

Eugene task force looks into towing

Like death and taxes, there are a few things to be certain of while in Eugene and at the University. There will be long lines at registration. When you reach the door to the room where your final exam is being held, you will momentarily forget everything you studied. And it rains quite a lot in Eugene.

Here's another thing to be certain of — at one time or another your car will be towed away and impounded.

The city of Eugene can't do anything about finals or the rain, but they have decided to form a towing task force to investigate the situation. The city is looking into the matter at the insistence of a number of citizens who've complained about their cars being towed. It's a common complaint. An *Emerald* reporter, while writing the article on towing, was almost overwhelmed by the number of people who had stories to tell of their cars being towed.

The city's task force will be reviewing ordinances on impounding with the intention of creating better relations between the city and the towing companies. Almost as an afterthought, they said citizens' attitudes will play an important part in the review.

Emerald Towing, by their own admission, claims to do 90 percent of the city's impounding. This virtual monopoly may have lead to the pay-up or shut-up attitude which impoundees say they face when they try to get their cars back from Emerald Towing.

While many of the complaints deal with the towing, most impoundees say they are met with a "tough luck" attitude from the towing companies.

The over aggressiveness of some towing companies should be investigated. According to one eye witness the tow trucks looked like ants on an anthill the night the Talking Heads were at the Hult Center. As soon as the concert was underway the tow trucks appeared. More than a few concertgoers left the Hult Center to find their cars towed away.

The legalities of towing cars appears to be cut and dried. If someone parks in a restricted lot, the car will get towed. It's usually posted. Perhaps the certainness of the towing law creates the problems with the towing companies, the city and prompts the citizens' complaints.

Many people park in commercial lots thinking that because it is after store hours the parking restriction is not in effect and they will not get towed. They usually realize their error after their car is gone.

The towing task force might consider utilizing store lots after hours for parking, especially in areas where parking is limited. This may take money from the parking garages, but not if commercial parking lots were zoned for parking where parking garages weren't available.

A policy of initial citation and then towing (perhaps after 24 hours) seems to be a better approach to the situation.

A public hearing will be held Dec. 14, at 7:30 p.m. in the City Council Chambers. At the hearing the city's task force promises to look into "all sides" of the issue. Anyone who has ever been towed would be wise to attend.

Ruling the nation from inside the fort

We are witnessing the building of the citadel — the construction of the fortress White House.

Saturday, three-foot-high concrete barriers were installed at entrances to the White House. The concrete bulwark replaces sand-filled trucks that were blocking the gates since Thanksgiving. The trucks were in response to unspecified, but "possible" truck-bomb attacks such as the one that killed 239 U.S. Marines in Beirut.

White House officials said the concrete slabs were "more esthetically acceptable" as driveway decor than those tacky (and certainly messy) sand-filled trucks.

The need for security is understood, but still there's something disturbing, in this free society, about the White House now being fortified behind slabs of concrete.



letters

Cowardly

Terri Dismuke's letter about the recent "terrorism" in the campus area speaks the same concerns and reactions that always appear whenever there is a series of sexual assaults. That this current cowardly misogynist has not been caught is indeed "very distressing," but if he persists I know there are many people who will be willing to assist in his detention.

However, I must take issue with the statement that we are "overlooking" this problem, and with her vigorous conclusion that some sort of organized protest should be mounted, "a demonstration (or whatever is needed)." She says, "this issue affect everyone's lives."

Exactly. We are all, men and women, affected by rape. So what makes it an "issue"? Though she never spells it out, we all know what the "issue" is: the perceived culpability of all men for this problem.

In "Against Our Will" (1975), Susan Brownmiller argues that rape is a sort of conspiracy: that for some men rape provides a sufficient threat to keep all women in a state on constant intimidation. (As Dismuke says, "when one woman is accosted, 50,000 are affected.") But this is the terrible effect, not a conspiracy.

The seeds of rape are believed to lie in childhood, with molestation and abuse being consistent factors. An increased awareness about the inappropriateness of extreme physical "punishment" within the family would probably reduce all sorts of violent crime, including rape.

But there is no reason to call for a general consciousness-raising among men simply because one sick criminal moves to town. The vague and insulting implication that men somehow tolerate rape or that we could reduce the problem through peer pressure is political crap that is based on anger and understandable frustra-

tion, not reality.

Let's face it, men are also responsible for almost all robberies, burglaries, kidnappings, and homicides. Yet these are not treated as indices of relative gender virtue, but as anti-social anomalies against which we have long-standing legal traditions. (If these laws are not adequate, then that is indeed an "issue" to be raised.)

Another *Emerald* letter writer wonders about how we might "compel" or provide for "required...rape prevention/self-defense training." Perhaps he will be happy when all women carry their keys in their fists or find a pair of attack-dogs necessary for jogging, but the prospect saddens me. I wonder if the problem really warrants the mobilization of vigilant anxieties among the entire "female population"?

To view the very personal crimes of an individual as symbolic acts in a scheme of gender conflict may be the rapist's rationale, but it should not be ours. It would seem to divert our attention from the real and specific sources of the problem, and of its real extent. I hope most women know that almost all men can be socially trusted, and relied upon to help catch these singular criminals.

Charles Pearson
senior, history

Refusal

I appreciated Bill Kitteridge's letter of Dec. 2, responding to one of the points I had made in a recent letter criticizing Melissa Barker's ongoing effort to file a lawsuit against the federal Solomon Amendment. His letter was a real eye-opener for me; I had, indeed, misunderstood Barker's legal reasoning.

I had naturally assumed that Barker was trying to make a serious argument that the Solomon Amendment was preventing her from getting financial aid. It seems that Barker is against filling out the Solomon Amendment form, period, regardless of whether this would result in her being denied federal funds (which, of course, it would not). Hence, it is not the Solomon Amendment, per se, that is holding up her grant — it is her own refusal (for no good reason) to fill out the required form indicating that she is exempt from registration.

But I wonder, if Barker doesn't feel like filling out the required form, why doesn't she likewise refuse to fill out all other required financial aid forms? Then, when her grant does not come through, she can claim that the financial aid paperwork is a violation of her

constitutional rights.

No, I am still not sold on Barker's argument. Why doesn't she just fill out the form — mark it "EXEMPT" — and get her financial aid, instead of wasting time and effort trying to create a civil rights issue where none really exists.

Thomas Karter
sophomore, history

One of these

This is in response to Debbie Howlett's column about Dan Cohen. Cohen received the Bowerman Scholarship because he deserved it, not because he was on the scholarship Review Committee. I know, because I was the other student on that committee.

When I joined the committee, I asked Carol Richard of the Financial Aid Office if I could apply for a scholarship. She said that was very acceptable and that most students on to committee were outstanding and very worthy of scholarships. I feel that Cohen is one of these people.

It would not have been appropriate for Cohen to "step down from the committee" because at the time of selection we were basically finished with our work. If Howlett questions the selection process, I suggest that she become a member of the committee. She can then help decide the process and read over 400 applications. For the time and effort this committee devotes to an honorable selection process, I am very offended by what Howlett is implying.

Jennifer Elling
junior, finance

Propaganda

A note to Debbie Howlett: Your article asking for Daniel Cohen to resign was about as worthless as fiction can get. You had better clean up your act before students ask for your resignation. I don't want my money spent on any political propaganda such as the *Emerald*. I'm sure others don't either.

Stephen Hansen
architecture

Reasons

Since the *Emerald* Editor evidently lacked the intelligence to determine any reasons for Reagan's reelection, I found 10 valid reasons that should have filled the blank space in Monday's issue.

1) Reagan advocates free enterprise, the most efficient and equitable economic system. His opponents advocate the inefficient and ineffective welfare state.

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