

editorial

Emerald editorials have a key purpose

The start of dead week presents an opportunity to reflect upon the purpose of the Emerald editorial page.

Throughout the year the Emerald has used this page to discuss a variety of local, national and international events. We have focused upon President Ronald Reagan's weaknesses as well as the effects of his policies. The Emerald has often criticized Reagan's policy toward South Africa and Latin America as well as his domestic policy. We have commented on the state Legislature's attempts to change state elections law and we have critiqued a wide range of campus issues.

Many have said that we have rarely come out in support of anything; instead they charge we have simply been a voice of negativism — anti, anti, anti! This has often been true, but if events warrant negative discussion then that is the purpose of a newspaper.

We are not cheerleaders. We are not in the business of public relations. Our job is to report on and critique world events.

There is just too much pain and anguish in the world for an editorial page to ignore these events. We live in a great country. There is much to be proud of, but we as a society, and as individuals, have our shortcomings. It is our responsibility to inform you about them. We hope we have done this well.

Surprisingly, the letters to the editor have raised much more campus debate than our editorials. Issues such as homosexuality, AIDS, abortion and South Africa have monopolized a great deal of the letters section.

We have often been criticized for running many of these letters. But we believe it is important for the Emerald to provide a forum for community residents who wish to state an opinion.

Many of the letters we have run, we believe, were in poor taste. Nevertheless, if they were not libelous and did not violate fair comment guidelines, we chose to run them. We did so simply because our definition of poor taste may not be the same as yours.

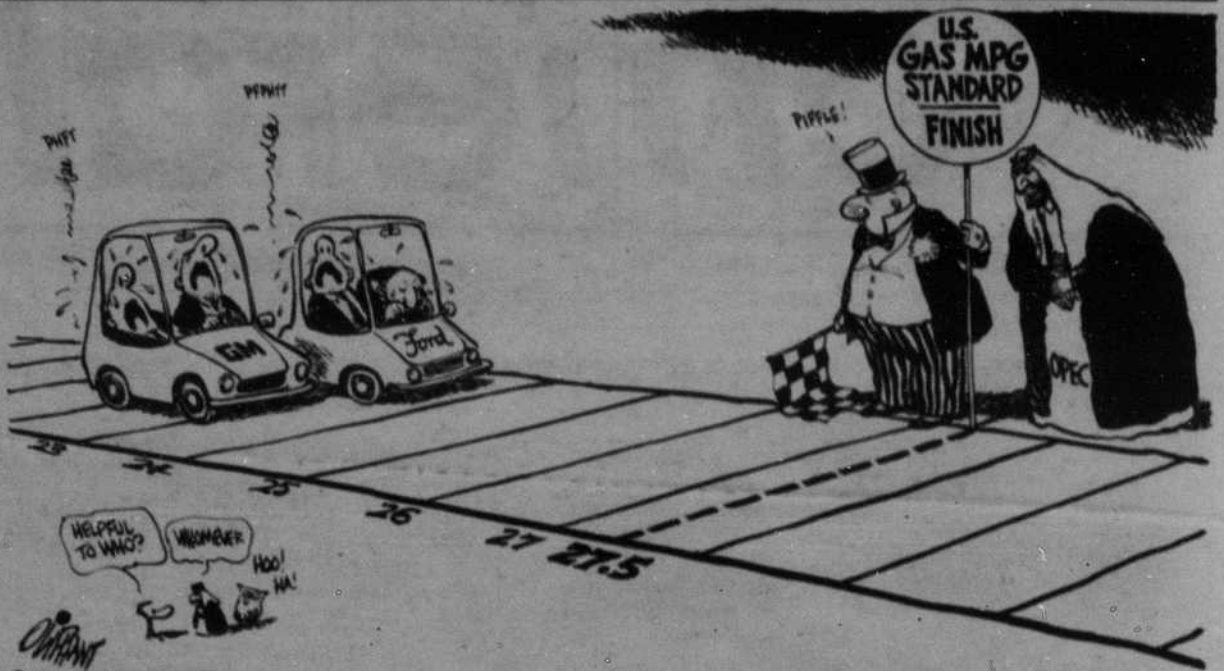
In this country we have a responsibility to remain informed on the issues. We hope we have helped to make our readers a little more informed and a little more concerned.

We should all be proud of the women's track team

Congratulations to the Oregon women's track-and-field team, which won its first-ever NCAA track-and-field championship Saturday, after a grueling four-day meet in humid Austin, Texas. The women were picked to do well in the meet, and they did not disappoint their fans.

The women were led by Claudette Groenendaal, of Salem, who placed first in the 800-meters and second in the 1,500-meters. Others who scored points for coach Tom Heinonen's team included Leann Warren, of Corvallis, who was third in the 1,500 and fourth in the 800; Kathy Hayes, of Newberg, who was fifth in the 10,000-meters and third in the 5,000-meters; Brenda Bushnell, of Eugene, who was seventh in the 3,000-meters; Sally Harmon, of Springfield, who was fourth in the javelin; and Quenna Beasley, of Pasco, Wash., who placed sixth in both the discus and the shot put.

The women's weekend victory and the men's victory at last year's NCAA meet prove that Eugene is a successful training ground for track stars. Eugeneans should be proud of these fine athletes.



A THOUSAND PARDONS, BUT PERHAPS IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO MOVE THE FINISH LINE DOWN TO THEM.

letters

Decency

The obvious has been ignored in Sharon Ellison's commentary (ODE, May 7).

For several years, Dr. Nathanson operated the world's largest abortion clinic. He personally performed some 5,000 abortions, and was a leader in the pro-abortion movement, co-founding the National Abortion Rights League.

Gradually, however, as he put it, the "accumulating weight of evidence" broke down the "mechanism of denial," and he came to see abortion for what it is.

This very real denial system can clearly be seen when pro-abortionists use such terms as "fetal tissue," "pregnancy termination," and one used by Ms. Ellison, "undeveloped fetus." Such language seems designed to keep our minds from grasping the fact that it is living, growing children who are being brutally killed.

Having children destroyed before birth is presented as a "reasonable and healthy choice" that is "frequently" preferable to allowing adoption by any large number of qualified, loving couples who are more than willing to do so.

Ignored are the many, many women who must subsequently live with deep emotional scarring, and the many deaths that take place, both in the course of "safe, legal" abortion procedures, and by suicides among women who have been persuaded to follow such "reasonable and healthy" advice.

Once we open the door to solving admittedly real and often severe problems by

destroying unwanted or inconvenient human lives, we cross a moral boundary where we lose much of what is decent and humane about our civilization.

William Moore
Eugene

Unfair

There has been a sudden change in the designated smoking areas in the EMU. Apparently there was a box put in the EMU with a sign that stated "Smoker Survey Preference." The students were to place their comments in the box. I don't feel the method by which the survey was taken or the change that was made was done with fairness.

There was little if no effort made to inform the students of the survey and the change. Tuesday morning we came into the Fishbowl where signs had been posted "No Smoking." I hunted down the new designated smoking sections and found that there are only two places; an eight-table area outside the Fountain Court Cafe, and the Skylight and Refectory.

If anyone has ever tried to find a place to sit and study in these areas, one knows it is a difficult task. There is very little ventilation in the area near the Fishbowl to disperse the smoke, rather than force the smokers into areas not well ventilated and difficult to find seats.

I can empathize with the non-smokers for their right to an area free of smoke, but I would like to see an effort to accommodate the smokers as well.

I don't feel the personnel of the EMU have given the smokers equal consideration.

Karen Heldstab
Eugene

What are you?

Dear Dan Goulet,
Concerning your criticism of Eugene Free South Africa and its efforts to free those oppressed by institutionalized racism:

Surely you must understand that the efforts of the Free South Africa movement will not involve only boycotting South Africa but awakening a sleeping world. In an age where "prudent investor" means one who considers profit over life and liberty, to speak out against this unjust policy is to strive toward a peace with all victims of injustice.

We must realize that supporting the oppressed people of the world is indeed a wise and worthy investment; while supporting the oppressors of the world is short-sighted at best. To support an enlightened policy based on human rights instead of capital is prudent, practical and flexible in application.

"Boycott" is not our magic word, Dan? "freedom" is.

Bishop Desmond Tutu has said that the South African people will remember who their friends are. I see our movement as an attempt on the part of U.S. citizens to be friends with the future rulers of South Africa. And divestiture is an attempt by our government to develop allies in a reformed South Africa.

But this is my view. I invite you to learn more and to join Eugene Free South Africa. Do not just sit back and be cynical about other people's attempts to act upon their conscience. They are part of the solution Dan. What are you?

Michael Walker
Eugene

O.D.E. LOGO

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Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on topics of interest to the University community.

Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style. Letters to the editor should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300, EMU.