

## New units shouldn't mean higher rents

Anyone who has ever lived in the Amazon, East Campus or Westmoreland housing units knows what they are like. Small, cramped and, in some places, falling apart.

But the rent is cheap. To be exact, \$142 a month for a two-bedroom apartment at Amazon.

At prices like that, residents say they can put up with weathered paint, utilitarian bathrooms and drafty bedrooms. After all, the low rent allows them to pay tuition and continue their education.

However, what should be done when the housing gets so decrepit, safety becomes a factor? The Amazon units were built to deal with the overflow of World War II soldiers going to college on the G.I. Bill. It, and the other housing areas, are badly outdated.

In 1989, the Oregon Legislature, in a time of high University enrollment, took steps to create more University housing by floating an \$11 million bond. But along came Measure 5 and dropping enrollment, and the University didn't need new housing. To top it off, the state treasurer froze all new bond issues.

So with \$4.4 million (from sale of bonds before the freeze) in hand, the University began looking at ways to spend the money. They found it. Renovating existing family housing was the answer. A time line was set — Amazon has been declared habitable only until 1996.

Sounds pretty good, right? At this cash-strapped University, any state funding, even in the form of a bond, should come in handy, right?

Wrong. There is one small problem. The money to pay off the bonds has to come from somewhere — in this case, rent from the housing units.

As a result, rent for family housing is going to go up. Nobody knows by how much, but the amount will depend on the occupancy rate. It could be a small increase. It could triple.

Zapping family housing residents with a large rent increase wouldn't make a whole lot of sense. It defeats the purpose of keeping these students in school.

But again, this isn't exactly a rare occurrence in this state. Not having enough money puts the state pretty much in the same category as most college students. You would think our state government leaders could relate, but sadly, curiously, they don't.

The solution is outside funding. If the state is going to rely on the family housing system to pay off the bond, a lot of students won't be able to afford the one-two combination of tuition and rent.

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## LETTERS

### Fact of life

Brian Westby, your letter made my blood curdle. Let's clarify. Rape is a fact. One in three women will be raped. Fact. It shouldn't be, but it is.

Your suggestion that martial arts for all women would end rape contains many inherent fallacies. Examine your proposal. Who will pay for these martial-arts classes? They cost money. Why should women pay for safety that should be a right guaranteed to all people? Why should women have to take martial arts to feel safe? Is everyone physically capable of taking martial arts? What happens if a woman is attacked by an armed person or multiple attackers? Do we have to look like Van Damme to be safe?

The suggestion that martial-arts training can prevent all rapes moves sexual assault into the victim-blaming arena. According to Westby, if a woman failed to take martial arts, then a rape is her fault.

I have taken martial arts — they are useful — but does this make me less likely to be attacked? No. Two assaults have been attempted against me since 1990. I escaped twice, no thanks to martial arts.

Rape is not a woman's problem — it is society's problem. The solution lies not in martial arts and victim/survivor blaming, but in societal change and punishment of the perpetrator.

Westby, can you honestly tell us that you would blame your mother, sister, girlfriend or daughter for being unable to defend themselves against a rapist? Think about it.

Amy Joslin  
Student

### Nixon '92

How curious that the campaign to destroy JoSonja Watson should be orchestrated by the College Republicans. Let us not forget that these people are the on-campus representatives of a political party whose membership has included Richard Nixon, Ed Meese, Spiro Agnew, Arlen Specter, April Glaspie, Pat Buchanan, James Watt, Joe Coors, Nancy Reagan, Dan Quayle, Margaret Heckler, John Sununu, Jesse Helms, David Duke, Clarence Thomas, Strom

Thurmond, Orrin Hatch, Alan Simpson, Al Mobley, Joe McCarthy, George "Read my Lips" Bush and Ted Bundy.

When I see some sign of integrity within the Republican Party itself, I may be more inclined to heed their call for integrity in an organization as innocuous and insignificant as the ASUCO. Until then I can only reflect on what the high-tech lynching of Anita Hill showed us about what happens to uppity black women who don't knuckle under to the conservative agenda of political correctness.

Finally, I can't help but wonder what would happen if the mistakes made by Watson had been made by a conservative white male. Would these kids be so vociferous and vehement in their cries for integrity?

Bob Parker  
English

### One more time

In response to Bryan Westby (ODE, Feb. 4), I would like to offer a suggestion that would make life "a hell of a lot simpler for everyone": Go drop a piano on your head.

Martial arts will not end all chances of any woman (or any man) from being raped. Rape is not only a physically violent act, it is a psychologically violent act.

Why should it be necessary for me to take a martial arts class, carry a can of mace, or carry a gun to be safe? Obviously, if I have to take such precautions, the fear and the threat of rape are still there. Why should any woman have to live with that fear?

I am not against learning anything. I have learned I have a lot more to fear than just being raped; I have learned to fear people like you who place the blame of rape on the victim.

Rape may not be a factor in your life, but it always is in mine. I feel its threat when I go home after dark, when I meet a new person, or when I pass strangers on the street.

Rape is not the fault of the victim, whether she has learned martial arts or not. Rape is the result of a sick society.

Mesheal Rice  
Journalism Political Science

### Dojo's world

In response to Bryan Westby (ODE, Feb. 4):

I hope you never have an acquaintance, friend or relative become a victim of rape. I really do.

I am not going to try to argue with your "logic." I just need to tell you your letter offended me, and I hope that no one will take your trivializations of rape or martial arts seriously.

I have trained in various types of martial arts, and the best advice I ever received was the dojo and the real world outside are not comparable. I hope you do not learn that the hard way.

You have no way of identifying with the fear women have to live with everyday, neither do I. The fear that keeps them checking over their shoulders, locking every door, and scared to go alone into the basement of the very place that they live. Rape is a "factor of life" for women. I guess that some men will do anything to make rape the victim's fault.

Think about it Westby, think about it.

Christopher Moore  
English

### Fogged in

In response to Bryan Westby's letter of Feb. 4, suggesting that women take martial arts classes four days a week for three years to "end all chances" of being raped, I ask you this: Are you so lacking in attention from women that you must resort to this crude exemplification of your epistolary talents in order to be recognized?

Can you explain what dense fog you were in when you said, "one could ignore martial arts and take her chance"?

Better yet, before you subject us to any more provocative ideas, I suggest that you spend four days a week for three years in a women's studies class. Perhaps then you will know what to do with your dangling piano.

Kari Brooks  
English

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