

EDITORIAL

Hayward not right for Aquino speech

Finally graduates of the University can be proud to tell their family and friends who is speaking at their graduation ceremony.

Corazon Aquino, the former president of the Republic of the Philippines, will present the commencement address June 11.

Aquino took over the country in the middle of political turmoil. After her husband was assassinated, she was elected in a 1986 general election. She changed the country from a dictatorship to a republic, implementing a system of checks and balances on executive power.

Previous speakers have not been on the same level as Aquino. Last year the University asked Claire Gaudiani, president of Connecticut College, to deliver the commencement address. Although she is probably an important educational figure, her name does not command the respect of someone like Aquino. Two years ago Roger Wilkins, a professor at George Mason University and National Public Radio commentator, who won a Pulitzer Prize for coverage of Watergate, delivered the address. Though he has an impressive resume, he did not have the notoriety the school needed for graduation.

The notoriety of the speaker shows how important the University thinks the graduates are. The bigger the name the more respect. After spending four years and several thousand dollars on this University, graduates deserve a speaker who can impart wisdom and command respect.

Although there are some students who do not care who the speaker is, it is important to note that Aquino is an important woman in world history. Some people say Aquino will not have anything important to say to students. But that is not true. She has been through a lot in her life and could have a lot of inspiration for graduates. Regardless, she will have a lot more to say than previous speakers, and graduates can say they heard Aquino speak.

The only problem is now that the University has a good speaker the seating will be limited to the capacity of Hayward field. Past graduations have taken place at Autzen Stadium and the University has had a hard time filling the seating. Attendance has gone down steadily over the years. This can be partially attributed to the speaker. When family members of graduates hear that a person they have never heard of is giving the address they will not want to attend for fear of boredom. However, when people hear that Aquino is speaking they will be more inclined to go to hear the speech.

Even though the University planned to have the graduation at Hayward Field before Aquino was confirmed as the speaker, University officials should have considered moving the ceremony back to Autzen Stadium to accommodate the potential crowd.

Thanks to Corazon Aquino for coming to the University to speak. It is too bad more people will not be able to see her when she is here.



OPINION

A few of my unfavorable things



Gayle Forman

The end of the year is nigh. As I sit back and reflect on my glorious tenure as an *Emerald* columnist, I ponder all the columns that I have written and all of the ones that did not get written.

There is a temptation, having this great-big forum to air your gripes, to use your commentary as a personal complaints page. I tried to steer away from that — until now. This, my final column, is my own ax-grinding session. These are some of the things that, had I been slightly more self-indulgent (is that possible?), I might have ranted on about. Ladies and gentlemen, boys and girls, welcome to Bitchfest '95.

The University: Benefactor of Education or Money-stealing Meanie?

It is truly astounding the ways in which the University tries to "subtly" take our money. For instance, why are we charged \$10 to change our grading options? Why do we have to pay a quarter for the list of classes when it has advertising in it? Where has all that money from the \$150 tech fee gone? Last year I paid \$10 a term for the same service that I now get for \$50. And I don't have a choice. I think the idea of expanded computer access is nifty, but a few new computers and expanded e-mail capabilities do not exactly seem worth all that money. By the way, what are they doing with all of that tech-fee revenue that has not been spent? If the University is broke, then raise tuition.

Stop nampy-pambying around with all these little fees. I'm told that next year much of the campus will be a no bike-riding zone, and that we'll be fined for riding in certain areas. A design for public safety or bike path robbery?

Cars, Bikes and Stupid Pedestrians

Question: Why do Eugeneans always drive 10 miles slower than the speed limit? Why must drivers completely stop before making a right turn? Is there something in the air that makes people here drive like idiots?

People, the bike lanes are for bicycles, not for pedestrians, not for coffee clutches. The sidewalks are for walking and running. They are not for bicyclists and no, I will not get out of your way so you can pass me on the sidewalk on your fancy mountain bike. And why must people cross the streets at a diagonal, so as to block the flow of traffic for as long as humanly possible? One last word of advice. It is very dangerous to stop suddenly in a bicycle lane, or step into it without looking. Use some common sense.

Hippies, Deadheads and Campus Panhandlers

I would like to preface this rant by saying that this is not about homeless people and people who genuinely don't fit into the system. This is about people who choose a certain lifestyle and expect me to help them support it. Deadheads and a lot of the panhandlers we see around campus have chosen to not have jobs, not be in school, not have homes and to travel around the country following a band. That is their prerogative.

But it is not up to me to help them, to give them money, food or shelter. And half the time they don't even need it. I've seen many a scraggly person ask for money and then get into a nice Jeep and zoom off. If they can afford those \$35 Dead tickets, gasoline to traverse the country, drugs and food, then they have no right to dare to ask me for cash. So don't!

They make me angry because they have made me wary and grumpy toward all panhandlers. They take away from the plight of truly needy people, people who don't have a choice in all this. It's hard to differentiate, and often I feel scornful toward people who don't deserve it. And that makes me mad, mad, mad!

Bonus mystery question: Why do hippies/Deadheads always have puppies but never seem to have full-grown dogs?

Positive Columns I Might Have Written

I wanted to write about former Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders and Secretary of Energy, Hazel O'Leary. Both of these ultra-cool women are (were) running government, or trying to, the way it should be: open, honest, without political maneuvering and with the best interest of the people in mind. But Clinton fired Elders and the GOP is looking to ax the entire Department of Energy, so there's really not much to celebrate about is there?

Campus Media and Other Lame Ducks

Those sharpshooters over at the *Commentator* really know good journalism. Their constant griping about the *Emerald*, their nostalgic musings about the *Emerald's* glory days when Jake Berg was in charge and writing countless exposés about beer prove that they are even more pathetic than they accuse us of being. What would they have to write about if there were no *Emerald*? Oh well, angry boys will be angry boys. And speaking of ...

Back at the *Emerald*, I have been holding my tongue and typing fingers all year. Every paper needs diversity in its content, and I respect a conservative point-of-view. However, ill-informed, misleading, and juvenile commentaries have no place in this or any other paper. I don't care what a person writes about, but an opinion writer, and all writers, should use facts to support his argument, not tailor the facts to fit his opinion.

But let this be a lesson to you. Don't believe everything you read and hear, even if it comes in a reputable paper. Be critical, questioning and thoughtful about everything; don't just swallow someone else's dogma, and please don't get too cynical and tune out. Thanks for your attention.

Gayle Forman is a columnist for the *Emerald*.

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