

Library survey could help students

Students may soon have an opportunity to improve their present voiceless relationship with the University library.

The final form, scope and methods of application for a spring-term survey of library users is being thrashed out by library administrators.

Under the direction of librarian Perry Morrison, the survey represents the first formal, comprehensive inquiry into the opinions of students and faculty since before head librarian William Axford arrived on campus nearly six years ago.

Students should support the fullest application of this survey and take part in it enthusiastically, for only by active participation might they prevent a continued decline in library services.

Axford likes to rely on closed discussion among a small coterie of senior librarians for decision-making. That has redounded unfavorably on the efforts of library users caught in the middle of policy changes about which they were not

In the past year, that practice has been modified in the case of faculty members, who took issue with some of Axford's abrupt pronouncements on library reorganization and change in services. Accompanying

improved contact with faculty through the Library Committee and other ad hoc groups have been certain democratizations in the library administrative council, which enhanced accessibility for a wider circle of library staffers.

But students remain out in the cold, largely because they have applied no political pressure on Axford's administration as the other groups have.

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In part that failure has stemmed from the lack of visible mechanisms by which to apply pressure and in part because of the collective vagueness about the sources of dissatisfaction.

A boycott of library services appears patently self-defeating and individual complaints to administrators are as easily dismissed as criticism of the library's micro-catalog system, criticism that has been documented — and ignored — since late 1976.

University Pres. William Boyd, who effectively cultivates an articulate and potentially powerful faculty by carefully assuaging its

complaints, can hardly be expected to play a similarly sympathetic role on behalf of students.

The latter, for instance, have received only sophistry in Boyd's alleged agreement with student access to course evaluations but obdurate refusal to mandate or exhort faculty consent to access. One could hardly expect him to champion students against an administrator whose "academic" orientation and professionally elitist attitudes he shares.

Student leadership — especially the ASUO and SUAB — remains enmeshed in the quagmire of internal bickering. But such leaders as the 4 percent of voting students have managed to elect would do well to cast their glance outwards and see what they can do in a matter of substance, abandoning for a while their perennial preoccupations with structural form and self-image.

The Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation might also consider addressing library issues since graduates perform much of the University's research and feel most any failures in Library policies.

But the first step in redressing student complaints over services appears to be completion of a competent survey.

That means, to begin with, that the user survey must be administered on other than a passively voluntary basis: persons picking up questionnaires from a box and filling them out only if they feel like it.

This process, which leads to self-selection and self-deselection of potential respondents, incompletely assesses the attitudes of its target audience and remains subject to rejection on the grounds of flawed methodology.

Instead, the library administration should allocate the funds and personnel necessary to have the survey successfully administered to a randomly selected group of library users: student, faculty and administration. An opportunity for voluntary completion of questionnaires could then be used to supplement data obtained from the more scientifically rigorous survey.

The questionnaire should also include inquiries about specific issues such as the micro-catalog shelving practices, closure of branch libraries, consolidation of the humanities and social science reference desks and relocation of the periodical sections. General attitudes about the quality of library services are not sufficient to provide the information necessary to initiate changes that should be made.

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Breaking mirror of past

I was very dismayed on seeing your front page photograph and caption for Friday, Feb. 23. The artifacts of prehistoric and historic sites do indeed represent reflections of the past, but the vandalizing like that Mr. Richards is shown carrying out is rapidly destroying those reflections.

Archaeological methods are quite sophisticated, but need data as undisturbed and undestroyed as possible to accurately reconstruct past ways of life, social organizations and cultures. When persons like Mr. Richards remove artifacts from a site, he makes accurate reconstruction of the past much more difficult if not impossible.

Professional archaeologists are obligated to present the results of their work so everyone may share the understanding of past human endeavors they uncover. "The Prehistory of the Far West" by Dr. Luther Cressman, museum displays and the course currently offered by the anthropology department on the archaeology of Oregon are some examples of such public presentation. The result of activities such as Mr. Richards' is privately hoarded collections of curious items that furnish grounds only for vague speculation.

The Congress of the United States has recognized the importance of preserving these reflections of the past in a series of laws extending as far back as the Antiquities Act of 1906. Vandalizing sites on property owned by the federal government is illegal. Still, many sites once rich in information about Oregon's prehistory and history have already been destroyed or extensively damaged. Activities such as those you appear to be encouraging break the mirror that reflects the past.

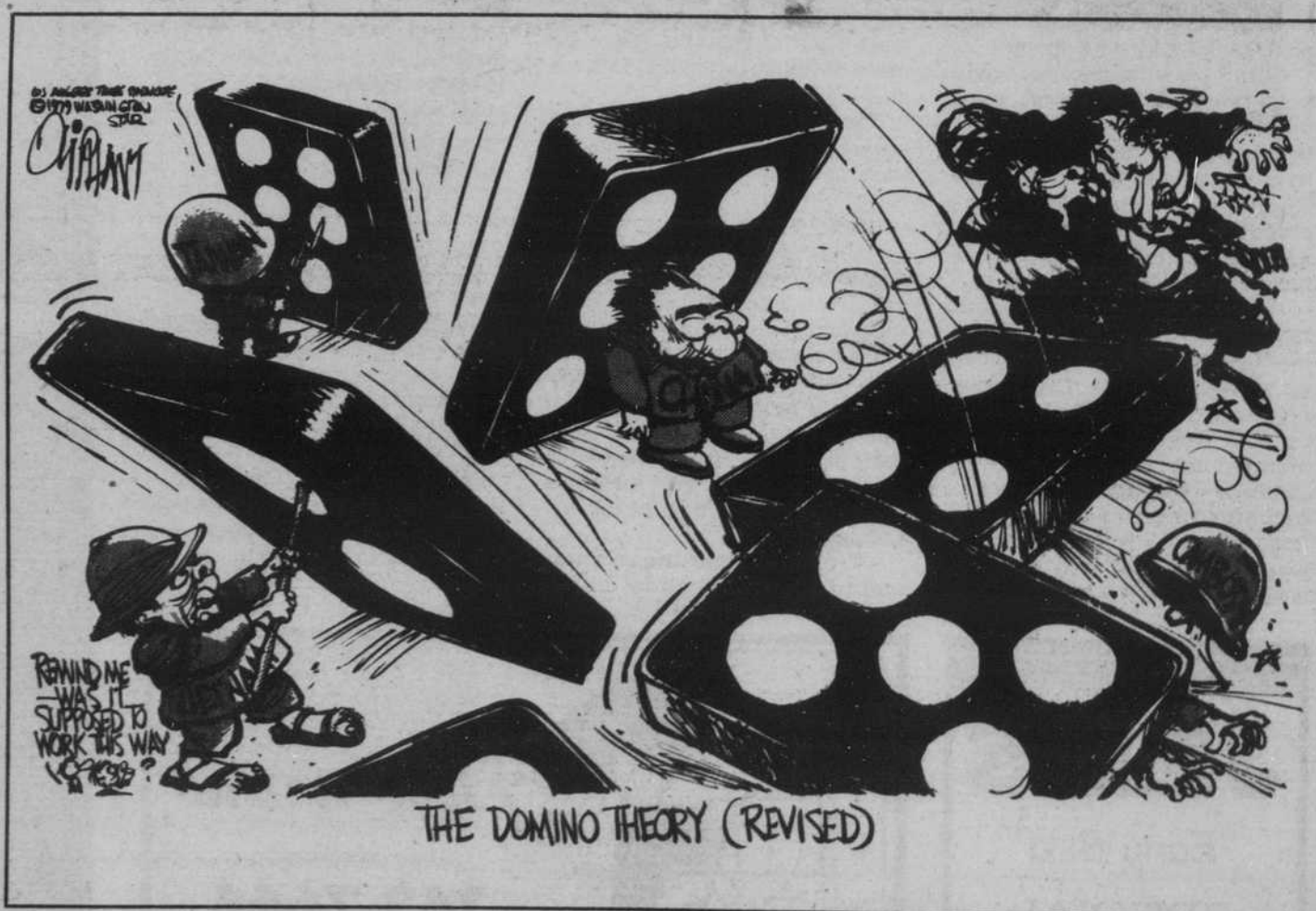
Richard Davis
graduate, anthropology

'Onslaught of ignorance'

In reference to the letter printed Feb. 21 (ODE) by J. Gilles and R. Roystacher (a political science major?) entitled "No respect, no burgers"

I am noticing the increasing onslaught of ignorance coming from "educated" Americans. The indignations expressed in the letter at Iranian students who are presently enjoying hamburgers in the EMU is a tiresome repetition of white America's wish to "keep those damned foreigners out" and their eternal search for a new nigger.

I am sorry that these two gentlemen (Gilles and Roystacher) follow this pattern of mental stagnation found so often in the history of white civilization and cannot watch the level of awareness indicated by an Iranian guerrilla's



statement: "We have nothing against the American people, it is their government we question."

Be real, fellows, stop worrying about your hamburgers and colas. This country has enough niggers (Blacks, Puerto Ricans, Mexicans, Polish, Jews, etc., etc.)

Nancy Silverman
junior, liberal arts

'Abolishing the ASUO'

It is about time that the students give consideration to abolishing the ASUO and replacing it with some form of limited student government. The present government under Ramon Herrera and Dusty Rhodes is guilty of wasting Incidental Fee money regardless of the veils of the

vast majority of the student body. The decision to cut the athletic ticket subsidy in spite of overwhelming student opposition is a blatant slap in the face to the students who pay those fees.

President Herrera is quoted as saying he is concerned about the lack of communication between the ASUO and the administration. There appears to be a more serious communication problem between the ASUO and the student body. How can Herrera justify cutting the ticket subsidy at the same time he asks for a full time paid assistant? What will be the duties of this new assistant? Will he be in charge of cutting the heart out of other popular programs?

Now is the time to do something about this. More power to the supporters of the ticket subsidy!

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