

God squad needs glasses for myopia

Today, May 14, will be the day God comes to town — the God Squad that is.

The Squad's vote on whether to exempt 44 Western Oregon timber sales from the limitations of the Endangered Species Act will finally take place. The sales include 219 million board feet of timber on 4,400 acres.

More important than the footage, however, is the fact that this decision will set a precedent for how federal forests are managed in the future. This vote is important, because we're talking long-term effects.

The God Squad's existence and ultimate vote have been surrounded by controversy since it was convened by Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan Jr. last year. Though it was called into action primarily because of the spotted owl debate, it has since riveted attention to environmental legislation, and subsequent arguments, surrounding America's wilderness at large.

So named for its authority to let a species go extinct, the Squad claims the power to erase Endangered Species Act restrictions in the name of progress. And that's what the argument boils down to here: continued economic and capital development vs. protection of natural resources.

Timber industry workers want to work it's that simple, that logical, that understandable. Jobs that have been around since day one are now being threatened by "an owl," and that's scary — downright ludicrous, right?

But it's not that simple.

The owl itself is not the culprit; it's only an indicator species. Since the owl is connected in a special way to the wilderness' entire ecosystem, the owl's well-being tells the health of the whole forest.

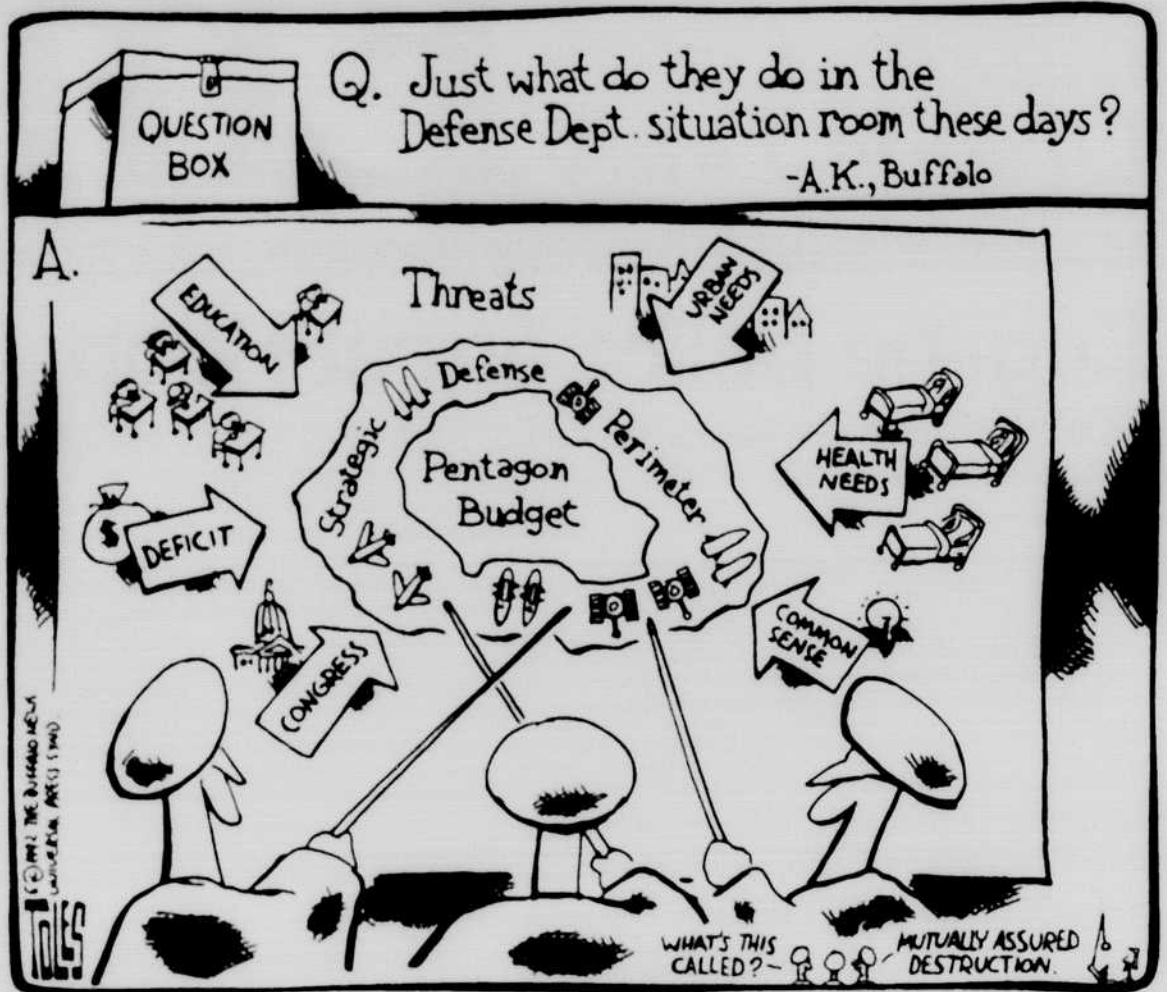
The problem isn't merely a single species; it's the health of the wilderness as a whole. And one doesn't need to look just to the owl to see that our natural world is in deep trouble.

This society continues to advocate killing off our environment so that we may "improve" and "progress." What it fails to see is the connection between humankind's survival, ranging from physical to economic, to our natural world's survival. Doubt it? Try drinking our polluted water; try breathing in our defiled cities; try eating our toxic marine life — and try cutting down trees that aren't there anymore.

Should the Squad vote to allow logging of previously protected lands, it will stand as one of America's most nearsighted moves. It may put a temporary band-aid on a questionable situation, but in the long-run we will pay. Dearly.

Someone tell that crew to put on its glasses; the myopia is killing us.

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LETTERS

Shame

It is a shame. It is a crying shame there are very highly esteemed faculty members of color teaching some classes here at the University for free.

They are Professor Kenny Bagley, who is currently teaching three classes and has a Ph.D.; Professor Clarence Spigner, who's been on campus for some time and is one of the positive role models for African-American students and faculty on this campus; Jim Garcia, who taught last term and is currently an adviser in the Office of Multicultural Affairs, and finally Mary Romero, Ethnic Studies department head, who is teaching two other classes besides her regular course load.

I'm aware of this because I have friends who were in Garcia's class and are currently in Spigner's and Bagley's classes. I have personally talked with Romero.

By the University not producing monies to pay these much-needed faculty members, it's showing its true colors. It does strive to make this campus "diverse" and "educationally sound," but I'll be damned if I'll continue to pay this University money for all the other professors and not give our faculty of color "a piece of the pie" also.

I applaud these four for their efforts, as well as other faculty and administrators of color who continue to stay and work here for their people. However, I feel not one single hand clap is to be given to the University on this issue.

Also, where are the African-American female professors who are supposed to be teaching here?

Tonya Menefee
Pre-journalism

Bio-ethics

The University biology department is nationally recognized in academic circles for its high quality research and edu-

cation. Part of the education involves hands-on work with living or dead animals. In the course of a biology student's education, the student may end up performing the same dissection repeatedly in different classes.

We understand the information obtained by the use of animals in lab experiments has value, but we feel this information can be presented through alternative means (e.g. computer model simulations, videos, drawings, essays etc.). We wish to emphasize the difference between animal research and education using animals. This letter is not directed toward the former. There is value in the knowledge; we merely question the way in which that knowledge is presented.

This is an important issue that we continue to face in our studies, and we feel is not open for debate in the biology department. For example, when a student asked for an alternative exercise to a dissection lab assignment, he was told some alternatives had been tried and rejected. This was based on the assumption that lab animal use provides the highest quality of learning available, and the student's ethics and morals were to be set aside.

He was told he "must conform" by his professor and similarly, by the head of the department. This is an example of a conflict that can arise through a lack of communication and understanding between different parties involved in the issue of animal use in both research and education.

It is, therefore, suggested the biology department add a bio-ethics class or seminar to its curriculum in order to provide a needed medium within which students and faculty can address these problems through healthy communication.

If there are other students who are concerned about these issues, please contact Professor Jane Gray, chairwoman Student

Relations Committee, Biology, 346-3032.

Ronando Long
Student
and 19 co-signers

Hostility

I am disgusted with the disrespect of Melinda Silva, Sue Dockstader, Diana Collins and Teresa Naillon. Talk about hate crimes. You're all a bunch of hypocrites if you advocate fairness and diversity and then turn around and destroy public property after speculating what it may suggest. You're just creating your own monster: more hate, more disrespect, more malicious discrimination.

Reading on in the April 29 edition of the *Emerald*, there appeared another bit about an instance where Dockstader inappropriately expressed her disagreement in the athletic department budget hearing the night before, causing hostility and offending some.

Nothing ever gets solved through irrational behavior. Learn some propriety and open-mindedness and maybe you'll get the respect you deserve as a human being.

Deborah Tucker
Biology

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Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.

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

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