

LETTERS

Aren't we all just students?

It is sad to see that one of the most exciting happenings in Eugene in the past few years has caused such grief to sportswriter Dave Charbonneau.

I really feel for him if it's true that he had a tough time riding his bike around Eugene while the "hippies" or "grieks" in a drunken stupor (before 6:30 p.m. at that) violently attacked him with two-ounce snowballs. This isn't Oregon State. We didn't relentlessly attack each other.

Each other thing: Aren't we all just students here? Should there be any separation between "grieks," "hippies" or whoever? That's something a sportswriter probably isn't too much of an expert about.

Mike Beauchamp
Political Science

Students need learning desire

Eben Fodor, in his commentary on the problems of higher education (*ODE*, Nov. 14), observes that "the University has largely become a training institution." Fodor goes on to assert that the system of higher education discourages idealism, spirituality and subjective reasoning, while attempting to brainwash students into becoming "cog(s) in the wheel of the great economy."

I do not intend to attempt to disprove these statements. My problem with Fodor's commentary is it is a typical, insipid reiteration of paranoid, anti-establishment dogma. Fodor assumes the "system" is at the root of the problem without stopping to look for other possible culprits.

Excepting the rare occurrence of inadequate teaching, the problem with higher education is not in the hands of the "system," but rather in the hands of the student. Each student will get out of his University experience precisely what he puts into it.

If a student comes to the University with no true desire to learn, but merely a desire to achieve a degree that will give him an advantage in the job market, as seems to be the case with the vast majority of University students, then that is precisely what he will achieve.

However, if one approaches education as a departure point for self-motivated exploration, and if one has a true desire for knowledge and the augmentation of the complexity of one's own mind, then it is entirely possible to achieve what Fodor refers to as an education, rather than simple job training.

Brad Wright
English

Abortion wrong; no argument

After challenging people several months ago with a letter stating why abortion is undeniably murder from a logical standpoint, I thought I'd share the responses.

A few people said it was a good letter. I assume these were people who already had the same thing in their minds.

Despite the impressive front put on by those who probably still oppose this clear line of reasoning and choose to hate those they have never met by terminating their existence, they are silent in the face of such reasoning.

Perhaps they knew nobody would be really impressed if they cursed at me or told me to keep out of their private parts. If they just said that to everyone, there would be no problem. Perhaps they are conceding, and nobody really wants to kill babies anymore. I dream of such a world.

I fear instead an attitude saying "we don't have to argue in an attempt to deceive anymore." "The nation is won over to the idea that killing the unborn at will is fine." Judgment is near.

Bob Weigel
Eugene

Learn activism with OSPIRG

You may have recently noticed that 24 million gallons of oil were spilled into the North Sea, or heard there are three million homeless people in the United States, or that a person dies from hunger-related causes every 40 seconds.

But did you know 20 percent of Oregon's ground water is contaminated by pesticides, or that there are 2,000 homeless families in Lane County?

It's clear the troubles of the world have come right to our own backyards. The question is now whether we will allow them to continue unnoticed or take action to educate each other and actively seek for solutions.

You can instantly begin the process by attending OSPIRG's general interest meeting on Thursday, Jan. 21 at 6:30 p.m. in the EMU Gumwood Room, where you will be introduced to the nine campaigns: alternative energy, campaign finance reform, consumer protection, environmental damage, hunger and homelessness, legislative watch, pesticide action, plastics and a city-wide ban on plastic foam.

Together we can help educate, activate and create social change.

Perry Pepper
OSPIRG

Don't ignore tragedy

In response to Stephanie Sisson's column (*ODE*, Jan. 11), get real. The natural "disasters" she talks about — volcanoes, earthquakes, fires and such — have been happening since the beginning of time. Nature was built around them; some of them are even integral parts of the system.

Man-made disasters and other foreign influences, however, have always had a truly disastrous effect. Take the Middle East, for instance. Has Sisson heard of the Cedars of Lebanon or the "fertile crescent" of ancient times? It was completely logged off (for ships, buildings and such). The climate changed, and now it's a virtual desert.

Or think of the asteroid that caused the extinction of the dinosaurs and many other creatures of that time. The havoc we are wreaking on this planet is not to be taken lightly.

It sounds as if Sisson is saying we could just keep on



doing it and get away with it. Being blind to the truth never helped anyone. Please wake up.

Chris VanDyck
Eugene

Security measures in place

Regarding the article by Tammy Batey on fraternity break-ins (*ODE*, Jan. 12), I was rather embarrassed upon seeing my name attached to a quote claiming we keep doors unlocked in an effort to somehow convince people into thinking students are living there during breaks.

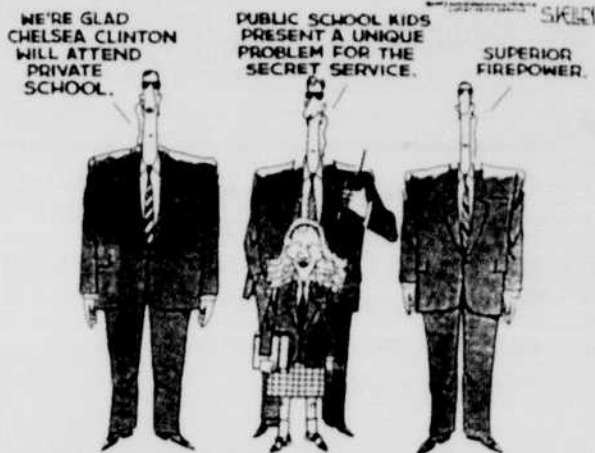
While naivete takes a prominent position among my character faults, I can assure you it does not stretch quite that far into the realm of fantasy. Please allow me to clarify, not so much for the huge multitude no doubt hankering for this information, but to preserve what little reputation I have left.

In the past, we left doors open because everyone knew no one was there, and we grew tired of shelling out hundreds of dollars everytime we returned to school to replace shattered doors and door frames.

Today, the outer doors of our house are reinforced and feature combination key-pad locks, but our policy remains to keep interior doors unlocked for two reasons: There are no valuables left in the house during breaks, and people will get into the house if they want to, so we make sure they find nothing to steal nor anything to break.

I do not want to accuse Batey of misquoting me, but I hope I wasn't that unclear when we spoke on the phone.

Jamie Bakum
Kappa Sigma



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