

On the money

A letter about Brian Womack's editorial on conservatism (*ODE*, May 22) was a little off the mark. Where did it say business owners should be able to clearcut their watersheds?

Of course, this is nothing new, because Mr. Womack seems to draw more mail than any other *Emerald* writer, ranging from the merely smug or sarcastic to the downright vicious. Here's what I'll say in his defense.

I don't know Brian, but from what I have read, he has never resorted to name-calling or vilification. The most critical he has ever been of a specific person or group has been Bible Jim, who he suggested ignoring. He does promote some very "conservative" ideas, but not legislation. Yes, he wrote against legalizing marijuana, but it's already illegal. Otherwise, it's a matter of encouraging people to modify their own behavior. Yes, we can choose not to do things that we have a legal right to do. What a concept!

I have observed a trend in Eugene of tolerance and a celebration of free speech for everyone except conservatives. Fairness aside, that's very dangerous. Sooner or later everyone is wrong about something, but how can you find out with your ears closed?

So let's have a little more tolerance for "alternative" viewpoints. Even if you don't change your mind, you may still learn something.

And just for the record, I think Brian's right on the money.

Gina Harris
Romance
Languages/History

Weird weather

Storms and floods are ravaging America, as county after county is declared a disaster area. We get drastic, detailed reports but never an explanation. "It's unusual weather!" Does no one ask why? It's been "unusual" for years

now and not improving, just getting worse but always surprising us. If it isn't rain and flood, it's drought and fire or tornadoes "in the heartland."

They may tell us the culprit could be El Niño. Why is this all due to an ocean current, year after year?

When will people take time off of the greatest diversion — O.J. — and start questioning what is really going on? Does no one care what our ultimate fate will be?

We have tampered so much with our environment that it is of little wonder we are in trouble. The vast forests of the world (Amazon, Congo, Siberia and America) are clearcut with ignorance and greed, paying no heed to the future. This deprives us of the protective, natural sponge that soaks up and holds water, cooling the earth with fog and mist and keeping the climate even.

There were always natural cycles of weather or climate changes with some variations, but not the drastic ones we have been experiencing.

"Washington" knows, but won't tell. They say "they do not want to panic the people!" Wouldn't you rather know and make changes while we have time left?

Hilde K. Cherry
Eugene

Bright future

Back in April, Joe Harwood wrote about some jocks becoming belligerent and abusive when intoxicated.

Subsequently, the *Emerald* staff has taken this "tabloid type" story and totally distracted the student mainstream from issues

and topics that students and faculty really need to be informed about — for instance, what the "Contract on America" is really about, namely, oppression and exploitation of the masses as well as destruction of all consumer-worker safety and environmental protection laws.

I would say many on the *Emerald* staff have a "bright" future with the corporate-controlled media.

Further, the *Emerald* ran an editorial regarding how University students should be especially proud of the precedent-setting ozone protection ordinance that "U of O students had worked so hard in implementing."

Let's set the record straight. The ozone initiative (voted on in May 1994) was written by not one University student, 90 percent of voter petition signatures collected for the initiative were collected by non-students and the latest ozone ordinance was not the result of energy expended by University students but by the persistence of a few original "save our ozone" members.

For those few University students and faculty who did contribute time, energy, support and sweat toward this campaign, you indeed deserve to be commended and thanked. Gaia thanks you.

So, to the active and the apathetic, don't be lulled by the rhetoric spewed forth by the *Emerald*. Their agenda seems clear. Keep those students ignorant, give them a false sense of accomplishment and keep them from acting or thinking about topics of foremost importance.

Shannon Wilson
Energy Management
Lane Community
College

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The *Oregon Daily Emerald* will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community.

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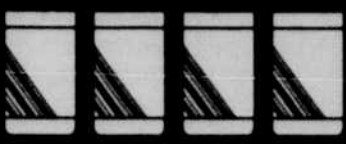
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