

# ENTERTAINMENT

## Propaganda topic of lecture

by mary whalen

staff writer

Propaganda Techniques in Documentary Television was the focus of a public lecture delivered at UNLV Wednesday, by Dr. Marvin Medhurst, Associate Professor of Rhetoric at the University of California, Davis.

The lecture, entitled "Persuasion, Propaganda and Television," analyzed two television documentaries about Vietnam. The program was sponsored by the Department of Communication Studies and the Nevada Humanities Committee.

A respected rhetorician and author, Medhurst has written and spoken widely about the relationship of media and culture and is co-editor of *Rhetorical Dimensions in Media: A Critical Casebook*.

Medhurst explained how techniques of persuasion, narrative and logic, come together in documentaries to effect the particular message being conveyed to a particular audience at a particular time.

"I choose to talk about the documentary because of all the possible genres, the documentary is clear-

ly the most susceptible to rhetorical analysis," said Medhurst. "It is the most explicitly rhetorical genre. Documentaries purport to inform, educate, allude, advocate and some of them, explicitly to persuade. All documentaries, by definition, are rhetorical.

"Although the public often perceives the documentary as being qualitatively different from other television genres, and associated with news, public affairs or cultural analysis, a professional propagandist may be especially interested in it because it gives generous access to the public and may be easily persuasive. It is perceived to be part of reality," he said.

Medhurst argued that documentaries are distinguished by the repeated use of nine dominant techniques of cinematic and television persuasion. These included "decontextualization" — the process of taking images from one time and place and applying them to another, and "recontextualization" in which the viewer is led to another interpretation of a misplaced image through the narrative reconstruction of its meaning.

A third technique is the attempt to appear objective, credible and fair when in fact, most documentary films are not.

According to Medhurst, the dramatic use of pathos in documentaries is a technique which strikes a responsive chord in the audience and is therefore an effective mode of persuasion. This is similar to "The Voice of God," technique in which the interpretation is seemingly unnecessary and the facts speak for themselves. The "material alteration of sequences" is a technique in which sequences are cut and spliced in the editing room to provide alternative answers to different questions posed by the off-camera narrator.

The "pursuit of the journalistic line" is a technique concerned with the reordering of sound and image which eventually reveals a clear conclusion which has been present all along. In the "asynchronous course of logic" technique, sound and image relate to each other but not simultaneously; image follows sound or sound follows image. This suggests different meanings between different elements.

## \$5,000 raised by Derby Days

by cathy giff

CSUN senator

Derby Days is an annual event held by Sigma Chi to raise money, both for the Wallace Village for Children and Opportunity Village.

Seven Sororities and little sister groups — Delta Delta, Alpha Delta Pi, Delta Zeta, Sigma Chi Little Sisters, Zeta Tau Alpha, Sigma Kappa, and TKE Little Sisters competed amongst themselves in such events as: The Corner Raise,

Casino Royale Night, Paint-a-Sig, Sunday-Sig, and Mike Mixer's Talent Showcase.

At the close of the activities on Sunday, results were as follows: Delta Zeta placing first, the Sigma Chi Little Sisters coming in second, and Zeta Tau Alpha, third.

Crowned as Derby Darling was Sigma Kappa's Rosemary May.

Derby Days began in 1916 during World War I at the University of California.

Since that turbulent time, through the roaring twenties and into the present at UNLV, it has become the largest social event in the Greek system, and is becoming larger and more successful each year.

At this time, the donations for the two charities exceed \$5,000 with more coming in each day.

*Editor's note: Senator Giff came up to help us out with this issue. Her aid was much appreciated.*

## Marquee

by jaq greenspon

staff writer

Cannes, France, has one. New York, New York, has one.

Even Park City, Utah, has one.

So why can't you have one?

You can!

I'm talking about a Film Festival and the perfect alternative to an expensive Saturday night out. It's real easy and a lot of fun.

When I did it this past weekend, I thought, "Who's my favorite actor?" (This time it was actor, it could just as easily be director or screenwriter or genre or even gaffer, if that's your inclination).

Once I had answered myself (my choice was Peter O'Toole), I went to a local video store and rented three of O'Toole's films. (Again, my choices

were *The Stuntman*, *My Favorite Year*, and *The Ruling Class*).

My choices were made to give a variety of viewing. *The Stuntman*, directed by Richard Rush, has O'Toole playing an insane film director who must convince his stuntman, Steve Railsback, that not everybody is out to get him.

In *My Favorite Year*, O'Toole is pitted against Mark Linn-Baker (of TV's *Perfect Strangers*) as a '50s matinee idol who must make a television appearance to pay back taxes. And finally there is Peter Medak's *The Ruling Class*, a biting black comedy about British aristocracy that has O'Toole playing Jack, the 14th Earl of Gurney, who happens to think he's Jesus Christ.

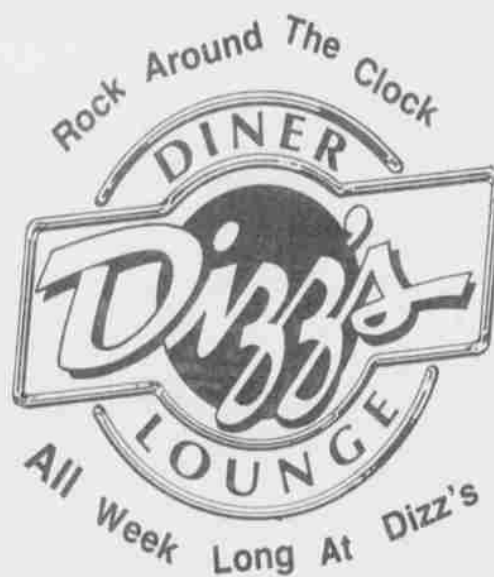
With these under arm, I was ready.

Plan the rest of my evening. I called my girlfriend to make sure she was going to be there at 7:00 and went out to get more supplies. (A girlfriend/boyfriend is not necessary. Festivals can happen alone or with as large a group as you want.)

The rest of the supplies included a few six-packs, (supply your own beverage: we had Dr. Pepper) a bag of chips and popcorn. (Popcorn just gives the feeling of a theatre; you can exchange this for licorice or whatever theatre candy makes you happy.) I was set.

In case you're wondering, the entire evening cost less than \$15 for everything (that beats the close to \$50 last week for dinner and a movie out) and was a total success.

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Dancing and Billiards



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Wednesday — Dangerous Delirium (Comedy Night)

Thursday — Face First

Everyday all drinks ½ price until 9pm  
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