

Ecosystem's life necessary for all

Oh what the heck — we didn't need all those trees anyway! Never mind the fact that they keep us crazy animals breathing and clean the air of toxins via their constant recycling of the earth's air supply. Never mind the fact that the major role they play in the natural world's ecosystem is instrumental to its continued existence.

And don't sweat the fact that the folks wanting those trees downed for the bucks won't have a job once their livelihood is diminished.

The only thing now standing between the felling of much of the Northwest's forests is the near-extinct spotted owl, protected by the near-extinct Endangered Species Act, courtesy of the God Squad.

But don't worry, those Bush administration groupies are still insisting that the trees must go, and no silly owl's gonna stop 'em.

Northwest Republican legislators recently introduced forest bills in Congress aimed at maintaining maximum logging while offering minimum protection for the threatened spotted owl. This comes after Interior Secretary Manuel Lujan's bright "preservation plan" was offered as an alternative to full owl protection measures required by the Endangered Species Act.

Many timber industry workers feel they're fighting the owl for precious trees, but in the end they have everything in common: the forests' survival.

Democrats are offering a plan as well, one that encompasses limited logging, a jobs package and greater protection for owls, the old-growth ecosystem and fish.

If we're talking survival, physically as well as economically, the Democratic Leahy-Adams plan must preside. The Republican's plan, offered by Washington's Slade Gorton and Rod Chandler, with Oregon's Bob Smith, is short-sightedly focused on continued existence of present logging industry jobs. While job preservation is a valid concern, the approach is wrong. Economic survival must be achieved through change, i.e. job retraining. Should things continue as they are, there will be no forests to sustain timber-related jobs.

Replanting? That would work just fine if one could replant an entire ecosystem. When the forests are logged, it's not just the trees that say bye-bye, but the whole web of plant and animal existence supported by those trees. Without that ecosystem's survival, they will cease to exist, because it's the ecosystem that supports forest life.

Luckily, the owl has supplied the spotlight and offered the excuse to stop the logging at various stages in the game. Many timber industry workers feel they're fighting the owl for precious trees, but in the end they have everything in common: the forests' survival. The best chance of that happening is through change, ranging from change of attitude to change of job skills.



LETTERS

Come in

As we are gearing up for finals and summer plans, there is something we need to keep in the back of our minds: round two of Measure 5.

It looks like the special session will take place. Hopefully the legislature will put together a plan so Measure 5, part two, will not take affect. This is where you come in.

With the special session will come a mail-in vote. To vote, you need to re-register to your summer address. This can be done at an ASUO-sponsored table for the rest of Dead Week, or just come into the ASUO and fill out the card. (The ASUO will send it in for you.)

Then you need to vote. If not, we will likely see higher tuition and even harsher cuts in departments. This is an issue that affects all students, so please take a few minutes, grab a friend and re-register.

The entire University thanks you.

John Thomas
Pres. Student Senate

Otto know better

I received a copy of a letter from Dr. Peter M. O'Day accusing me of saying at a lecture during Jesus Week that "all non-Christians possess ethical values that are seriously flawed." He followed this by saying, "blind bigotry and intolerance of other religious views is not new ..."

O'Day's vitriolic attack was not against my thesis, but against me (and other Christians) by name calling, using such words as "intolerance," "dehumanizing fellow human beings," "crimes of violence," etc. — the very things I, and other Christians, would speak out against. O'Day seems to have completely missed my main point which was that our problem is "not knowing what we ought to do, but in doing what we know," as anyone who would listen to a tape of the session can ascertain. (These may be obtained from David Lee, 485-4375.)

What I said was that a non-theist lacked a logically consistent motivation to follow an ethical system, even one that

we both might embrace. I referenced two books on ethics by atheist authors that were almost entirely devoted to telling us what we ought to do, rather than why we should do what we ought. To support the importance of motivation, I gave statistics showing that most violations of professional ethics are willful.

One continues to hope that the "logic" of name calling is not indicative of University scholarship. Though O'Day called for an apology, I leave it to you to judge who should apologize to whom.

Otto J. Helweg
Chairman/Professor

A big fan

Camacho Solis of Mexico City is an innovator. Here's his ingenious plan for curbing Mexico City's incredible air pollution problem: build giant fans to blow all the bad stuff away. That's right. The people living in the world's worst polluted city will now enjoy pristine, smog-free breaths of air. Problem solved. Good riddance. (Shh...mum's the word for their neighbors.)

This plan epitomizes the lack of intelligent vision in the problem of air pollution — specifically global warming. Band-aid solutions and apprehensive world leaders perpetuate a looming disaster. Prevention of pollution should be the only determining factor in environmental protection — not fans.

George Bush is just now willing to admit that global warming is alive and kicking, but he will do nothing about it. The official White House statement on global warming is an ambiguous, garbled message of empty promises and undefined goals. Bush will not sign on to preventive measures of carbon dioxide emission reductions like all other industrialized nations have promised. His hands are tied, undeniably, to the fossil fuel industry. Don't be fooled by Bush's attendance at the Earth Summit in Brazil on June 3. He has no intention of controlling environmental hazards — he only wants to control PR.

Both Bush and Solis like to blow hot air.

We need comprehensive reductions in carbon dioxide emissions to quell the effects of global warming and reduce pollution of urban areas. Until then, temporary solutions and wimp-like decisions compound the problem.

Derek Top
Student

Rising up

Regarding Lydia Lerma's commentary on justified violent protests I have the following comments.

History has little use for problem solvers. Its only use is in understanding how others are constrained in their acts and thoughts because of history. Is it because of history that Lerma believes "social injustice inevitably results in violent upheaval by the oppressed"?

She reached that conclusion after giving examples of "violent protests" from 1773, 1791, 1877 and 1886.

Curiously, in her very next sentence, Lerma says "acting in a peaceful manner has not always brought about needed changes." Do peaceful protests sometimes work? Or is violent upheaval inevitable? It can't be both.

The point is one should not use history to make excuses for why something is accepted or why something can or can't be done. It is lazy, non-creative, and ends up impeding change.

As for the "rising up" in L.A., one would be stretching the meaning of the word to label the events following the trial a "protest." Burning buildings owned by innocent people, looting their businesses, pulling them from vehicles and throwing bricks into their faces is an odd way of protesting. What I saw on TV was a riot, and for some participants a true "party."

As for the "rising up" in Eugene, these "violent protesters" are either misguided fools or are intellectually, if not physically, dangerous. Either way, at their present stage of development they are useless to any meaningful positive changes in society.

David Kopilak
Student

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