

LETTERS

Democracy

It will be a fine day in our intellectual development as a people when the "love it or leave it" argument is universally recognized as pop despotism, embodying all the historical awareness of a dung beetle.

The corollary that all discontented Americans can defer conscience or complicity by expatriating reflects our base notion of escapism as panacea.

Escapism is a fine leisure activity, but to suppose that it constitutes a brave expression of political self-assertion is to mistake denial for resolution. Even a limited democracy like ours can pretend democratic principles *only* by allowing the discourse of dissent and difference.

To thrive as a democracy, vigorous self-criticism is requisite. Revoking the right of open dissent dispels even the illusion of plurality and liberty.

I would invite people to remind themselves who have forgotten (I had) that our Declaration of Independence (although dated in some respects) pursues the notion of challenging a government which becomes "destructive" to the ends of "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." In this case, it is our duty to alter or abolish it.

A small cavity accommodates repair of the tooth, but a tooth that is too rotten throughout cannot be saved, and the gum must give. Our nation, prematurely blunt with misuse and rotten through mismanagement, requires a cosmic dentist or a people committed to flossing and brushing after every decadent and sugary sweet administration, or political action.

It is the duty, and not the downfall, of a citizen to question and challenge its nation's integrity.

Donovan Gwinner
Student

P.C.

If the "politically correct" are individuals who always protest and try to change the system when they see injustice, then the "politically incorrect" are people who want everyone to shut up, remain passive, blindly follow "authority" and wave a flag (or get out of the country) when they see injustice. Right?

Marlene Reed
Psychology

Appreciation

I would like to publicly express my gratitude for the child care services here at the University. Knowing that my children were being well-cared for on campus, just a few steps away from my own classes, has made my life much easier.

I especially appreciate that the Child Care and Develop-

ment Centers understand how hectic a student's schedule can be; not many other child care programs are this accommodating. All of the teachers and staff have been very helpful to me, and the quality of care my children received was excellent.

I would also like to thank the ASUO for having the child care subsidy program. This program has been instrumental in allowing me to continue my education. I am very grateful that I have been able to use both of these services, and sincerely hope that they will continue to be available to student-parents like myself.

Suzy Montalvan
Human Services

Challenge

I would be very interested to know the source of Erin Schafer's statistics (*ODE*, May 20) on the amount of "ozone-eating" pollutants produced by a typical space shuttle launch.

Ten billion cubic tons? It is ridiculous (which is as gently as I dare put it) to assert that a shuttle launch could produce an amount of pollution thousands, if not millions, of times its own weight. Schafer's figures are more appropriate for an explosion the size of the Mt. St. Helens disaster, and even then I suspect they would be wildly inaccurate.

I am as worried about pollution as much as any and more than most — it is a lethal problem which is worsening by the hour — but let's get back to the realm of physical possibility here. The pollution produced by all the space shuttle launches past and for the foreseeable future does not equal a fraction of the damage caused by American automobile traffic in one week (probably, for that matter, in a single day).

Assuming that Schafer's statements are neither inane satire nor the result of *Emerald* typos (assumptions that I am not entirely comfortable with), I must admit that I fear for the future of engineering in this country.

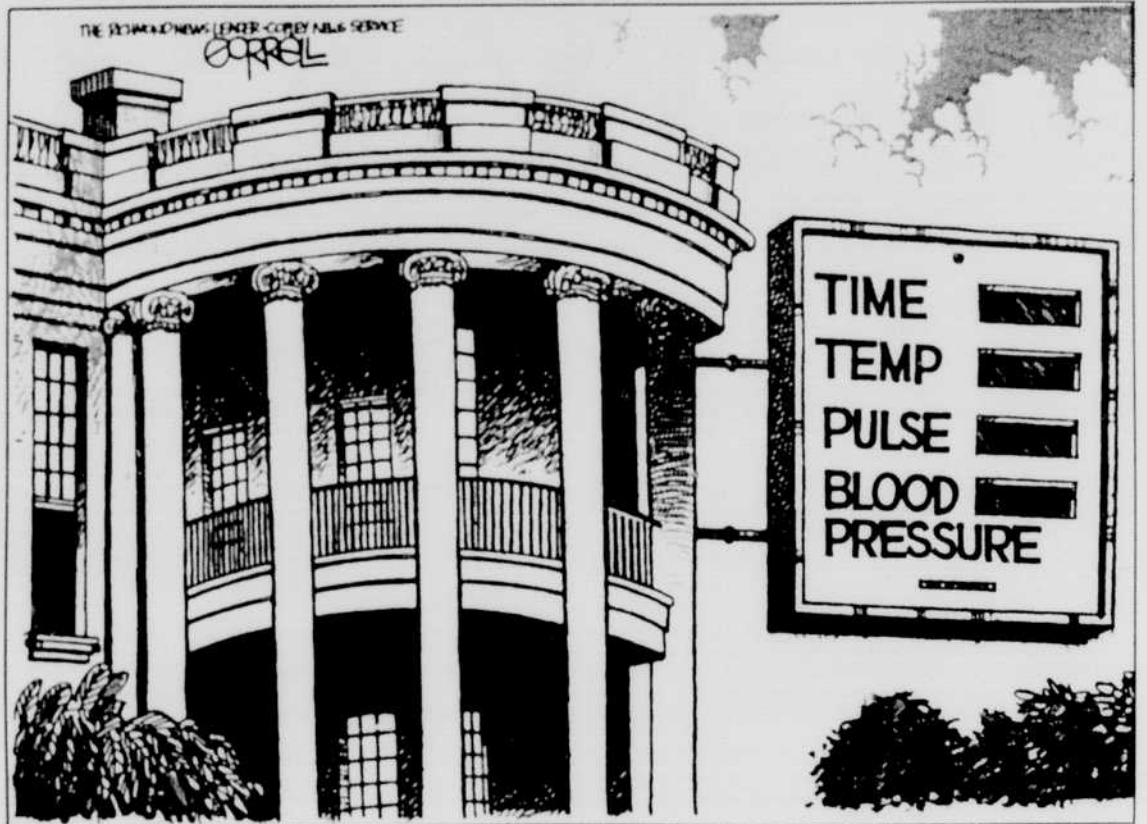
And I am not impressed with the kind of pre-school journalism that would let such Chicken Little assertions — unless they are meant to be funny — go unchallenged.

Michael Stamm
Composition and Graduate
Secretary
English Dept.

Confuse

Alex Peterson wrote (*ODE*, May 20), "John came up with this letter to confuse the students concerning Mike Colson." Thus, he implied that he, Peterson, was not going to confuse the students. He's wrong.

"The fact is that Colson was found responsible for altering committee minutes..." So he



was — found responsible by two people who don't like him personally and who refuse to release any of the evidence (if it exists) that led them to believe their claims of impartiality. This system may work in Salvadoran death squads, but not here... in America you need evidence.

"The fact is that Colson has been accused of carrying a gun on campus." So who is accusing him? Could I do the same thing — for instance, accuse Jennifer Bills of carrying a 105 mm. recoilless rifle across campus in her backpack — and get all the trendy activist posers shrieking for her crucifixion too? We need to think carefully before we start persecuting people based on unproven accusations alone.

On the other hand, witch-hunting is an awful lot of fun if you happen to not be the witch. Maybe Peterson and company are right to revive this fine old American tradition.

Finn John
English

Threatened

I disagree with Gary Darby's letter (*ODE*, May 22).

He argues that the Women's Center should not receive funds from the students because he charges they engage in "bigoted, prejudicial and sexist type activities."

This statement follows several paragraphs detailing his misunderstandings about the activities of the Women's Center, when in fact the Women's Center is fighting bigoted, prejudicial and sexist type attitudes.

If Darby feels threatened by

the Women's Center, perhaps self-examination might be in order. If a person feels threatened, perhaps that person:

- Does not understand what the true issues are.
- Does not understand the difference between accepting homosexuality and being heterosexual.
- May have (perhaps unconsciously) bigoted, prejudicial and/or sexist attitudes.

If a person feels threatened by the Women's Center, and examines why they feel threatened, that person has been educated. The reason the University exists is to provide an education to its students.

If Darby, or any others, have been made more aware of women's issues, and their own attitudes, by the Women's Center, they have been educated. Thus the funding for the Women's Center is justified and well-spent.

"Self-examination 101" may not be for credit, but it's one of the most challenging and rewarding courses of a lifetime.

Russell Barnett
Political Science

Analogous

According to Diane Wong (*ODE*, May 24), a woman student is being prosecuted for making written statements that "might lead to an increase in hate crimes against women."

In other words, she's being prosecuted for inciting men to beat her up. This is analogous to arresting a woman who is being beaten by her husband because "she asked for it."

There's a lot of potential in this sort of prosecution. We

could arrest Jews for causing the holocaust, black people for causing segregation and members of the peace movement for causing the wars in Vietnam, Central America, and the Middle East.

Hitler would be proud.

Ann Tattersall
Eugene

Identity

It's great to know that in my very own university, hatred is alive and well. It's nice to know that hatred knows no limits, adheres to no logic. Hatred is still hatred and still popular.

On Friday, May 24, I had the pleasure of hearing a speaker in the EMU Ballroom. His message was most interesting: Jews control the media in America. Jews own America itself.

Jews use black people to gain money and power. Jews use homosexuals, lesbians, blacks and all oppressed people in the world to make more money and power. Jews aren't *really* Jews, but they called themselves Jews to get "Jewish privilege" while living in Europe. I found all this very interesting.

The man saying this was not some neo-Nazi, white nation supporter. No, he was a black American and he blamed the plight of all oppressed people in the world upon Jews — here, at the University, with student funds, no less. And he spoke to a gathering of students who smiled and applauded his evil message.

It's nice to know that because of my ethnic identity, people will always hate me because I am a Jew. I've never understood so deeply the meaning of Israel until this moment.

Phil Zuckerman
Jewish Student Union

