

**OPINION**

# Airing dirty laundry a definite no-no



**THE FINE PRINT**

BY CHRIS BOUNEFF

The other day, my editor and I began talking about the columns that are printed periodically in this paper. This wouldn't be unusual except that we don't generally talk about newspaper topics. Mostly, our conversations consist of:

Editor: What's up?  
Me: Not much. You?  
Editor: Nothing.

It's a simple conversation and very similar to the one taught every day in my Spanish class, but the class also asks where everyone is from, making the class conversation more detailed.

As students, we do this every day, as I mentioned before, and now I am able to ask the guy sitting next to me what his name is, the names of his parents, where they are from and what they do professionally. These are very important questions if you are planning a trip to a Spanish-speaking country. Translated, most conversations in Spanish are like this:

Person 1: What's up?  
Person 2: Not much. You?  
Person 1: Nothing.

So, in our conversation about columns (with the editor, not with the class), my editor observed that a lot of columns this paper prints do nothing but complain about something or mention the paper's name as if the world revolves around it (notice my avoiding the use of *Emerald*).

Also, my editor observed that sometimes the column writer subtly airs internal dirty laundry.

In my continuing effort to raise journalistic standards, I will neither complain nor air

dirty laundry. To do so would be petty.

It would be as petty as charging hardworking staff members \$28 for Freedom Bowl tickets that couldn't have been scalped at any price, especially because they were the worst seats in the stadium. Any schmuck could have walked to the ticket booth, paid the same price, and been in a seat where the game was visible and not just the Los Angeles skyline.

Oh, now there I go again. Getting petty with internal stuff

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and complaining so others can hear me. I really do understand why I should not complain and not question these things. You definitely don't want to do this because of how you will be perceived by your co-workers.

You might be thought of as cheap, like the kind of person who, in an office poll, would pick the University of Washington football team (ranked fourth in the nation at the time) to beat lowly Kansas State (who tried to cancel the game with UW because it was such a mismatch) by only six points.

Geez, I did it again. I got in a cheap shot. I'm being petty, like the kind of person who would ban reporters from watching TV in the office library while they are eating their lunch, because advertisers might wander into the wrong department and see reporters watching TV.

Could you imagine that? Seeing reporters watch TV? On their lunch hour, no less. God forbid that an advertiser see that. The exchange between the general manager and the advertiser might go something like this:

Advertiser: Is that a TV?  
Manager: Yes.

Advertiser: Is that reporter watching it?

Manager: Yes.  
Advertiser: Now, about those ad rates.

Of course, advertisers for most newspapers don't seem to mind the numerous TVs that litter newsrooms and office libraries of other papers. *The Oregonian* has at least five TVs in the newsroom, two around the copy desk and one near the sports desk. And all those sets are not always tuned in to informational news shows such as *Nightline*, *McNeil/Lehrer* and *Days of Our Lives*. I don't know how they manage to stay in business.

You can imagine advertisers walking around *The Oregonian*:

Advertiser: Are those TVs?  
Sales person: Yes.

Advertiser: Well, I don't want to advertise with a paper that allows its employees to watch Donahue. I'm a 'Days' man myself.

Thus, the wisdom behind the decision to have a TV, but not use it on the lunch hour, becomes evident. Thank God for logic.

Damn, there I go again. Well, instead of rewriting this piece to be a shining example of column writing (I don't have time, Oprah is on TV), I'll leave it as it is to serve as an example of what not to do.

Don't be petty, don't air internal business and don't write the word *Emerald*.

Chris Bouneff is news editor of the *Emerald*.

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**THE FAR SIDE**

By GARY LARSON



Milli Vanilli's bird, Lilly

**LETTERS**

**Politics is hell**

As homosexual activists cry foul in California and see a Christian conspiracy in Springfield, conservatives whine about tax dollars going for urination in DEA-sponsored "art," filthy so-called "AIDS education," and welfare cheats, we learn anew that politics, like its violent brother war, is hell.

We have been sheltered of late. No more Army vs. militia wars as in 1864. No more open, active, bigoted denial of rights by gun and dog as in the 1950s and '60s. No more can the technocrats save us. No, we must now stand on our own two feet and decide "What do I believe?"

Opportunists abound. We have taken the choice of seat belt use away from all 40ish Ph.D.'s in Oregon. Why then, the fuss when conservatives like myself want to do the same for 13ish girls who are pregnant and incompetent to make it?

Why the cry when sexual morality is the yardstick for sexual behavior? Why defend the thieves, rapists and murderers rather than the innocent?

Lines are being drawn. This is an ideological war. One side or the other will win, for, paraphrasing Thomas Reed, we (the

American people) believe that if 101 white, male, sexist, homophobic, racist homophobes vote one way, and 100 enlightened, politically-correct humans vote the other, the 101 are right.

May the ideals of our system bank and cool our vicious disposition, for in a land of majority rule only majority restraint will allow majority rights.

William Gaskill  
Political science

**Appreciation**

Just a note to proclaim my love and respect for the teachers — Nancy and Carol — and the student staff of the EMU Child Care Development Center.

The efforts, patience and concern you share with our children is invaluable and deeply appreciated.

Thanks for everything!

Juliejohn Knott  
Student

**Affordable**

Like many other students on campus, I drink coffee. As a high-volume consumer of coffee, I have one question for the EMU food service: Why does a 22-ounce coffee refill cost me 75 cents at the EMU, but only 25 cents at Circle K?

A bottomless cup at most restaurants is 75 cents. I know that it costs far less than that to make a cup of coffee — usually 6-8 cents, according to the restaurant owners I have talked to. In these difficult financial times, why not give the coffee-drinking students a break. Lower the price of a cup of coffee to an affordable level.

Ron Harper  
Sociology

**Absurd**

I want to oblige Mark Russell (*ODE*, Sept. 30) who requested letters.

Washington D.C. is becoming stranger all the time: Acting dumb, forgetting important facts, lying to Congress and apologizing for your inattention is in, and you will be confirmed to run the CIA, a formerly balderdash about "natural law," not ever having discussed Roe vs. Wade, and growing up without running water or a toilet is in, and will lead to confirmation to the Supreme Court.

Just what gives in this country? Why is everything becoming a farce? A theater of the absurd!

Hilde Cherry  
Eugene

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