

ANALYSIS OF THE DAILY O'COLLEGIAN
COVERAGE OF CAMPUS CONTROVERSIES,
1989-90

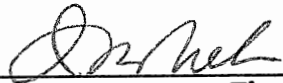
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Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
MASTER OF SCIENCE
July, 1991

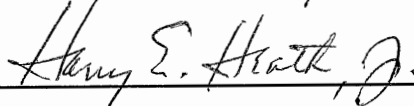
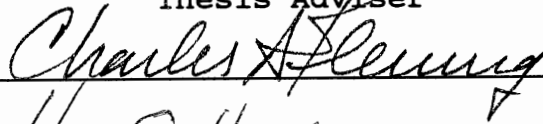
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Thesis Approved:



Thesis Adviser



Dean of the Graduate College

PREFACE

Because the author also serves as the editorial adviser for The Daily O'Collegian, precautions were taken to avoid a conflict of interest and ensure the accuracy of this endeavor to analyze coverage of campus issues in academic year 1989-90.

First, the study omits the adviser's role in the coverage so that observations would not be misconstrued as the author's opinions or inferences. Information in the thesis is based on published reports and personal interviews except for that under discussion headings. For the record, however, the adviser's role in the coverage was merely in an advisory capacity to encourage aggressive but responsible and ethical coverage of the issues.

To ensure accuracy in the study, the author used the advice and consultation of journalism faculty and other respected journalists in coding information and analyzing stories.

As a result, I am confident the effort provides as accurate assessment of coverage as possible. Accuracy was of utmost importance because a major purpose of this study is to use its results in evaluating the O'Collegian staff's performance and in educating future staffs.

In completing the project, I wish to express my sincere gratitude to my thesis adviser, Dr. Marlan Nelson, for his guidance and to Dr. Charles Fleming for his scholarly advice. I also am grateful to Dr. Harry Heath for his interest in this project and for serving on my thesis committee.

Additional appreciation goes to Andy Richardson, Doug Drummond and Gary Ziehe for their contributions to the project and to Kurt Gwartney and Kent Lauer for their input.

I also wish to thank the following faculty for their professional influence in my work and studies at Oklahoma State University: William Steng, the late Walter Ward and Don Reed.

Special acknowledgment goes to my parents, Goldie Lancaster and the late Chet Lancaster, for instilling their values and for their support and confidence through the years. Thanks also go to Shirley and Sharon for the exemplary roles they established for their baby brother.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The pages of The Daily O'Collegian, the student newspaper at Oklahoma State University, were dominated in academic year 1989-90 with coverage of two controversial events.

The first issue to make headlines occurred when OSU's governing body, the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges, voted unanimously on a motion that would cause the movie, "The Last Temptation of Christ," "to not be shown on the OSU campus" while the Board deliberated on various issues.¹

The second event surfaced when the O'Collegian reported that the university president reinstated seven athletes who were academically ineligible to stay in school.

The O'Collegian's extensive coverage of both events won national and regional awards for journalism excellence. However, some critics said the coverage projected too much negative news about the university and was unfair to university administrators and regents.

The purpose of this research is to determine by content analysis if stories about the topics were slanted or

contained bias concerning university officials, administrators and regents.

Background

Oklahoma State University reached a milestone in 1990. The university observed its 100th birthday and celebrated the 1989-90 centennial year with a myriad of activities that included visits by President George Bush and former Presidents Gerald Ford and Jimmy Carter.

But major headlines told of controversy and conflict when two unrelated events unfolded in the fall 1989 and spring 1990 semesters. Both made major impacts on campus, the state Capitol, the governor's office and Oklahomans in general.

The first occurred in fall 1989 when university regents attempted to block the campus showing of the movie, "The Last Temptation of Christ." Campus turmoil caused by the controversy included faculty and student protests, intervention by state-government officials and the American Civil Liberties Union, a lawsuit filed against the university and its regents for prior restraint of First Amendment rights, and an injunction hearing in federal court. After the regents later decided in a split vote to allow the movie to be shown, the chief executive officer resigned at the end of an emotion-filled meeting.

Needless to say, coverage of the events filled the pages of The Daily O'Collegian.

The O'Collegian published 41 front-page news stories in the six weeks of controversy, devoted most of its editorial pages to the issue and printed a special edition the Saturday morning of homecoming when the regents decided the previous night to allow the film to be shown.

Follow-up coverage continued periodically through the following months and again regularly when some administrators and faculty proposed a freedom of expression policy in fall 1990 to establish procedures that would prevent a recurrence of the movie controversy. It was adopted in January 1991.

In a campus lecture six months after the "Last Temptation" was shown, Jean Otto, past national president of the Society of Professional Journalists and a founder of the First Amendment Congress, said she "read every word" of the movie's coverage in the O'Collegian.² She called it a "compelling story, from the first report that the movie might not be shown on campus to the dismissal of the suit because the university agreed to the showing and the resignation of the regents' chief executive officer."³

The second major story occurred in spring 1990 when the O'Collegian broke a story that the university president had reinstated seven athletes who were academically ineligible to remain in school. The O'Collegian scooped local and state professional media on the story and continued to break stories with 23 articles of running coverage.

After the O'Collegian printed the first accounts of what had transpired, the governor called for an investigation of the president's actions, and the general faculty and Student Government Association called for the president's resignation. Six weeks later, the investigation ended with the regents reprimanding but retaining the president. However, the issue provoked new policies and procedures to prevent a recurrence.

Also in the aftermath, the State Regents for Higher Education proposed a "no pass, no play" rule for all college students involved in extracurricular activities and conducted hearings statewide the next several months.

The regents eventually adopted a measure 11 months later that will require all Oklahoma college students to maintain a 2.0 grade point average to be in good academic standing. More than 160,000 students at Oklahoma's colleges and universities will be affected by the toughened retention standards.⁴

The O'Collegian used its stories about the two controversies as a basis to gather 10 national awards for journalism excellence and 28 regional awards from the Society of Professional Journalists and Southwestern Journalism Congress.

Among the O'Collegian's national honors were a regional Pacemaker Award, considered the Pulitzer Prize for college journalism, and an All-American rating from the Associated College Press. The newspaper's performances in

monthly competitions in the 31st annual William Randolph Hearst Foundation's Journalism Awards Program earned the OSU School of Journalism and Broadcasting in 1989-90 an eighth-place ranking nationally out of 89 accredited journalism schools.

Also, Robert Ridenour, a May 1990 graduate who authored the stories about the reinstatement of the failing athletes, was named first runner-up for U. Foundation's College Journalist of the Year. He received the award in Washington, D.C., at the national convention of the Associated Collegiate Press and College Media Advisers.

Judge Tom Rolnicki, executive director of Associated College Press, said: "Ridenour's tenacious reporting, clear writing and careful editing paid off in this story about the abuse of power. He got his story in the best tradition of newspaper 'watchdog' journalism and alerted his readers to an important situation at his university."⁵

Ridenour's stories also earned regional awards from the Society of Professional Journalists and Southwestern Journalism Congress, and he was the recipient of the E.K. Gaylord Award given annually by the Oklahoma City Gridiron Foundation for investigative reporting.

Also, staff writer Matt Maile's coverage of a regents meeting about the reinstatements earned a 13th-place award in the Hearst contest for news writing.

And the O'Collegian's total coverage of the reinstatements won the annual Public Service Contest sponsored by the Southwestern Journalism Congress.

In "The Last Temptation" coverage, staff writer Todd Knott won seventh in Hearst and firsts in SPJ and SWJC for news writing.

Editorial writing on the subject earned Kelly Kurt a ninth in Hearst, Ridenour a first in SPJ and second in SWJC, and Andy Richardson a third in SPJ.

The news staff received a third in in-depth coverage from SWJC.

In her lecture on campus, First Amendment rights advocate Otto said: "The O'Collegian is to be commended. It aired the issue fully and fairly. It showed maturity and judgment. And courage."⁶

The O'Collegian also won second in sweepstakes honors at the SWJC in 1989 and third in 1990. It was named the third best newspaper regionally by SPJ in 1989 and third best by SWJC in 1990.

In receiving the All-American award from the Associated Collegiate Press, the O'Collegian received marks of distinction in all five categories: coverage and content, writing and editing, design, opinion content, and photography, art and graphics.

"Publication is very well-done," judge John Kolb wrote in his critique. "Overall, publication is first-class."⁷

The Problem

Critics said the O'Collegian published too much negative news about the university in the 1989-90 academic year and coverage was unfair about "The Last Temptation" and reinstatement of athletes issues.

Tim Barker, editor-in-chief in 1989-90, said he fielded at least a complaint a day during almost two months of "Last Temptation" coverage. He said some complained that there was too much coverage but most complaints were religion-oriented. "Callers complained about the film because they thought it was blasphemous and shouldn't be shown," he said. "That missed the point. The question was one of free expression."⁸

At a campus protest Feb. 2, 1990, on the Edmon Low Library lawn, more than 100 Students for Academic Equality called for President John Campbell's resignation, but other students attended later, carrying signs in support of Campbell and blaming the O'Collegian for unfair coverage.⁹

In its Feb. 5 issue, the O'Collegian ran a page-one story about the protest. The story said students voiced different opinions about Campbell and the paper ran two accompanying photos, one with a sign reading, "We Love (Heart) Campbell."

On the opinion page in the same issue, a letter to the editor supported Campbell and a columnist wrote that protests and negative publicity from the "Last Temptation" and reinstatement issues had grown into more than state

news. "It appears that people all over the country are looking at OSU as one big problem," the columnist wrote.¹⁰ He also wrote that the O'Collegian had written "more 'Last Temptation' articles than your dog could excrete waste on" and "who wants to read Campbell articles in the O'Collegian for the rest of the semester?"¹¹

Also, H. Jerrell Chesney, chief executive officer who resigned when the regents voted to allow the movie to be shown, wrote in response to a critical opinion column that he did not recall "expressing dissatisfaction with the accuracy and fairness given to an issue previous to the arising of this most recent one involving a certain movie." ... "You have foisted personal harm upon me which, I think, is irreparable. A news reporter may write with zeal, but he at least ought to deal with facts and be committed to truth. Moreover, your article is obviously written with extreme malice."¹²

Chesney made the remarks in a five-page letter that appeared on the opinion page in response to Managing Editor Robert Ridenour's column that blamed Chesney for the regents' stance on the movie and applauded his resignation. Ridenour wrote that Chesney, by letting his personal moral beliefs color his decisions, very nearly violated the First Amendment rights of the entire university and that because of his resignation, "I won't have to worry about his bad judgment rearing its head again."¹³

In his letter, Chesney said: "You have stated the actions of the Board damaged OSU's credibility. The inaccurate representation (not by The O'Colly, alone) of the Board's intentions and its actions are responsible for any such damage."¹⁴

Chesney requested "a complete retraction and public apology" for Ridenour's remarks in the column and sent copies of the letter to more than 30 people "connected to and responsible for the publishment" of the O'Collegian. He also wrote: "Perhaps it takes courage for a reporter with The Daily O'Collegian to give fair treatment to the Board of Regents. Be that as it may, the facts remain the same and all the slanted reporting in the world will not change those facts."¹⁵

Rumors circulated that administrators, upset with the O'Collegian's coverage, discussed the possibility of an alternative newspaper on campus so they could exercise control of its content.

Columnist Kelly Kurt, 1990-91 president of the OSU chapter of the Society of Professional Journalists, wrote a year later that some administrators would like to see the O'Collegian replaced with a campus newspaper operated by the OSU public relations department. "What well-intentioned administrator would like the O'Collegian after seeing his or her name glare alongside words like 'reinstatement of athletes,' '\$82,000 inauguration' and 'The Last Temptation of Christ,'" she wrote. "A 'positive'

public relations rag would be much more welcome at OSU than the student-run newspaper we now publish."¹⁶

Objectives

Content analysis will be used to determine if the O'Collegian's news stories about the "Last Temptation of Christ" and reinstatement of athletes contained biases and met criteria established to determine fairness and balance. Examples of previous studies will be used to establish guidelines in analyzing the stories to measure bias, fairness and balance.

Measuring the concepts in a systematic manner should provide an accurate assessment of the stories that seemed to attract conflicting reaction.

Did they represent objective, quality reporting as the many awards would indicate? Or were they biased as critics and some university officials would indicate?

Assumptions

A basic underlying assumption to this research is that the media have social and ethical obligations despite their First Amendment rights. This principle was brought to attention by the Commission on Freedom of the Press in the 1940s and is called the social responsibility theory.¹⁷

Social responsibility, a theory that began in the 20th century United States, is based on the writings of W.E. Hocking, Commission on Freedom of the Press, practitioners

and media codes. The theory is designed to inform, entertain and sell but chiefly to raise conflict to the plane of discussion. Because a socially responsible press is motivated by its duties to the people, it must serve society or endanger its First Amendment rights.¹⁸

It can be assumed, therefore, that the media face social responsibilities in fulfilling a watchdog role that makes governing bodies and major institutions accountable to the public.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is based upon the belief that the media have a responsibility to the public under the social responsibility theory. The Hutchins Commission stated in the 1940s that the duty of the press is to provide "a truthful, comprehensive and intelligent account of the day's events in a context which gives them meaning."¹⁹

The media's responsibility also is outlined in the Society of Professional Journalists, Sigma Delta Chi, Code of Ethics. The code states that "news reports should be free of opinion or bias and represent all sides of an issue."²⁰

The theory and codes can be applied to the O'Collegian's coverage of "The Last Temptation" and reinstatement of athletes. If the newspaper acted responsibly,

accounts of the events should have been accurate, representative and objective.

Importance of Study

No doubt, the O'Collegian has much influence on the OSU campus. At the time, 12,000 copies were distributed five days a week and 88 percent of the 25,000 students, faculty and staff say they regularly read the O'Collegian, according to the OSU Continuing Market Study, 1989-90.²¹

Analysis of the stories could have historic and futuristic value for the O'Collegian in coverage of news events, especially ones involving administrators, regents and authority figures. This research could be used as an educational tool to evaluate performances at the O'Collegian and other college newspapers. Also, it could be of value to other media to help them assess their social responsibility roles.

Endnotes

¹ Minutes of the Meetings of the Board of Regents for the Oklahoma State University and Agricultural and Mechanical Colleges, (Sept. 22, 1989), p. 194.

² Jean Otto, text of speech at Oklahoma State University, after being named 1990 recipient of the Paul Miller Journalism Lecturer Award, (April 13, 1990).

³ Ibid

⁴ Jim Killackey, "Grade requirements raised," The Daily Oklahoman, (Dec. 18, 1990), p. 1.

⁵ U. The National College Newspaper, (February 1991), p. 4.

⁶ Otto, (April 13, 1990).

⁷ Jose Quevedo, Associated Collegiate Press Newspaper Guidebook, (1989-90), p. 31.

⁸ Personal interview with Tim Barker in Stillwater, Oklahoma, (April 13, 1991).

⁹ Tara Roberson, "Students voice differing opinions over Campbell," The Daily O'Collegian, (Feb. 5, 1990), p. 1.

¹⁰ Brad R. Pepmiller, "Say 'yes' to Campbell," The Daily O'Collegian, (Feb. 5, 1990), p. 4.

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² The Daily O'Collegian, (Oct. 19, 1989), p. 4.

¹³ Robert Ridenour, "Thanks Chesney; It is high time you quit," The Daily O'Collegian, (Oct. 16, 1989), p. 4.

¹⁴ The Daily O'Collegian, (Oct. 19, 1989), p. 4.

¹⁵ Ibid.

¹⁶ Kelly Kurt, "Screaming for free speech," The Daily O'Collegian, (April 23, 1991), p. 4.

17 William L. Rivers, Wilbur Schramm, and Clifford G. Christians, Responsibility in Mass Communication, (New York: Harper and Row, 1980), pp. 44-45.

18 Ibid., p. 50.

19 Ibid., p. 45.

20 Ibid., p. 293.

21 The Daily O'Collegian, (April 16, 1991), p. 6.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

"The Last Temptation of Christ" Background

Stories about "The Last Temptation of Christ" began in the Sept. 8-9, 1989 issue of The Daily O'Collegian when the Student Union Activities Board announced the movie would be shown Oct. 19-21 in the Student Union Little Theater. The controversial movie, called blasphemous by many critics, had not been shown commercially in Oklahoma. "The Last Temptation," an Oscar-nominated film directed by Martin Scorsese, contains a scene that depicts Jesus, while crucified on the cross, fantasizing about married life and having sexual relations with Mary Magdelene.¹

A week later, the O'Collegian reported that a board of administrators would screen the movie to decide if it "meets community standards of decency" and should be shown on campus.²

A few days later, 600 students signed a petition to prevent what they called censorship of the movie, and some faculty were quoted as saying the movie's status is an issue of freedom of expression.

On Sept. 22, the Board of Regents for Oklahoma A&M Colleges voted not to show the film until the issue was studied further and issued 10 legal and ethical questions to university administrators about policies and procedures related to such situations. The regents said they based their decision on reaction from outraged alumni and the Oklahoma Christian community.³

After the regents meetings, 12 professors met to form the Committee for the First Amendment⁴ and the O'Collegian ran a front page editorial critical of the regents' decision and denouncing the governing body for infringement upon First Amendment rights.⁵

In the Sept. 27 issue, the O'Collegian reported that Governor Henry Bellmon had sent a letter to the regents, warning them of his concerns of censoring information on campus.⁶ "Regardless of the merit or demerits of this movie, I am concerned that the regents are establishing a policy of attempting to censor the distribution of ideas or information on campus," Bellmon wrote. "Censorship is inadvisable, impractical and inappropriate."

Regents chairwoman Carolyn Savage responded that the regents had not made a final decision.⁷

On the same day, about 300 people attended a meeting of the Committee for the First Amendment. The committee drafted a petition urging regents to rescind their temporary order to ban the movie because the university should

be allowed to carry out its educational missions free from pressure by the public and the government.⁸

On Oct. 4, about 800 faculty and students protested on the Edmon Low Library lawn in support of showing the movie⁹ and later that day, about 250 faculty members approved recommendations denouncing the regents' actions and expressing a lack of confidence in President John Campbell's handling of the issue.¹⁰

The next day, Oct. 5, an American Civil Liberties Union attorney filed a lawsuit on behalf of the Committee for the First Amendment in U.S. District Court against the university and regents for prior restraint of First Amendment rights.¹¹ The preliminary injunction hearing was scheduled Oct. 12 in Tulsa, the day before the regents were scheduled to meet in special session to decide the movie's fate. After seven hours of testimony in the hearing, the federal district judge delayed a decision until after the regents meeting the next day.¹²

The regents met Oct. 13 on the OSU campus. After a one-hour meeting in executive session with the regents, defendants attorney Burck Bailey reported in open session that it was his "opinion that the Board cannot constitutionally vote to prevent the showing of the film."¹³

After more than three hours of discussion and sometimes heated debate, the regents voted 6-2, with one abstention, to allow the movie to be shown.¹⁴ After the vote, chief executive officer H. Jerrell Chesney ended a

15-year association with the board with a surprise resignation because "I do not support and, in fact, renounce the film and its promotion."¹⁵

Committee for the First Amendment leaders said they were "astonished" by the debate, split vote and Chesney's resignation.¹⁶

Chesney later told the O'Collegian that his personal beliefs and loyalties to Christ, not a protest to the decision to show the film, were reasons for his resignation.¹⁷

On Oct. 19, a day-long teach-in was conducted to inform the public of First Amendment rights before the debut of the movie, which attracted more than 700 people during its five showings. Five Stillwater ministers led discussion groups in exploring symbolic and theological meaning of the movie after each showing.¹⁸

Reinstatement of Athletes Background

A banner headline in The Daily O'Collegian on Jan. 22, 1990, read, "Campbell asks dean to reinstate athlete." In the story carrying Robert Ridenour's byline, President John Campbell is quoted as saying he asked a dean to reinstate a football player whose grades were not high enough to stay in school.¹⁹ Smith Holt, dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, confirmed in the story that the player failed to raise his grade point average to the required level and would have been dropped from the university had the president not intervened.²⁰

The banner headline in the next issue read, "7 athletes with low grades reinstated." The story, again carrying Ridenour's byline, quoted university officials saying that seven athletes were reinstated despite not meeting minimum grade requirements.²¹

The next day, another Ridenour story quoted Campbell saying he was "solely responsible" for the readmission of the seven suspended football players.²² He said he based the decision on coaches' recommendations about players they believed "deserved another chance."²³

In a news conference Jan. 24, Faculty Council chairman John Thornton said athletic officials requested the reinstatements and Campbell's action to comply was contrary to normal procedure.²⁴ Campbell said in a prepared statement that the decision was made in the "spirit of compassion and in the best interests of the individuals as students."²⁵

The following day, Governor Henry Bellmon asked the Board of Regents for OSU and the A&M Colleges to investigate the president's action and report findings to the Speaker of the House and Senate Pro Tempore. The governor called the situation "highly damaging to the credibility of the university and the state higher education system."²⁶

The same day, a sidebar story reported that an academic adviser said the president "issued an ultimatum" to reinstate the athletes "regardless of the rules." Campbell would not comment on the charges.²⁷

On Jan. 28, a state academic audit was initiated to examine OSU's compliance with regents' retention standards, and Chancellor of Oklahoma Higher Education Hans Brisch said in a news conference that Campbell faced "an uphill battle" to regain credibility.²⁸

Petitions critical of the president began to circulate on campus, and the Student Government Association called for Campbell's immediate resignation in a 27-10-2 vote.²⁹

On Feb. 2, more than 100 protesters gathered on the Edmon Low Library lawn to denounce the president's actions, while a small group of Campbell supporters also assembled to criticize the O'Collegian and staff writer Ridenour for unfair coverage of the issue.³⁰ Campbell said he would not resign.³¹

On Feb. 13, the state audit ordered by the governor showed OSU not in compliance with state regents' retention standards.³²

The next day, the general faculty voted 209-182 to oust Campbell, citing "abusive management style" and violations of university policy.³³

Two weeks later, OSU's Board of Regents retained Campbell after a nine-hour meeting in which they called the reinstatements "regrettable" but "essentially well intentioned."³⁴ The regents directed Campbell to set policies to prevent a recurrence but took no disciplinary action.³⁵ The Committee for the First Amendment, formed the previous

semester during the "Last Temptation" issue, called it "a slap on the hand."³⁶

At a meeting March 19, the regents gave a 7-1 vote of confidence to President Campbell and called on administration, faculty and students to set aside their differences. Campbell said he appreciated the vote of confidence.³⁷

Bias, Fairness and Social Responsibility

The Canons of Journalism adopted by the American Society of Newspaper Editors call for every effort to be made "to assure that the news content is accurate, free from bias and in context, and that all sides are presented fairly. ... Journalists should respect the rights of people involved in the news, observe the common standards of decency and stand accountable to the public for the fairness and accuracy of their news reports."³⁸

Violations of the canons were among press-performance criticisms issued by the Commission on Freedom of the Press in 1947. In a study of attitudes toward press responsibility 34 years later, Barbara W. Hartung, an associate professor of journalism at San Diego State University, found it startling how contemporary the directives of the commission were in 1981 and how unchanging the problems of the press in America appear to be.³⁹ "Certainly there are dated items but generally they capture the essence of an ideal--that newspapers ought to be responsible to society."⁴⁰

There is no question that The Daily O'Collegian devoted much space to the coverage of "The Last Temptation of Christ" and reinstatement of athletes issues. The coverage generated award-winning stories, as cited earlier, but questions do arise. Were the stories free from bias? Were they fair? Did the O'Collegian act socially responsible?

Robert Ridenour, managing editor during "Last Temptation" coverage, said maintaining objectivity was difficult in the movie coverage because the O'Collegian staff believed the situation attacked First Amendment rights and that attack affronted the staff's beliefs.⁴¹

Ridenour's opinion coincides with responses in Hartung's 1981 study in which 100 percent of editors and publishers surveyed said newspapers should inform the public of First Amendment rights and the need to protect freedom of the press.⁴²

But Ridenour defended the newspaper's coverage. "It was hard not to be biased, but I felt we were objective in our reporting," he said. "It was a great story--in our own backyard--so we needed to approach it from all angles. I thought we did a great job and public awareness stemmed from our efforts."⁴³

Tim Barker, editor-in-chief in 1989-90, said that editorially the newspaper took pro-movie and anti-reinstatement stances, but he initiated steps to ensure his staff's objectivity on the news pages.

For instance, reporters covering the movie issue were not allowed to participate in campuswide protest efforts for First Amendment rights, and reporters covering the news were not allowed to write editorials or columns of opinion until after the issues had been decided. Barker said no media can be completely without bias, but he was confident the paper presented the news in objective, fair and responsible fashion.⁴⁴

The two stories differed in that "The Last Temptation" involved constitutional rights concerning the public showing of a movie, and the reinstatement of athletes surfaced because of investigative reporting in a classic watchdog role of the press.

While the movie issue seemed to stir more emotion campuswide, the reinstatements also made a major impact because football is such a high-profile operation at OSU. The program produced a Heisman Trophy winner and Holiday Bowl Championship in 1988, but was saddled with NCAA sanctions the same year for recruiting violations. OSU also made national headlines in 1989 when Dexter Manley, an All-Pro defensive lineman for the Washington Redskins, testified in front of a U.S. Senate education subcommittee about a lifelong struggle with a learning disability that left him essentially illiterate.⁴⁵ Manley attended school and played football at OSU from 1977 to 1981.

After the reinstatement of athletes, Editor-in-Chief Barker penned an editorial critical of President Campbell's

actions and the negative image resulting from Manley's confessions about his educational experience at OSU:

If our president really values this educational institution, he needs to prove it by making a commitment toward that "academic excellence" of which he speaks so highly. The OSU policy on readmission says nothing about being readmitted on the basis of athletic prowess. Unlike Dexter Manley after four years at OSU, surely President Campbell knows how to read the rules.⁴⁶

Ridenour, who broke the reinstatement stories, said it was easier for him to be objective with the investigative stories than the movie stories. "I went to great lengths to be objective," he said, "because I wanted to be fair and find out what his (President Campbell's) explanations were."⁴⁷

Ridenour said that because Campbell would not return telephone calls made to his office after the first few days of the controversy and his home phone number was unlisted, he went to the president's home on two occasions late at night in attempts to balance stories he was writing on deadline. He said the president refused to talk to him on both occasions and the stories ran without the president's reactions to the charges.⁴⁸

The effort he said he put forth to ensure fairness reflects results of the previously cited 1981 study about attitudes toward press responsibility. In that study, 97 percent of editors and publishers agreed that newspapers should strive for fairness and balance as they report the news.⁴⁹

But some students at a protest criticized Ridenour's stories and said negative publicity generated by the O'Collegian's "unfair and biased" coverage was destroying the university.⁵⁰

Barker, in an editorial, called the charges against the newspaper a classic example of blaming the messenger for bad news. "We haven't conjured up anything we've reported," Barker wrote. "We have interviewed people and told our readers what they said. ... We have given Campbell every opportunity to tell his side. He has refused. ... What we do have is a legitimate story that has generated a lot of interest around this state and the rest of the country."⁵¹

Defining News and Objectivity

It probably is safe to assume that most journalists would consider the banning of a movie on a university campus and the reinstatement of failing athletes as legitimate news stories for a campus newspaper--or any media, for that matter. But the legitimacy of the news stories is not the question of this study. The question is whether the stories were biased or unfair. But before that can be answered, definitions of the relevant terms are necessary. And by the subjective nature of the terms, the task is not easy.

The definition of news varies, but most journalists agree that news is the account of an event, not the event

itself. An infinite number of events occur simultaneously, and the reports of those events become news. It is obvious that all events cannot be reported, thus creating a decision-making process.

Professional newsgatherers judge the potential interest and/or importance of an event before deciding whether to render an account of it, thus making it news. These newsgatherers are men, not deities. They possess no absolutistic yardstick by which to judge what to report and what to ignore. There is nothing that cannot be made interesting in the skillful telling; and only a supernatural power could say what is important.⁵²

News starts with the source, whether someone dies, is born, gives a speech, commits a crime, wins an honor, takes a trip--the list is endless. But nevertheless, it is the source, not the reporter, that creates the news. However, reporters are human, and humans do practice a selective perception. It is possible for the source and reporter--with the possible influence of other factors--to affect the final news product. Communicator David K. Berlo says:

First, the number of possible perceptions, possible observation is infinite. We can never observe everything, or all of anything. We must select. Perception must be perceptive if it is reported. ... A simpler way of saying this is 'We see what we want to believe, our beliefs determine what we see.'⁵³

Defining objectivity, one of the most basic principles of journalism, also results in varying definitions. One dictionary definition: "expressing or involving the use of facts without distortion by personal feelings or prejudices."⁵⁴ Most journalists believe that facts are safe,

and a reporter's duty is to provide his readers with the facts.

Theodore Glasser, a journalism educator currently at Stanford University, says objectivity means that sources supply the sense and substance of the day's news:

Sources provide the arguments, the rebuttals, the explanations, the criticism. Sources put forth the ideas while other sources challenge those ideas. Journalists, in their role as professional communicators, merely provide a vehicle for these exchanges.⁵⁵

But authors Sharon M. Murphy and James E. Murphy say reporters tell what they think they see happening, and they write the "facts as their perspectives and biases and backgrounds and assignments suggest they write. And they see these facts according to their own interior programming, according to the principles of importance and interest and drama each takes to viewing the world."⁵⁶

The meaning of objectivity has changed somewhat through the years, as some journalists stress the need to present more than straight facts to provide the public with accurate perceptive information. William E. Rowley and William V. Grimes, teachers of journalism and philosophy, respectively, at the State University of New York at Albany, break the concept of objectivity into three principles:

1. Factual objectivity. Getting the hard data of our perception of the facts as straight as we can, and in the right pattern, a pattern that comes as close as we can make it to fitting the facts, one that gives us the right lead.

2. Dramatic objectivity. Getting and communicating the emotional quality of the event, the experience, the development, which is just as much a part of the story as the facts.

3. Moral objectivity. Getting the moral implications of the story as straight as we can. This is an act of conscience. It means clearing one's head of preconceptions, prejudices, stereotypes, as one perceives and evaluates the facts, so as to represent the moral issues involved in the situation clearly and justly. Reporting is not a neutral act; it cannot reflect integrity and be amoral.⁵⁷

Even the Commission on Freedom of the Press, in its critical account of press performance, reported in 1947: "It is no longer enough to report the fact truthfully. It is now necessary to report the truth about the fact."⁵⁸

Washington Post reporters Carl Bernstein and Robert Woodward became famous for their watchdog-role exposure of Watergate, corruption in the White House and the deceptions that led to the resignation of President Nixon. Rowley and Grimes say the reporters exercised objectivity in their stories that resulted from hours of in-depth, investigate efforts in their search for truth. "The ethical, as well as factual and dramatic, dimension of both reporters' objectivity lay in the tension between their muckraking zeal and the restraint they and their editors imposed on it."⁵⁹

The watchdog role, regarded as another basic duty of the press, concerns making government and officials accountable to the public. It is a role cited previously in this study by journalists judging the O'Collegian's coverage in 1989-90.

Regarding the media's watchdog role, Time magazine reported that without a strong and trusted press, people would have almost no way to keep their government and other big institutions honest.⁶⁰

Alan Barth, the late editorial writer for the Washington Post, summed the situation in a 1977 speech:

If you want a watchdog to warn you of intruders, you must put up with a certain amount of mistaken barking. Now and then, he will sound off because a stray dog seems to be invading his territory or because he sees a cat or squirrel or is outraged by a postman. And that kind of barking can, of course, be a nuisance. But if you muzzle him and leash him and teach him to be decorous, you will find that he doesn't do the job for which you got him in the first place. Some extraneous barking is the price you must pay for his service as a watchdog. A free press is the watchdog of society."⁶¹

Some observers believe criticism toward the media is common when the media are reporting bad news. In a Time magazine story mostly critical to the press, it was reported: "The press, by its nature, is rarely beloved--nor should that be its aim. Too often it must be the bearer of bad tidings. Since World War II, journalists have covered the turmoil of the civil rights movement, conveyed vivid scenes of domestic protests and battlefield gore during the Vietnam War, and participated in the collapse of a presidency."⁶²

Those views are consistent with those of Barker, the O'Collegian editor-in-chief who defended the newspaper's coverage of the controversial issues in 1989-90.

Barker wrote in an editorial that protesters' charge of unfairness against the newspaper was "a classic example of killing the messenger because of the message he's bearing."⁶³

Previous Studies

This research is based on several published studies using content analysis to measure objectivity, fairness and balance in reporting.

These undertakings include a study of news media coverage of issues during the accident at Three-Mile Island, a study of newsmagazine coverage of the Supreme Court and an analysis of coverage of the Vietnam veteran.

In those respective studies, researchers' findings did not support the charges that coverage of issues with political consequence raised during the accident at Three-Mile Island were unbalanced. First Amendment decisions by the Supreme Court were the most frequently reported by news magazines, and the press gave favorable coverage to the Vietnam war and Vietnam veteran.

However, this study attempts to replicate as nearly as possible the methodologies of two studies: a 1989 study, "Covering Conflict and Controversy: Measuring Balance, Fairness, Defamation," by Todd F. Simon, Frederick Fico and Stephen Lacy, and a 1965 study, "How Time Stereotyped Three U.S. Presidents," By John C. Merrill. Also replicated are parts of follow-up studies to Merrill's analysis. They are

"Time Magazine Revisited: Presidential Stereotypes Persist" by Fred Fedler, Mike Meeske and Joe Hall in 1979, and "Time and Newsweek Favor John F. Kennedy, Criticize Robert and Edward Kennedy" by Fedler, Meeske and Ron Smith in 1983.

Merrill used six bias categories to analyze Time's coverage of Harry Truman, Dwight Eisenhower and John Kennedy. They were: 1) attribution bias, 2) adjective bias, 3) adverbial bias, 4) contextual bias, 5) outright opinion, and 6) photographic bias.

In considering the categories, Merrill and his panel of coders noted instances of bias as either positive (favorable) or negative (unfavorable). Indications of bias thought dubious by the panel were not counted as bias in the study. It was further decided that there was no need to compare space treatment given the three presidents, since space in itself has no necessary bearing on subjectivity or bias. What was considered important was the language used to describe each president, with special emphasis on the presence or absence of "loaded" words and expressions and on general contextual impressions presented.⁶⁴

Merrill's study indicated that Time editorialized in its regular news columns and used trickery to bias stories to lead the reader's thinking. The magazine also presented the reader with highly loaded essays of a subjective type

that were anti-Truman, pro-Eisenhower and neutral toward Kennedy."⁶⁵

In the 1989 study of stories covering conflict and controversy, the researchers measured the concept of fairness by determining if contact was made with someone representing the two major sides of an issue.

Of the 21 newspapers used in the study, successful contact was made with both sides in 66 percent of the stories. Contact was not made in 6 percent of the stories, but a statement was included that contact was attempted but failed. In 28 percent of the cases, no contact was made and no explanation was offered by the writer.⁶⁶

Summary

Sacramento Bee ombudsman Art Nauman says readers notice and complain about "loaded adjectives and phraseology" in stories. "It doesn't take much to damage a news story's fairness or to betray a bias--an anathema to good good journalism," he wrote in a column.⁶⁷

In siding with readers' complaints, he cited examples of pejoratives in loaded leads and phrases in the California newspaper's news stories. "Eschew adjectives and adverbs. They'll turn around and bite you every time," he wrote.⁶⁸

However, a Los Angeles Times poll in 1985 found that readers perceive a liberal bent among the nation's newspa-

per reporters and editors but believe the bias does not unfairly influence news coverage.⁶⁹

Also, veteran journalist Vance Trimble, 1960 winner of the Pulitzer Prize for a series about nepotism in Congress, said in a lecture on the OSU campus in 1991 that all writers are biased but the stories they produce must include their biases both for and against an issue to ensure balance and objectivity in reporting.⁷⁰

This study attempts to utilize the systematic measurement of bias and fairness established by previously published studies and apply them to the O'Collegian's award-winning coverage of major issues in 1989-90. Did the O'Collegian comply with ideals set forth by the social responsibility theory and media codes, and was its coverage of "The Last Temptation of Christ" and the reinstatement of athletes an example of solid, fair and objective reporting as the judges' comments and awards would indicate? Or was it an example of slanted, unfair and irresponsible journalism as critics, some regents and some administrators would charge?

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CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study utilizes content analysis to determine the frequency of bias and concepts of fairness and balance in The Daily O'Collegian's coverage of the attempted banning of the campus showing of the controversial movie, "The Last Temptation of Christ," in fall 1989 and the university president's reinstatement of seven failing athletes ineligible to remain in school in spring 1990.

All front-page news stories published within the periods of the controversies were analyzed in the study.

Definition of content analysis, as proposed by Bernard Berelson in 1952, is "a research technique for the objective, systematic, and quantitative description of the manifest content of communication."¹

Guido H. Stempel III calls content analysis a formal system for doing something that all people frequently do informally--draw conclusions from observations of the content of media coverage.²

To exemplify the importance of content analysis, Stempel uses the seldom-resolved controversy about television violence. "Such situations make the need for formal

content analysis rather evident," he writes. "Issues like television violence are too important to be resolved on the basis of people's impressions."³

It is for these reasons the system is used in this study to analyze the student newspaper's coverage of the two major issues that engulfed the OSU campus in academic year 1989-90.

Scope of the Study

Because the study deals with the universe of all locally written, front-page stories published in roughly two, six-week periods in fall 1989 and spring 1990, few generalizations can be made beyond this group of stories.

Also, because of the transient nature of student-newspaper staffs and the shifting climate caused each semester by changing editors-in-chief and staffs, it is difficult to generalize beyond this group of student journalists.

However, the analysis could be used to determine the quality of stories of a college student newspaper, The Daily O'Collegian, in its coverage of two specific controversies concerning the school's president and regents. Some generalizations about findings could be projected toward the content of future O'Collegian coverage of similar events and coverage by other college newspapers, in general, of such sensitive issues.

Newspapers Selected

Issues of the O'Collegian selected for this study consisted of all those containing page-one locally produced coverage of the two major stories in 1989-90.

"Last Temptation" coverage began in the Sept. 8-9, 1989 issue when SUAB announced its intentions to show the controversial movie that had not been shown previously in Oklahoma theaters. Examined newspapers continued from that issue through the Oct. 23, 1989 issue, which contained reaction of the movie after it was shown in the Student Union. Forty-one front-page stories were published on the issue during this time frame.

Reinstatement stories began in the Jan. 22, 1990 issue when the O'Collegian reported that the university president asked the dean of an OSU college to reinstate a football player whose grades were not high enough to stay in school. Newspapers used in the study continued from that issue through the March 19, 1990 issue in which regents ended weeks of speculation by giving a vote of confidence to the president and calling on administration, faculty and students to set aside their differences. Twenty-three page-one stories were published on the issue during this time period.

In total, 64 stories--41 movie and 23 reinstatements--and nine photos were examined for the study.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study was intended to answer four questions about The Daily O'Collegian's coverage in academic year 1989-90 of "The Last Temptation of Christ" and the university president's reinstatement of the seven athletes:

1. Did the news stories in the O'Collegian contain biases toward the university (i.e. administrators, regents, president)?
2. Were the stories presented fairly with both sides of the issue represented?
3. Were the stories balanced?
4. Was there any relationship in type of coverage given the movie issue and the reinstatements?

From these research questions, six specific hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is no significant frequency of positive or negative bias in the O'Collegian's two major news stories in academic year 1989-90.
2. There is no significant frequency of positive or negative bias in "Last Temptation" coverage.
3. There is no significant frequency of positive or negative bias in reinstatement coverage.
4. There is no significant relationship between frequency of bias and subject matter.
5. There is no relationship between concept of fairness and subject matter.

6. There is no relationship between concept of balance and subject matter.

Definitions of Terms

Coverage: Because the study was concerned with only the bias, fairness and balance that appeared in news columns, the author considered only news stories, news headlines and photographs--not editorials, columns, cartoons or letters to the editor. To be considered, a story, headline or photograph had to appear on page one during the height of the movie (Sept. 8, 1989, through Oct. 23, 1989) and reinstatement issues (Jan. 22, 1990, through March 19, 1990).

Bias: The author defined bias as any expression of opinion, and positive or negative bias as any variance from neutrality. Items of bias were classified as positive, negative or neutral.

Fairness: The author defined fairness by determining if both sides of the issues were represented in each story.

Balance: The author defined balance by finding the absolute value difference between different sides in each story.

Categories of Analysis

Categories of bias used to determine objectivity were formulated from classification in previous studies: attri-

bution bias, adjective/adverb bias, outright opinion, contextual bias, headline bias and photograph bias.

Categories were defined according to Fedler's 1979 and 1983 studies. Isolated words and phrases were classified as examples of adjective/adverb or attribution bias. Entire sentences or paragraphs deemed biased were classified "outright opinion" of the author, and whole overall impression created by each story was classified "contextual bias." Headline bias also was determined by overall impression created by the headline. Photographs, packaged with their cutlines, were judged positive, negative, or neutral in the category of photograph bias. If a photograph was positive but its cutline negative, the photograph was judged negative.

It was decided, as in the Merrill study, that there was no need to compare space treatment given the subjects, since space in itself has no necessary bearing in subjectivity or bias. What was considered important was the language used to describe each issue, with special emphasis on the presence or absence of "loaded" words and expressions and on general contextual impressions presented.

Concepts of balance and fairness were measured using the 1989 study of Simon, Fico and Lacy. Balance was measured using the absolute value of the difference between sides in stories of conflict or controversy. Fairness was measured by determining if contact was made with someone representing the two major sides of the controversy.

More specific definitions are:

Attribution Bias

Attribution bias was measured as positive (favorable) toward regents and administrators, negative (unfavorable) or neutral. The category concerns the story's means of attributing information to a source. The bias is contained in the verb. For instance, the attribution verb "said" is neutral because it is not opinionated and evokes no emotional response. "Shouted" is negative since it involves emotion, and "smiled" is favorable because it is positively affective.⁴

Adjective/Adverb Bias

Adjective bias attempts to build an impression of the person described by using adjectives, favorable or unfavorable, with the person. Examples are "sensitive to the mood of the students" for favorable and "flushed with anger" as negative.⁵ They are sometimes called judgmental adjectives because they tend to prejudice the reader for or against the person described. They actually are subjective in nature and are the opinions of the writer.⁶ Examples of objective or neutral adjectives are "the blue sky" or "the new car." Adverbial bias depends on qualifiers or magnifiers--adverbs--to create an impression in the reader's mind by telling how or why a person said or did something.⁷

Examples are "he said sarcastically" (negative) or "he skillfully answered the question" (positive).

Contextual Bias

Contextual bias is the bias in whole sentences or paragraphs or in other units of meaning, to determine the overall impression created by an entire story. The purpose is to present the person or issue reported on in a favorable or unfavorable light by the overall meaning or innuendo of the report, not by specific words and phrases alone. The whole context must be considered. Since one's own biases or interpretations might determine what is considered contextually biased, it is necessary to get the opinions of a panel. Contextual bias is counted only when there is agreement among the panelists.⁸

Outright Opinion

Outright opinion is the most blatant and obvious type of subjectivity in newswriting.⁹ The expression of opinion by the publication might be called "presenting a judgment," which S.I. Hayakawa says should be kept out of reports. Hayakawa defines "judgments" as "all expressions of the writer's approval or disapproval of the occurrences, persons, or objects he is describing."¹⁰ An example would be that "campus unrest grows as the protest nears."

Headline Bias

Headline bias is the positive, neutral or negative impression created by the headline to draw the reader to the story. Previous studies included headlines in the contextual category, but this study looks at headlines as a separate classification because they should tell the news--the gist of the story--to the reader of headlines alone and should show relative importance of stories by size of type and column width. As in contextual bias, the opinions of a panel are necessary to interpret meanings. Headline bias is counted only when there is agreement among panelists.

Photographic Bias

Photographic bias is determined by how people are presented in photographs--dignified, undignified, angry, happy, calm, nervous, etc. Bias can be unintentional, however, intention is not considered in the treatment of this or any other category.

Fairness

The concept of fairness is measured by determining if contact is made with someone representing the two major sides of a controversy. Also measured is if stories do not make contact but include a statement as to why or if stories contain no contact and no explanation as to why. For the purpose of this study, fairness is not applicable to some stories because they are not conflict stories but

merely informative pieces related to the subject matter. These stories were discarded in the fairness test and not tested for the fairness concept. Conflict stories, as defined in previous studies, were determined as those in which the primary focus was in explicit opposition on topics of public or private organizational policy as represented by two or more parties from opposing positions.¹¹

Balance

The concept of balance is measured using the absolute value of the difference between sides. The absolute value difference is measured in paragraphs by determining the number of paragraphs devoted to each side and total number of paragraphs in the story. In this study, articles not meeting the criteria for "conflict" stories as outlined above were discarded because balance measurement was not applicable.

Quantification System

Items for analysis were counted and listed for each story. Items of bias were listed under the different categories of bias whether the items were positive, negative or neutral with respect to the university (i.e. regents and administrators). Data collected were nominal data or frequency count.

Coding

Two experienced journalists were used as coders: an award-winning writer and the author. Also, a former journalism educator offered guidance and advice in the coding process. The 64 stories were clipped, and coders worked independently in reading the O'Collegian articles about "The Last Temptation of Christ" and reinstatement of athletes. Each recorded instances of bias in positive, negative and neutral categories, and each recorded the concepts of fairness and balance. Stories not meeting the "conflict" definition were not measured for fairness or balance concepts because the concepts were not applicable.

Coders followed the procedures established by Berelson and other authorities on content analysis by meeting to discuss items of disagreement or ambiguity in an attempt to reach common agreements. Articles or points in which no agreement could be reached were discarded from the study.

To check procedures and estimate intercoder reliability, a pre-test was conducted to analyze O'Collegian news stories covering the university president's inauguration. It was a controversial subject on campus in spring 1989 because of its expense. An intercoder reliability test was conducted.

Statistical Analysis

As data collected were nominal, chi-square analysis was used to examine content differences and relationships

in the stories. The 95 percent level of confidence was used to determine which differences were statistically significant.

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CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Intercoder Reliability

To check coders' reliability in counting and categorizing bias, an intercoder reliability test was conducted between the two coders. The formula used was

$$R = \frac{2M}{N1 + N2}$$

M is the number of coding decisions on which the two coders agree, and N1 and N2 represent the total decisions made by coder one and coder two, respectively.

The intercoder reliability (R) for test stories about the university president's inauguration was 0.986, and for the stories in the study is 0.978. On a scale of 0 to 1.0, where 1.0 is perfect reliability or agreement, 0.986 and 0.978 indicate a high reliability between coder decisions.

In stories about "The Last Temptation of Christ" and reinstatement of athletes, coders independently studied 64 stories and nine photographs. They considered 849 items for bias and agreed upon 98 percent or 830 items. The coders met and discussed the 19 items of disagreement and eventually reached agreement on 18. One item was considered ambiguous and discarded from the study.

Coders categorized occurrences of bias as positive, negative and neutral in six categories: attribution, adjective/adverb, outright opinion, contextual, headline and photograph.

Findings

The stories published in The Daily O'Collegian about the two major issues in 1989-90 indicated overall objective reporting with 96 percent of the occurrences of bias classified as neutral. (See Table I.) Less than 1 percent of the items were listed as positive bias toward the university, regents and administrators with the remainder classified as negative bias.

Chi-square analysis of occurrences of positive, negative and neutral bias in the major stories shows a significant difference ($x^2 = 396.187$, $df = 10$) at the .01 level of confidence. The difference among bias categories is real, not merely a chance difference. However, frequency counts are low in some cells and might render the chi-square test invalid.

The table shows the highest frequency of bias classified as neutral (812), followed by negative (32) and positive (5).

In stories about "The Last Temptation of Christ," most occurrences of bias again were classified as neutral. (See Table II.)

TABLE I
 FREQUENCY OF BIAS IN MAJOR NEWS
 STORIES, THE DAILY O'COLLEGIAN,
 1989-90

	Attribution Bias	
Positive		1
Negative		4
Neutral		679
	Adjective/Adverb Bias	
Positive		3
Negative		2
Neutral		2
	Outright Opinion	
Positive		0
Negative		10
Neutral		12
	Contextual Bias	
Positive		0
Negative		8
Neutral		55
	Headline Bias	
Positive		0
Negative		7
Neutral		57
	Photo Bias	
Positive		1
Negative		1
Neutral		7
<hr/>		
Total Positive		5
Total Negative		32
Total Neutral		812

TABLE II
 FREQUENCY OF BIAS IN "LAST TEMPTATION
 OF CHRIST" STORIES

Attribution Bias		
Positive		1
Negative		1
Neutral		392
Adjective/Adverb Bias		
Positive		1
Negative		1
Neutral		2
Outright Opinion		
Positive		0
Negative		6
Neutral		8
Contextual Bias		
Positive		0
Negative		5
Neutral		35
Headline Bias		
Positive		0
Negative		5
Neutral		36
Photo Bias		
Positive		0
Negative		1
Neutral		4
Total		
Total Positive		2
Total Negative		19
Total Neutral		477

Chi-square analysis of occurrences of positive, negative and neutral bias in "Last Temptation" stories shows a

significant difference ($x^2 = 157.818$, $df = 10$) at the .01 level of confidence. The difference among bias categories is real, not merely a chance difference. However, frequency counts are low in some cells and might render the chi-square test invalid.

The table shows the highest frequency of bias classified as neutral (477), followed by negative (19) and positive (2).

Regarding stories about the reinstatement of athletes, most occurrences of bias also were classified as neutral. (See Table III.)

Chi-square analysis of occurrences of positive, negative and neutral bias in stories about the reinstatement of athletes shows a significant difference ($x^2 = 253.710$, $df = 10$) at the .01 level of confidence. The differences among bias categories are real, not merely chance differences. However, frequency counts are low in some cells and might render the chi-square test invalid.

As with the other major story, the table shows the highest frequency of bias classified as neutral (335), followed by negative (13) and positive (3).

Stories also were compared to determine if there was any difference in the type of coverage each of the two subject matters received. (See Table IV.)

Chi-square analysis of the relationship between direction of bias and subject matter showed no significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. The difference

TABLE III
 FREQUENCY OF BIAS IN REINSTATEMENT OF
 ATHLETES COVERAGE

	Attribution Bias	
Positive		0
Negative		3
Neutral		287
	Adjective/Adverb Bias	
Positive		2
Negative		1
Neutral		0
	Outright Opinion	
Positive		0
Negative		4
Neutral		4
	Contextual Bias	
Positive		0
Negative		3
Neutral		20
	Headline Bias	
Positive		0
Negative		2
Neutral		21
	Photo Bias	
Positive		1
Negative		0
Neutral		3
Total Positive		3
Total Negative		13
Total Neutral		335

might be due to chance, however, frequency counts are low in some cells and might render the chi-square test invalid.

TABLE IV
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN DIRECTION OF
BIAS AND SUBJECT MATTER

	"Last Temptation of Christ"	Reinstatement of Athletes
Attribution Bias		
Positive	1	0
Negative	1	3
Neutral	392	287
Adjective/Adverb Bias		
Positive	1	2
Negative	1	1
Neutral	2	0
Outright Opinion		
Positive	0	0
Negative	6	4
Neutral	8	4
Contextual Bias		
Positive	0	0
Negative	5	3
Neutral	35	20
Headline Bias		
Positive	0	0
Negative	5	2
Neutral	36	21
Photo Bias		
Positive	0	1
Negative	1	0
Neutral	4	3
Total		
Total Positive	2	3
Total Negative	19	13
Total Neutral	477	335

$\chi^2 = 0.727, df = 2, NSD$

The table shows both subject matters dominated by neutral occurrences of bias, followed by negative and then positive occurrences.

In a test of fairness, the subject matters were analyzed to determine if both sides of the controversies were represented. (See Table V.) The test of the fairness concept shows that successful contact was made in 77.4 percent of "Last Temptation" stories and 55 percent of stories about the reinstatement of athletes. No contact was made but stories included statements as to why in 3.2 percent of movie stories and 15 percent of reinstatement articles. There was no contact and no explanation why in 19.4 percent of movie stories and 30 percent of reinstatement stories.

TABLE V
RELATIONSHIP OF FAIRNESS WITH
SUBJECT MATTER

	"Temptation"	Reinstatement
Successful contact with both sides	24 (77.4%)	11 (55.0%)
No contact, but statement as to why	1 (3.2%)	3 (15%)
No contact and no explanation as to why	6 (19.4%)	6 (30%)
	N = 31	20

$$x^2 = 3.625, df = 2, NSD$$

Chi-square analysis of relationship of fairness with subject matter indicates no significant relationship at the .05 level of confidence. Again, the difference might be due to chance. However, frequency counts are low in some cells and might render the chi-square test invalid.

More than 80 percent of "Last Temptation" stories successfully contacted both sides or explained to readers why there was no contact, while 70 percent of reinstatement stories did likewise.

In a test of balance, an absolute value difference--number of paragraphs devoted to each side of the issues--was measured for stories about both subject matters. (See Table VI.) In "Last Temptation" stories, 41.2 percent of paragraphs were attributed to sources or information favorable to banning the movie, and 58.8 percent of paragraphs were attributed to sources or information unfavorable to banning the movie. In reinstatement stories, 25.5 percent was favorable to the reinstatements and 74.5 percent was unfavorable.

Chi-square analysis of relationship of balance with subject matter showed a significant difference at the .05 level of confidence. The difference is real, not merely a chance difference. Stories pertaining to the "Last Temptation" were more balanced in terms of space devoted to each side of the issue than were stories about the reinstatements. A contingency coefficient of 0.583 shows a moderate strength of relationship of balance with subject matter.

TABLE VI
 RELATIONSHIP OF BALANCE WITH
 SUBJECT MATTER

	Favorable	Unfavorable
"Last Temptation"	41.2%	58.8%
Reinstatement of Athletes	25.5%	74.5%

$\chi^2 = 26.28$, $df = 1$, $p < .05$
 $N = 51$, $C = 0.583$

Analysis of Content

Aside from the quantitative findings and analysis, other observations are relevant and complement the empirical findings.

Nature of Coverage

The findings show a statistical difference in classification of positive, negative and neutral biases in stories about the "Last Temptation" and reinstatement of athletes with both dominated by neutral occurrences of bias.

Findings also show similarities in reporting of subject matter with no significant difference in the relationship of bias and type of story.

The test for fairness shows no significant difference in type of fair coverage given the two subjects, but the test for balance shows a significant difference in balance in the two stories with "Last Temptation" stories more balanced than reinstatement stories.

Other observations about coverage, types of bias, and fairness and balance concepts are:

Attribution Bias

Stories about both subjects were predominantly objective in the attribution category. There were 679 uses of the neutral word "said" in attributing information to sources in the 64 stories. "Said" is considered neutral because it is not opinionated and evokes no emotional response. The only positive attribution was the word "urged," used in a "Last Temptation" story when a state representative "urged" the regents to prohibit showing the movie because he said it violated a state statute. Five instances of negative attribution were found.

One was in a quote from a Nigerian student, who supported showing the film because some international students on campus come from oppressed countries: "We've come too far to see the same thing here," he said, receiving a standing ovation for his statement.

Two negative biases occurred in attributions when stories reported that President Campbell "admitted" to reinstating the athletes, and another occurred in a story

when Campbell "acknowledged" he rushed to a judgment in reinstating the athletes.

Adjective/Adverb Bias

Only seven instances of adjective or adverb bias were found in the stories. One story said Campbell had been "sharply" criticized by students and faculty for readmitting the seven athletes. Another story said the faculty "overwhelmingly" voted to express a lack of confidence in Campbell's handling of the "Last Temptation" but did not provide the reader with a Faculty Council vote count.

An example of a positive bias occurred after the regents voted to retain the president. The story said Campbell appeared relieved and spoke casually with reporters after the meeting.

Outright Opinion

Six occurrences of negative outright opinions were found in "Last Temptation" stories. They were deemed as the author's opinion, not objective or attributed statements. Examples are:

A group of professors met and ridiculed the regents for postponing the film.

H. Jerrell Chesney, the board's chief executive officer, scheduled the special meeting to address the issue under pressure of a pending lawsuit and mounting public pressure on campus.

Under pressure from the pending court decision, the board met Friday and in a split vote ...

Four negative outright opinions were found in reinstatement stories. Examples are:

Vice President James Boggs knew who made the order (to reinstate them), but when asked who the order came from, he said, "I don't want to answer that."

The group says the athlete reinstatement is one of a number of Campbell abuses since he came to power 18 months ago ...

Contextual Bias

Fifty-five of the 64 stories were classified as neutral. However, two "Last Temptation" stories were classified as negative. One compared the regents' decision not to show the movie to action in 1970 that banned political activist Abbie Hoffman from speaking on campus. The story used a former legal counsel at OSU as its only source in reporting that there is a history of attempts by the OSU regents and administration to censor activities on campus. The other story classified negative was published the day after the movie was shown. Its lead paragraphs read: The last line of the film, "The Last Temptation of Christ" was a quote from Jesus as portrayed by William DaFoe: "It is accomplished ... it is accomplished."

Three reinstatement stories were classified as negative. One had a direct quote lead: "I won't cave in. I'm

not a quitter. The thought of resigning hasn't crossed my mind. No way," said Oklahoma State University President John Campbell Monday. Another story lead was: The faculty of Oklahoma State University adopted a "sad but necessary" resolution late Wednesday night calling for an end to President John Campbell's reign at OSU, citing his "abusive management style" and violations of university policy.

Headline Bias

Five of the 41 "Last Temptation" headlines were called negative: They were: "Decision outrages faculty," "Local cable to censor 'Temptation' showing," "'Temptation' furor reaches fever pitch with lawsuit, threats," "Faculty slams Campbell role," and "CFA calls for prompt departure of Chesney, two dissenting regents." The two of 23 reinstatement headlines classified negative were "Campbell admits noncompliance" and "Regents do not discipline Campbell."

Photo Bias

Of the nine published photographs, one was positive, one negative and the other seven neutral. The negative photo showed two sign-carrying students at a protest in support of showing the movie. The negative bias was in the cutline, which quoted one subject as saying the two students attended the protest "to raise hell and tell the regents what we think. No way I settle for somebody else telling me what I can see." The positive photo was taken

at a campus protest of the athletes' reinstatement. In the two-photo package was a picture of anti-reinstatement protesters listening to a speaker, and in the other was two students displaying a dominant sign that read, "We Love (Heart) Campbell."

Fairness

The concept of fairness shows that in more than 80 percent of "Last Temptation" stories, contact was made with someone representing the two major sides of the issue or a statement was included as to why no contact was made. In 70 percent of reinstatement stories, contact with both sides was successful or stories included an explanation as to why no contact was made. No contact and no explanation as to why occurred in 19.4 percent of "Last Temptation" stories and 30 percent of reinstatement stories. Statistically, there was no difference in fairness treatment of the subjects.

Balance

The findings showed a significant difference in the relationship of balance with the two subjects. "Last Temptation" stories were statistically more balanced than reinstatement stories. However, numbers used in the chi-square analysis were calculated on absolute value differences of paragraphs devoted to each side of the issues. As stated previously, the fairness test showed 15 percent of rein-

statement stories had no contact but included statements as to why. Those statements--usually "no comments"--commonly were made in one paragraph, thus reducing the absolute value given to that side of the issue.

Discussion

While statistics suggest that The Daily O'Collegian coverage of "The Last Temptation of Christ" and the reinstatement of athletes represented objective and overall responsible reporting, some methodological factors should be considered.

First, tests for bias used in the study were ones developed by Merrill in his 1965 study of Time magazine and used in subsequent 1979 and 1983 studies of news magazines. The tests for bias probably are more useful for magazines, which use a more colorful and interpretative writing style than does the O'Collegian newspaper.

Merrill's study documented numerous occurrences of positive and negative bias in Time's coverage of Truman, Eisenhower and Kennedy and numerous examples of subjective, judgmental and opinionated reporting.

Using attribution bias as an example, the Merrill study showed many ways the magazine placed a president in favorable or unfavorable light by using different verbs to describe how he made a statement: He shouted, he smiled, he demanded, he said expertly, he said with a sly grin.

In contrast, the O'Collegian attributed statements with the neutral verb "said" on 679 of 684 occasions. The newspaper showed negative bias in attributions only four times and had one instance of positive bias.

Perhaps an explanation for the O'Collegian's objectivity in this area is that staff members consist almost entirely of young reporters who work at the student newspaper while receiving their education at Oklahoma State University. Most of these students are subjected to teachings from journalism faculty and O'Collegian editors and advisers who insist on the use of the word "said" because of its neutrality and because it evokes no emotion in attributing information to a source. Staff members seldom deviate from this lesson, stories in the study indicate.

The concept of fairness, used in a 1989 study of major newspapers, shows the O'Collegian to be fair in its treatment of the issues. As stated earlier, in more than 80 percent of "Last Temptation" stories, reporters contacted both sides or made a statement as to why there was no contact. This was true in seventy percent of reinstatement stories as well. In the '89 study of major newspapers, one side of controversies was not contacted 28 percent of the time.

The test of the concept of balance, similar to the one in the same 1989 study, shows "Last Temptation" stories significantly more balanced than reinstatement stories. However, the figures could be misleading. Fifteen percent

of the reinstatement stories revealed no contact but contained statements as to why there was no contact. Those statements, usually made in one paragraph, have minimal impact when figuring the number of paragraphs devoted to each side of an issue.

In one reinstatement story, the writer reported in one paragraph: "Campbell could not be reached for comment. Messages asking for comment have been left for two days, but Campbell has not replied."

Also, as previously stated, the principal writer of the reinstatement stories said the president would not return telephone calls after the first four days of published stories, making it difficult to balance stories.

Overall, the O'Collegian news stories were relatively free of negative bias toward the university, regents and president. Editors, as mentioned earlier, said the paper was pro-movie and anti-reinstatements on its editorial pages, but the statistics indicate they did a high quality job of not letting prejudices creep onto the news pages.

Positive bias was nearly non-existent, but negative bias also occurred in insignificant numbers in the newspaper's news coverage of the campus controversies.

Summary

A study of 849 items of bias in 64 stories and nine photographs about "The Last Temptation of Christ" and reinstatement of athletes shows the coverage significantly neu-

tral and no significant difference in the relationship of bias and subject matter.

Of the 849 items, 812 were classified by the coders as neutral, 32 as negatively biased and five as positively biased. That translates into 96 percent neutral, less than 1 percent positive and the remainder negative.

Tests also reveal no significant difference in fairness shown to the two major stories. In more than 80 percent of "Last Temptation" stories, reporters successfully contacted both sides or included statements in their stories as to why contact was not made. Seventy percent of reinstatement stories included successful contact or an explanation.

Balance of the two stories was significantly different with movie stories more balanced than reinstatement stories. Movie stories were split 58.8 percent to 41.2 percent in amount of space devoted to the two sides of the issue, while reinstatement stories might be misleading, since administrators often would not comment or were unavailable for comment, thus reducing the number of paragraphs devoted to that side of the story.

Findings supported five of the six hypotheses. The data revealed:

1. No statistically significant frequency of positive or negative bias in the O'Collegian's two major news stories in academic year 1989-90.

2. No statistically significant frequency of positive or negative bias in "Last Temptation" coverage.
3. No statistically significant frequency of positive or negative bias in reinstatement coverage.
4. No statistically significant relationship between frequency of bias and subject matter.
5. No statistically relationship between concept of fairness and subject matter.

Only the sixth hypothesis was rejected by the findings. The research showed a significant difference in the relationship between concept of balance and subject matter.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

Two major campus news stories confronted The Daily O'Collegian in academic year 1989-90 when the university regents temporarily banned the showing of the controversial movie, "The Last Temptation of Christ," and the university president reinstated seven athletes who were not academically eligible to stay in school.

Both events attracted state and some national attention to Oklahoma State University.

They provoked gubernatorial intervention, protests from some faculty and students, and the movie issue included a lawsuit filed against the university and regents by the ACLU on behalf of a group of faculty and students calling themselves the Committee for the First Amendment.

The O'Collegian published 41 front-page news stories in the six weeks of the movie controversy, and 23 page-one stories when it broke the news about the reinstatement of athletes.

The O'Collegian's coverage of both events won national and regional awards for journalism excellence. However, some critics said the coverage projected too much negative news about the university and was unfair to university administrators and regents.

The purpose of this research was to determine by content analysis if stories about the topics were slanted, contained bias or were unfair or unbalanced.

The theoretical framework was based upon the belief that the media have a responsibility to the public under the social responsibility theory.

The theory and media codes were applied to the O'Collegian's coverage to determine if the newspaper acted responsibly and if its coverage was objective, fair and balanced, as the journalism awards would indicate.

This study utilized content analysis to measure frequencies of bias and the concepts of fairness and balance, as established in published studies, and applied the measurements to O'Collegian coverage of the events in 1989-90.

To do this, the research attempted to replicate parts of the methodologies of four previous endeavors: "Covering Conflict and Controversy: Measuring Balance, Fairness, Defamation," by Todd F. Simon, Fredrick Fico and Stephen Lacy in 1989; "How Time Stereotyped Three U.S. Presidents," by John C. Merrill in 1965; "Time Magazine Revisited: Presidential Stereotypes Persist" by Fred Fedler, Mike Meeske and Joe Hall in 1979; and "Time and Newsweek Favor John F. Kennedy, Criticize Robert and Edward Kennedy" by Fedler, Meeske and Ron Smith in 1983.

Categories of bias used to determine objectivity were formulated from the previous studies: attribution bias,

adjective/adverb bias, outright opinion, contextual bias, headline bias and photographic bias.

The concept of fairness was measured by determining if contact was made with someone representing the two major sides of controversy, and the concept of balance was measured by using the absolute value of the difference of paragraphs devoted to the two sides in each story.

Six specific hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is no significant frequency of positive or negative bias in the O'Collegian's two major news stories in academic year 1989-90.
2. There is no significant frequency of positive or negative bias in "Last Temptation" coverage.
3. There is no significant frequency of positive or negative bias in reinstatement coverage.
4. There is no significant relationship between frequency of bias and subject matter.
5. There is no relationship between concept of fairness and subject matter.
6. There is no relationship between concept of balance and subject matter.

All front-page news stories published within the periods of the controversies were analyzed in the study. In total, 64 stories--41 movie and 23 reinstatement--and nine photos were examined.

Two coders worked independently in reading the articles. They recorded instances of bias in positive, nega-

tive and neutral categories, and recorded the concepts of fairness and balance. Coders met to discuss items of disagreement or ambiguity in an attempt to reach common agreements. Articles or points in which no agreement could be reached were discarded from the study.

Coders identified 849 occurrences of bias in the study. As data collected were nominal, chi-square analysis was used to examine content differences and relationships in the stories. The 95 percent level of confidence was used to determine which differences were statistically significant.

The findings supported the first five hypotheses but rejected the sixth.

Chi-square analysis shows the coverage significantly neutral and no significant difference in the relationship of bias and subject matter.

Of the 849 items, the coders classified 812 as neutral, 32 as negatively biased and five as positively biased.

Tests showed no significant difference in fairness shown between the two major stories. More than 80 percent of "Last Temptation" stories successfully contacted both sides or contained statements as to why contact was not made. Seventy percent of reinstatement stories had successful contact or explanation.

Balance of the two stories is significantly different with movie stories more balanced than reinstatement sto-

ries. Movie stories were split 58.8 percent to 41.2 percent in amount of space devoted to the two sides of the issue, while reinstatement stories were divided 74.5 percent to 25.5 percent. However, figures for reinstatement stories might be misleading since administrators often would not comment or were unavailable for comment, thus reducing the number of paragraphs devoted to that side of the story.

Discussion

Because the study deals with the universe of all locally written, front-page stories published in roughly two six-week periods in fall 1989 and spring 1990, few, if any, generalizations should be made beyond this group of stories.

Also, because of the transient nature of student-news-paper staffs and the shifting personalities of staffs caused each semester by changing editors-in-chief, it is difficult to generalize beyond this group of student journalists.

Editors said the O'Collegian was pro-movie and anti-reinstatements on the editorial pages, but steps were taken to ensure objectivity or at least the appearance of objectivity on the news pages. The findings of this study indicate the editors were effective in their efforts not to allow those prejudices to spill onto the news pages.

Instances of negative bias did occur, but they were few in number. Contributing factors could be reporting that was overly zealous, sloppy editing, time limitations caused by imminent deadlines and space limitations for headlines. Overall, news pages indicate objective reporting, relatively free of bias in coverage of the events.

However, the editorial pages show the staff was adamant in its support for First Amendment rights to see the movie and unyielding in stating the university's academic mission and questioning the ethics involved in reinstating the athletes.

Perhaps the charges of unfairness by critics were generated by the editorials and columns of opinion. The critical letter from regents CEO Jerrell Chesney, for example, was in response to a column of opinion on the editorial page, not coverage on the news pages.

Another factor could be that readers sometimes confuse news pages that are designed to provide objective accounts of news events and editorial pages that offer opinions and a public forum for free expression. Also, the O'Collegian editorial page, published twice weekly in 1989-90, probably has a higher impact in a traditionally 8- to 10-page paper, as was the O'Collegian in 1989-90, than the editorial page in major newspapers containing many more pages.

Even though few generalizations can be made beyond the 1989-90 staff and time period, the analysis can be used to determine the quality of stories of a college student news-

paper, The Daily O'Collegian, in its coverage of two specific controversies involving the school's president and regents. Some generalizations about findings could be projected toward the content of future O'Collegian coverage of similar events and coverage of news events, especially ones involving administrators, regents and authority figures. This research could be used as an educational tool to evaluate performances at the O'Collegian and help its leadership assess the newspaper's performances and social responsibility roles.

Conclusions

The student staff at The Daily O'Collegian faced a unique situation when two major news stories broke in academic year 1989-90. It undoubtedly was quite a challenging and educational experience for the young editors and reporters.

The O'Collegian coverage drew accolades from journalism experts and criticism from some readers, university administrators and regents.

For its efforts, the newspaper produced the first runner-up for College Journalist of the Year and received a regional Pacemaker Award and an All-American rating from the Associated College Press. Its coverage also received national awards from the William Randolph Hearst Foundation and regional awards from the Society of Professional Journalists and the Southwestern Journalism Congress.

The author concluded that the O'Collegian was deserving of its national and regional awards for journalism excellence.

This study shows overall coverage was objective with 96 percent of occurrences of bias classified as neutral. Positive bias was almost non-existent, and although negative bias did occur, its frequency was relatively low.

The previously cited critique by the Associated Collegiate Press sums the matter up from the viewpoint of outside critical judges: "Publication is very well-done. Overall, publication is first-class."

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APPENDIX A

REPRINTS OF SAMPLE COVERAGE OF
"THE LAST TEMPTATION OF CHRIST"

Decision outrages faculty

by Hollis Cantrell
Staff Writer

A group of Oklahoma State University professors met Sunday and ridiculed the Board of Regents for postponing indefinitely the showing of "The Last Temptation of Christ."

The faculty members also criticized the regents for asking administrators to answer a list of 10 legal and ethical questions before the regents decide whether to allow the controversial film to be shown on campus. The regents issued the questions at a meeting Friday in the Student Union.

"The faculty should categorize the questions, dismiss them and insist it is the rights of the students to see the film," said Robert Mayer, assistant professor of English.

Twelve faculty members gathered Sunday at the home of English professor Edward Walkiewicz to

The faculty should categorize the questions, dismiss them and insist it is the rights of the students to see the film.

—Robert Mayer
assistant English professor

establish the Committee for the First Amendment, a group promoting the showing of the film at OSU.

The committee's next meeting, open to the public, will be held 7:30 p.m. Wednesday. The location of the meeting will be announced Tuesday or Wednesday.

"CFA needs to point out this action (the post-

ponement of the film) apparently contravenes university policy as it stands," said Mayer. "Students can be controlled by administration. They can control student behavior."

The showing of the film is "not a question of church and state," said Earl Mitchell, professor of biochemistry.

Mitchell said several First Amendment violations will be challenged if the Regents bar the film, including the right to free speech.

"It comes under the question of academic freedom and the establishment of religion and free exercise," he said.

The First Amendment states: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press

or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances."

Mitchell described the issue as a "white horse" case — "a case lawyers love to win because it's all the same color and it has four legs that run in the same direction."

The sixth question on the regents' list of ten questions asks administrators to consider the possibility of setting a precedent with negative effects.

"Could any film be shown on campus?" said Leonard Lutz, associate professor of English. "Life of Brian" and "Hell Mary" were shown on campus. Does that constitute a precedent?"

"Life of Brian" and "Hell Mary" are both highly controversial films dealing with religion.

"A lot of Christians in the community are not offended by it, but are interested in seeing it," said Lionel Jensen, assistant professor of history.

The Daily O'Collegian

Vol. 93—No. 25 Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Okla. Monday, September 25, 1969



Not-so-happy trails
Oklahoma State University football coach Pat Jones watches as the Cowboys lose their third straight game in Saturday's contest against the Texas Tech Red Raiders, 31-15. See page 6 for game stories.

An O'Collegian editorial Regents ignore basic freedoms

Ignorance isn't bliss, and this ain't a police state. We, as U.S. citizens, are steeped in the tradition of freedom. Freedom of thought. Freedom of religion. Freedom of speech and assembly.

Since the Revolutionary War, brave Americans have fought and died to protect those freedoms. Children are taught to believe they have the right to read, learn and believe whatever they wish.

It's our legacy. It's our right. How dare a group of narrow-minded political appointees aspire to curtail our rights. How dare they try to ascribe their moral beliefs to 20,000 other individuals. How dare they turn their backs on the millions who died to preserve those freedoms.

This university is here to educate and challenge held notions. It is not a citadel to the moral notions of the few; it is a monument to the knowledge of the many.

The regents effectively censored "The Last Temptation of Christ," by postponing a decision on showing it. "Postponement" is synonymous for "Let things blow over."

The next chance the regents have to issue an edict on their conception of our rights is Oct. 20, the day after SUAB had planned to show the film. Barring an emergency regents meeting, the film will not be shown and the tenuous reputation of OSU as an institution of free thought will be shot.

The regents, when making their non-decision, worried about negative publicity and alumni reaction. The university is a tool of education, not public relations. Why were the people who have the biggest stakes in the decision, the students, not allowed to choose for themselves?

No one will be dragged, kicking and screaming, to the film. The only people who'll attend are the ones interested in learning about the movie that's caused all the fuss.

If the regents won't listen to the students, they have no right to govern us.

What matters is our reaction. Shall we roll over and accept an infringement on our rights? Have our forefathers died for nothing?

We are duty-bound to stop this outrageous attempt at censorship. Believe this — if they can ban a movie, they can ban a book. Nothing, truly nothing, is sacred if this film is allowed to be censored.

OSU regents' moral principles are built on sand, shifting with their perception of the public tide.

It's up to the students, faculty and staff to shore them up.

by the O'Collegian editors,
Tim Barker, Billy Berkenhite, Alejandro Gomez, Chris Greer, Antonio Hansen, Todd Kuest, Kelly Kurt, Robert Ridenour and Larissa Tatge.

Regents postpone 'Temptation' decision

by Hollis Cantrell
Staff Writer

The Board of Regents for Oklahoma A&M Colleges Friday cited outraged alumni and the Oklahoma Christian community as reasons for postponing their decision on allowing "The Last Temptation of Christ" to be shown on campus.

10 questions regents say OSU administrators must answer

- C1. Exactly how is the Student Union Activities Board constituted with the authority to independently make a decision which might have a University-wide impact, with potential implications which might be of enormous significance to the general welfare of the University and which may be of extraordinary interest to the several constituencies of the University?
- C2. Is the Student Union Activities Board or other such

- with overall responsibility for the University, particularly on matters which may have a University-wide impact affecting general public support, financial support, etc.?
- C4. On matters having University-wide implications, are there and should there be any constraints within which organizations such as the SUAB should operate?
- C5. Prior to the Student Union Activities Board announcing a

film when it is fictional, she said. "I just want to make it clear that the students have a right to see whatever they want to see," she said. "I think the choice of this particular film has no historical merit."
Erik Haugl, SUAB president, said "I think they're (the Regents) ignoring the fact that the film is



The Daily

O'Collegian

Vol. 95—No. 37

Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Okla.

Wednesday, September 27, 1969

Regent 'not opposed' to seeing film



'It is very hard for me to sit and judge what I haven't seen. I would not be opposed to seeing the movie.'

— Carolyn Savage
Regents chairwoman

'I suggest that the attention created by the Regents' action will only cause the rate of viewership to rise.'

— Henry Bellmon
Oklahoma governor



by Matt Male
Staff Reporter

Four days after opposing a scheduled viewing of "The Last Temptation of Christ" by students, the chairwoman of the Board of Regents for Oklahoma A&M Colleges said she "would not be opposed" to seeing the film herself if it were shown.

"It is very hard for me to sit and judge what I haven't seen," Carolyn Savage said Tuesday. "I would not be opposed to seeing the movie."
The regents have yet to pass judgment on showing the film, she said.

"We have not totally banned that movie forever," Savage said.

But Gov. Henry Bellmon sent a letter to Savage Tuesday warning the regents to beware of censoring information from the students.

"Regardless of the merit or demerits of this movie, I am concerned that the Regents are establishing a policy of attempting to censor the

distribution of ideas or information on the campus," Bellmon said in the letter.

The regents postponed presentation of the film to decide what effects the movie would have on the university, she said.

Bellmon's letter came in response to controversy on showing the film at OSU. The Student Union Activities Board had planned to show the film Oct. 19 and 20.

A group of Student Government Association and Residence Halls Association members have called for a protest Oct. 4, the day Bellmon will visit OSU for an environmental forum.

Many critics of the movie's presentation say the film, which portrays Jesus Christ having a sexual fantasy about Mary Magdalene before he is crucified, is blasphemous.

See film pg. 7

Student contacts ACLU, expects movie lawsuit

by Hollis Castrell
Staff Writer

While he said "nothing has been cast in stone," senior Tad Cooper is anticipating litigation.

On Monday, Cooper said he contacted the American Civil Liberties Union to "promote his constitutional right" to see "The Last Temptation of Christ."

He said he will also talk to lawyers from the ACLU Wednesday night at the Committee for the First Amendment meeting, a group formed by faculty concerned with the regents' postponement of the film.

The ACLU has not taken any action yet, said

censorship of their decisions.

This statement "makes me feel better," said Cooper, a recreation administration major.

"I appreciate his (Bellmon) support and I'm glad to see that he's decided in favor of academic freedom," he said. "My hat's off to the old guy."

The regents said many members of the religious community are against showing the movie.

"I have yet to have someone tell me showing the movie shouldn't be done," Cooper said.

"Members of the Christian community have advised nothing but support for the showing of the movie and I consider myself a member of that community," he said.





The Daily

O'Collegian

Vol. 95-4-No. 31

Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Okla.

Thursday, October 5, 1969

Protest mounts on movie issue

Students rally for film, rights

By Helle Cantrell
Staff Writer

Chants of "show the movie" and "it's our right" echoed on Oklahoma State University Wednesday as students and faculty protested against a postponement of "The Last Temptation of Christ."

Flushed by reds and dressed in black, the crowd, which OSU police estimated at more than 800 people, mourned for what they called the "death of the First Amendment."

The protesters, spurred by a Board of Regents for Oklahoma A&M Colleges' decision to postpone a scheduled showing of "The Last Temptation of Christ," crowded OSU's Edmond Law Library lawn, many chanting slogans and waving signs condemning the regents' decision.

On the opposite end of the lawn, a counter protest manned by members of the religious community rallied to ban the film from campus.

Regent Ed Maliban was contacted by The Daily O'Collegian before the protest and asked what he thought of the controversy. He said the protests are "all a waste of time. You all have better things to do."

"The point has been made," he said. "Jumping up and down and hollering won't make that much difference."

The protest crowd cheered as history professor Laurel Jensen made an impassioned plea for the film to be shown.

"The regents and the president have flagrantly violated their own regulations," Jensen said to the group. "The president and the regents have decided they are, in fact, a government of one body with no representative assembly."

"The struggle we are engaged in right now is a lengthy one. I think most of the people who have we're right are on our side, including the governor and the people in Washington."

"Let me tell you what we are now engaging in (the protest) is the first step in a journey of 10,000 miles. And all of you are here . . . must be ready to engage in this conflict fully, with every blow and muscle in your body."

A group of about 20 protesters also picketed the Myriad Convention Center in Oklahoma City, to draw the attention of the U.S. Secretary of Education Lauro Cavazos, who was visiting the city.

Gov. Henry Bellmon, who was in Stillwater all day for an environmental forum, said at a news conference, "I'm not taking a stand for or against the film. Universities are places of free thought and that should not be restricted."

See protest pg. 2

Faculty slams Campbell role

By Todd Knott
Senior Staff Writer
and Sheila Hilbig
Contributing Writer

Oklahoma State University faculty approved recommendations Wednesday, including one expressing a lack of confidence in President John Campbell's leadership in handling the controversy surrounding the showing of "The Last Temptation of Christ" on campus.

About 250 faculty members overwhelmingly voted in the recommendations, including another voicing displeasure with the Board of Regents for Oklahoma A&M Colleges' actions, at a faculty meeting in the Sereetan Center Concert Hall.

The recommendation, introduced by philosophy professor Ed Lawry, said, "Not only was he (Campbell) unable to insulate the campus from unwarranted interference with campus routines by the regents, but his public acknowledgement of his lack of independence from the board inspires no confidence in his leadership of the university. The matter of the movie symbolizes academic freedom which is one of our most cherished professional values."

Campbell was at an OSU Foundation President's Club meeting in Dallas and could not be reached for comment.

Vice President for Academic Affairs James Boggs discussed with the faculty responses compiled by the administration to legal and ethical questions raised by the regents at its Sept. 21 meeting prior to the vote on the recommendations.

"Personally, I think the faculty will be pleased with the outcome of this issue," he said referring to the responses submitted to the regents.

But he asked the faculty "not to make individual stands on this issue," to a few hoos from the crowd.

He said three issues need to be considered. First, the Board, as a whole, has not voted on showing the film. Second, the Regents asked the administration for a study and third Campbell waits for the Board's input.

The recommendations included:
□ Calling for the regents to rescind the order and to reaffirm the principles of the 1970 policies and procedures letter dealing with Extra-Classroom Activities.

□ Expressing disappointment in regents and Campbell.

□ Thanking the faculty for establishing the Committee for First Amendment, SUAB Chair Erik Haugli, SGA President Elm McCoy, the editorial staff of the Daily O'Collegian and other students who have opposed the regents' interference in the showing of the film.

"They have displayed maturity and sound judgment in standing for rights and free speech," the recommendation said.

See faculty pg. 2



Staff photo by Antonio Mancini

Brothers in arms

Brian Miller, left, and Johnny Hays said they attended the protest "to raise hell and tell the regents what we think." Miller said, "No way I settle for somebody else telling me what I can see."

The Daily
O'Collegian
 Vol. 95—No. 37 Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Okla. Westland, October 13-14, 1989

Regents yield to 'Temptation'

Chesney quits after 'yes' vote

by Todd Kaest
 Senior Staff Writer

Oklahoma State University students won a three-week emotion-packed battle for the right to see "The Last Temptation of Christ" on campus when the university's regents voted Friday to let the administration decide to show the film.

But it cost the Board of Regents for Oklahoma A&M Colleges a chief executive officer.

H. Jerrell Chesney resigned after the vote at Friday's special meeting because he said he had seen the film and though he believed the board's decision was correct, "I do not support and, in fact, renounce the film and its promotion."

His resignation followed a 6-2-1 vote to send final approval of the film's showing to the administration. Robert Robbins and Jack Craig voted against the motion while John Montgomery, a Baptist deacon, abstained.

President John Campbell said the film would be shown on its scheduled dates next Thursday, Friday and Saturday, but a disclaimer needed to be added showing the university neither agreed or disagreed with the film's content.

The regents' decision came the day after a federal judge delayed an injunction against the request to allow the film to be shown on campus. The lawsuit was filed in U.S. District Court of the Northern District of Oklahoma on behalf of a minister, four students, and the Committee for the First Amendment, an ad hoc committee of more than 100 faculty and students.

Chesney was among administrators, faculty and students who testified in the hearing Thursday.

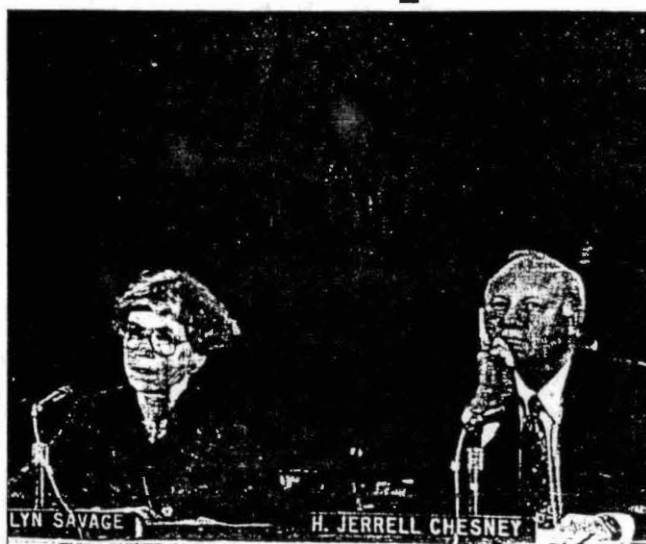
Chesney said, "Actions initiated by me . . . were not motivated on content of the film," but rather to conduct an objective inquiry of the issues at stake.

Chesney, who has been on the board for 15 years, said he had projects to finish and would "not leave this board in a lurch."

About finding a replacement, regents chairwoman Carolyn Savage said, "We don't want to think about that yet."

Regent Robert Robbins emotionally responded when Chesney resigned: "You people may have won the war but you lost a great man on this board. You people shot yourself in the foot."

see Regents, pg. 13



The final hour
 Carolyn Savage and H. Jerrell Chesney listen to statements about the proposed showing of the "The Last Temptation

of Christ." Friday afternoon. Chesney announced his resignation after the Regents voted to allow the film showing.

CFA 'astonished' at decision

by Matt Malle
 Staff Reporter

Leaders of the Committee for the First Amendment said they were "astonished" by a decision of the Oklahoma A&M Board of Regents Friday, ending what many students and faculty had called an attempt at censorship at the university.

"My reaction is astonishment," said Lionel Jensen, co-chairman of the CFA.

The regents approved a motion by regent L. E. "Dana" Stringer to allow the Oklahoma State University administration to decide if the film, "The Last Temptation of Christ," should play on campus.

In more than three hours of discussion and at times heated debate, CFA representatives criticized the regents for censoring the scheduled showing of the film.

More than 130 persons watched as the regents spoke. The regents maintained they intervened in the movie's presentation only to review the rules.

"I do believe it was censorship," said Richard Cummins, CFA co-chairman.

Regents' Chairwoman Carolyn Savage interrupted Cummins' comments about censorship as they debated the matter.

After the decision, Cummins said the university would not suffer because of the movie: "The university is going to suffer because they (the regents) decided to censor the film and got egg on their face."

Media from across the state watched as Jensen presented the regents with a petition with about 2,000 signatures supporting the right to see the film.

More than 100 students and faculty formed the CFA following a regents' decision Sept. 22 to postpone the film's showing.

The CFA issued a prepared statement following the decision.

"Unfortunately, the Regents' imprudent actions have done irreparable damage to campus morale and to the university's national reputation," the statement said. "We believe that, regardless of their decision today, the Board of Regents acted improperly in judging the film's suitability based upon its content."

CFA co-chairman Jensen said the committee's life might not end with the regents' decision.

"If we continue to exist, then things like this won't happen in the future," Jensen said.

A CFA meeting is tentatively scheduled for Oct. 23, Jensen said.

Resigning executive ends 15-year career

by Robert Edinger
 Managing Editor

Chief Executive Officer H. Jerrell Chesney shocked members of the Oklahoma Board of Regents for A&M Colleges by resigning Friday, saying he would not work for a university which shows the controversial movie, "The Last Temptation of Christ."

"This most shameful portrayal of him (Jesus) is what gives rise to my personal decision," Chesney said.

Chairwoman Carolyn Savage wept as Chesney announced his decision, capping a 15 year career with the board.

"It's a great loss to the state of Oklahoma," said regent Robert Robbins. "I don't know if I want to serve on the board without



H. JERRELL CHESNEY

APPENDIX B

REPRINTS OF SAMPLE COVERAGE OF
THE REINSTATEMENT OF ATHLETES



The Daily

O'Collegian

Vol 95—No 87

Oklahoma State University Stillwater, Okla

Tuesday, January 21, 1990

7 athletes with low grades reinstated

By Robert A. Ridenour
Copy Editor

Seven Oklahoma State University football players were allowed to remain in school after failing to meet minimum grade requirements for enrollment at OSU university officials said Monday.

Cindy Ross, director of Academic Affairs Administration, said she was told on Jan. 11 to reinstate five players in an academic assessment program after they had failed to meet requirements to remain enrolled in the program, which is a probationary period for failing students. Students must make a 2.0 cumulative grade point average in 15 hours of classes to remain in school.

When asked why she reinstated the five players, Ross said "Because of the sensitivity of the issue, I refer you to President John Campbell for an answer."

Ross said, "Exceptions were made at another level higher than mine and five students were readmitted who did not meet the criteria."

"Why, I can't answer. I was told to."

Vice President for Academic Affairs James Boggs said he knew seven players had been allowed to stay in school although their grades were too low.

Boggs knew who made the order, but when asked who the order came from, he said, "I don't want to answer that."

He said he did not make the decision. OSU president Campbell was unavailable for comment Monday. He said Friday that he had asked Dean of Arts and Sciences Smith Flott to readmit a player whose grades were not high enough to be enrolled.

Exceptions were made at another level higher than mine and five students were readmitted who did not meet the criteria. Why I can't answer."

—Cindy Ross,
Director of Academic
Affairs Administration

"There's a number of things being reviewed about the assessment program," Campbell said Friday. "One of the things we're going to look at is if athletes are being treated the same as other students."

Ross said that in addition to the five players whom she allowed back into the

academic assessment program, one player was allowed into the College of Business and another was reinstated into the College of Arts and Sciences.

Robert Sandmeyer, dean of the College of Business, said a player was enrolled into the Business College after Ross called and asked that the player be allowed into the college.

Sandmeyer said he did not believe the player's grades were high enough to be enrolled. At OSU, students must have either a 1.6 GPA in 36 hours, 1.8 in 36 to 72 hours or a 2.0 in over 72 hours to remain enrolled.

When asked if he thought Campbell had requested the reinstatements, Sandmeyer said, "I guess that's what happened."

Athletic Director Myron Roderick said

Monday that the seven players "aren't in school. That's all I have to say, period. I think this is being blown out of proportion."

Ross said all seven players had completed a probationary period in the academic assessment program designed for students who are failing in regular college enrollment. Of the 234 students in the program, Ross said 110 failed.

She said three of the five players allowed back into the program had appealed her initial decision to not allow them to re-enroll. Also, Ross said "I had other students who appealed and we were consistent in that they weren't reinstated."

All seven were "given every opportunity" to pull their grades up, Ross said.



The Daily

O'Collegian

Vol. 95—No. 90

Oklahoma State University Stillwater, Okla.

Wednesday, January 24, 1990

Campbell takes blame for reinstatements

By Robert A. Ridenour
Copy Editor

Oklahoma State University President John R. Campbell said Tuesday he is "solely responsible" for the readmission of seven football players to the university after they had been suspended for low grades.

"I'm solely responsible," Campbell said. "I take all the blame."

Campbell said he ordered the players be reinstated after OSU coaches told him during the first week of the spring semester which players the coaches felt "deserved

another chance."

"I received a list of a number of athletes who were falling from the admissions office," he said. "I discussed with the coaches which players they thought would make an effort to get their grades up and I requested they (the players) be reinstated."

Campbell said "a lot of factors" led to his order to reinstate the players. Academic Affairs Administration director Cindy Ross said Monday she had been told to reinstate seven football players on Jan. 11 after they had completed a probationary period and failed to

raise their grades. She would not say who had told her to make exceptions for the players, but said "because of the sensitivity of the issue, I refer you to President John Campbell for an answer."

Campbell would not say if the seven players had since withdrawn from school.

The OSU regents said Tuesday that five players had withdrawn from the university. The five players, freshman Brandon Colbert, sophomore Les Keith, freshman Cornell Cannon, freshman Ricky Blocker, and freshman Elmer Williams all

withdrew from school late Friday, said Glen Jones, OSU registrar.

Colbert, a junior nose guard from El Reno, and Keith, a split end from McAlester both enrolled in El Reno Junior College Monday, according to the El Reno Junior College admissions office.

Blocker, Williams and Cannon were readmitted at Northeastern Oklahoma Junior College Monday because they did not meet the school's requirements, according to a secretary in NEJC's admission office.

Campbell said he reinstated the students because he felt "we owe

it to them to do everything possible to get them a degree."

"These students are viewing films, lifting weights, running and practicing for 30 to 40 hours a week during the fall semester," Campbell said. "We're asking a lot of them and I think we owe them something. As a university we are obligated to help them out academically and not just use them."

"We can't always treat students and athletes the same, because they (athletes) have a tremendous amount of pressure on them."

Carlton Savage, chairman of

the Board of Regents for Oklahoma A&M Colleges, said Tuesday she had not talked to Campbell about his order to reinstate the players because he had been in Kansas City since Monday.

Campbell said he would release a public statement on his actions Wednesday.

"It certainly is something we (the regents) don't condone," Savage said. "But I can't sit and judge without first knowing all the facts."

Savage said Campbell had not notified her that he would be issuing Campbell pg. 2



The Daily

O'Collegian

Vol 95—No 92

Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Okla

Weekend, January 26-27, 1990

Bellmon requests investigation by regents

By Robert A. Ridenour
Copy Editor

Gov. Henry Bellmon requested Thursday that the Board of Regents for Oklahoma A&M Colleges investigate Oklahoma State University President John Campbell's order to reinstate seven football players that did not meet enrollment requirements.

In a letter to regents Chairwoman Carolyn Savage Bellmon instructed the board to investigate the reinstatements and report its findings to the Speaker of the Oklahoma House of Representatives Steve Lewis and the Senate Pro Tempore Robert Culliton.

"Recent news reports indicate the possibility of inequitable

Academic adviser explains reinstatement

By Robert A. Ridenour
Copy Editor

An academic adviser said Thursday that President John Campbell ordered Academic Affairs Administration director Cindy Ross to reinstate seven football players "regardless of the rules" in Campbell's office in the presence of Athletic Director Myron Roderick and football coach Pat Jones.

Scott Purkeypile, who has counseled all seven of the players requirement of equal protection," Bellmon said.

Bellmon also wrote a letter instructing the chairman of the Oklahoma State Board of Regents, Jim Barnes, to form a subcommittee of the state regents to "participate actively in the OSU investigation."

Savage said Wednesday she has spoken to other regents and their investigation will begin "as soon as possible."

"We need to get down and find out what the facts are," Savage

that were reinstated with deficient grades, said Campbell summoned Ross to his office "and issued an ultimatum" to re-enroll the players.

"She came down to the office and told us, 'This is what Campbell told me — and this is what we have to do,'" Purkeypile said. "She told us, and we all (of the five counselors) just got mad. It was totally against our personal ethics, working

See adviser, pg. 3

said. Until we find out what the facts are I can't say what will happen."

"We do want students to be treated fairly and we want students to graduate with a degree they can be proud," said Savage a

1983 OSU alumnae.

Campbell said Wednesday that Athletic Director Myron Roderick requested that the seven players be reinstated.

Five players withdrew from OSU Monday said associate registrar Glen Jones. A sixth player, freshman wide receiver Tony Brown, withdrew Wednesday.

Savage said the investigation should be concluded in "a pretty short period of time."

"We'll find out what can be done if there has been inequity," she said. "If there has been we'll put something in place as a safeguard against this happening again."



The Daily

O'Collegian

Vol. 95—No. 92

Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Okla.

Monday, January 19, 1990

Petition calls for Campbell's resignation

By Carol Reeves

RIA-OCSEA Reporter

A group of students calling themselves Students for Academic Equality is circulating a petition asking for the immediate resignation of Oklahoma State University President John Campbell.

"We are calling for his resignation because we feel we have to do something that drastic for him to listen to us," said J. Laune Johnson, SAE chairman.

The petition statement calls for Campbell's resignation, "due to unethical and unequal treatment con-

cerning academic standards, reckless use of university funds, and a lacking concern for the current student body."

Johnson said the group's goal is to obtain about 5,000 signatures. About 150 to 200 signatures have been obtained so far, Johnson said.

When the desired number of signatures is obtained, Johnson said, the group will present the signatures to Campbell.

"Change is what we want President Campbell to do, but if he can't do that then he needs to resign," Johnson said.

The group formed early last week after Campbell submitted to ordering

seven OSU football players be reinstated after they did not meet retention requirements.

"We want the students views to be heard in this matter," Johnson said.

"They need to be heard."

In a letter to Campbell, the group wrote, "This action, which you have taken full responsibility for, is unethical as well as inequitable to the remainder of the student body. The ramifications of your action could have a devastating effect on the reputation of OSU as well as the respectability of its educational programs and the credibility of our faculty."

The letter, dated Jan. 26, was signed by Johnson, and two co-chairmen, Christopher Kalko and Joseph Anthony.

The letter also listed other students' grievances, such as "unnecessary spending of \$66,000 on an inaugural ceremony," the lack of "decisive action during the controversy surrounding the film 'The Last Temptation of Christ,'" and the feeling that Campbell does "not give enough consideration to (students') opinions."

"President Campbell cannot continue to administer blindly. He needs to communicate more with students. How can he administer to us when he doesn't

know our needs. You can't do that by looking out the window of Whitehurst," Johnson said.

"He (Campbell) has responded to us, and requested that we meet with him Monday afternoon," Johnson said. SAE will meet with Campbell at 2 p.m. Monday, Johnson said, and "we hope to talk with him and share the student's views and to hear his reaction."

Johnson said he will be speaking at the Residence Halls Association assembly at 6 p.m. Monday in Case Study 1 to present on the discussions of the meeting with Campbell.



The Daily

O'Collegian

Vol. 95—No. 123

Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Okla.

12,000 Copies Printed

Monday, March 19, 1990

Campbell retains presidency

Regents: his skills eclipse his mistakes

By Matt Minto

Alumnus Editor

WARNER — The Oklahoma A&M Board of Regents gave a vote of confidence to President John Campbell Friday and called on administration, faculty and students to set aside their differences.

"Having weighed all of the evidence for and against President Campbell, we, the regents recognize that Dr. Campbell's accomplishments and capabilities far outweigh his mistakes and errors in judgment," the regents said from a prepared statement.

"All the information obtained attests to the fact that mistakes enough were made to go around for everyone concerned. Let us now use those mistakes as lessons learned so that we make less mistakes in the future," the statement went.

The regents' 7-1 decision followed two hours of closed-door discussion.

Campbell appeared relieved and spoke casually with reporters after the regents passed the motion.

"I did get a strong vote of confidence, and I appreciate that," he said.

Regent L. E. "Dew" Stringer opposed the board's decision.

Stringer said following the regents' monthly meeting that Campbell's image was tarnished.

"I think there is considerable doubt as to his (Campbell's) continued effectiveness," he said.

The vote of confidence gave the impression that everyone on the board has confidence in Campbell, he said.

Stringer would not elaborate on his comment but later said he would support the regent



Decision and the president.

Student Government Association President Kim McCoy said students were dismayed at the decision.

"I'm very disappointed," she said. "They (the regents) obviously overlooked Faculty Council and SGA's opinion on the matter."

"It's pretty ridiculous that they gave him (Campbell) a vote of confidence when he's broken so many rules," she said.

The regent's vote followed controversy about Campbell's reinstatement of seven athletes to the university who did not meet academic requirements.

The Board issued a report Friday, at the request of Gov. Henry Bellmon, to explain OSU's reinstatement policy.

The report stated that administrators had some discretion when applying the university's standards to stu-



Staff photos by Matt Minto

dent.

"Worthy and extraordinary" students could receive special consideration, the report said.

Despite the policy of discretion, the board told Campbell at a special February meeting not to involve himself with

reinstatement of students to the university.

Campbell agreed.

"I won't be admitting any athletes. You can be sure of that," he said after the regents' meeting.

Campbell said he had no trudge against the faculty or

Regent response

Above, Regents Chief Executive Officer Jerrill Chumney confers with President John Campbell. Left, John Montgomery speaks L. E. "Dew" Stringer at their March meeting.

Staff photos by Matt Minto

students who in February voted no confidence in the president.

"It's not a vindictive sort of person," he said. "I believe in freedom of speech, and I believe in expressing views."

See Campbell pg. 2.

Investigation shows Causon expenses legal

By Diana Muehle

Student Government Reporter

Vice President for Student Services Ron Beer has concluded from an investigation that Jim Causon, regional chairman for the American Association of University Students, may have used "poor judgment" in some instances but did not spend student monies illegally.

Causon, whose positions as regional chairman and chairman of the AAUS National Board of Directors end this month, was authorized to spend up to \$8,000 by former SGA President Jody Johnson.

Causon has been reimbursed for more than \$8,300 by SGA since last March.

"There were no written guidelines about the expenditure of these funds, except that they were to be used for official business," said a report released by Beer's office last week.

Beer has requested that staff of the department of Student Activities develop a specific set of guidelines, which conform to university policy, for future SGA travel expenditures.

The report states that Beer found "several instances of miscommunications, misunderstandings, and perhaps some poor judgment" in regard to Causon's use of student funds. Causon also failed to provide adequate documentation of his traveling expenses in the early months of his position.

There was no evidence, Beer said, that student funds had been used in an illegal manner.

"We started out with handwritten records, and then University Accounting said we had to turn in receipts," Causon said. "We had the amounts because of vouchers, so we just had to go back, match them with the receipts, and make copies for everyone."

The original memo from Johnson caused a lot of the confusion, Causon said.

"He gave a copy of it to Kim McCoy and I, but he never gave us copies of the budget breakdown," he said. "All we had record of was a hum hum."

VITA

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