

# OPINION PACKETS

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*Our*  
**VIEW**

## Judgment day

*Impeachment trial motives questioned*

Our representatives said they would finish the matter by Christmas.

The analysts said censure was all the House could support.

But our senators are now conducting the impeachment trial of William Jefferson Clinton — a trial called the most important in American history.

Those senators soon must decide whether to call witnesses and pore over sordid details or to streamline the trial for speedy closure.

Though it has one drawback, streamlining the trial seems best for the United States' government and its people, and right now, senators seem to support leaving key players, including Monica Lewinsky, off the witness stand and the airwaves.

First, streamlining would expose the trial for what it now is — not a test of the presidency or the Constitution, but a personal attack against a man many feel is no longer good for the country.

Legislators know the public approves of the president as an officeholder but disapproves of him on a more personal level. No one likes a liar, and the same Americans who approve of the president's job performance resoundingly agree that their figurehead lied.

Certainly many Republican legislators realize this trial could be the only way to get rid of a notably immoral man who has been subject to a multitude of accusations and investigations, yet has rebounded each time.

In the last election, all the accusations leveled against him didn't hurt the Democratic Party. It's almost bewildering, and it must anger many of his opponents.

Because this trial is an expression of personal dislike for many officeholders, it should be resolved as quickly as possible in order for our elected representatives to move on to government — not personal — business.

Next, half of Democratic senators would have to vote to remove the president from office in order to get the two-thirds majority needed to oust him. Analysts say that two-thirds won't materialize, so a trial is merely a formality needed to arrive at closure.

The analysts' prediction seems premature, but dumping costly time into a formality is the type of bureaucratic waste politicians lament and taxpayers abhor.

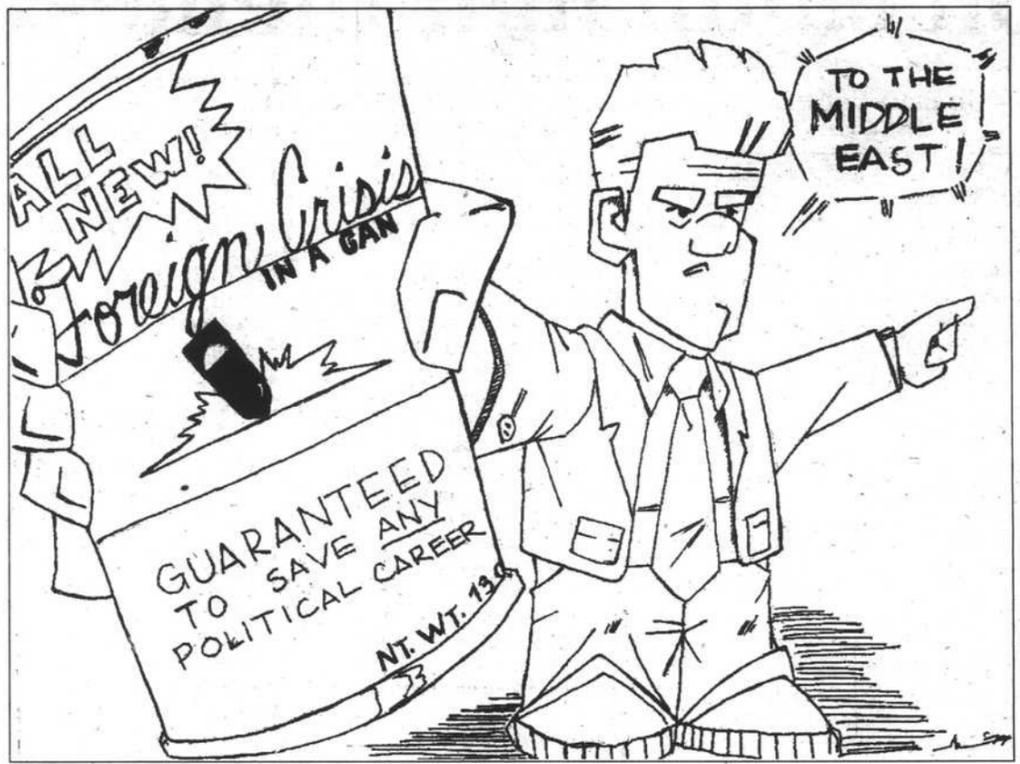
Thus, a lengthy and detailed trial, filled with the explicit details of an affair, would be outrageous at best if Clinton was acquitted, and acquittal seems certain at this time.

So it appears that the most important trial in U.S. history could be compacted by our legislators in order to progress to more important government business.

In that irony lies the drawback. If the office of the presidency has lost its importance, a streamlined trial could enforce that sentiment.

Or perhaps the only importance lessened would be that of one man named Clinton.

*Lupo's*  
**VIEW**



## Mail call

*New year brings challenge for more feedback*



**CLIFF HICKS is a senior news-editorial and English major and the Daily Nebraskan opinion editor.**

New semester, new year, new world.

As the last spring semester opinion editor of the 1990s, I have got to start getting this section ready for the coming shift, when the world hits the rollover point and the first number we write in the year is a two.

What does that mean?

Whatever you think it means.

See, the opinion pages are back and the kid gloves are off. No more pulled punches, no more taking it easy on politicians, laws, the university or anyone else who's doing something we disagree with.

The pages are more split now than they have been in a while. We went out of our way to try to find strong voices from every walk of life and every school of thought. But you know we can never get them all.

We're not here to make you feel better. We're here to get your ire up enough to discuss.

Discussion is the watchword for the semester.

Don't just sit there like Pavlovian dogs and nod your heads every time we say something. We're itching for you to fight us on this one, or any other one. And when you agree, don't think that means you don't have to say anything either.

This is about "us" as a community.

The opinion pages are just that — an open forum for students and faculty, administrators and local residents, anyone and everyone who has an opinion. Gov. Johanns doesn't pull any more clout on our pages than Newblood Freshman A. Everyone's an opinion.

Including you.

There's going to be someone on these pages who will offend you this semester, be it because of their political point of view or their irreverent attitude towards something you cherish. And that's what I want.

See, I want to see something on these pages that gets under *my* skin.

I have to hear the nutcases on CNN all the time, telling me how I need to return to family values because otherwise I'm corrupting the people around me. And that's good.

If an opinion section goes a whole semester without going against every individual at some point or another, they're being too limited — too liberal or too conservative, too religious or too atheistic, too tame or too radical, too much of one and not enough of the other.

That shouldn't be a problem this semester.

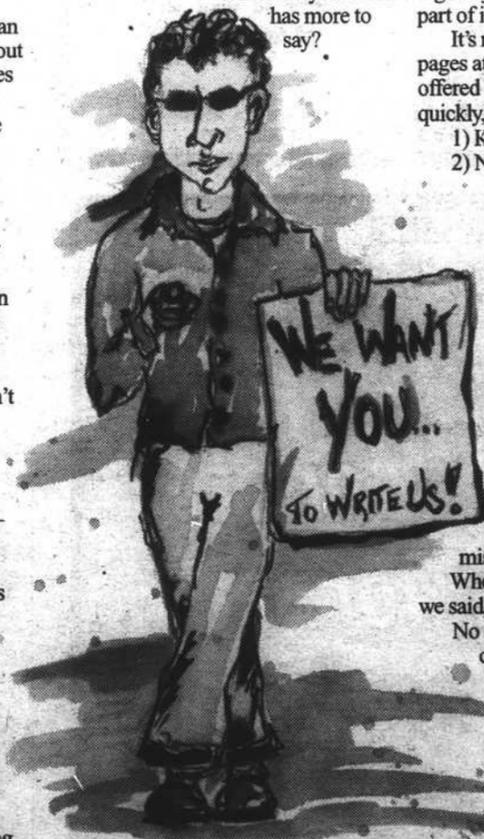
It's time to start the arguments, to set things afoot, to make people think and discuss.

Don't think the opinion pages are lightweight either, because we've buckled down and refocused. We're cleaning house and making sure that we tackle hard issues just as much as we make you laugh.

But we can't do it alone.

Between myself, the columnists and our cartoonist, we're only 15. • You're 15,000.

Which do you think has more to say?



DEB LEE/DN

This isn't to say we're aren't going to say a lot this semester — we just know that you should be a part of this, too.

When a letter doesn't see print, it doesn't mean that we didn't read it. It might be similar to another letter we got recently. It might be too long, or too short. It might attack someone personally, instead of attacking his or her opinions.

But we read it, trust me.

Not only do I read it, but whoever it was written to reads it. And they probably thought about it for a minute. They may or may not have agreed with it, but we are listening.

But you can't be quiet.

We're here to engage you in a conversation. This is a dialogue among people.

And don't think I haven't overheard you between classes. I've listened as students complain about this column or that column, heard them argue with something that was printed or wasn't printed, heard them actually discuss what they read.

I'm not asking you to stop doing that. Far from it. I'm actually encouraging it. I just want more people to be a part of it.

It's my goal to have letters on these pages at least half of a week. But like I offered last semester, I'll recap them quickly, just in case you've forgotten:

- 1) Keep it short — 100-300 words.
- 2) No personal attacks or profanity.
- 3) Give your own opinions as much as you debate your opponents.
- 4) Don't get discouraged if you don't get published.
- 5) Be sure to sign your letters.
- 6) Don't write about something you read two or three weeks ago. Write today about today.

We want to hear from you.

When you agree with us, we want letters. When you disagree with us, we want letters. When you think we missed something, we want letters. When you're proud of something we said, we want letters.

No one lives in a vacuum, but we can't know everything about everyone unless you tell us.

So here's the gauntlet thrown, the line drawn in the sand, the official challenge issued.

We're going to come out swinging. How about you?

**Editorial Policy**

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**Letter Policy**

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