

OREGON DAILY EMERALD

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A Missed Opportunity

The Motion Now Before the Faculty

On Graduate Language Requirements Can Be Improved

The Faculty-Student Council missed an excellent opportunity Tuesday to add something significant to the present dialogue over the requirement of reading proficiency in two foreign languages for doctoral candidates.

The Council quickly asserted its approval of the motion made at the last faculty meeting by Robert Campbell, head of the economics department, which would allow departments, if they wished, to substitute another program for the second language. We couldn't agree with them more and we're happy that they moved quickly to endorse Mr. Campbell's motion.

The requirement of a second language for the Ph.D. should be abolished for at least two reasons.

A second language is no longer a significant research tool, since translations of major works in most fields are now available. And Mr. Campbell's motion allows those departments where the second language is still necessary to require it.

The second reason for a change is that few students ever really gain much out of that second language requirement. All they have to do is pass one test, which involves translating 150 lines of carefully selected prose. Usually they use a dictionary. And many graduate students say that the little that they have to learn to pass that test is

quickly forgotten. It makes the second language really meaningless.

Besides the argument that there has always been a second language required and therefore there always shall be a second language, the only argument left for keeping the second language is that it hurts American education generally, since languages are often neglected in American schools.

And that's where the Faculty-Student Council could have improved Mr. Campbell's motion.

It's obvious right now most graduate students are learning one language fairly well (at least they can read it) and one language hardly at all (they can pass one test on it). It seems to us that it would be a good idea to toughen the requirements for the first language. In other words, make the students learn one language well instead of two languages half-well. One way of strengthening this is to emphasize a speaking knowledge as well as a written knowledge of the language.

A tough requirement for one language would be better than a useless two-language requirement.

The Faculty-Student Council discussed this Tuesday but took no action. We wish they had and we hope the faculty will take steps to look into the matter of strengthening the requirement for the first language.

Speaking from Ignorance

We're getting sick and tired of people who criticize this newspaper when they don't know what they're talking about.

We have two recent cases that really make us see red.

Case one: several letter writers have made cracks about our estimate that 600 people watched the rally on the steps of the Student Union earlier this month.

And "The Almost Daily Rhinestone," a little mimeographed sheet which we take to be a publication by a faculty member, made a wisecrack about it. In a "news story" about a "faculty demonstration" to "demand a voice in the Emerald," the publication, which by its own admission is published in a men's lavatory, said 1,200 faculty participated in the rally and cracked:

Some have questioned our estimate of 1,200 on the ground that the faculty has only 600 voting members. Possibly our reporter, like some others we know, sees double. But 600 or 1,200 we still had twice as many as the students.

For the information of our letter writers and the anonymous author of the "Daily Rhinestone" we had five different counts made, all by non-staff members, and they all came up with between 500 and 600.

Case Two: We've had several people in the office and a couple of letters about one statement we made in our Monday cover-

age of the International Festival. The worst was one letter writer who criticized the "editorial" in which Assistant Managing Editor Nomi Borenstein said, "A group of bare-footed West African students (Ph.D.) candidates among them" who performed at the Festival. He demanded an apology.

Well, sir, no apology will be forthcoming. In the first place it wasn't an editorial. It was a news story that described some of the many events of the Festival. And in the second place, the West African students were bare-footed and there were Ph.D. candidates among them. That isn't a critical comment on African students. It's a fact. And what's wrong with a newspaper printing facts?

We don't object to criticism, but we do wish those who criticize us knew what they were talking about.

No Openings

The Moderator, which calls itself the "magazine for leading students," said in an article on campus leaders that "Students are needed at the University of Oregon to serve on the tenure committee."

Well, as far as we know there is no tenure committee. And if there were, we're sure the faculty wouldn't want any students serving on it.



"JUST CHECKING YOUR OIL, SONNY."

Letters to the Editor

Apologize

Emerald Editor:

It is no exaggeration to say that Miss Nomi Borenstein's editorial about the International Festival extravaganza infuriated many African students when she wrote about the (gasp!) "bare-footed" West African students with (golly!) "Ph.D. candidates among them."

Although I'm sure she meant to imply that even Ph.D. candidates were not too highbrow to sing and dance, she also implied, however inadvertently, that West Africans were primitive, bare-foot dancing people that (wonder of wonders) somehow managed to have Ph.D. candidates among them. Such thoughtless statements leave a bad taste in the mouths of these people who are destined to be leaders of their nation, and gravely endanger African-American relations, both now and in the future.

I think it would be a fine and good thing if Miss Borenstein would publicly apologize to these people.

Erich Richter
Graduate, Chemistry

Defends Review

Emerald Editor:

I am writing this letter in order to answer the critics of Miss Maxine Elliott's review of the San Francisco Mime Troupe—a review which, in my opinion, by the virtues of its honesty and accuracy of interpretation, is the best entertainment review to appear in the Emerald so far this year.

It seems that there were two basic complaints which all of the critics seem to agree upon: (1) that Miss Elliott did not remain for the duration of the program, and (2) that she was trying to escape and deny the true "realities of life."

The first complaint can be dismissed with a simple analogy: that one does not have to eat all of a rotten apple to know that the portion which he throws away is also rotten.

However, it is the second complaint which particularly interests me. I am trying to picture in my mind the image of "over a thousand students, faculty members, and adults" going to see the San Francisco Mime Troupe with the intention of discovering "the realities of life." The image seems rather of a man going down to the city dump, sticking his head in a garbage can, and then spending two or three hours trying to reflect upon abstract universality. As if there, in the midst of the stench, among the rotten eggs, tin cans, decomposed vegetable matter, and dung beetles,

one can discover the true nature of man, and of his position in the universe.

I believe that someone ought to point out that the arguments presented by the critics who so vehemently defended the Mime Troupe not in spite of but because of the troupe's utter intellectual degeneracy and moral depravity are not really arguments. Rather they are attempts at justification.

When I say "justification" I mean to illustrate that the troupe does not provide its apologists with entertainment as much as it provides psychological reassurance. To people like Miss Elliott's critics and the Students for a Democratic Society, the troupe does not come as entertainers as much as they come as divine missionaries of absolution. If these apologists can somehow convince themselves that the show which the troupe puts on is truly illustrative of the "realities of life"; if they can somehow convince themselves that the garbage cans and public lavatories of our society are microcosms and the only true representatives of the whole of our society, then all mental and moral failings will be automatically justified.

If the truth were known, one would realize that the apologists do not want the ghettos of our society to disappear. Rather they want them to expand and get worse so that at length they will overrun respectable institutions and depravity will become a sacred American tradition.

I don't know about the apologists, but as for myself I do not look to garbage cans and public lavatories for the justification of my existence. For that matter, neither does Miss Elliott. If Miss Elliott's critics did not like her review of the Mime Troupe, this is probably because they do not realize that her review was not motivated by a desire to justify garbage cans or to justify herself to garbage cans. To Miss Elliott's critics, and to the SDS, I would suggest the following: take your heads out of the garbage cans. There is a whole wide wonderful world which you have been missing for all too long a time.

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