

Ebert Talks At Two Forums

UI Lacks Trust In Its Students

By VICKI PACKER
Daily Illini Staff Writer

"The University has never had the courage to try students on their own," said Roger Ebert Friday. "In every arena there is too often suspicion and not trust."

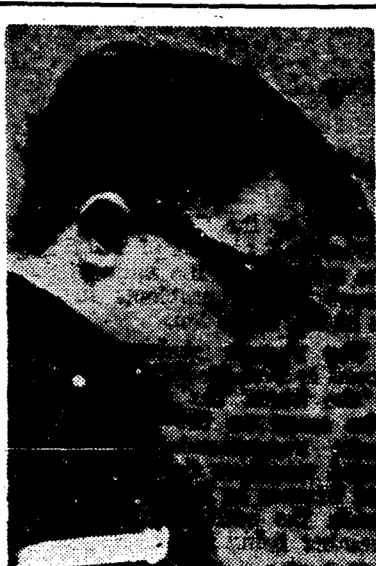
Ebert, last year's editor of The Daily Illini, soon to leave with a Rotary Fellowship for a year's study at the University of Cape Town, South Africa, spoke on the "Welfare Campus" Friday at the YMCA-YWCA's Faculty Forum, explaining the University's problems and giving his proposals for how these problems can be solved.

He said there is at present "no system of values" underlying the University's disciplinary structure." Ebert said, "There lacks in our community a definition of what constitutes conduct becoming to students" and the disciplinary system consists of negative rules, "Thou shalt nots with a vacuum of Thou shalt."

Need Alternative

Ebert pointed out the need to find alternatives to the situation which exists and said, "Unless we have a sound definition of the values and goals, we have no reason to be in conduct enforcement business." Meekness, he said, is what the current system demands and "there is nothing more frightening than law abiders — if the law changes, they will change."

"I would not want to see the University abandon a value system," Ebert said, but there should be "sound values subscribed to by the community as a whole," values



ROGER EBERT
... Forum speaker

which "we all must possess and share."

"All voices should be heard and respected," Ebert said, but we should eliminate committee reports and newsletters which "strangle real human communication." We must examine, he said, what "realistic course of action is necessary and possible."

Seven Proposals

Ebert then made seven proposals for a value formulation in the University. First, he said, an honor system should be established for all exams in the classrooms. Cheating, Ebert said, and not sex "is the worse sin in the University."

Second, Ebert said, freshmen should be initiated into the University by freshman seminars with a faculty advisor, 15 advisors, 2 upperclassmen and a graduate student to make the faculty aware of problems facing freshmen and make possible a student body with an understanding of the reason for their presence here.

Experimental College

Another Ebert proposal was to establish an experimental college within LAS to help create excitement on "a diligent and weary campus."

Ebert Speaks To Students

"When I leave here," said Roger Ebert, "society will probably not speak my language because I speak the language of our nation — of goals, and dreams and hopes, and they speak in practical terms."

Ebert told Student Forum Friday at 4 p.m. "We are losing sight of the utopianism which has always been present but is not present anymore" and "we are too realistic, too practical, too afraid of losing anything and too afraid of ourselves to ask if we have anything worth keeping."

Ebert, speaking on the topic "The Super University and the Pseudostudent" quoted a Princeton University survey which said 4 per cent of the students are at the university to rebel, 16 per cent for intellectual reasons, 25 to 30 per cent for vocational reasons and the rest of the students attend universities simply because they are "on the educational treadmill" or for social reasons. Then, concluded Ebert, 9 out of 10 students are pseudostudents and are here for "honey, false or contrived reasons."

Utopian Ideals

We have a rotten society, added Ebert, and "most of the things we talk about that make it great are not in operation in society." There is nothing to be ashamed of about Utopian ideals, Ebert said, and we should "stand up and say we want a perfect society." He asked "Unless we know a perfect University, can we have anywhere to start in working with this University?"

The administration, or the "establishment" has to carry on after we leave and thus "has to insist that what we have is good enough," he said, but it is our duty as students to become informed about the processes and structure of the University and work for reform.

We must prove, Ebert said, that the intellectual is "valuable in society even though there is no tangible by product," and we must "choose on occasion to take a public posture as a student and

a citizen in an academic community."

The intramural building controversy, Ebert commented, taught us "about how the University operates and the dangers of a consensus ideology" and that "we, as students, were used, manipulated and exploited in the University process."

In discussing the "superuniversity" Ebert said the "educational assembly line may not always be very efficient." He said many little worlds exist here which have nothing to do with the University — "many alternative worlds in which we are fairly happy."

Clear Basis

If we are to initiate change, he said, we must take "an informed position" and "invite other students to join with us in this critique." We must learn from the experience of the past, he added and "if we are concerned about segregation we should go to the South or give money," if concerned about slums "we should go to the slums and not write letters to the editor."

And if we are to reform the University we must have "a clear basis, know how power operates and how the University is structured, Ebert explained. We must have a "rational criticism, understand the structure and then go about with an idealistic, utopian point of view."