

News that's fit?

Sure... this newspaper game gets to me, especially when I get hate mail from the outraged, the envious, and the just plain stupid. Granted, in the haste of a daily deadline the editorials and columns aren't always as well written as I would prefer. If journalism abides the axiom "literature in a hurry" then, deadline editorials are occasionally opinions shot from the hip.

cort fernald

sidelong glances

Don't tell anybody, but sometimes I shoot wide of the mark. Those editorials are distressing to see when the shouting is forgotten and the haste to dummy the page and make it to class on time — if only now and again — is yesterday's headache.

I usually hide out in the library when an editorial just didn't turn out quite right. I read *Punch*, the English humor magazine, and find solace for the misplaced modifiers, editing oversights and nasty letters from journalism and pre-journalism students (very cool people). My favorite is the *Country Life* section of *Punch* wherein they print honest-to-Allah news items.

The woman who can come up with the most rat tails will be crowned honorary queen of a southern Philippine province. The queen will win a power tiller, a knapsack sprayer, pesticides, fertilisers and seeds, according to the official Philippine News Agency. Rats are killed and their tails dried to serve as votes. Dried rat tails are also used as tickets for benefit dances. (The Gulf Mirror)

I don't think the above will replace Beerhunter as a campus sport — though, it's certainly more humane than bunny-bashing.

A Zambian security guard has been sentenced to six months' hard labour for eating a pet monkey belonging to a European whose house he was guarding. The accused, John Mwamba (27), told the court it "was a chance that comes once in a lifetime" for a Bemba man. He added that the little perisher was very tasty. (To the Point)

Some of the items in *Country Life* are nearly unintelligible to American readers because of the... um... language barrier.

British Rail's inter-city catering development officer said: "there will be no overnight changes. It will be a gradual process, but restaurant cars are not sacred cows, and as demand falls away, they will be withdrawn. We believe there is no point in flogging dead horses." (Yorkshire Post)

I know how to flog a dead horse — but what is "skylarking"?

We reported last week that Exeter Ladies Football team has been banned from competitions at Pontin's holiday camps following skylarking in the showers. We are asked to point out that in fact the skylarking took place in a chalet. (Exeter Weekly News)

And lest you think only the English are daffy...

McQuin, the only sister to testify, said they had fasted for three days on coffee and tea when they began to feel "maggots" on their skin. After smearing on the mustard, relish and mayonnaise for relief, McQuin testified, the house became unbearably hot and they dashed outside thinking "judgement day was at hand." (Detroit Free Press)

This last item is of some comfort as I write editorials about viciously controversial subjects such as... cheese.

Studies involving Mongolian gerbils suggest that we may have chemicals in our saliva which are attractive to other people. (General Practitioner)

"Barkeep — a draught for me and a Bloody Mary for my friend the gerbil."

Cort Fernald is the Emerald's editorial page editor.



HOW'D YA LIKE THAT? WE USED TO BUILD LEMONS, NOW WE SELL APPLES

letters

Draft advice

I didn't know what advice to give my 20-year-old cousin about the draft registration, so I called my good friend Herman.

"Tell him not to worry," Herman assured me. "I have a plan that will take care of it all."

"What is it?" I asked. "We'll draft the elderly," he said.

"Oh?" "Yes. By manning our Armed Forces with people over age 65, we'll save our young and provide for our senior Americans."

"That's ingenious," I said. "But what about their health?"

"Nothing could be better for the aged than the military," Herman said. "They'll get warm clothes, three meals a day and plenty of exercise."

"And what of the risks involved?" I asked.

"Look at it this way," he said. "They could be having the time of their lives driving M-1 tanks instead of withering away in nursing homes playing shuffleboard."

"I suppose, but modern military technology is awesome," I said. "It could overwhelm them."

"Not so," Herman said. "Most of the time they'll just look at a screen and let a computer do all the work. It wouldn't be any different for them than watching 'Bowling for Dollars.'"

"But," I thought aloud. "Wouldn't World War II veterans feel cheated having to serve twice?"

"That's just the point," Herman said. World War II vets would be our first choice. After all, those good ol' boys won that one, didn't they?"

"Thanks," Herman said.

"And what's more, with all the elderly in the military, we can finally eliminate Social Security and Medicare which have been forever siphoning away valuable defense dollars."

Pete Kent
Graduate, journalism

Antagonism

I'd like to offer some advice for Sociology professor Al Szymanski so the next time he condemns those opposed to Soviet colonialism he won't receive so much antagonism.

Though you have a case of hero worship for Joe Stalin you shouldn't let it show during so-called panel discussions. After all, many people, including his own daughter, saw Stalin as a bloody barbarian. But so what if he killed more people than Hitler? If you say he got things done more efficiently, I'll take your word that he wasn't such a bad guy.

The next panel discussion you hold shouldn't allow any audience questions or comments. No discussion at all is better than avoiding every single important question students bring up. By avoiding them with 10 minute orations consisting solely of empty rhetoric — as was done Jan. 13 in the Polish Crisis discussion — you gave everyone the impression you don't want to answer anything which might make the Soviets look bad.

People tend to like the Polish freedom movement. You shouldn't have let them know you opposed Solidarity. You certainly shouldn't have glorified Soviet efforts to keep these people in line.

Better yet, to really promote the cause of Soviet expansion-

ism why don't you quit your high paying teaching position and move to the Soviet Union? You could provide the Soviet citizens a perfect example of devotion towards the cause. They especially need your help since many Russians are actually adopting anti-revolutionary tendencies. Really! Many are secretly being baptized Christians, asking for more freedom, and listening to Radio Free Europe instead of reading Marx.

Michael Cross
Junior, political science

Drifting

This is in response to "Drifting" Jan. 22 Emerald, regarding the "problem" of transients. The article begins with a typical scene in which two women are approached by a beggar. The man asks for nineteen cents for a cup of coffee. As usual, he is ignored and looked down upon. The article goes on to present an on-going transient "problem." According to Sgt. Don Ellingson of the city's "PIG" Team, these transients cause problems for the police and citizens alike. They tend to commit violent acts within their own "group," drink in unlicensed premises, urinate in public, and "make a skid row of the parks." On top of that, each arrest costs taxpayers about \$46.

Sgt. Don Ellingson and we should open our eyes, not to mention our hearts, to the real "problem." In the article, these people are referred to as beggars, transients, wanderers, and hoboes. Not once are they referred to as people. Nor are they referred to as people in our community.

Mary Barnaby

staff

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Monday through Friday except during finals week and vacations by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co.

News 686-5511
Advertising/Business 686-3712
Classifieds 686-4343
Production 686-4381

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