

# Letters

## Ego boost

As a member of the history faculty who has not written (and does not plan to write) a textbook, I should like to clarify a few issues regarding the professorial use of one's own book.

The notion of faculty members fattening themselves on the hard-earned dollars of students or their parents as reported in Tuesday's paper is vastly overdrawn. Allow me to point out certain facts.

All courses use textbooks or supplementary reading material, and if a professor likes his own better than that of someone else, is that really to be wondered at? After all, a text is nothing more than an essay which draws together a vast range of materials from a particular perspective. As an undergraduate I frequently found it helpful to use the instructor's text, because it allowed me to clarify some of his ideas prior to an examination, or because — in the case of a geologist who was a horrible lecturer — to skip his class altogether and spend my time studying his text (I got an A in geology).

Also, many students don't buy books assigned in a course regardless of who writes them. Maybe they don't have the money — an all too frequent situation here at Oregon. Perhaps they borrow from a friend or the library. Some have the money but don't buy the books because, quite simply, they know they aren't going to read them anyway.

As a matter of fact, very few professors make much money on their textbooks, although there are a handful of spectacular exceptions we frequently read about; Paul Samuelson's book on economics made him a millionaire. In my own field, however, the leading text has sold 100,000 copies over the last twenty-five years, which at an average sale price of \$10 would give the author about \$15,000 (before income taxes). This is an ill-gotten gain only if one believes that professors should take an oath of poverty along with their degree.

And if, as one of the students quoted in Tuesday's article suggests, the sale of one's own book to one's own student is an ego boost, what crime is there in that? Everybody can use an ego boost once in awhile — even a professor who seems so self-assured to his students. It costs no more, you know.

**Mark Falcoff**  
Ass't. Prof., history

## Decision arrogant

Pres. Boyd has said "no" to public access to faculty evaluations. He claims to have based this decision on the faculty's rejection of the proposal at a December meeting and support by the Faculty Advisory Council for that vote. Later it comes to light that the faculty present at that meeting had not voted against public access, but rather against the establishment of a whole new evaluation form designed specifically for publication. Even that vote did not represent the majority of the faculty. Boyd's decision is arrogant at best. Clearly extensive input from all parties concerned should have been solicited and evaluated before a decision was reached.

Hopefully, in view of ASUO Pres. Jim Bernau's plan to appeal Boyd's decision, the issue is not

dead yet, and so I would like to contribute some of my own unsolicited input. Talk of open faculty evaluations often brings retorts like "won't that make teaching into a popularity contest" or "what will happen to 'standards'?" As both a teacher and student I find both these attitudes ridiculous. We are all individuals with different learning and teaching styles, different strengths and weaknesses. One student's Prof. Perfect may completely "turn off" another. Ideally the classroom is a place where students and teachers cooperate to achieve some goal. This could be greatly facilitated if students had an idea what would be in store before signing up for classes. For this to happen, we need well-designed and thoughtfully filled-out course and faculty evaluations which are accessible to all students. Comparison shopping is generally encouraged in the "real world." Why not on campus?

**Marsha Novak**  
GTF, Romance Languages

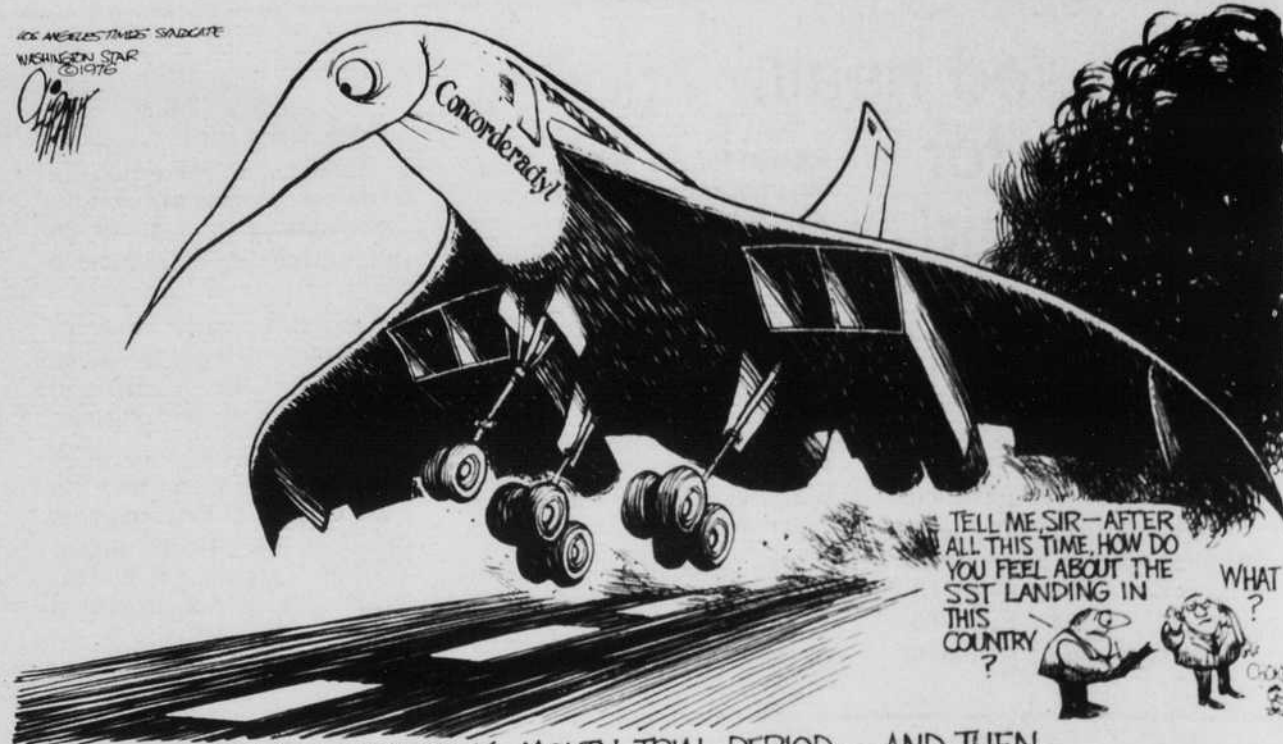
## Options pleaded

Regarding the reinstatement of the "D" grade, I would like to point out several implications that have gone heretofore relatively unmentioned: the coincident reinstatement of the GPA and the significant loss of pass-no pass privileges. The main proponent of the "D" grade, William Lamon, suggests that the GPA "helps" all students. The meaning of this statement might be that it helps the students in that it motivates them to produce and participate in "better" academics. I question, however, the validity of continued promotion of "hoop-jumping" as the right motivation. That is, in what way does the pressure to get a "decent" grade — in order to get into med school, law school, grad study, or, perhaps most elusively, the job market — encourage good academics, i.e. the pursuance of knowledge in its own right and for its own sake?

Lamon may argue that, for the interested students in the class, it is "useful" to have all the members tied into a stake in the class. Is this correct, or is it more plausible to suggest that, on an individual level, it is more "useful" to concentrate one's efforts in one or a few areas at the expense of others without the pressure of an artificial standard? In any case, Lamon, however, can't be using seriously this first meaning, since, he insists, the "D" grade "should not be considered distasteful or below standard." In other words, we are to assume some configuration such that an F=failure, a D=satisfactory (or average?), a C=above standard (whatever that means), a B=outstanding, and A=incredibly wonderful. Thus, the students are asked to give up a whopping 54 pass/no pass credit options in return for a nonsensical standard which, I don't doubt, will have the effect of introducing unnecessary pressure (for we students do have — if nothing else — a marvelous hoop-jumping talent, no matter what the size or shape of the hoop).

Probably, my questions aren't answerable in less than vague terms, and I find it incredible that Lamon claims to have hard and fast "evidence" for the support of the "D" grade. Finally, this is a plea for the retention of the 90 pass/no pass credit options if the "D" grade is reinstated. If the students are to be subjected to this bizarre standards system, it

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CONCORDE GETS 16 MONTH TRIAL PERIOD — AND THEN...

should be their choice, beyond the "choice" of getting a "D."

**Joan Boisclair**  
Pol. Sc., soph.

## Not counted

Well, what do you know. The UO has its own token group of demonstrators who pride themselves in counting the crowds they claim to draw.

I certainly hope that when they were taking their head count, mine was not one of those counted. You see, I was just on my way to class. Besides, guerilla theatres don't interest me. I wonder if anyone else in the courtyard that day was just passing through? That's not what's important though.

In Monday's *Emerald* opinion column the banner screamed, "Fight the tuition hike." The Revolutionary Student Brigade and The Committee to Fight for the Right to an Education charged the *Emerald* with not making much sense of "what the event was like." After all, wouldn't a wide angle crowd shot of their Feb. 2 rally have been more effective?

Come now. Is it the tuition hike, or the publicity you're concerned about?

Now, I agree with your statement that students "...damn well do care about what's going on in the world." Yet, your groups are the only ones I know of that coin students as being "apathetic clods."

And, what is the matter with "knuckling under, hitting the books and getting ahead; or streaking, swallowing goldfish and voting?" Aren't the first three what college is about? Studying. Improving one's life style. But, in your "opinion" you say "Nothing could be farther from the truth."

Now, I'll admit that neither streaking nor swallowing goldfish are my idea of having a good time, but I care enough about "what's going on in the world" to vote.

Instead of making slanderous remarks about the members of the State Board of Education, why not direct your energies to working out alternatives to the tuition problem?

The Legislation Advisory Board and the ASUO are considering long-range plans to minimize tuition and to improve the educational opportunities at the UO. Why not help them?

Before we all go caravanning off to the State Board's Finance Committee, as you suggest, why not engage our minds; think about the problem and formulate reasonable alternatives. Then instead of a full frontal assault on the

committee, present something constructive.

I say, "No Way!" to the Revolutionary Student Brigade and the Committee to Fight for the Right to an Education. I'll stick with the ASUO.

You see, I want someone to represent me who uses common sense and is working towards solving problems, not producing rank guerilla theatre presentations.

Like I said earlier, "guerilla theatres don't interest me."

**Greg Walden**  
Journalism, soph.

## Sound spoils

Like any other student who has attended any of the campus (or whoever) sponsored movies, I realize that at the very reasonable price of a buck per head you must expect to make some concessions. And I can put up with the somewhat cramped classroom-converted theatres; the typically uncomfortable, overheated temperature conditions of these rooms; and the absence or inconvenience of certain necessary facilities.

However, the sound quality of most of these films has been so incredibly bad that, at this point, the line must be drawn. I was appalled at how bad the sound was at the Beatles' "Let It Be" movie last weekend. The dialogue between members of the group was almost completely unintelligible, and the music came out sounding tinny, fuzzy and totally inferior in comparison to how good it sounded when I saw the movie in the theatre.

Past movies shown on campus have been no exception. I found myself straining to hear most of the dialogue in "Lady Sings the Blues," while struggling to endure the smouldering heat of the EMU Ballroom. In my opinion, "The Sting" would have made an excellent silent flick—I couldn't hear anything anybody was saying during the film anyway.

Is better sound equipment available at the University for use in these movies? If so, I wish this equipment could be put into use at the earliest possible opportunity. If such equipment is available, it is my sincere hope that it could be put into use at the earliest possible opportunity. If such equipment is not available, it is my sincere hope that it could somehow be purchased soon to prevent any future campus movies from being spoiled by poor sound quality. With all the other drawbacks present, we should at least be able to expect decent sound at campus flicks.

**Jon Meine**  
Pre-journalism, freshman

## No checks please

In Wednesday's paper (Feb. 4, 1976) you printed three large articles from the CPS. (College Press Service?). Do you actually pay for those things? If so, it should be pointed out that you are getting ripped off. But of course you know this and have asked for your money back, right?

Well, maybe you were too busy to read the articles (writing "objective" editorials I suppose). So maybe I ought to let you in on the quality of material you were printing. The most enjoyable article was the one labeled "analysis." The unnamed author (probably due to shame) told us the doleful story of the failure of Ford's amnesty program and the equally pitiful story of the plight of the 450,000 veterans who received dishonorable discharges for such "anti-war" activities as "refusing to load ammunition." As the story developed, I found out that the amnesty program attracted only 22,000 out of the 117,000 eligible. The article indicated that the 22,000 represented "only two per cent" of the 117,000. Hah! I could get better "analysis" from a grasshopper!

The story went on to present an impressive number of "facts and figures" obviously obtained from a fortune cookie. The capstone of the article was, of course, the 450,000. Let's face it, the author was obviously including everyone as far back as maybe the Second Punic War (refusing to load spears?). The author certainly couldn't have been referring to the dishonorable discharges from the U.S. military during the Vietnam era since there were only 3,500 of those. These innocents, of course, were kicked out for such "anti-war" activities as rape, grand larceny and sodomy with small furry animals.

Well, let's face it, either you are deliberately spreading low grade propaganda because you want to or because you don't know any better. If the latter I have a wonderful bargain for you. No checks, please. Cash and in small bills.

**Michael R. Noble**  
Law

## Crave letters

All people crave companionship; some form of friendship. We seek communication through distant conversation. So break out your pens and pencils or any other writing utensils.

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