

**LETTERS**

**Earth to Ed**

Ed Carson makes some statements about earth-centered religions (ODE, Aug. 3) that he admits are un-researched. He says that earth-centered religions spring from cultures that have "not yet mastered nature." This implies that these cultures are "less advanced," and so inferior to our own.

Actually, these cultures have chosen a different way to relate to their environment. Instead of dominating and exploiting their environment as ours and many other cultures have, they have studied every nuance of their environment and have learned to live in harmony with it.

Carson assumes that earth-centered cultures' spirituality worships a Goddess. In actuality, these forms of spirituality take many forms, and some of the cultures that hold these beliefs go beyond the bipolar male/female view of gender. For example, while there are only three genders in the English language, in the language of some Native American tribes there can be from 11 to 15 genders, as well as the possibility of crossing over from one gender to another.

Indigenous people have existed longer than industrial, modern civilization has, they have more leisure time than we moderns do, and because they live in an ecologically sustainable way, their kind of culture has the potential to last a lot longer than ours, which is a way of life that is currently moving the world toward environmental collapse. It seems that in many ways earth-centered cultures are "more advanced" than ours. I think that we have a lot to learn from them.

**Ben Iglauer  
Eugene**

**To the point**

"Woman was created from the rib of man. She was not made from his head to top him, nor out of his foot to be trampled upon, but out of his side to be equal to him, under his arm to be protected and near his heart to be loved."

**Allen James  
Eugene**

**Just do it**

David Thorn's opinion piece on his experiences as a cashier

("Death, taxes ... and shopping," ODE, Aug. 5) brings to mind one element of my personal philosophy of life: Everyone should spend at least six months working either behind a cash register or waiting tables. The result would be an increase in awareness as to how other people live, and in common courtesy toward working people. These are two things our society needs desperately.

Anyone who has held a retail position understands me. People think that because they are handing you money, they have the right to complain about prices you don't control and treat you like a brainless lowlife. It's one chance that the guy who kisses up to everyone from his boss to his in-laws gets to hold power over someone whose job it is to not leap over the counter and pound him into the ground.

I do not mean to paint all sales clerks as saints. Nothing drives me crazy like a zitty teen-age 7-Eleven clerk talking on the phone, doing her nails and looking right through me as I attempt to hand her a quarter for my newspaper. I did my menial job as best as I could, why can't she? But perhaps if she got an occasional "thanks" or a smile, the vicious circle could be broken.

A single pleasant customer can make a cashier's day. Today, try to be that customer. It's easy, and it makes the world a little nicer.

**Sam Mathis  
Second-Year Law**

**Unvantastic**

The unreinforced rear bumpers on the Volkswagen EuroVans are an expensive proposition not calculated into the sticker price of the vehicle.

The plastic shell shatters upon minor impacts such as

bumping a light pole in the supermarket parking lot (reference: *Consumer Reports*, February 1993). Repairs can cost thousands for replacement of the bumper and the rear deck, including the large window, rear window wiper and trim, in addition to insurance premium increases.

A reinforced bumper would absorb the majority of minor impacts without causing major damage to the bumper and rear deck door.

The gas tank, which VW claims is safe on the EuroVan, is partially exposed to side impacts on the driver's side. Unfortunately, if your gas tank is hit only a little, the potential is there for explosion, fire or leakage.

Although a controlled test by the National Highway Safety Administration, where Chevrolet Caprice was slammed into the side of the EuroVan at 50 mph has apparently resulted in no explosion, fire or leakage, the potential is there, nevertheless for such a result.

Accident scenarios cannot be controlled and duplicated in a testing laboratory. Placing the gas tank fully inside the extra protection of the chassis frame, which most American car makers seem to have done, would decrease the relative potential for problems associated with the uncontrollable dynamics of broadside collisions impacting the area of the gas tank.

Prospective purchasers of a new family mini-van may want to determine the relative value of unreinforced plastic bumpers and side-impact exposed gas tanks before buying.

**Rand Knox  
San Rafael, Calif.**

**ET ALS**

**MEETINGS**

The Chronic Fatigue Syndrome Support Group will meet Aug. 29 at 3 p.m. at the Emerald People's Utility District building, 33733 Seavey Loop Road. For more information, call 686-0310.

**MISCELLANEOUS**

Cascade Toastmasters meets every Tuesday morning at 6:45 a.m. at the Original Pancake House, 649 E. Broadway. For more information, call 485-5611 during the day or 345-3073 during the night.

Family housing rents is the subject of a public hearing Monday at 3:30 p.m. in the

EMU Gumwood Room. For more information, call 346-3036.

Deadline for submitting *Et Als* to the Emerald front desk, Suite 300 EMU, is noon the day before publication. The news editor does not have a time machine. *Et Als* run the day of the event unless the event takes place before noon.

Notices of events with a donation or admission charge will not be accepted. Campus events and those scheduled nearest the publication date will be given priority. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for grammar and style. *Et Als* run on a space-available basis.

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