

## HARVARD: How often can you grill a communist dictator?

Richard Gephardt came to speak about education. I don't know who picked the panel, but the students, teachers, and local parents on it all agreed unanimously with Congressman Gephardt and applauded his concern for children's education and for helping families (that is about as detailed as he got; after all, he may be running for president). No one on the panel asked him any tough questions such as what he would do to help families and education. No one asked what programs would he implement, how they would work, and or who would pay for them. No one disagreed with him. There was no one there from the other side of the political fence. No home teaching or school voucher advocates. The sound of ass kissing in that room was so loud I could hardly hear myself think. After this love-fest was over, Gephardt was whisked away without the promised audience question and answer period. Sorry, no time for that.

It seems that stifling open debate and the marketplace of ideas for political reasons is a common practice among many faculty and students on our university campuses, UNLV and Harvard among them. This must be the reason for Harvard being so nice to the president of a country that violates the human rights of millions of people on a regular basis. I can understand the US government's desire to be diplomatic and to consider our national interests first above human rights issues regarding China. I don't agree with it, but it is understandable.

But our universities should hold to a higher standard. They should not be so worried about diplomacy that they stifle debate, inquiry and exposition of the rationale of oppressive

regimes. How often does an audience get to question the leader of a totalitarian state such as China? A university should be most concerned with the education and improvement of its students. How is that served by censoring them? It is ironic that one of the most prestigious institutions of higher learning in a supposedly free country greeted a bloody dictator with a fixed photo op. A rare opportunity to put the leader of a repressive regime in the hot seat and show him what democracy is all about was lost.

Or is it that he *did* get to see what democracy is all about? Is it that we have free speech as long as we agree with the prevailing view? Are our ideals about open discourse just empty rhetoric? Have we fallen prey to democratic despotism and the tyranny of the majority?

Students should expect more from their university and themselves. It might be that the faculty and administration do not care what the students think if they disagree with the status quo or if they are going to cause some guest to be uncomfortable. Are they more concerned with the fragile sensibilities of a communist dictator than the free speech of their students? Maybe it was *who* the speaker was more than a general concern for foreign relations that brought out their maternal and protective instincts. Possibly they still cannot bring themselves to admit that Marxist theory leads to such monstrous conclusions whenever it is tried. Many on the academic left still have on rose colored glasses when it comes to dreams of a communist utopia and overlook the atrocities of Marxist regimes, China being the chief butcher among them. That is a topic for another time.

By Darryl Richardson  
Editor-In-Chief

*"Sport is one area where no participant is worried about another's race, religion or wealth: and where the only concern is 'Have you come to play?'"* — Henry Roxborough.

Well, they certainly came to play.

I'm not, of course, talking about our beloved Rebel football team, which, from all accounts, rolled over in the second half of last Saturday's game against Colorado State. No, I'm talking about a UNLV squad that took on a much higher ranked foe and showed what true heart and determination is all about: the UNLV volleyball team.

The Rebels faced the 14th-ranked Hawai'i Rainbow Wahine on Sunday afternoon before a packed house at the Lied Gymnasium. It's just too bad that the crowd was mostly rooting for the opponent. More on that later.

I went to the game, my second of the year, to work on a story for a television production class. Since he was done with the work on his section, Opinion Editor Jeff Hoskin went along with me. Boy, did we have a good time.

First, we made the decision to sit right at courtside, about five feet back, in fact. While this was a great spot for checking out the action, it also put us in the line of fire. But then we noticed something. The team on our side

of the court won each of the first three games. This got Jeff and I thinking that maybe we were responsible for this anomaly. Maybe the team hitting towards us was dazzled by our manly charms. However, if you've ever seen Jeff and I, you would know that it had to be something else. Two old (27 and 28), balding (him more than me)[Hey!-ed] guys aren't exactly the cream of the UNLV male crop.

Then something came along that made us think of another reason why the team on the other side of the net kept losing. It was a volleyball coming at about a million miles per hour off the spike by UNLV's Staci Smith. The ball nearly took both of us out on its way into the bleachers.

This got Jeff to thinking about what he's written that would have offended any of the players (since I know that it couldn't have been anything that I wrote). But, we couldn't think of anything, so we just chalked it up to the dangers of sitting so close.

Of course, if we'd been paying closer attention, we might not have gotten into this situation. But we were distracted by the sight of attractive women just a few feet away (yes, Jeff and I are both single). The flying ball brought us back to reality though. These women are not only attractive, but they could probably kick our asses as well (even though Jeff wanted to take them on in Oozeball).

Yes, our women's volleyball team seems to be on the right

track. They got off to a great start, but then the injuries kicked in. The loss of several top players led to a long losing streak which was broken last Thursday against Air Force. Then, the Rebels put on one of their best performances of the year in the Hawai'i game. Even though they lost in four sets, they made the more-experienced Wahine squad work for every point and the victory.

It's just too bad that more UNLV fans didn't show up at the game. The bleachers were full of people wearing the green and red of Hawai'i, but not enough were wearing the Rebel colors. What is causing this?

Is it because it's too far to go to see the game? No, they are held right here on campus.

Is it because the games are too expensive? No, it's free for students.

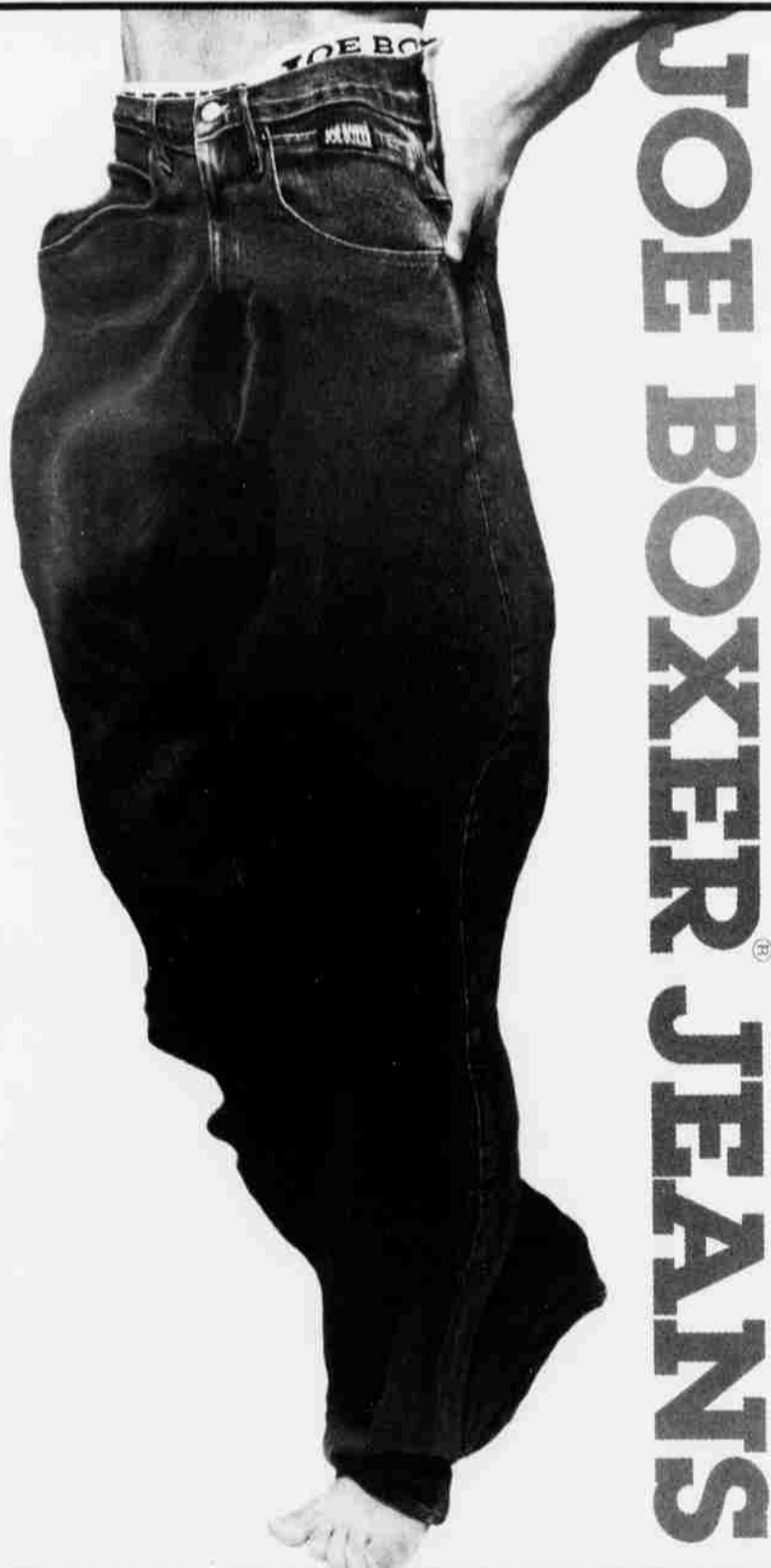
Is it because the team isn't winning? Maybe. However, people will still go see the football team, even if they are having a bad season.

Is it because volleyball is not a "major" sport? Probably. Hopefully though, this year's team will spark interest in the sport and the crowds will pick up.

So here's a tip for something to do on either November 13 or 15. Go see the last two home games of the year. I think you'll be impressed.

And if you see two old, balding guys sitting in the front row, stop by and say hello. I'm sure we'll be there.

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