

# editorial

## Street vendor's act violated ODE policy

The Emerald has been thrust into the middle of an important and controversial campus issue — the conflict between University-area business owners and the street vendors of the corner of 13th Avenue and Kincaid Street.

Sometime Wednesday morning, John Wilson, who owns a coffee cart usually located on the sidewalk outside the University Bookstore, slipped copies of a political handbill into some Emerald newspapers outside the store. The fliers, printed on City of Eugene letterhead, announced an upcoming public hearing on proposed regulation of the pushcarts and included hand-written claims that "local businessmen" want to "eliminate unfair competition." As soon as we learned that Wilson did this (he admitted to it), we were pulled away from our position as objective observer. We were then an involved party in this conflict.

That involvement may have contributed to our reporting error in Thursday's front-page article. Because we didn't check our facts thoroughly, we reported that Wilson stuffed 3,600 newspapers, the total bookstore distribution. In fact, he only got to 200 papers. Wilson and some witnesses of his action called this to our attention, and we admit our error.

But some people who were upset about the error acted as if the inaccurate number made Wilson look bad. They seemed to be saying that since he only inserted 200 copies of the handbill the act was excusable. We see things differently.

What can't be overlooked is that Wilson's act constitutes a civil offense. Slipping 200 handbills into a newspaper without permission is just as detestable as inserting 3,600 copies. For this reason, we can't drop this issue. Wilson committed an offense and should have to pay the consequences. Because his act is a civil offense, not a criminal one, we'll pursue the case through our lawyers, not the police department.

We don't want to harm Wilson's business, and we aren't stating an opinion on the conflict between the street vendors and the business owners. But we have to enforce the position that the Emerald is not public property and cannot be abused without consequence.

## A nuclear catastrophe may occur before 2005

A Nuclear Regulatory Commission analyst estimates there is a 50-50 chance of a meltdown at an American nuclear reactor sometime in the next 20 years. The estimate was made by Robert M. Bernero, a safety analyst with the NRC. Bernero's appraisal relates to the probability of a "severe core melt accident," which could be more serious than the March 1979 partial meltdown at Pennsylvania's Three Mile Island. His calculation comes at a time when the domestic nuclear power industry is suffering from a lack of public confidence.

A meltdown is the worst possible nuclear reactor accident. During a meltdown the reactor core overheats to such a degree that its radioactive fuel — uranium — melts. If the fuel penetrates its protective housing, radioactive materials are released into the environment. Radiation kills body cells, resulting in latent cancers, genetic damage or death. Populations must be evacuated from irradiated land, while irradiated water is a severe threat to human, animal and plant life. The 50 percent probability of a nuclear meltdown demonstrates the folly of relying on nuclear power.



... HOWEVER, AS AN OPPONENT ONE MUST ADMIT HE IS A MOST ENGAGING PERSONALITY AND A CHARMING AND WITTY CONVERSATIONALIST. I AM GONNA MOIDA DA BUM, ANYWAY!

## letters

### Was justified

I would like to respond to Mr. Cross's letter (ODE, April 11).

The person with the nerve is not Mr. Diaz, but Ms. Parkman and people like her. As Cross stated, no one has the right to imply anything about the sexual habits of someone they do not know, but that is precisely what Parkman did in her recent homophobic letters to the Emerald.

The letter from Diaz was written in anger, an anger I feel was perfectly justified. Straight societies' attitude that AIDS is a "gay disease" is unjustifiable, as its attempt to use the disease as a means of validating its own moral judgments, judgments it is not in the position to make.

As Cross also stated, a number of heterosexuals have died from AIDS. However, he made no mention of the literally thousands of gay men who have also died from the disease.

Does this reflect an opinion that their deaths do not matter, or that they are of no importance in the assessment of the disease's implications for society as a whole?

It is precisely this sort of attitude that we need to change. The gay community takes the threat of AIDS very seriously indeed.

The great majority of us are not the irresponsible breeders of disease Parkman would have you believe.

Michael McHugh  
Eugene

### Degrading

Heaven's Gate Restaurant and Springfield Spas, a silent partner of the restaurant, are sponsoring a wet t-shirt contest for "girls".

The ad appeared in the Emerald last Friday and Monday and will also appear Wednesday and Friday. We urge all people to boycott these businesses as a protest against promoting sexism and the degradation of women as objects.

We recommend that all women consider the implications of participating in this kind of event and refuse to be contestants. We also ask men to knock the bottom out of the contest by refusing to be an audience.

By viewing one woman as the sum total of her breasts, it becomes easy to view every woman as a pair of teats.

Shawn Wirtz  
Eugene

### Sensationalism

The recent front-page article on Professor Baker's account on Korea is a common example of sensationalism, providing neither enlightenment nor an understanding of the situation in Korea.

Kwangsook Chung  
A concerned Korean student

### Inconvenience

An unfair banking practice exists in Oregon. It is called the "bank float" and under it, a bank can put a hold on a deposited check and not allow the customer access to those funds for a certain period of time.

This hold can be too long, and this is unfair and an inconvenience for fixed income citizens.

I had trouble with my bank last term. I deposited a check into my account and was told there would be a 14-day hold on it. I waited 14 days before writing any checks on that money, but my check bounced because the hold had been extended without notifying me.

I was spared from paying late fines for my tuition only through the generosity of friends. Others may have trouble paying bills, etc. when

holds are placed.

This is particularly unfair since the banks have use of the money one or two days after deposit.

I have heard of a bill that would solve the problem of bank customers being inconvenienced.

The bill, being supported by the Oregon State Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG), would set reasonable hold periods for Oregon banks. Although many bankers contend that check-holding and long float periods are not a problem in Oregon, I know several people who have had problems similar to mine.

I urge anyone who has had problems with a bank to write to OSPIRG at 027 S.W. Arthur St., Portland 97201 so that they can show legislators that there is indeed a problem.

Jenny Polakov  
Eugene

### Perceptions

I have been compelled to write to you about the article on Nuclear Winter. Dr. Ehrlich asked, "Why is reducing arms so frightening?" It is so frightening because those in power on both sides perceive a threat from the other.

They are gambling, they would rather die powerful than weak. They fear that arms reductions would be seen as a weakness and the other side would take advantage.

The only way we are going to get arms reductions is if they perceive a greater threat from their own citizens by having nuclear weapons, than the threat from the other side by not having them.

David Sternbergh  
Eugene

### Appreciation

I'd like to publicly express my appreciation to Steve Bove of Cinema 7 for his decision to discontinue the weekend midnight showings of films that were objectionable to part of the community.

Not only does Cinema 7 show terrific films and have a friendly, comfortable atmosphere, it also deserves the support of the film-going community.

Jesse Ledgerwood  
Eugene

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