

School should guard student's civil rights

By now, we all know about the drug war. We all know about the physical harm drugs can cause, and we all know about the violence inherent in the drug trade.

And we all know about President Bush's plan.

While drugs are a problem in our society, we need to make sure one of the casualties in the war isn't our civil liberties.

Case in point: the Eugene School District suspending a student for alleged gang-related activity.

School district officials *do* have a strong case against the student. He is an admitted member of the "Bloods" gang, and was allegedly involved in a Portland drive-by shooting.

Jefferson High School in Portland threw him out. Police officials consider him dangerous. He apparently does nothing to cover up his gang ties.

The student enrolled on Oct. 20. He went to classes the following Monday. Two days later, he was suspended.

So far, reviews of the school district's move have been mixed. Anti-gang organizations have praised the action, calling it part of a tough stand against gang violence. Civil liberties groups, such as the ACLU, have expressed concern.

District administrators said the student was not suspended for anything he did at South Eugene High School. Instead, they claimed his presence and gang-related clothing constituted a threat to the safety and health of other students.

In this instance, the school district might be right. But what about the next time? This case establishes a dangerous precedent, and we're worried about whether due process was served.

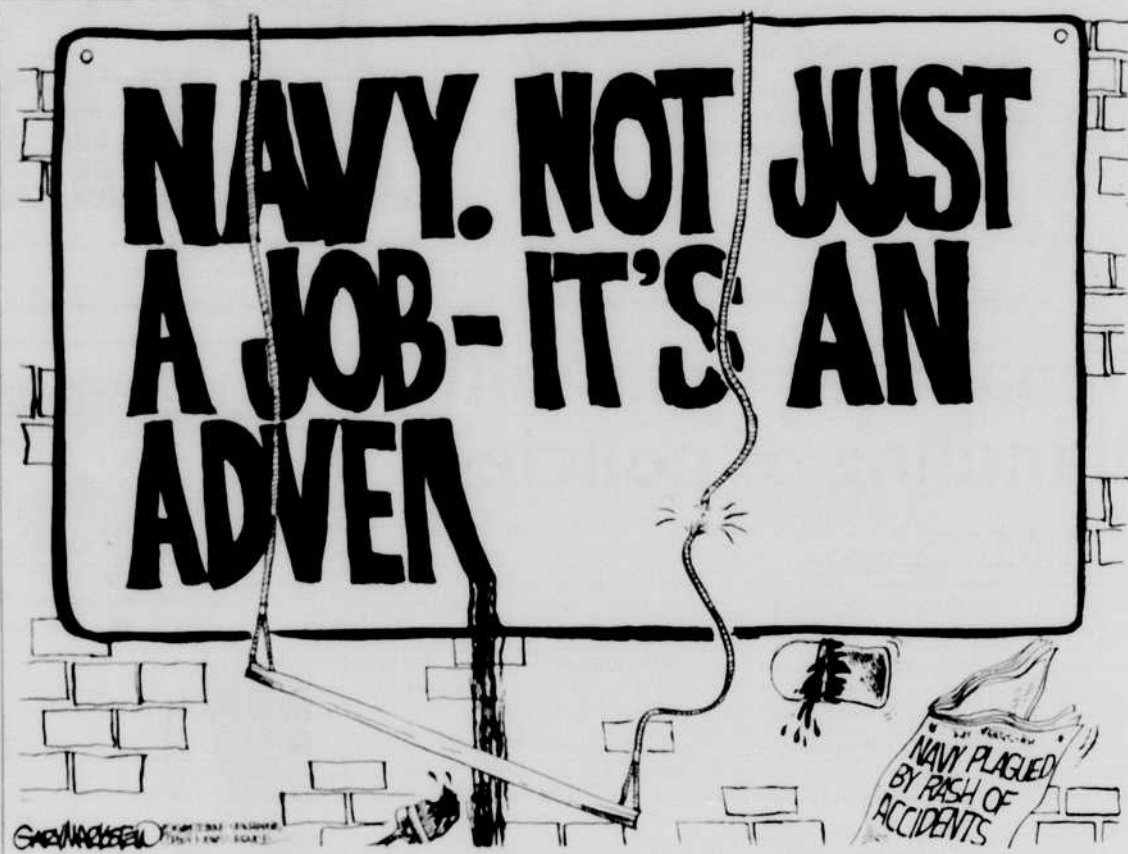
We recognize that fact school district officials are charged with protecting the safety of the student body, but we also know it's the law that every student has a right to an education. It is quite possible the right has been denied in this case.

Eugene School District needs to tread softly in civil rights cases. The rights of the individual must not be swept away in a wave of anti-gang hysteria. Punishing somebody for the clothes they wear is wrong.

People should not be judged for their prior records. No matter what the offenses, or alleged crimes, the student should not have been suspended without the benefit of at least a hearing.

The student should be reinstated, and have a fair public hearing in front of district board members as soon as possible. If he is found guilty, fine. Suspend him. But don't presume he's guilty, and make him prove his innocence.

The Constitution guarantees the right to due process. The Eugene School District should not infringe that right.



Science museum's future is in the stars

The level of scientific interest in Eugene is pretty small as it is, and it seems likely it will get even smaller soon.

The Willamette Science and Technology Center plans to permanently close its doors if they don't raise \$58,000 by their self-imposed deadline of Nov. 20. The science museum has been closed since August of this year, after it failed to raise the money it needed from the "Wish Upon a Star for WISTEC" fund drive.

WISTEC has been in operation for 20 years, at various locations in the city. According to an employee, the museum has always struggled financially, due to lack of funding from the city and community donations. In contrast, a science museum in Portland receives 50 percent of its funding from the city.

While the city of Eugene did contribute \$10,000 to WISTEC in August for staff funding, in the past it hasn't aided the museum financially. This lack of city support may be because WISTEC hasn't approached the city for regular assistance. Whatever the cause, however, it seems that now is a crucial time for the city to step in and save the museum

from going under.

WISTEC is asking for pledges from citizens, not for instant money. They would be

happy if people promise to pay a certain amount, even if they can't pay until the middle of next year. That way the pledgers wouldn't be throwing away money into an endeavor that may fail. Sounds fair.

The imminent closure of our only science museum exemplifies the fact that neither the city government nor the community seems to care enough about our scientific future.

However, the financial troubles of WISTEC cannot all be blamed on city apathy. The museum is stuck in a remote corner of the city, away from main streets. To compound the problem, WISTEC hasn't publicized itself and its location to the fullest extent.

So there isn't just one wrong ingredient in the WISTEC formula. The science museum has become a concoction of miscalculation and wrong ingredients. Like any scientific experiment, too many careless errors and apathetic participants will produce unsuccessful results.

Letters

No CIA

Professor Bill Loy, who teaches aerial photographic interpretation at the University, on Oct. 25 invited his students to a meeting with a "representative of a federal agency" to speak on job opportunities.

Eight students went to this meeting in 106 Condon Hall to find "unclassified" CIA maps of Central America and the Soviet Union posted on the wall. The representative gave his title as CIA Director of Information Resources, but failed to give his name.

The CIA has conducted illegal operations internationally, violating the sovereignty of other nations, committing crimes ranging from conspiracy to murder, unlawfully subverting the democratic process in other nations, and violating the human rights of individuals throughout the world; all in the violation of foreign, domestic and international law.

Additionally, the CIA has intentionally deceived the U.S.

Congress and the American people about the extent and breadth of its participation in illegal covert operations; all done under the name of the people of the United States.

The CIA has received assistance from both Loy and the Office of Career Planning and Placement to advertise employment positions to University students, all to the purpose of attracting University students to the employment and unlawful activities of the CIA. This is wrong.

Shannon Oliver
Co-director
Student Campaign
for Disarmament

Not a curse

We are dismayed at the attitude projected toward bicycle traffic on campus in your Wednesday, Nov. 1 editorial. The article, wandering from its focus of bike theft, stated the University has a serious problem with bike traffic due to lack

of parking spaces for cars around the University.

Furthermore, you paint the picture that the University is "doomed to large amounts of bike traffic." That is an unacceptably regressive opinion in a time when environmental awareness is essential to keep further degradation of the biosphere.

With global warming on the rise, and energy resources becoming more precious, why encourage more automobile traffic than we already have? Eugene has a fantastic transportation system. The community should be inspired to take advantage of the numerous bike paths and the bus system, instead of using private transportation.

Fewer cars means less congestion and a better quality of life around campus. Increased bike traffic is a blessing, not a curse. We need more bike racks, not parking structures.

Dan Geiger
Angela Gauthier
Students

Let's not forget

As a college student, an American and a concerned human, I am a bit angry and a lot sad that Veteran's Day is not going to be acknowledged at the University this year as the national holiday it is.

Veteran's Day is not only a day to commemorate the supreme sacrifice vets around the U.S. have made; it is a day to remember those who never made it home. It is also a day to remind us of the promise of peace that is still in its infancy today.

We (in my opinion), owe it to our brothers who fought for us

to insure a safe and peaceful world for at least their children's children to live in. I think it is a grave mistake for a University, whose attendants are at the most likely age to be drafted if a conflict occurred, to allow this holiday to slip by unnoticed.

Many people have said that only when we forget history do we repeat it. This is a state school, and many men from this state died in the Vietnam war alone. Most of them didn't even dream about making it to college. Please, at least think about them while you're in classes Nov. 10.

Moir Gleason
English

Letters Policy

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