

LETTERS

Learn the facts

In response to Dave Thorn ("Not all forms of life are equal," *ODE*, Jan. 12): If all human life were to be wiped off the face of the planet, would life on Earth continue? The answer is yes. If all microorganisms (which he seemed to think were quite unimportant) were gone, would life still exist? The answer here is no.

A reason it is seen as "OK" to kill little things, like mosquitoes and microorganisms, is not only because they're small, but also because of their sheer numbers. Yes, he has killed millions of living organisms, but the percentages and impact involved are virtually imperceptible. However, when one kills a deer, a dog or a whale, it does not take very long, comparatively speaking, for these actions to have a noticeable impact on the species' population.

As far as animals communicating with each other through language, which humans tend to tout as their greatest achievement, I have a very simple response, though no doubt a controversial one. I assume Mr. Thorn has witnessed interactions between people and their pets. My question is, which animal, human or pet (cat or dog, for example), appears to be better able to understand what the other is saying?

I could go on, but as Mr. Thorn himself said, an hour's worth of arguments would not do any good. My suggestion to Mr. Thorn, however, would be to do a bit of reading and maybe take a biology class or two. Perhaps after he has applied his "superior" human intelligence to learning the facts, he will reevaluate his viewpoint.

Shanie Holman
General Science

Biocentrism

Dave Thorn's Wednesday opinion piece (*ODE*, Jan. 12) showed no understanding of the environmental movement, or of what biocentric environmentalists mean by the notion that "all forms of life are equal."

First off, biocentrism is a philosophy embraced by only some environmentalists. There are many environmentalists who hold on to an anthropocentric view point.

Even if you think humans are the No. 1 kings of the planet, with the right to exploit everything in their own interest, you can easily become an ardent environmentalist once you see the devastating consequences our destruction of the natural world will bring down on us. When the natural predators of deer (wolves) are killed off by humans, and the deer then over-graze, they soon die off in large numbers. Humans who ruin the ecosystem that sustains them have and will continue

to suffer similar consequences.

Biocentrism isn't about every organism being the same, or having to be treated the same, or having moral considerations that we give to our fellow humans. What biocentrism is about is seeing nature not as the rightful kings of the natural world, with God-granted moral permission to destroy whole ecosystems for fun and profit, but rather as part of the global ecology, as existing within a system that gives us life, and so deserves our respect. It is the old, anthropocentric paradigm that has led to our ruining much of the natural world, and that is why many people think the anthropocentric paradigm has got to change to a biocentric one.

Ben Iglauer
Eugene

Superiority?

Recently the *Emerald* printed a "shamelessly pro-human" opinion column by Dave Thorn (Jan. 12) that stated, "It's the application of intelligence that makes humans special." Mr. Thorn went on to state, "Humans are superior to all other forms of life."

I wonder which particular application of human intelligence Mr. Thorn had in his mind when he determined this human "superiority"? Was it the dropping of atomic bombs on Hiroshima and Nagasaki? Could it have been the Holocaust of European Jews during World War II? Or maybe Mr. Thorn was thinking about how humans nearly drove the whales to extinction, creatures that apply their intelligence (?) to making music?

Humans drop bombs on each other. Whales sing songs. Mr. Thorn thinks humans are superior. Really, a mind is a terrible thing to waste.

Anthony Stumbo
Sociology

Dolphins know

Congratulations. Wednesday's opinion column was better than last year's "Let's do whatever we want 'cause we can't absolutely destroy the world" by Stephanie Sisson. Dave Thorn's "We don't need to preserve other species 'cause we're the best" (*ODE*, Jan. 12) deserves a Howitzer Prize.

Come on, Dave. "Animals, left by themselves, will eat entire species into oblivion"? Why not use that massive intelligence that separates humans from gerbils? Any dolphin knows that the species that systematically destroys its food sources will die off. Can you name a species that systematically destroys its own source of food? Here's a hint: They're "better manipulators of their environment."

Given, the world would still revolve without dolphins. Still, you don't acknowledge the major reason we need to save dolphins, whales and any species that's threatened. It's called an "ecosystem."

Your ecological niche depends on other species. Destroy enough ecological niches and you'll eventually hit one that directly impacts your own. Then you die.

Those who want to die quickly should find ways to do so that don't involve taking other, better-adapted species along for the ride. Why not take a class in global ecology? The pressure of factual evidence pitted against your massive denial just might make your head explode.

Steve Cole
English

Racism realities

As a woman of color with some experience on and off campus, I found Diana Collins Puente's statement about the realities of racism in Eugene a bit too extreme. To me, the awareness of and concern for respecting diversity here is quite strong.

I admit my ignorance of the political aspects of Collins Puente's relationship with the ASUO or how much money had to do with her decision to leave.

If, as she said, the reason was because she was discouraged by a lack of support, then maybe she did not realize that she is a leader, in the front of the fight for minority rights, and she must expect the worst people can give. That is one of the responsibilities of the position. Is it true that the goals she admirably wants to achieve "cannot be accomplished"? They surely cannot be achieved by a single soul.

Don't misunderstand me. I believe it is important that she spoke out, that she felt all right to speak out, and that we support her right to speak out! But is Eugene more racist than most other places? I wonder.

Guanghong Z. Atman
Eugene

Ideas welcome

I read with interest Mary Tegel's letter, "U of TacO," in the Jan. 10 *Emerald*. As a member of the EMU board and a fellow student, I encourage any and all feedback we receive from the University community on our plans and decisions.

We are subject to Oregon's open meetings law and invite all interested parties to attend our meetings on alternate Wednesdays at 4:30 p.m. (check schedule board for location). If you'd like to address a specific concern, please write us at: EMU Board of Directors, c/o ASUO, University of Oregon, or e-mail us at: EMU Board of Directors@oregon.edu (cc:mail if on campus).

The TacoTime enterprise is the present phase of a major renovation of EMU Food Services. Future plans call for removing the wall between the Fountain Court and the Fishbowl and replacing current facilities with a food court that Food Services hopes will make them less dependent on incidental fees. The food court would be geared toward recognizable brand-name enterprises that are popular with students. These plans are presently under review, and since you elected us to serve your interests, we welcome to all your comments, concerns and suggestions.

S.W. Conser
Vice Chairman
EMU Board of Directors

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We've lost two of our student Board of Directors members, Chanira Reang and Seth Walker due to moves. Because of this, the UO Bookstore is now taking applications to fill their positions.

Positions Available:

• One Junior Position for currently registered, full time junior student to serve on our board thru June, 1995.

• One Senior Position for currently registered, full time senior student to serve on our board thru June 1994.

Bookstore board members represent students, faculty and staff of the UO, and help guide bookstore policy. Members attend a monthly meeting, and receive a monthly stipend.

Applications will be accepted upstairs in the administrative office through Wednesday January 26th.

346-4331



Q: What JOB OPPORTUNITY at the university gives you valuable leadership experience, allows you to meet many interesting people and pays your living expenses?

A: Resident Assistant

University Housing is now accepting applications for Resident Assistants for the 1994-95 academic year. To apply:

- 1- Pick up an application packet at the University Housing Office, Walton Complex.
- 2- Attend one of the three mandatory informational sessions

Jan. 19	7pm	Riley Hall Lounge
Jan. 20	7pm	Hamilton Ramey Room
Jan. 25	7pm	Carson Gold Room

3- Hand in application to Housing Office before the deadline: Tuesday, February 1st at 5pm

Qualifications: Must be a full time student at the U of O with above a 2.5 GPA and junior standing by fall term 1994.

Compensation: Room and board in a single room, and \$600

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