

# Professor questions course-evaluation bill

I wish to make two points concerning the Emerald's recent coverage of the "faculty ratings" issue (HB 2831).

As to the flaying of Rep. Frohnmyer, who is quite capable of defending himself, the editorial (Apr. 11) says parenthetically as if it were a minor detail, "After all, under HB 2831 only a compilation of quantitative data, not individual written comments, would be made public." Therein lies the very crux of the matter — well, one of two cruxes, the other being in the serious question of legislative intervention.

I submit that there are only two grounds on which the publication of student evaluations of faculty can be defended:

(1) That such publication will benefit

students by helping them choose the best teachers available — not necessarily the most popular — in those relatively few courses in which they have a choice. Can anyone really believe that a student can be assured of *learning more* (the only valid reason for making a choice) from Professor Anonymous than from Professor Unknown simply because Anonymous is rated higher on a 5-point scale, which is all the student will have to go on, when no one can sort out the innumerable variables that went into producing those numbers?

(2) That such publication will in itself help an individual faculty member to become a *better teacher*. Can anyone really believe that?

If I thought that either of these objec-

tives could thus be achieved, I would favor such publication (though still opposing its imposition by state law), but I know of no reliable evidence that supports the hypothesis.

As to the news treatment, Dana Tims' stories in the April 11 issue were good reporting as far as they went. Unfortunately, Tims left the hearing before it was over and thus missed some important testimony. Given the demands of deadlines, such partial coverage is understandable, but in such cases the gaps in an incomplete report should be closed in the next edition.

I refer specifically to the testimony on Keith Jackson's cost estimates on HB 2831. (Jackson is the assistant budget director for the OSSHE, not "the lobbyist for the chancellor of higher education's

office" as reported.) As a result, Emerald readers learned of Jim Bernau's attempt to refute Jackson's estimate but nothing, that day or the next, of the other side of the story as presented near the end of the hearing by David Nicodemus, dean of faculty at OSU.

Two years ago, Dean Nicodemus had estimated the added cost of publication at around \$60,000 a year for OSU alone, and saw no reason to change it significantly now. He admitted it was a "ballpark" figure because there has never been a real cost analysis of the proposal. That might have been a good place for the ASUO and the OSL to start.

**Charles Duncan**  
professor, journalism  
(Faculty Legislative Liaison)

## Attacks coverage

Where do this paper's news coverage priorities lie? What are the politics involved in obtaining publicity for a seminar sponsored by a recognized student organization of this university? How does a student attempt to convince a reporter, from a paper that is funded by his incidental fees, to write an article about his newly founded organization?

These questions come to my mind after the Oregon Daily Emerald failed to cover AIESEC's seminar on "New Dimensions Of Foreign Trade In Oregon" on Wednesday, April 11. This seminar, quite possibly one of the best attended conferences sponsored by a student organization this year, was covered by ABC news, KZEL radio and the Eugene Register-Guard. But it was not reported on by the Emerald — when the event occurred in its own backyard!

Why? The Features and Department and Schools Editors were "cordially invited" to attend the seminar. Phone and written messages were left in their offices to arouse interest in the international business program. Three days of advertisements were placed in Emerald Classifieds. Yet not one Emerald reporter bothered to set foot in Gerlinger Lounge along with the seventy-five businessmen, academicians, and students who were in attendance.

I am impressed with the ODE's literary awards but I am

disappointed that this newspaper is not giving fair coverage of student organizations sponsoring newsworthy activities. I agree that there a large number of these organizations that coordinate a wide variety of events but I don't believe this to be sufficient rationale to neglect an obviously newsmaking event such as AIESEC's Foreign Trade Seminar.

I am not alone in my criticism of the Emerald's news reporting policies. There is nothing more frustrating than having a school newspaper balk at a school and community related event for someone who realizes the circulation of this newspaper and its impact on student awareness.

I challenge the editor of the Oregon Daily Emerald to answer these questions I, and others, have raised. Don't students of this university have a right to know where their paper's news coverage priorities lie and the politics involved in obtaining a newsworthy article within its pages?

**Brandt Handley**  
AIESEC president  
(International Association  
of Business and Economics  
Students)

## 'Unfortunate light'

I was recently quoted in an Emerald article on Dean Axford, and feel I was placed in an unfortunate light. I would like to tell exactly what happened as I understood it.

Happening to be in the library one day (I am on sabbatical) I met a colleague who said a person from the Emerald would like to ask me a question or two. I agreed with this and went to the phone. The question was only this: "What would you like to see as future Library policy?" My answer was that I would like to see equal credit given in terms of promotion and tenure for excellent service, publishing, teaching.

I also added, from my special point of view as an active composer, that I thought Library faculty should be given credit for good work in what are known as the "creative arts." Only the latter bit was quoted, if I remember right, which placed me in a position of special pleader.

I definitely did not foresee that snippet being placed in an article represented as "analysis" nor did I expect it to

have any critical bearing on any person in the University. Therefore I did not hesitate to allow my name to be used. Also, I am not, as implied by a correspondent, a member of any faction.

That is all there is to my part in the matter.

**Edmund Soule**  
professor, library

## Jazz delight

If the names Mark Wells, Boyd Small, Jeff Grimblich, Dean Engelson, Jerry Rimple, and David Golden don't ring familiar in one's ears (especially those of a jazz-fan), he/she obviously missed the superb show these musicians put on at the Fishbowl Follies on the night of April 10. Though the Emerald did not give the slightest coverage to the session put on by these hard-working artists, the handfuls who did show for the performance realized the abilities and potential which they displayed that night.

On behalf of the guys here at Clark (home of the one and only sax-wizard), we express our full support and wish the best of luck to the soon-to-be-famous Mark Wells Jazz Combo. Hang tough and kick ass (who the hell is Tom Scott, anyways?)

**Chris Stiles**  
freshman, accounting

Wednesday, April 18, 1979



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