

Frat house closings indicative of crunch

The *Animal House* legend lives on in Eugene.

The rowdy 1978 frat comedy starring John Belushi was filmed here, and that's long been a dubious source of pride to both the general student population and the University's Greek system.

Now it appears that some of the campus fraternity houses have been living up — or down — to the image fostered by the fictional Delta Tau Chi fraternity. During month, the city's fire marshal's office ordered the closure of five houses (Beta Theta Pi, Lambda Chi Alpha, Sigma Alpha Epsilon, Sigma Chi and Phi Gamma Delta) for numerous violations of fire safety codes.

The violations included faulty fire alarm systems, blocked exits and gas leaks. In some cases, residents were sleeping in rooms and attic spaces that were not designed to be slept in.

These incidents, however, are more than just examples of the Greeks misbehaving. After all, co-op living organization Parr Tower also faces closure. Last spring, the University itself condemned some of its student houses that had fallen into a state beyond repair.

In a crowded housing market such as Eugene's, substandard housing is taxed well beyond its proper limits. A group of rowdy guys probably puts a lot of strain on a house. When that group's size doubles because members can't find housing elsewhere, the strain will become too much.

The effects of such overtaking are being felt now, ironically in a way that worsens the crunch. Apparently, some of the fraternities, which house up to 50 men each, may not be ready to open their doors in the fall. That isn't the fire marshal's concern, of course (and that office is not doing anyone a disservice by doing its job), but it should be of great concern to the University.

It should also be noted that the fraternity members are not, in some of the cases, entirely responsible for the closings of their houses. Many of the fraternities rent their buildings, and it is as much the responsibility of the landlord as the tenant to make sure the buildings are safe and habitable.

Where the fraternities have been negligent is within their own organizations. Some fraternity members have complained about the closings occurring in the summer, while most of their numbers are away. But the initial inspections of the University's Greek houses occurred last April, which should have given plenty of time for members and their alumni to bring their buildings up to code. Also, those recalcitrant members should ask themselves if they really preferred their houses had been shut down during the school year.



Forum

Abortion deprives children of life

By William Moore

With the Supreme Court's continuing re-evaluation of the Roe vs. Wade decision, people are becoming increasingly vocal about their views concerning abortion. The opposing sides are so far apart that it is sometimes hard to believe they

Commentary

are dealing with the same issue.

Agencies and organizations such as the National Organization for Women, Planned Parenthood and the National Abortion Rights League are leading the way in seeking aggressively to convince us that abortion is a safe and necessary medical procedure, and involves a fundamental right of women to control their own lives.

Others, including myself, argue the position that an abortion unjustly deprives an already living, innocent human being of his or her life. How can we sort through all the rhetoric to arrive at what is true and right in this issue?

Depending on who is asking and which questions are asked, polls can be used to show that a majority of Americans is either "pro-choice" or "pro-life." Frankly, however, this seems to me to be inconsequential except as a means of convincing politicians that they had better support one side or the other. Right and wrong, and fact and falsehood, are not determined by majority vote.

All of us *feel* right, and we can easily take that feeling of personal certainty as some sort of irrefutable proof that we are right. Unless we recognize the built-in trap of believing that "because I feel right, I must be right" (or, a corollary, "people I think are right agree with me, therefore we must be right"), we are likely to hold what is, quite frankly, a foolishly high regard for our own assumptions and opinions.

It is not how confident I am in my being right that deter-

mines the merit of my position. Rather, it is the validity of my assumptions, the soundness and relevancy of my facts and the quality of the reasoning which I have based on those assumptions and facts.

Here are some of my facts:

- Dr. A. W. Liley is a professor of fetal physiology at the National Women's Hospital in Auckland, New Zealand, and is known as the "father of fetology." In his book, *A Case Against Abortion*, he points out, "Biologically, at no stage can we subscribe to the view that the fetus is a mere appendage of the mother. Genetically, mother and baby are separate individuals from conception..."
- In October of 1967, the first International Conference on Abortion brought together respected authorities from around the world in the fields of medicine, law, ethics and the social sciences. The first major question this secular group of experts considered was "When does human life begin?"

Their conclusion: "(We) could find no point in time between the union of the sperm and egg ... and the birth of the infant at which point we could say that this was not a human life. The changes occurring between implant, a six-week embryo, a six-month fetus, a one-week-old child or a mature adult are merely stages of development and maturation."

- Dr. C. Everett Koop, outgoing U.S. Surgeon General, has stated, "Biologists uniformly take the position that life begins at conception. There is no logical reason why the pro-abortionist should try to arrive at a different definition when he is talking about people."

Planned Parenthood itself published literature in August, 1963 which stated, "An abortion kills the life of a baby after it has begun."

What is different today? Have the basic facts of biology changed somehow in a 20-year period? I contend that our mod-

ern cultural acceptance of abortion does not come from more recent and better knowledge, but rather from a deliberate turning away from knowledge.

How can otherwise normal, well-educated and intelligent adults continue to deny such unambiguous, well-documented facts of life? Given the universal human capacity for denial and self-deception, I believe that many are immovably committed to certain kinds of behavior or to a particular social or political agenda and are unwilling to face into the moral implications inherent in such facts. I suspect that others push away the truth about when life begins simply because they must — or else face enormous guilt, despair and self-hatred.

I suggest that the pro-choice community is engaging in something that communist historians would understand and recognize instantly — a kind of biological "revisionism." Since the fundamental facts of biology do not lead them where they wish to go, many in the pro-choice movement have chosen simply to ignore or deny these facts, and are attempting to base their pre-determined conclusion on something besides truth.

Our refusal to accept reality, however, does not alter that reality, although it may well blind us morally. By placing a higher value on doing as I please (regardless of the moral consequences), or on seeing my particular set of social or political issues pushed forward, than I place on being guided by objective truth and what is right, I merely place myself in opposition to what is true and right; I do not change it.

There is no question that tremendous hardship can accompany crisis pregnancies. The question is whether there are not moral limitations on how we will seek solutions, i.e., are there some things that we are physically and legally capable of doing that we should not do?

There are other, less fatal

Turn to Abortion, Page 3
Tuesday, August 1, 1989

Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. Comments must be factually accurate and refrain from personal attacks on the character of others.

Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.

The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style.

Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. Box 3159, Eugene, Oregon 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon. Daily publication begins with the fall.

The Emerald is operated independently of the University with offices on the third floor of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

The Emerald is private property. The unlawful removal or use of papers is prosecutable by law.

Editor: Thomas Prowell
Managing Editor: Alice Wheeler
Graphics Editor: Mark Yien
News Editor: Christopher Blair
Night Editor: Alice Wheeler

Associate Editors
Community/Higher Education: Gary Henley
Entertainment/Student Activities: Kelvin Wee

Advertising Sales: Scott McAvoy
Production: Jim Finch, Ted Shepler, Ingrid White.

General Staff
Advertising Director: Susan Thelen Assistant to the Publisher: Jean Ownbey
Production Manager: Michele Ross Advertising Coordinator: Sandra Daller
Classified Sales: Colynn McMath

Accounts Receivable, Circulation, Newsroom: 686-5511
Classified Advertising: 686-4343
Display Advertising: 686-3712
Production, Graphic Services: 686-4381