

## We'd move to CBS for \$16 million too

Most days, editorials are fairly serious in tone. This isn't one of those days.

We could be deliberating over important issues like the new Clinton administration, the Oregon Legislature, health care, environmental issues, the invasion of Iraq, or the Super Bowl.

But we're not. Our news judgment goes beyond that. These are issues that the conglomerate media cover extensively in order to confuse the proletariat. But we're interested in what's really important.

Late night television.

David Letterman announced Thursday he is splitting with NBC. CBS will reportedly pay him \$16 million a year and move him from 12:30 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.

For University students, Letterman switching networks solves a continuing problem. For the last 10 years, students have debated whether to stay awake for his late night show. While Johnny Carson may have been respected, he'd been stale for a long time. And Leno as a replacement hasn't yet delivered.

Branford Marsalis' talent can't save the show. A 15-second music clip before commercials doesn't justify watching an entire hour of dull television. Leno's show fills dead time until Letterman comes on, but few watch it for the show itself.

Letterman's brand of humor appeals more to college students. His Top 10 list on Thursday gave a number of reasons for his decision: "In order to grow as an artist, I feel it's important to do the same crap over at CBS," "CBS had the best Amy Fisher movie," and "At NBC, they insist I wear pants."

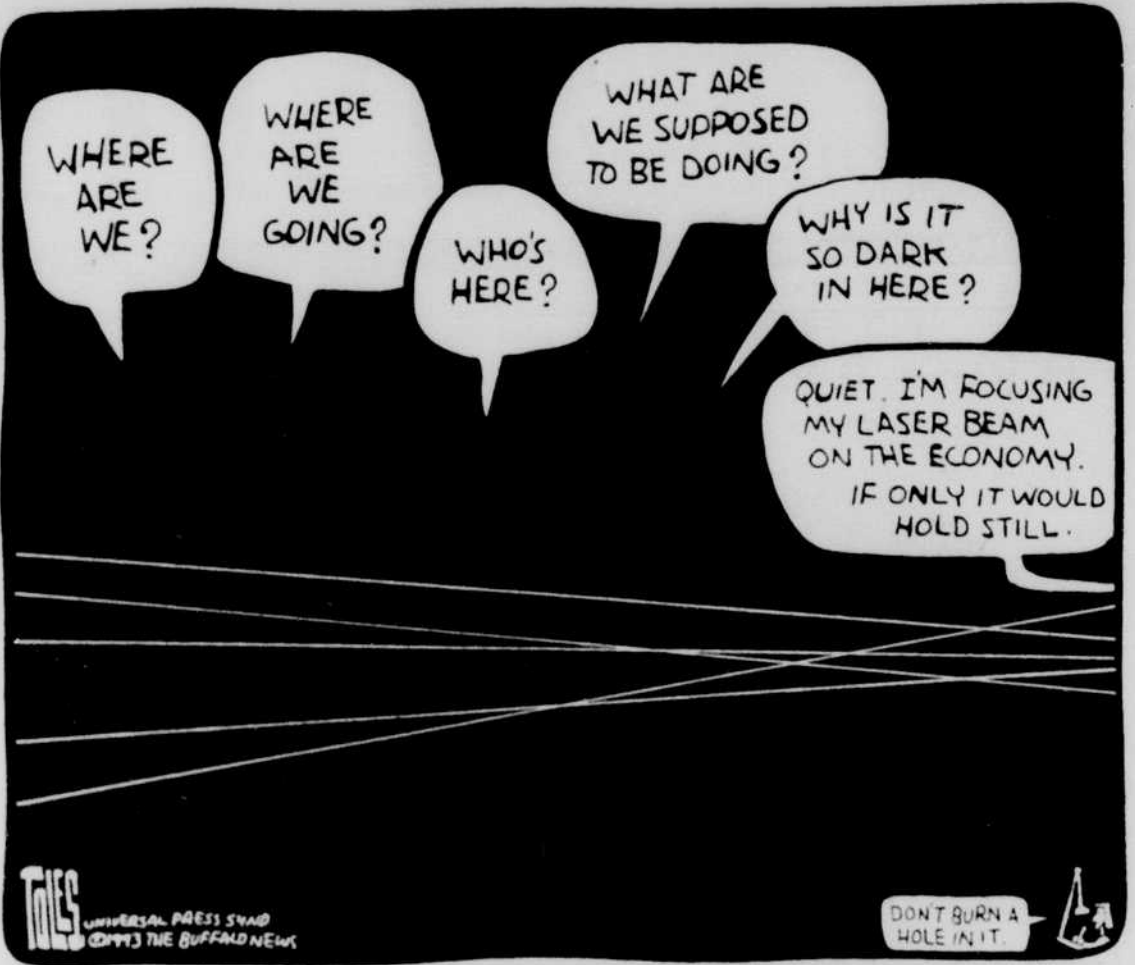
We might add a few of our own. Any network that doesn't give Dave what he wants doesn't deserve him. It will be a pleasure watching him beat the pants off Arsenio. And at last CBS will have to stop flailing desperately for a late night talk show host — no more Pat Sajak from this moment on.

Of course, this also brings up several problems for University students. First, night owls will be left with a grievous 12:30 hole in their television schedule. Second, sports fans will have to choose between Letterman and SportsCenter at 11:30. And finally, there may be a few people out there who liked both Leno and Letterman and can't decide between the two.

Fortunately, as the *Emerald* sports editor pointed out, Fox moved *Studs* from Midnight to 10:30. At least he'll rest easier.

Tomorrow, expect some of those manipulative, mainstream-media topics again. Dave is off our chest. We'll be writing about war and the bombing of Iraq. Enjoy.

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## COMMENTARY

### Earth's environment not self-healing

By Steve Close

On Jan. 11, the *Emerald* published a column by Stephanie Sisson that implied the earth is capable of repairing all the damage that human beings are able to dish out.

The main thrust of Sisson's argument was that humanity is not powerful enough to destroy the earth, and the "misplaced fear" created by statistics that are "created to make Americans feel guilty," may cause us to be overly cautious. I think anyone who studies the problem closely would have an entirely different opinion.

First of all, what does "overly cautious" mean? Is there a danger to being "overly cautious"? If these statistics cause more people to bike to work or to recycle, what's the harm? Every bit of caution we use prolongs the amount of time the earth continues to exist as we know it now.

Sisson wrote of catastrophes from which the earth has recovered such as earthquakes and volcanic eruptions. She does not consider the fact these are only catastrophic by human standards. They don't damage the earth, which began with volcanic eruptions and earthquakes. The damage that we do is in an entirely different class, and on an entirely different scale.

Sisson said she believes what we are experiencing right now is merely a symptom of our change from an agricultural way of life to a "mechanical" way of life, and that the earth must change with us.

Unless Sisson plans to develop new and exciting ways to cook toxic waste, the combination of a depleted ozone layer, greenhouse gasses, erosion and massive gaps in the food chain will eventually make it impossible for humans and numerous other species to eat. Sisson might see this as the earth's way

of "adjusting" to the human catastrophe, but it seems a bit drastic.

Sisson appears to believe the earth has some type of magical cleansing process by which it has eliminated many of mankind's environmental blunders. The only evidence she gives of this is a quote from, of all people, the federal cleanup coordinator for the Exxon Valdez oil spill.

First of all, chances are slim that he would say, "I tried, but we did a rotten job, so please fire me." What he does say, however, is equally revealing. "Mother Nature, to a great degree, will eventually do the best job of cleaning up this spill." This is not a triumphant statement, but a statement of an unfortunate fact.

The \$1.3 billion clean-up did very little in terms of restoring Prince William Sound to the state it was in before the spill. The gist of what is being said is Mother Nature must do the best job of cleaning up the spill, since those who had the technology to cause it lack the technology to correct it.

Sisson needs to reconsider her definition of the earth. Although I agree with her that there will continue to be something orbiting our sun that is the size and shape of our earth, I question whether it is earth.

To me, earth has always been the place I share with peregrine falcons, California condors and more amphibians than one could shake a stick at — yet all of these creatures are in severe decline because of humanity's insistence on dirtying its own

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nest. The question is not whether earth will endure, but what kind of earth will endure.

Sisson cares little enough about the earth in general to write a column that essentially condones polluting, but she's certainly not apathetic. Her writing of that column showed she is very worried, not about the environment, but about public opinion.

Sisson has tried to prove that any intelligent person will share her opinion and give up on trying to slow down the degradation of the environment, possibly so that she won't feel guilty for the damage that she herself does.

Sisson's column shows that she finds people, and by extension, herself, to be the most important things in the world; perhaps even more important than the world. It's this kind of self-centered thinking that got us into trouble in the first place.

*Steve Close is a GTF in the English Department. He wishes it to be known that he is not a "granola weirdo hippie Earth First!" type of guy, but if anyone needs a reason to discount his opinion, he offers the following labels: a) enviro-bike geek, b) tofu-munching vegetarian and c) used to have long hair.*

## Oregon Daily Emerald

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Commentaries should be between 750 and 1,000 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.