

Daily Nebraskan
Editorial Board
University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Chris Hopfensperger Editor, 472-1766
Dionne Searcey Opinion Page Editor
Kris Karnopp Managing Editor
Alan Phelps Wire Editor
Wendy Navratil Writing Coach
Stacey McKenzie Senior Reporter
Jeremy Fitzpatrick Columnist

EDITORIAL

Act I

No candidate stands out in debate drama

It wasn't a debate. It was a staged presentation, and each of the players played their parts well. President Bush was well-rehearsed in the lead role. Bill Clinton, the up-and-coming understudy. And Ross Perot, the comic relief.

Bush, comfortable in his role after four years in office, emphasized his strength in foreign policy, took the credit for victory in the Cold War and blamed his troubles on the congressional villains.

The president took advantage of the spotlight to attack Clinton. He played his patriotism card, making reference to Clinton's anti-war activities while the Arkansas governor was studying abroad.

Not wanting to be outdone, Clinton threatened to steal the show with his tear-jerking reflections. He played the audience — and the camera — well.

Clinton, taking up the banner of change, did well on the domestic issues. His soliloquies on health care and family values were straightforward and well-received.

Perot, the outsider, warmed up the crowd quickly with his witty one-liners. The non-candidate laid his candidacy on the line by being honest — a role true politicians are not often willing to take.

Being left out of the early mudslinging was good for Perot, who obviously gained more supporters with his jokes.

But no one was laughing when the directors brought up Perot's plan to raise the gas tax 50 cents over the next five years.

Questions also were raised about Perot's ability to blend in with the cast in Washington. His answers were vague and nebulous. The question will come, however, when Americans ask themselves if they are ready to take Perot's plan seriously.

It was a stirring beginning, but the auditions were too close for any cuts to be made.

OTHERS' VIEWS

Numbers game

Bush's claims don't match statistics

It appears as though President Bush's numbers just don't add up.

In a recent speech while stumping for votes in South Dakota, Bush said farmers have made more money during his administration than ever before.

Not true, say economists at the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

USDA analysts say the average net farm income during the Reagan and Bush years actually rank last when compared with rates during the administrations of Presidents Kennedy and Johnson, Nixon and Ford and Carter, according to an article in The Des Moines Register.

Kind of makes one question the validity of the other numbers Bush tosses around.

For example, Bush has a new commercial out that uses a lot of numerical data in an attempt to show that Bill Clinton was a rotten governor. Where do these numbers come from? Probably the same place where Bush got the idea that farmers made piles of money during his administration.

Even if farmers did have larger profits while Bush was in office, who's to say that it was the result of his leadership?

It's time for Bush to forget about the number-crunching game and start to accept the idea that he might as well crawl in a hole and lose this election with what grace he's got left.

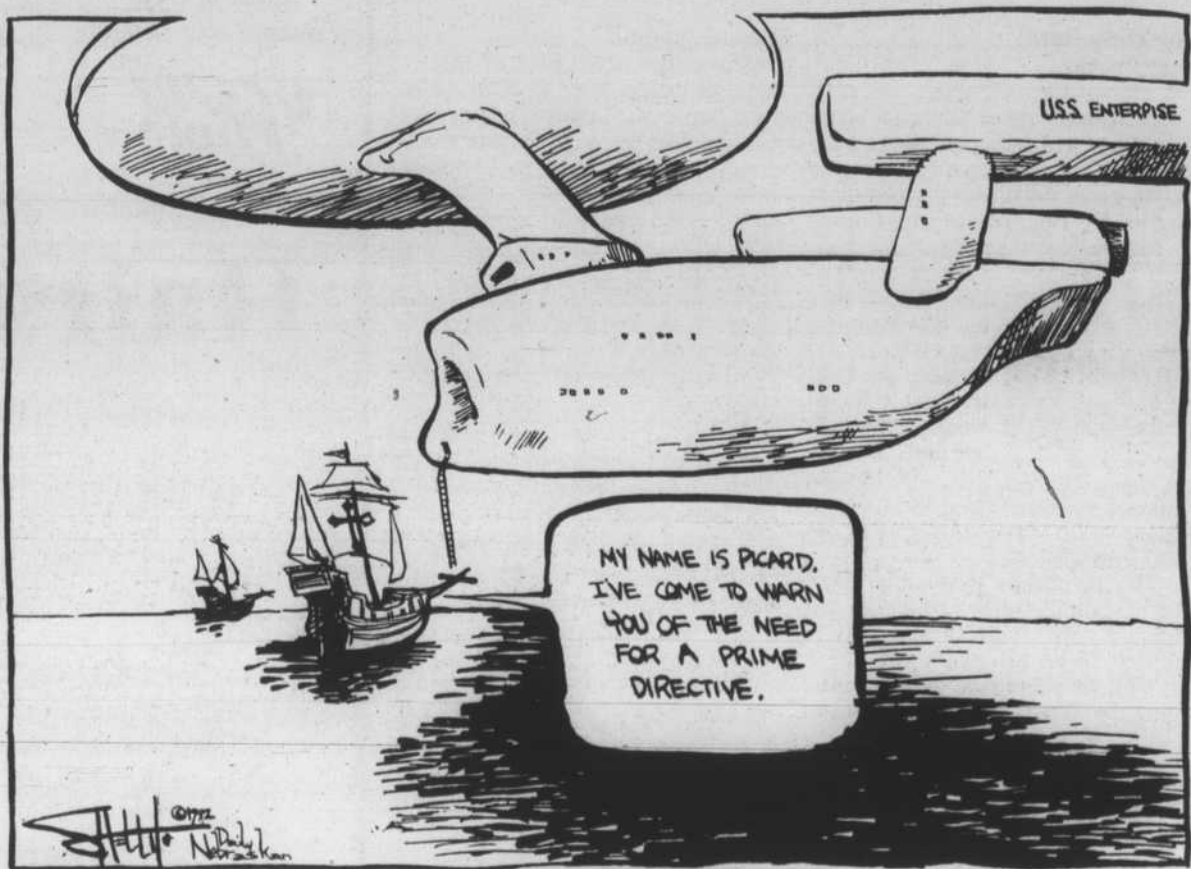
— Iowa State Daily

EDITORIAL POLICY

Staff editorials represent the official policy of the Fall 1992 Daily Nebraskan. Policy is set by the Daily Nebraskan Editorial Board. Editorials do not necessarily reflect the views of the university, its employees, the students or the NU Board of Regents. Editorial columns represent the opinion of the author. The regents publish the Daily Nebraskan. They establish 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 students.

LETTER POLICY

The Daily Nebraskan welcomes brief letters to the editor from all readers and interested others. Letters will be selected for publication on the basis of clarity, originality, timeliness and space available. The Daily Nebraskan retains the right to edit or reject all material submitted. Readers also are welcome to submit material as guest opinions. The editor decides whether material should run as a guest opinion. Letters and guest opinions sent to the newspaper become the property of the Daily Nebraskan and cannot be returned. Anonymous submissions will not be published. 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.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Racism

In regard to the Joyce Joyce issue, I totally agree with Leo Sartori ("Joyce guilty of violating rights," DN, Oct. 5).

Her class was the only class I purposely flunked besides a German class, which I flunked because of illness.

From the first day, I believe she had me pegged as a naive white person who needed to be reprimanded for racist activities of which she said I was guilty.

It didn't matter that I had been making a 20-year or so concerted effort to overcome subconscious racial attitudes within myself. If I had them. She told me I did, and that was what mattered. She stood within inches of me and in an extremely intimidating way, told me that I must really be racist because "if a black man were leaning over me like that," I "would be afraid that he would rape me." NOT TRUE!

For three days, I endured her taunts of me and my "racist" attitudes, and I did my best to show her that she was wrong in her assessment of me. Finally, on the fourth day of the three-week pre-session class, she attacked me full force.

I was taking notes on a poem we were discussing and must have written a statement of hers incorrectly and in order to understand it better, questioned her about the accuracy of what I had written.

She immediately lit into a tirade that I was stupid and incapable of understanding the black experience ... as are all white people.

She refused to clarify her statement even when I practically begged her because I really did want to understand, but I was aware that I needed to be taught and that was the purpose for my taking this Afro-American literature course. I was in the process of fulfilling credits for an Africa minor.

She said that if I didn't understand "by now" I would never understand because, after all, I was white. She hinted that the time would come when whites will be subjected by blacks and then it won't matter if we understand or not. I simply assumed at that time that she was a Black Supremacist.

I left the class trying to manage my uncontrollable tears at having been

accused of being stupid and incapable of learning. I did not go to the ombudsman because it would have done no good. Besides, it took me nearly three months and counseling at the health center to feel good about myself again and before I could stop weeping at the thought of failing so miserably in her class.

It was my psychological problem. I also understood that it would do no good to approach the ombudsman because Joyce is black and a woman who had the legal system by the horns. All she had to do was cry "racism" and if that didn't work, she could cry "sexism."

All I had to do was prove to myself that I wasn't stupid, but that is extremely difficult because even with an A overall average, I still feel tremendously stupid. If a professor senses I have brains and am intelligent, I am capable of working to achieve an A+, which I have done.

"I don't understand how you can judge a 16th-century man with 20th-century standards. I'm sure that Columbus was considered a man of his time."

But if a professor hints that they believe that I am stupid, I usually get B+'s or B's. My only C+ came from a woman who really thinks that I am stupid — because she told me that a woman with long hair cannot be a scholar. Well, that is beside the point.

I have discovered, however, that all the sympathy I did feel for her because in fact, she is a black and a woman who has had to fight her way up the white ladder. ... I no longer feel.

I have realized that her problems do not stem from racism, as she believes, but from the fact it appears she is a mean, narrow-souled, small-minded person who blames all her ills on racism.

We don't need people like that on this campus, and I, for one, am glad she is gone. Unfortunately, I really would like to take that class.

Constance M. Bachus-Yoder
music, anthropology and religion

Columbus Day

I hate to burst your bubble but what exactly did you think the Europeans were going to do? Advance into the 20th century, launch their first spacecraft and not notice the fact that we missed discovering two whole continents?

My biggest complaint about Columbus bashers isn't that they point out all the bad, nasty things that Columbus did. I have little doubt that Columbus enslaved the natives and helped plunder the New World.

I don't understand how you can judge a 16th-century man with 20th-century standards. I'm sure that Columbus was considered a man of his time. I'm also sure that if you asked average citizens of the 16th century, they would think that the conquest of the New World was totally logical.

Spain was at war when Columbus discovered America. For several hundred years around this time period clobbering their neighbors and stealing their stuff was the thing to do.

Remember also that the more advanced Native American tribes, particularly the Central and South American Indians, engaged in wars with each other for slaves and other purposes.

I suspect that given another couple hundred of years, the Aztecs would have branched out and controlled a considerably larger area than they did when they met the Spanish.

It seems to me there is a movement in this country to become overly sensitive. Anything that is found to be offensive is changed to the point of rewriting history.

I'm surprised with all the abundant kindness and understanding floating around, some of it wouldn't be directed at Columbus. Give Chris a break, he was raised in a dysfunctional era, it's not his fault. Does this sound familiar?

Don't kid yourself. Americans are one of the most progressive groups of people in this planet. If you don't believe me, watch some CNN. At least when we have a problem in the United States, we don't raid the National Guard armory and start passing out ammo.

Paul Gebhart
sophomore
general studies

P.S. Write back



The Daily Nebraskan wants to hear from you. If you want to voice your opinion about an article that appears in the newspaper, let us know. Just write a brief letter to the editor, sign it, (don't forget your student ID number) and mail it to the Daily Nebraskan, 34 Union, 1400 R St., Lincoln, Neb. 68588-0488. Or stop by the office in the basement of the Nebraska Union and visit with us. We're all ears.