

'Independent' paper needs students' help

After 14 years of service to the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Company, Jean Ownbey, assistant to the publisher, was dismissed by the corporation's board of directors. Ownbey was the *Emerald's* most impressive advocate of independence in student publications.

Ownbey was not a "model" employee. Ownbey's lack of perfection as an employee was due to her strength of character and conviction. She is a woman who speaks her mind and fights for what she believes. She was never a puppet who played safe by agreeing with everything her employers said.

Ownbey worked at the paper twice as long as any other employee. She was instrumental in the paper's growth from typewriters to a state-of-the-art computer system.

She was the closest thing the newsroom had to a department head. Newsroom staffers could seek advice from Ownbey without being told what to do, nor what — in Ownbey's opinion — was the right thing to do. She would help students sort out their options and make their own decisions. She always left the final decision to the students.

Her 14 years of service to the corporation apparently did not entitle her to any amount of loyalty from the board of directors. The decision to fire her was made Monday evening, and Ownbey was escorted from her office Tuesday.

Her firing contradicts what the newsroom's board representative was told about her job security.

Last spring when the board of directors decided to hire a general manager, the newsroom's representative was told the hiring of a manager and the addition of a new salary would not effect Ownbey's job in any way.

Now, board members say there are different interpretations of that conversation.

It appears the board wants the news staff to "join the corporate team," grow up a little and learn about the real world, as they suggested last spring after the news staff presented a letter to the board voicing concerns about the new general manager position.

However, being grown up should not mean "joining the team" and blindly following those in positions of authority. Being grown up means having enough self-confidence in your values and beliefs to judge for yourself when something is wrong.

The loss of Ownbey has led some students to question the fundamental structure of the board of directors that fired her.

The *Emerald* is touted as being an independent, student-run publication, but this is not entirely the truth. Students do not have a majority of seats on the board of directors. Of the 10 total seats, five are held by students and five by non-students.

Decision-making at a student-run paper should involve a majority of students.

The bylaws of the corporation require only four people to make a quorum and vote on any issue; this is not even a majority of the board. During summer term, when important decisions are made, the quorum is made up of non-students. A quorum should be 50 percent of the board plus one. And there should always be at least one student included.

University students pay a subscription fee to the *Emerald* through the ASUO for what they are told is "their" student paper. Those students deserve a student-run paper. The only department of the newspaper that is run completely by students is the newsroom. There should be student leadership in all departments.

The *Emerald* is not meeting one of the goals it names in its bylaws: "The primary purpose of this corporation ... is to publish a newspaper that will provide education and training for students in all aspects of newspaper operations."

Students should have the opportunity to be on the management teams of the ad, business and production departments as well.

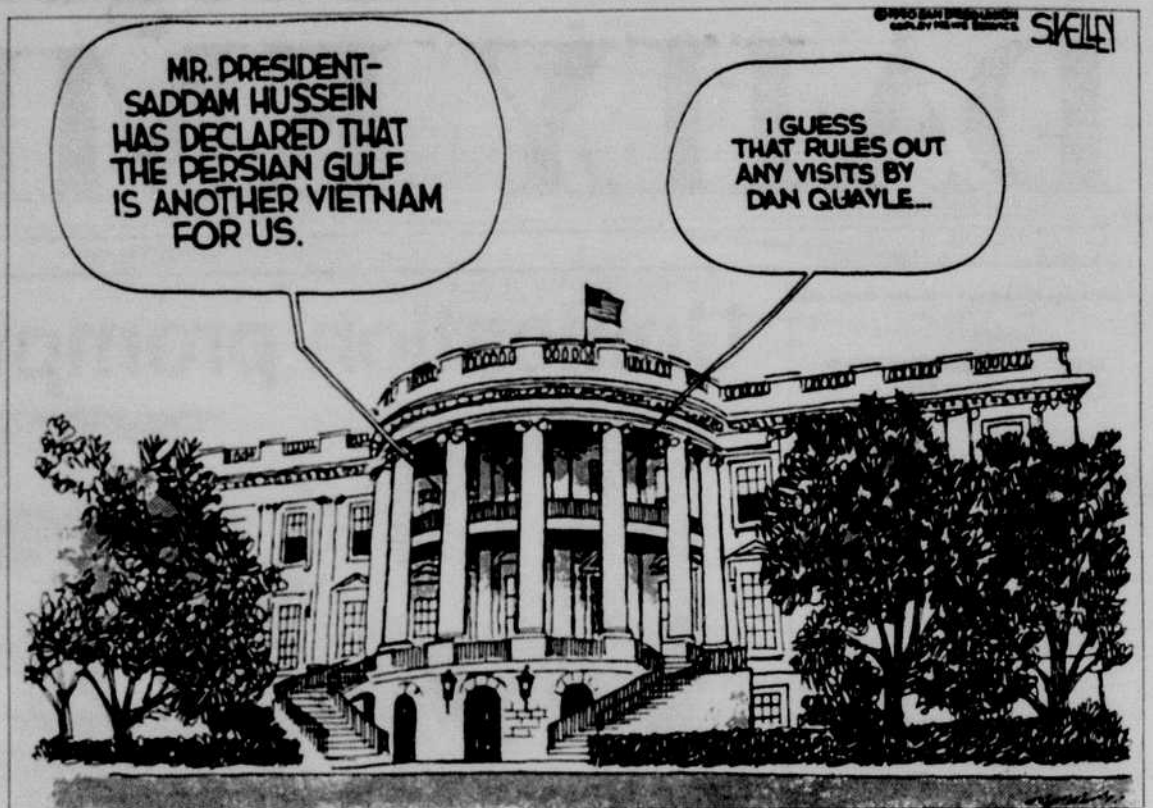
This year is the 20th anniversary of independence for the *Emerald*. The paper should be moving further along in its independence, as Ownbey had always assured. Now is not the time to take steps that could lead to an erosion of the paper's independence.

The news staff at the paper found out last spring what little influence it has with the board of directors. Without support of the campus community, the control of the *Emerald* will remain in the hands of outside influences.

If you care about having an independent, student-run, daily newspaper that won't become a corporate machine, we urge you to get involved and voice your concern by writing letters to the *Emerald's* editor.

LETTERS POLICY

The *Oregon Daily 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

Drug war

The war on drugs is nothing short of a dismal failure. Spending close to \$1 billion a year, our government intercepts only 30 percent of the current traffic.

These laws have had no positive effect upon this country whatsoever. Rather, the result has been an environment where the criminal element has thrived because they have control over the supply and can set prices as high as they wish.

This is the same result that was found when alcohol was made illegal. The current laws should be changed just as those were. Making things illegal has never been a deterrent to the criminal; it only makes it harder for society to deal with the problem.

Crack cocaine, black tar heroin and many other drugs popular today did not exist 20 years ago, and would not exist today were it not for the laws that make the search for highly addictive, highly profitable drugs good business for the drug lords.

Making drugs available in a regulated form similar to alcohol will instantly remove this crime element. How long do you suppose it's been since someone was robbed for money to buy a beer?

It will also create thousands of jobs and raise millions of dollars in taxes every year — two things that this failing economy cannot do without.

Jeffery Gent
Student

Two plus two

Newspaper stories about poor achievement in mathematics and science in our American educational systems suggest the appropriateness of the theological thoughts of Robert Green Ingersoll and the importance of uncompromised secular education:

"Christ, according to the faith, is the second person of the Trinity, the Father being the first, and the Holy Ghost the third. Each of these three

persons is God. Christ is his own father and his own son. The Holy Ghost is neither father nor son, but both. The son was begotten by the father, but existed before he was begotten — just the same before as after.

"Christ is just as old as his father, and the father is just as young as his son. The Holy Ghost proceeded, from the Father and the Son, but was equal to the Father and the Son before he proceeded, that is to say, before he existed, but he is of the same age as the other two.

"So it is declared that the Father is God and the Son is God, and the Holy Ghost is God, and that these three Gods make one God.

"According to the celestial multiplication table, once one is three, and three times one is one. And according to heavenly subtraction if we take two from three, three are left. The addition is equally peculiar, if we add two to one we have but one. Each one is equal to himself and the other two. Nothing ever was, nor even can be, more perfectly idiotic and absurd than the dogma of the Trinity."

Let's stop martyring the intellects of people on the altars of faith!

Bert Tryba
Eugene

Laid up

I sat there listening to the steady breaths of air coming out of Grandma's lungs, thanking God high up that she was still with us. Her face bruised and beaten and her stamina near exhaustion, she still managed a positive attitude on life and an "I love you." The man who hit her could probably be forgiven by this lady if he wanted to be.

Grandma will be home again, and her 82-year-old body will for the most part heal, probably through the stubbornness of not wanting to be laid up if not just with time. But as I turn her and the sheet slips off of her I wonder ... you see, two days ago she had both her legs. Do you

think the physical pain will hurt as much as the realization of what happened to her when she goes to walk out of here?

Please, for their sake, don't drink and drive.

Kevin Bineham
Architecture

Celibacy

Many devout, unsuspecting church members who watched *Geraldo Sept.* 11-12 on church sex scandals, must have been stunned. The study and findings by *Investigate News* clearly indicate that the priesthood in the United States is morally, intellectually and religiously bankrupt.

Heated controversy throughout the two-series broadcast pointed out the widespread sexual abuse of children and teenagers by priests who are supposed to stay up on the pedestal of morality, but jump off. Poor spiritual life is the problem — personal loneliness.

An article on religion in *Time Magazine* points out, "Jesus himself was not married, but most of his disciples were. Judaism of that time frowned upon bachelorhood. The majority of priests and bishops during the first four centuries of Christianity were married, so were many popes: the last in the 9th century.

"Celibacy eventually became the rule for clerics under the dominant voice of St. Augustine, whose view of sex was that it turned the masculine mind from the heights of those who would give their lives to God."

When young men enter the priesthood, celibacy is to be accepted as the "crowning jewel" of the Roman Catholic Church. As one young priest pointed out, "It becomes more like a crown of thorns."

To stop the hundreds of cases of child molestation by priests from rising higher, various church teachings such as birth control, celibacy, divorce and obedience must change. They are becoming the basic issues of unrest among priests: betrayal of trust.

Catherine Desmond
Springfield