

## True power carries serious obligations

The flap concerning EMU Director Charles "Dusty" Miller's decision to erect curtains in the Art Gallery for the "Uncensored Celebration" continues.

Last week, the EMU Board of Directors passed a motion directing Miller to remove the curtains he unilaterally ordered put up in September. Miller subsequently appealed the ruling to University President Dave Frohnmayer who overruled the board's decision. Thus, the curtains remained until Oct. 4, well past the scheduled end of the controversial exhibit.

On Tuesday, the board passed another resolution attempting to limit Miller's ability to take such an action again.

The original resolution was so broad that Miller would have had to get permission to clear the building in the event of a fire. The amended version allows him to make common on-the-spot decisions required of any professional manager in any type of business.

The crux of the resolution, the entire controversy in fact, lies in the board's real power to guide EMU policy and provide Miller with a general direction in which to conduct daily business.

Is the board recognized as a legitimate policy-making body? If so, why was Miller's decision allowed to stand?

While the board, at least on the surface makes policy, those decisions go up the hierarchical ladder to rest on the desk of Frohnmayer, who holds ultimate authority on any policy decision made by students, staff and faculty. This is especially true in the case of highly controversial matters involving the EMU's consuming public.

Only one other time in recent history has a University president overruled the board on a policy decision. That was in 1990 when Paul Olum, former president, vetoed the board's decision to prohibit military recruiters from the EMU. Olum made the right decision then because the action was discriminatory and probably illegal.

Whether Frohnmayer's decision via Miller was the right one is not the issue anymore. The exhibit is over. But will he again ignore the direction of a recognized policy-making body? Probably not. This was an extreme case presenting sexually explicit subject matter, the argument of exactly what constitutes art aside.

The idealistic students on the board must realize their power is real only so long as it is used responsibly and with a heavy dose of pragmatism. With authority comes certain obligations to maintain an atmosphere where everyone can feel comfortable. Despite the way "things should be," there is always an element of accountability with each and every decision. To bring the curtains down would have had sparked controversy similar to the controversy that leaving them up caused.

In the future, the director of the EMU and the president of the University must allow students, staff and faculty to assume the authority vested in them as legitimate policy makers. And once given that power, those who hold it must be accountable for their decisions.



### OPINION

## No thirsty desire for O.J. left

Who do you think the most powerful person in the nation is right now? Bob Dole? Bill Clinton? Jimmy Carter? Rush Limbaugh? Hillary Rodham Clinton? Alan Greenspan? Good guesses, but you'd still be wrong.

No, the most powerful person in this great country of ours right now is Superior Court Judge Lance A. Ito. Yes, he will have, in his hands right now, the decision that will change the course of many Americans' lives: whether they'll put off early Christmas shopping, whether they'll care if we go off to war, or if they'll vote.

The monumental question, which could change our lives, is "to televise O.J. or not to televise O.J.?" The trial, which is set to begin in November, will saturate our lives and could immerse us even more if Ito decides not only to let us watch 27 hours of reports on the hearing, but also to let us watch it live.

Judge Ito is by no means scared of the media. He's already sentenced the second largest paper in the City of Angels to merely pretrial hearings, but not the big dance. They were one of only four newspapers with permanent seats. The judge was worried about a leak that detailed a questionnaire for jurors.

He even kicked out the pool of television cameras from the court hallway because they broadcasted the faces of jurors in other cases.

So what if he does?! Before I give you my opinion on this court skirmish, let me say that I have a hard time even caring what happens. I cared for a while. Maybe two weeks or so. But the onslaught of coverage that berated the public has driven me to indifference.

It's like hearing a song on the radio that you like. But the radio station finds out that you like it, along with too many other people. So it plays the song enough to push any hardened criminal into repentance, admission or



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whatever it takes to just turn it off.

I didn't even want to hear the two-letter combination, O.J. For a while, at McDonald's I'd have to ask for that drink that comes from a popular common fruit from Florida.

My turning on the news to find Connie Chung telling me that a bloody glove was taken everywhere in L.A. by some guy, who waited for a long time for O.J. to get out of the shower, incited me to find more interesting things to do. So I flipped the channel to the Home Shopping Network.

I thought that the coverage would calm down between the accused's court appearances. Instead, I have to work my way past the O.J. pages everyday in the paper, dodge commercials that tell me to just dial 1-800-MORE OJ and try to find *National Review* stuck behind some copies of the "OJ Monthly."

What's wrong with you people? Are you that bored? Have you given up hope of ever having a life? Why do you care if O.J. went for a Big Mac on the night of the murder? Is it Robert Shapiro's hair? What's with you people?

I will say that I do care if O.J. is guilty of killing Nicole Brown Simpson and her friend, Ronald Goldman. Murder is a serious offense and should be followed by capital punishment.

But why must we be so obsessed with this trial? It has no bearing on 99 percent of us. If O.J. committed a double homicide, he should be prosecuted. But he doesn't have the power to kill any of you, so why worry about it?

Have we, in America, become so obsessed with celebrities that reality is something we have a hard time differentiating from television?

People, O.J. Simpson is not the pope or Hitler. He's just an incredible athlete. Michael Jackson and Lisa Marie Presley are not Bill and Hillary Clinton. Oprah Winfrey is not Judge Ruth Bader Ginsburg.

There are other things in life to concern yourself with that are actually important: money for tuition, abortion, taxes, or the rise of communism in Russia.

Wise up people. Life is short. Learn hard. Immerse yourself in things that matter.

After reading all of this, you may be wondering how I could care about a few cameras that might show up in the most popular courthouse in California.

The reason is that so many people will either be watching this trial or leading their normal lives. Some residents in California are worried that the O.J. case will dramatically reduce voter turnout.

Usually I'm for the free flow of information that will help to open the eyes of the public firsthand as opposed to media-filtered. As long as the issues are clean enough to be shown on daytime television, I believe more information can only help the average American.

But the average American has become so brain-dead, and his voting decisions are threatened by this trial. So I must say for the O.J. case, that I'm against it.

A circus atmosphere somewhat has formed as the media has covered this story. More coverage can only increase that atmosphere.

A recent poll found that there is a 2-1 margin among American adults who believe O.J. is guilty. So maybe we should just skip to the sentencing.

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## Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. BOX 3159 EUGENE, OREGON 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

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