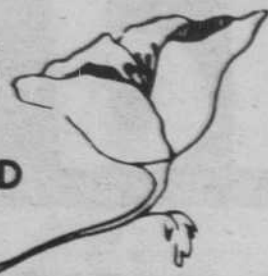


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sally hodgkinson

editor's note

When you make a joke,
there is always a chance
someone won't laugh.

Such has been the case
with the *Emerald* and its his-

Lenny
has 55¢
Löwenbräu

tory of satirical issues that
began long ago with *The
Scarlet Letter*. Today's debut
of *Not the Emerald* will un-
doubtedly raise some
humorless hackles.

The risk you run with satire
is that people take it too se-
riously.

Re: the fall term spoof of
Oregon State University's
Barometer. We thought it
was funny and in good taste.
We had it checked for libel.
OSU journalism professors,
students and staff members
complemented us. *Bar-
ometer* staff members com-
plemented us. Although we
received a few anonymous
"this-is-trash" type of notes
in the mail, the response to
the "Baremeter" was over-
whelmingly positive.

But D.M. Kornmann, office
manager of the University's
Community Education
Centers was not amused.
She was enraged.

She quickly fired off a let-
ter to the ASUO asking the
executive to join her prior-
restraint crusade to "stop
future creations." She said
the *Baremeter* spoof was
sadistic and "will undoubt-
ably create a great deal of
anger and it would not be
surprising if PHYSICAL
VIOLENCE results because
of this publication." (Capi-
tals from original letter).

She ended her letter with a
plea to "BRING 'PRIDE'
BACK TO THE UNIVERSITY
OF OREGON CAMPUS." The
style of the letter was

extremely similar to an
unsigned letter that was sent
to *Emerald* advertisers urg-
ing them to withdraw their
business and "help ELIMIN-
ATE TRASH."

I wrote her back, agreeing
that in the past, the *Emerald*
has taken, uhm, liberties in
the content of the *Immortal*
and other spoofs. I told her I
thought the *Baremeter* was a
good-natured spoof, void of
dirty words and sexual in-
nuendos.

In return she called me
naive, insensitive and insult-
ing. "People who have never
PAID THE PRICE find it
EASY to be CRITICS and
FANS, don't they?"

I began to write another
letter, then gave up. We ob-
viously weren't going to
agree on the merits of satire.

Kornmann is an extreme
example of a critic of the
Emerald's sense of humor,
but today we'll probably be
answering again to people
who don't think the *Emerald*
staff has a sense of humor.
And probably a few who
think the issue is too mild.

This year's April Fool's
edition was—like the *Bar-
ometer*—kept "clean" and
was proofed for libel. The
name was changed from the
Immortal to *Not the Emerald*
for graphic reasons and
because of the connotations
of bad taste that are linked to
the previous name.

Still, someone is not going
to laugh at the spoof.

We think it's worth the risk.

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The Oregon Daily Emerald is published
Monday through Friday except during
holidays 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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