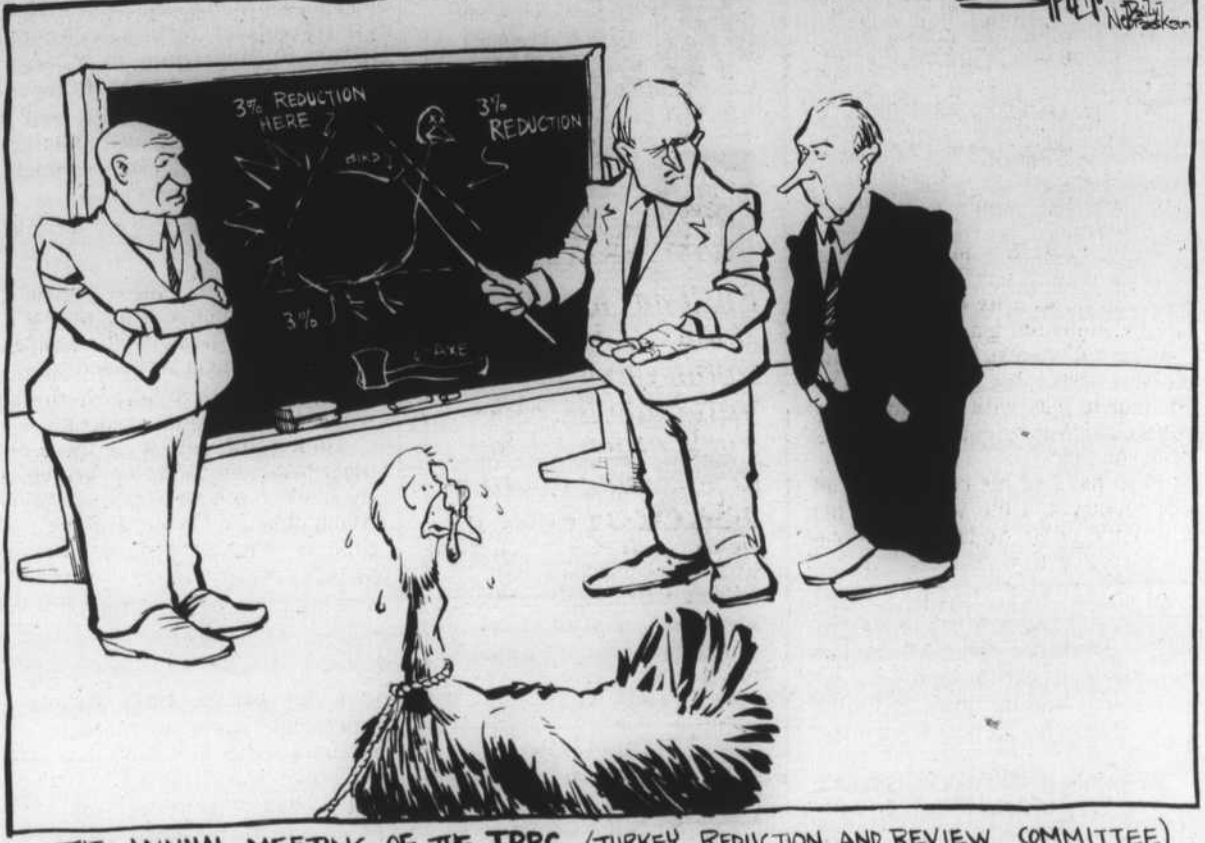
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Anonymous submissions will not be considered for publication. Letters should include the author's name, year in school, major and group affiliation, if any. Requests to withhold names will not be granted.

Submit material to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Nebraska Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0448.



THE ANNUAL MEETING OF THE TRRC. (TURKEY REDUCTION AND REVIEW COMMITTEE)

ERIC PFANNER

## Political chatter perilous sport

This column is not about Mario Cuomo.

It is about sports, politics, the mass media and Umberto Eco.

Eco is an Italian writer, the author of "Foucault's Pendulum," "The Name of the Rose," other books and many essays and newspaper columns.

A few years back, in one of those essays, Eco talked about sports. Specifically, about soccer's World Cup, at once the largest, most cosmopolitan, international and entertaining, rowdiest, tawdriest sporting event on Earth.

Billions of people watch it, live and on television, every four years. There are always flamboyant, arrogant stars and exciting victories, as well as riots, ethnic clashes and other assorted violence.

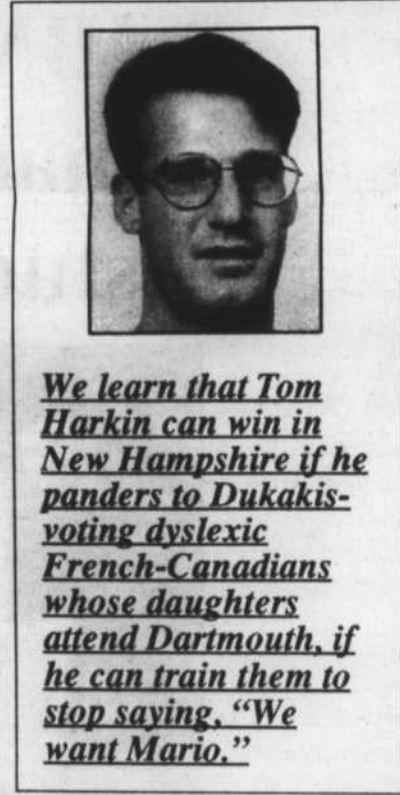
Eco complains about the fans' role in sporting events such as the World Cup. While he is not against sports, he is against organized sports.

That is, he believes that athletic activity, pursued on an individual basis, is a positive outlet for a legitimate human need to get rid of energy. When that activity is pursued vicariously, by watching others vent stored energy, sports loses its value.

Even worse, Eco says, it gives rise to a chain of digressions. It starts with the action on the field. The media watch this action and give a secondary account on television or in the newspapers. The fans, who read about or watch the media's version of sporting activity, are the tertiary level of the sporting event. When Monday morning quarterbacks — or, in Eco's case, Monday morning goalies — gather around the office water cooler — or, in Eco's case, the Chianti bottle — they become a fourth level of what he calls "sports chatter." The circle of absurdity culminates when one media organization, such as a newspaper, runs an article critiquing the performance of another media entity, such as a sports broadcaster.

The end result is a valueless, vicarious activity far removed from the physical athletic act.

In the United States, we are now engaged in a dangerous bastardization of another, far more important institution. We have turned politics into nothing more than "political



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chatter."

I'm not really sure whom to blame — the public, the media, the politicians or Mario Cuomo. Probably all are equally responsible.

Politicians start by making a bunch of irrelevant twisting, turning, thrusting, parrying and dodging motions on the political field. More and more politicians are switching to Astro-Turf.

The mass media then "report" these movements. Readers, viewers and listeners of the media get polls, commentaries and analyses.

We learn that Bob Kerrey can win in New Hampshire if he woos unemployed used-car salesmen from Nashua who voted for George McGovern in 1972 and for George Bush in '88.

We learn that Tom Harkin can win in New Hampshire if he panders to Dukakis-voting dyslexic French-Canadians whose daughters attend Dartmouth, if he can train them to stop saying, "We want Mario."

Instead of learning more about the issues, we get this secondary level of political chatter. It causes the tertiary

level, in which the people start to think they are the experts.

In a class the other day, I overheard a conversation between two students:

"Bob Kerrey can win in New Hampshire if he woos unemployed used-car salesmen from Nashua who voted for George McGovern in 1972 and for George Bush in '88."

"Oh, really? I think Tom Harkin can win in New Hampshire if he panders to Dukakis-voting dyslexic French-Canadians whose daughters attend Dartmouth, if he can train them to stop saying, 'We want Mario.'"

Obviously, they read the same papers that I do.

Unfortunately, while all of us are now expert campaign strategists, none of us know anything about any of the issues.

The average person could tell you all about Paul Tsongas' lack of charisma or Bob Kerrey's slips of the tongue. He could go on and on about what each needs to do to overcome these handicaps and about what their chances are of doing so. But he couldn't tell you the first thing about Kerrey's national health-care plan.

That would be fine if we were talking about sports. I don't care that most people know more about Magic Johnson's smile than about the intricacies of the nickel defense.

In politics, however, it is dangerous when the distinction between issues and "chatter" no longer exists.

It's dangerous, because while all of us can be campaign experts, some of us have to be voters, too.

It's doubly dangerous when one of the political figures is Cuomo, who takes the political chatter game full circle, alternately jousting and dancing with the media, the campaign experts and the voters.

But, as I said earlier, this is not a column about Mario Cuomo. Frankly, I don't care whether he enters the race.

In fact, by commenting about the commentary of the political commentators, I am guilty of the crime I condemn. Better to shut up and watch Monday Night Football.

Pfanner is a senior news-editorial journalism major, the Daily Nebraskan's opinion page editor and wire editor and a columnist.

## EDITORIAL POLICY

Signed staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 1991 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Its members are: Jana Pedersen, editor; Eric Pfanner, editorial page editor;

Diane Brayton, managing editor; Walter Gholson, columnist; Paul Domeier, copy desk chief; Brian

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vised 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 students.