

# Christian politicians right on

Chuck Sigerson isn't trying to brush his party's Christian conservatives under the Republican rug. To the contrary, he has brought out the red carpet.

Sigerson, chairman of the Nebraska GOP, says the Christian right has become a major political influence in the state and throughout the country. It's been a force Sigerson has seen explode in the last decade — and one which the party leader says must be recognized.

"This movement," Sigerson says, "comes with a heightened awareness of not only what is right with America, but also of what is wrong."

Indeed, on the national level, the religious right is now one of the most potent grassroots forces in American politics. Christian political powers, like Pat Robertson's Christian Coalition, count as major conservative forces in the Republican party.

According to Coalition reports, Christian conservatives currently have control or play a leading role in state GOP affairs in more than 30 states. And Robertson has said he wants even more state GOP organizations under Christian conservative leadership, suggesting "100 percent" as his goal.

It is a movement that has some out-of-touch party officials worried. Not Sigerson.

"This isn't an attitude of 'We have to take it over to get it right.' It is more 'How can we help to get it right?'" says Sigerson.

"These folks aren't trying to tell people how to live. They are saying, 'We believe Republicans can lead in the moral direction we think is best.'"

It's encouraging to see Sigerson and the state party not only listening to its moral majority, but welcoming them in as well. At a time of receding loyalty within both parties, more GOP officials need to see the Christian conservative movement for what it is: The party's most valuable asset.



**Jamie Karl**

*"These are the conservatives of the heart. These are the traditionalists who believe our problems stem not from a lack of goods, but a poverty of the soul."*

For too long, the Grand Old Party has been playing politics like a high school girl running for homecoming queen — trying to be something she is not. Pronouncing its "Big Tent" philosophy, the GOP of the late '80s and early '90s tried to make everyone feel comfortable and right at home in the party.

In this failed grab for universal popularity, Republican leadership discarded the party's traditional stances on social issues, such as abortion, gay rights, etc. They concurred these were "wedge issues" that divided the nation, and had no place in their plan of "cohesive politics."

Instead, the GOP focused on free trade and economics. But in running away from its moral matters, GOP leadership showed a lack of conviction and a lack of confidence in the party's message — and in the party's foundation.

Waffling on these issues of our time, wishing that they would go

away, the Republican hierarchy brought down their president in 1992, and almost killed the party for good.

If principles count for something, the GOP of late has stood for nothing.

There is still that old faction of the GOP that wants to be everybody's homecoming queen. The party is still home to the "economic conservative," who thinks social issues are only obstacles on the way to becoming elected.

But a new message is coming from the party, after some soul searching. As evidenced by Mr. Sigerson, things are starting to change in the Republican hierarchy.

The new Republicans, headed by the Christian right, sense the struggle is much broader, much deeper than economics alone.

They want the traditional beliefs, cultural norms and moral values they were raised on returned to the party and honored as they once were.

These are the conservatives of the heart. These are the traditionalists who believe our problems stem not from a lack of goods, but a poverty of the soul.

They are out there, in the tens of millions. And if the Republican Party fails to represent them, they will find another party that will.

More and more GOP leaders, like Chuck Sigerson, understand that if you stretch that Big Tent too far, the tent poles collapse.

And as Sigerson himself has said: "Until people start feeling comfortable again about where we are going as a state and as a nation, more and more religious conservatives are going to be wielding more influence and becoming even further involved with the country's politics ... We welcome them."

Amen, Mr. Sigerson. Amen.

Karl is a senior news-editorial major, and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

# Tale of the troubled 'Tuskers'

As a small child, I revered Christopher Columbus. I had a picture of him on my bedside table, looking like the smoldering volcano of virile manhood that he was.

Non-Columbus fans in my home state were viewed with suspicion. He was our hero. We loved the way he could pack the stadium at the University of Madrid when he and his crew, the "Tuskers," charged onto the field, as strong and powerful as the wild Spanish pigs they were named after.

Fashion was important. Fans carried the ceremonial pigskin and dressed in scarlet and cream, the colors of the University of Madrid — where Chris got his Ph.D. in psychology.

We felt we owed him that much. After all, he and his crew opened up a whole new world to us — not just in America, but every other Saturday afternoon at the stadium, where they re-enacted their conquest of opposing teams, like the Arawak Arrowheads or the Indian Islanders.

Crew members came from all over the country to sail with Columbus and the "Tuskers." Red was in at Madrid. "Go Big Red," fans screamed, watching the "Tuskers" charge. Queen Isabella and King Ferdinand cried, "Go Big Red," whenever Columbus and his crew came onto the field, or sailed off for an away game.

And wherever they went, they brought home the gold for Spain and the University of Madrid.

But now all of that has changed. Once lauded as a strong, rugged conquistador, Columbus has now become vilified by the press as nothing more than the leader of a pack of thugs.

I'll never forget the day Chris told me that he had banned the "Daily Madridian" from "Tusker" practice sessions, after they started running uncomplimentary stories about crew members Juarez and Fellini, accused of assault, and crew member Diaz, on trial for attempted



**Debra Cumberland**

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murder. "Maybe things have gotten out of control. I don't know. You tell me," said Columbus, in a statement to the press.

"People say that we're another Florence, or a Barcelona," added the famous conquistador. "Well, maybe we are. But I don't think we're that bad. I think we have a pretty good character level."

None of the fans knew to what to think. Columbus decided to suspend crew member Fellini, charged with assaulting his former girlfriend. Diaz and Juarez were still on the team.

"Ships Illustrated" came and did a feature on Columbus. The conquistador issued a press release, saying that he refused to read the article.

Isabella, Ferdinand and the University of Madrid's Board of Regents fielded calls all day, begging Columbus to put Fellini back on the team.

Callers also defended Diaz, whose presence on the crew had

stirred a few protests. "It wasn't as if he killed anybody," said one caller. "After all, he fired a warning shot."

"Crew members are under a lot of pressure," noted an Eminent Psychologist, when I interviewed him for the "Daily Madridian."

"On board a ship all day, in the hot sun, denied fresh fruit and vegetables and female companionship, there's no telling what could happen when they actually land," he explained.

"Some people say that Columbus committed genocide against the Indian Islanders and the Arawak Arrowheads," the psychologist continued. "People who take this stance feel that crew members are just naturally violent, and that they need to be violent to get the job done. I think that's a little too strong. People don't understand that these guys are under terrible pressure. Columbus opponents ought to try and see it from their point of view."

Columbus agreed, noting that before he and his crew discovered the New World, they created a Wellness Program to help ship members deal with aggression. He talked with his assistant conquistador about developing a program to help the "Tuskers" turn off the aggression needed on board when they went ashore.

In the 13 months before Columbus and his crew discovered the New World, the "Tuskers" attended three workshops on authority and anger control.

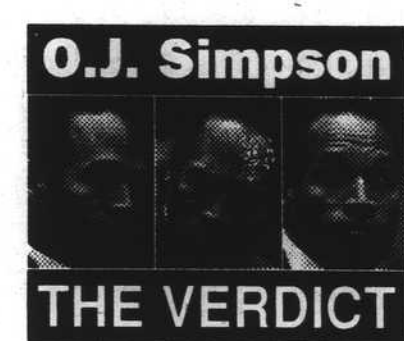
"Tusker" opponents claim that the workshops were not helpful.

When asked, the mighty conquistador just heaves a big sigh and hangs his head.

"I don't know," he said, thinking about his past history of pillaging and plundering. "Sometimes, this all weighs so heavily on me."

Cumberland is a graduate student of English and a Daily Nebraskan columnist.

# From the INTERNET



## O.J. can't escape internet jokers

"Did you hear that F. Lee Bailey was mad at Shapiro? He even told one reporter, 'I'm going to sue that SOB for everything O.J. has!'"

**The last year will be remembered for a lot of things: marathon trial coverage, Mark Fuhrman's weaselly ways and white Broncos. But jokes, like delicate flowers, bloom only once, and are gone.**

**Let's take a moment to smell those flowers (even though some of them are pretty stinky) just once more before the season fades.**

**For more last whiffs, contact the same page where we found these: <<http://www.infi.net/~cashman/humor/canonical/OJ.html>>**

There's good news and bad news today: The bad news is that the jury has acquitted O.J.

The good news is that Susan Smith drove him home.

More evidence that O.J. didn't kill his ex-wife: Any man who can sit beside Howard Cosell on Monday Night Football without killing him would never kill anyone.

Police are now saying that O.J. is no longer a suspect because they found a Super Bowl ring at the murder scene.

When Marcia Clark asked Kato Kaelin where he had been between 9 and 11, Kato replied, "Third grade."

At O.J. Simpson's arraignment, the prosecutor said "...and we will prove beyond a reasonable doubt that Mr. Simpson committed this crime with malice and forethought." At which point a confused O.J. blurted out, "That's not true! I did it alone!"

O.J. ran for more yards in one evening than in 8 years with Buffalo. His final run, although spectacular, epitomized his career. Just think what he could have done if he had just had some really good blocking.

The play by play: "Well, there's not much time left, they have to make a big play soon..." "Movement in the backfield, it's O.J.! What a move! He

breaks away from a pack of defenders, he's going 10, 5. He just might make it."

"He cuts to the 91...now streaks down the 405. They can't catch him!"

"Looks like he's going to make it, and...ooohh...They bring him down in the driveway, just short."

"What a play...One we'll all remember...One for the record books, O.J.'s longest run from skirmish."

Heard on one of the New York City radio stations: "I tried to watch the Knicks game last night, but all I kept seeing were those Ford Bronco commercials."

Q: What's OJ's favorite baseball team (besides the Dodgers)?

A: The Red Sox!

Q: Did you hear about Hertz's new billboard?

A: It's a picture of O.J. Simpson with a caption, "Hertz: For Great Getaways!"

They are going to remake the movie "The Longest Yard," starring O.J. Simpson as himself.

Q: Why did O.J. flee?

A: He was mad about not being Grand Marshall in the Rose Parade.

Q: Do you know why O.J. drove around as long as he did?

A: He was waiting for a call from Dr. Kevorkian!

Q: Why did O.J. sit in the Bronco for so long?

A: Because Rodney King called him and told him not to get out of the car.

Q: What do O.J. Simpson and Michael Jackson have in common?

A: They are both missing a glove.

Q: What is the difference between O.J. and David Letterman?

A: There is absolutely nothing funny about David Letterman.

Q: What is the difference between Tang and O.J.?

A: Tang won't kill you!

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