

opinion

Democratic roadshow comes to Eugene

The 1984 Democratic campaign for the presidential nomination has been anything but predictable. The Democratic roadshow comes to town Saturday when Colorado Sen. Gary Hart makes a "whistlestop" at the downtown mall devoting one day to Eugene of his scheduled four days in Oregon.

Whether or not you would vote for Hart, even if you're not a Democrat, it's important to take this opportunity and hear what Hart has to say. How often do the citizens of Eugene get a chance to hear the views and respond directly to a national political figure?

Hart aides have said that the candidate considers Oregon to be "extremely important" to his effort to gain the Democratic nomination. But it appears Hart doesn't really have to spend the time, nor the money in the state because he is the odds-on favorite to win the primary. Yet, he plans a stopover instead of playing strategic politics and bypassing the state like Walter Mondale. That shows something of the character of Hart.

Most of what we see and hear of the Democrats vying for their parties nomination is filtered through the media. The people with ink on their fingers, and those wearing blazers standing before the cameras tend to select only the most interesting snippets of candidates' speeches. The time and space constraints make this process necessary and understandable. That's why voters should see and hear a candidate in person.

Responsible voters vote by head and not heart — looking into the positions of each candidate from the political parties and making their choice. This is the essence of an informed choice.

Politics in this country has always been a participatory sport. However, unlike athletic competition, in politics its the spectators not the players who determine the winner. The spectators have to follow the play-by-play or they cannot vote for what they consider the best candidate.

We advise all concerned voters, be they independent, Democrat or Republican to turn out Saturday and hear what candidate Hart has to say. That's the imperative of democracy.

Law school rates deserved high marks

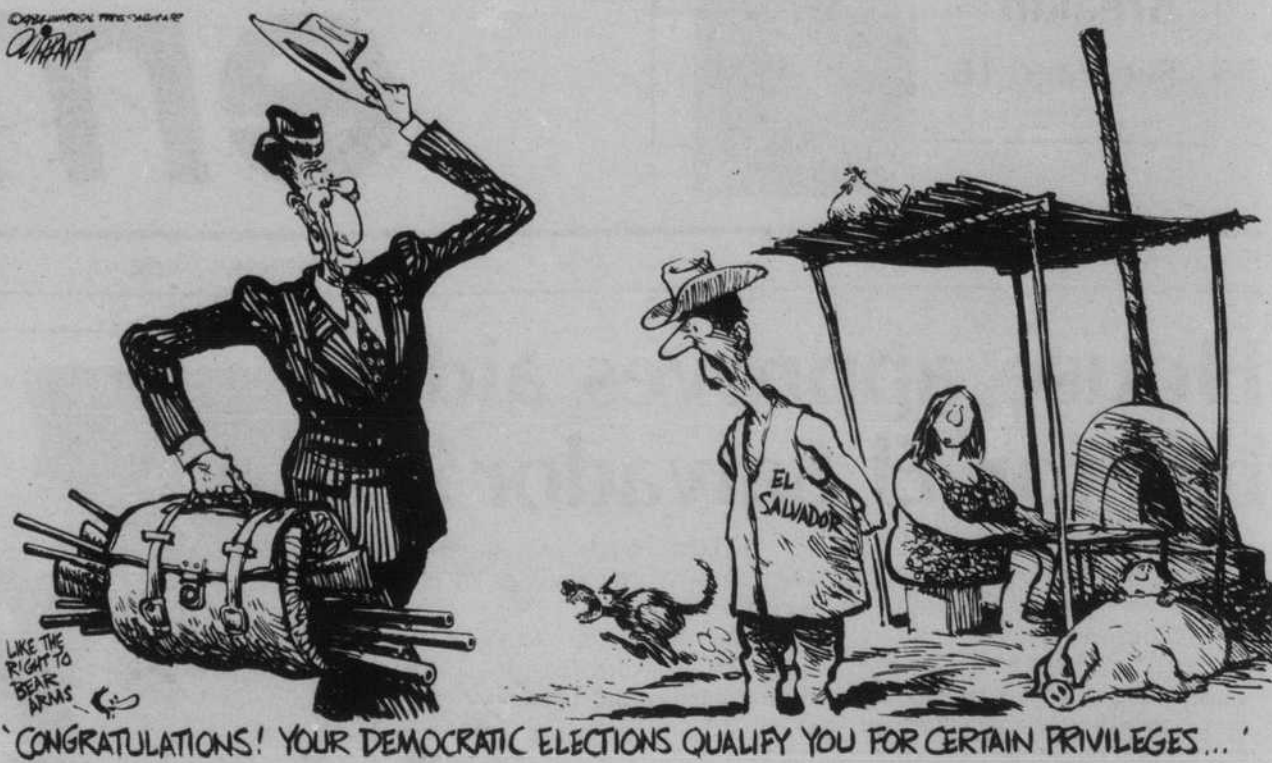
There seems to be a camaraderie between deans of the state's various law schools — they don't feel compelled to play a game of oneupmanship regarding the academic excellence (or academic inferiority) of the other schools.

This is true of the recently published ranking of the country's 172 law schools in the latest edition of *The Gourman Report*. The report, written by Jack Gourman, a political science professor at California State University, ranked the University's law school 51st in the nation. That ranking is very good.

However, the report ranked Willamette University's College of Law 68th and Lewis and Clark College 150th. Willamette University's law school ranking is good, while Lewis and Clark 150th ranking is poor.

Instead of boasting, Derrick Bell, law school dean, behaved like a gentleman and commented "Lewis and Clark came off far worse than it deserved...."

Gourman's report has generated a lot of controversy, in part due to its method of evaluation. Nonetheless, we would like to compliment the law school on its continued excellence — especially the excellence maintained under the onus of a constant budget crisis.



Eyewitness to oppression

We don't get many students from Guatemala coming into the University Testing Office where I work, so when Carlos came into the office to take an English language practice test it was a surprise.

As it turned out Carlos had completed his undergraduate work at the University of San Carlos in Guatemala city. I had once attended the University of San Carlos. What was even more of a coincidence was that we had both majored in environmental science.

reporter's notebook costas christ

As we talked I realized that Carlos and I knew many of the same professors. Memories of my stay in Guatemala were suddenly coming back to me.

"How is Mario Dady?" I asked excitedly. Mario had been my favorite biology professor. My mind wandered back to the afternoon walks we would take in the University botanical gardens where Mario would tell me about his work to save the beautiful Quetzal, Guatemala's national bird, from the threshold of extinction.

"Mario's dead," Carlos replied. "He was killed by unknown gunmen who sprayed his car with bullets."

Poor Mario, I thought. His only crime, it turned out, had been to complain to the authorities that police harassment of students on campus was resulting in fewer and fewer people showing up for classes.

It seems they solved the problem by making sure that Mario would no longer show up either.

"What about Julio Quan?" I asked. As a professor of geography and political science it was Julio who first showed me the hardship of life for the majority of Guatemala's Indian population.

"Julio is living in exile in Costa Rica," Carlos said.

"He left Guatemala after learning of an assassination attempt that was planned for him."

Although stories of death squad murders in Central America are nothing new, talking with Carlos and learning about Mario's death and Julio's self-imposed exile brought back many bitter memories of my experiences in Guatemala.

My six months there taught me things I never expected to learn. I learned that saying that the United States is promoting democracy and freedom in Guatemala by giving military aid to the leaders of that country is a lie.

I went down to Guatemala to study environmental science. I came back convinced that our government is making a terrible mistake. It wasn't an easy conclusion to arrive at.

One morning in November 1976, I awoke to the news that two fellow students, both of them friends, had been killed during the night and their bodies dumped onto the street only three blocks from where I

lived.

A month later, in Guatemala city, I watched horrified as police opened fire on a crowd of demonstrators who had gathered to protest military rule.

Then, five days before my departure from Guatemala I found myself being taken at gunpoint into a small room where I was interrogated for over an hour by soldiers. A book I was carrying, *Ten Keys To Latin America* by Frank Tannenbaum, was declared "subversive literature." Two soldiers backed me against the wall and pressed their machine gun barrels into my ribs.

The irony was too much. I was in a foreign country while soldiers wearing U.S.-made army fatigues and holding U.S.-made guns, were about to kill a U.S. citizen, or so I thought. Needless to say, they didn't. But I will never forget what happened to me and what I saw happening to Guatemalans.

It's hard for me to forgive the government, our government, for giving these madmen in Guatemala weapons and political support in the name of promoting democracy and freedom. We're still doing it today, which is why many of my friends in Guatemala are dead. In such circumstances it doesn't take communism to start a revolution.

Costas Christ is a freelance reporter writing for the Emerald.

letters

Credit due

Regarding your May 7 article on the Alumni/Oregon football game, I must clarify some points you made. Most of the article was good, but when you got to the kicking game of Oregon, your treatment of Matt MacLeod was terrible. His performance was quite admirable, I believe. This was MacLeod's first college football game and the pressure on him was tremendous.

You assume that the "whopping" 28 yard average return of kickoffs is directly resultant of MacLeod's kicking. This is not only not true, it is stupid. You should give the return man some credit, or take credit away

from the rest of the kickoff team, but do not blame the kicker. In fact, his kicks were quite good. They were long, and they had good hang-time (which means they were in the air longer). This is what kickers are supposed to do.

MacLeod is a sophomore kicker and not a junior. He was nervous going into the game, and he did very well for a young kicker. Four extra points and a 25 yard field goal is a great opening performance.

I realize you are not ruining his career, but MacLeod did a very good job for the Ducks on Saturday, and I feel that he deserves credit.

Fred Johnson

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