

## Factors may keep Rose off death row

After nearly two days of deliberation, the jurors in the Jason Wayne Rose trial Tuesday unanimously sentenced him to death for the satanic human sacrifice killing of 19-year-old Melissa Ann Meyer last May.

Rose, 21, will now be the first person in Lane County to be put on death row in 62 years. However, Rose's death sentence may never be fulfilled — and perhaps it shouldn't be.

To begin with, defense lawyer Terry Gough believes the jury's "lengthy" deliberations indicated the final decision was a close call. True, it's a difficult situation to be in when one is faced with the enormous responsibility of deciding whether another human being should live or die.

Indeed, as prosecutor Brian Barnes said, deliberations lasted two days because jurors realized "this could be the weightiest decision they will ever make."

But the jurors probably had little doubt in their minds that Rose killed Meyer intentionally and without provocation, and that Rose is a continuing threat to society.

This may have been no more completely evident than when Rose re-enacted the slaying on videotape, and appeared to be enjoying himself in the process.

The fact that the case is to be appealed automatically to the state Supreme Court further demonstrates the decision isn't a light one. The appeal process alone could take several years allowing the current heat surrounding the case to die down.

In this respect, Rose differs from others sentenced to death. Rose intends to fight this; others often resign themselves to their fate.

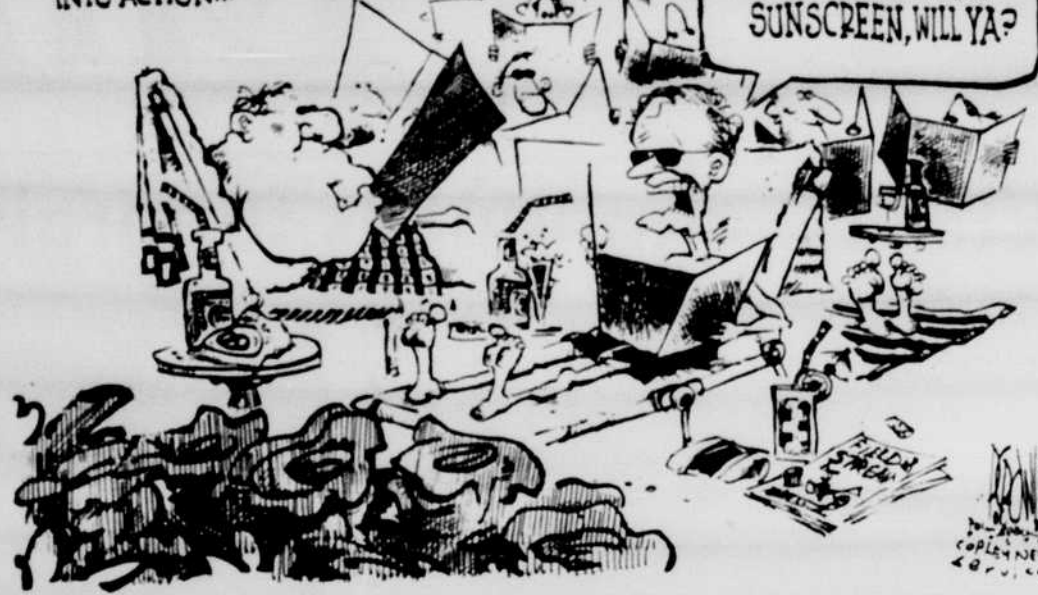
Moreover, the fact that this is the first death sentence in Lane County in 62 years demonstrates the pacifistic attitude in the community. If this attitude maintains its fervor — and there's no reason it shouldn't — it is unlikely Rose's death sentence will be carried out.

Finally, Rose wasn't alone in the ritualistic killing. His co-defendant John Ray Jones is just as responsible — yet he does not face a potential death penalty because he was 17 at the time of the crime. Oregon does not allow the execution of juvenile offenders.

In this respect, Rose doesn't deserve to die if someone as equally responsible for Meyer's death can't be sentenced to die also.

There is no question that Rose (and Jones) brutally murdered Meyer. But it appears as though too many extenuating circumstances will prevent Rose from receiving the death penalty. And where Jones is concerned, it is unfair for Rose to take the bulk of responsibility and receive the death penalty when Jones can't.

IN RESPONSE TO A CONGRESSIONAL INQUIRY INTO THE GLOBAL WARMING CRISIS, THE BUSH TEAM SWINGS INTO ACTION...



## Students subjected to lesser of two evils

Ironic. Truly ironic.

Tuesday afternoon, between 150 and 175 Lincoln Junior High School students left school grounds to rally support for the South Lane School District's \$2.5 million levy.

Now these students face suspension.

The students left school shortly after Principal Billie James made an announcement over the school's public address system warning the seventh-, eighth- and ninth-graders that those who skipped class would face disciplinary action.

The students left anyway, and with placards in tow, gathered across from City Hall on Main Street. The students later moved the rally across from the high school, where they were greeted with horn honks and waves from apparent supporters of the levy.

At the time, they shouted "yes for schools." We couldn't blame them if they've changed their minds by now.

School officials were correct when they said that they had no way to physically restrain the students from leaving.

And they shouldn't have wanted to anyway.

The students were learning to be politically motivated and they weren't just mess-

ing around. It might be a different matter if the students had left to play outside, but they were being responsible citizens.

Everyone should be thrilled that the young people in the community feel strongly about education. How often do junior high school students take it upon themselves to rally support for education?

The students might have even had something to do with the fact that the South Lane levy passed. Looking at the poor voter turnout for Tuesday's elections, it's a good thing somebody — in this case, several people — decided to do something about it.

Maybe if more adults felt as conscientiously about education as these young people did, the state's educational system wouldn't be reaching a level of crisis.

So the students gave their show of support and now they are to be punished for it. How very ironic.

The adults in the community should be ashamed of themselves.

Applause goes to the students for taking charge and standing by their convictions. It is unfortunate that school officials and parents will now make a mockery of such a just cause.

## Letters

### Walk the walk

To the editor:

The editorial on graffiti vandalism (ODE, May 8) completely missed the point and strengthened intolerance on this campus.

First, you berate graffitiists for not signing their work. When have we ever seen a signed editorial?

Second, you pay lip service to the disenfranchised, yet deny us expression. I think it no mistake you pick on some graffitiists now. Look at those singled out: pro-gay, animal rights, pro-gay, U.S. out of El Salvador, pro-gay, pro-gay, pro-gay. Do I detect an emphasis?

Third, where have you been this year? It's impossible to walk anywhere and not see graffiti for some cause. If you are indignant about graffiti alone, run anti-graffiti editorials every day. Oh, I see. Everyday graffiti aren't news. Just pro-gay, lesbian, animal and human rights graffiti are worthy of condemnation. Is there a connection between content and condemnation?

Finally, you missed the why: Why are there graffitiists? The poor, Third World, gay, of color, lesbian, disabled and disenfranchised have no Emerald at their disposal. Graffiti are about the only public medium the truly disenfranchised have. Do I sense intolerance in action?

If you really support the rights of the disenfranchised, get off our backs and out of our faces! Start working for us, not just your own special interests. If you talk the talk, walk the walk. Otherwise, we'll know you for the bigots you seem to be now.

Bryce Ryan  
Eugene

### Distinguished

On April 26, the Emerald carried a story in which Provost Norman Wessells was quoted as saying the religious studies department was undistinguished. Wessells denies having said that.

The three full-time faculty (Kim, Sanders, Schmidt) in religious studies read twelve different foreign languages. All of

us have had or are having our dissertations published by university presses.

We have published, as well, four other books, two in second editions, and one of us is now publishing an edited volume. Three of the above books have appeared in academic series. We have published 21 articles in academic journals, 11 articles in multi-authored volumes and four encyclopedia articles.

One of us has received a Fulbright Award, one a Mellon Fellowship, one a National Endowment for the Humanities Fellowship, and together, we have received a total of three other post-doctoral fellowships. In addition, we have received eight other grants for periods of less than a year.

One of us has been a member of the editorial board of a major academic journal. We have presented three invited lectures at international conferences, two of which have been held abroad. One of those lectures was a keynote address. We regularly present papers at meetings of various scholarly societies.

A department of three people

with that list of accomplishments can hardly be called undistinguished.

The department is not limited to its full-time faculty, since it also includes eight faculty persons who have primary responsibilities in other departments. They are Thomas Brady, Aletta Biersack, Robert Herbert, Benton Johnson, Kenneth Liberman, Jack Maddex, Sharon Sherman and Anita Weiss. The academic attainments of that group are also remarkable. Certainly it would be difficult to assemble a finer faculty anywhere.

J.T. Sanders  
Professor of religious studies

### Waste of life

To the SOB who stood by and encouraged his dog to attack and kill a squirrel outside of Gerlinger on May 8 — Why?

Was it some vindictive act on your part? Was there some past event in your life that made you so deathly afraid of squirrels that you had to watch this one being tortured? Did the

power of being able to cause the death of this animal make you feel that good? I'm just trying to understand how anyone could do such an asinine and cruel act without some hidden reason because, to me, it just seems like a senseless waste of life.

Cynthia L. Bolin  
Fine/applied arts

### Old math

Where can I pick up one of those two dollar television sets?

Karen Engels' story (ODE, May 10) says cartoonists Michael Frome and Michael Russell purchased a television from the profits they received selling a cartoon book.

Let's see ... They spent \$3.44 producing each book and sold them for \$3.50. They sold 27 copies. Old math tells me that is only \$1.62 in profits. Yet that is enough to buy a television?

I know, they drew the set on their sketch pad, right?

John Sowell  
Journalism