

## Senate chooses space station over Americorps

**OUR OPINION:** Slashing the service program hurts all Americans

How would you like to earn money for college by helping rebuild America's inner-cities, teaching disadvantaged children how to read or taking care of an impoverished senior citizen?

Unfortunately, that's no longer an option.

The U.S. Senate voted to cut all funding for President Clinton's Americorps program Tuesday, opting to invest money in a research project to build an orbiting space station instead.

The Republican-dominated Congress has declared war on the nation's poor under the guise of expense-cutting-budget-balancing and has set its sites on eliminating "wasteful" and "superfluous" programs from the national payroll.

While reducing spending is an admirable goal, it is not only misguided, but obscene to conclude that Americorps is "wasteful." It is a program that allows non-wealthy young people to earn money for college by improving the lives of other Americans.

Rather than fund the program for the requested \$819 million, the cost-conscious Congress approved spending \$2.1 billion for the space station and an additional \$11 billion to complete the station by 2002.

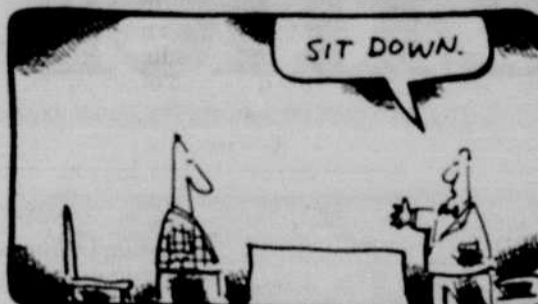
Americorps established one of the few win-win situations in federal policy. Students who needed financial assistance could earn it by serving their country without joining the military. While students on the G.I.

Bill protected the nation, Americorps students gave them something to protect. At the same time, the work of Americorps students helped inner-city kids improve their chances of staying in school and living long enough to attend college.

By not funding the program, the Senate has not only made it more difficult for middle-class Americans to attend college, but it has simultaneously taken opportunity out of the hands of the hungry and the homeless. Our representatives, it seems, believe the poor are not a priority. The flaw in this value judgment, however, is that by making higher education less accessible to low- and middle-income families, the number of poor people in this country will continue to grow. It will also widen the gap between the haves and the have-nots into a chasm.

More than half of every tax dollar is spent on defense, social security and interest paid on foreign debts. Yet Congress has chosen to cut the segment of budget that affects the most Americans but costs the least. The National Endowment for the Arts, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Medicare, and welfare have all gone under the Congressional knife.

When a governing body begins to place the value of technology above the value of people, it no longer represents the public it is sworn to serve. Rather than supporting a program that sought to rebuild America, our Senators decided to start construction in space instead. Now, what was that again about family values?



## Freshmen: Have fun, live a little and learn

*"Training is everything. Cauliflower is nothing but cabbage with a college education."*

— Samuel Clemens

When I was a freshman, I knew everything. At that age everybody does. For the past three years I have gradually (and painfully) learned everything I missed. So I'm going to pass on all that wonderful knowledge to all you little freshmen whipper-snappers who are now part of this illustrious institution.

First off, you don't know jack. You may be 18 and invincible but you're still an idiot. I don't know how many times I've seen freshmen convinced they're right, get in a face-off with a professor. You have a high school diploma; the professor has a Ph.D. Think about it.

Rush during the first week of classes. The frat will give you free beer by the gallon. Then don't join. Unless of course you like running around in your underwear with a toilet brush around your neck looking for the soggy biscuit. This isn't hazing. It is now referred to as "motivationally challenged." If you're joining a sorority, smack any one who asks you how much Daddy makes.

Don't pet the wildlife on 13th Avenue. Don't pet the dogs either. If someone asks you for spare change, ignore them. Most of them are young, have good strong backs but are afflicted with the unfortunate disability of being "motivationally challenged." Nothing that a haircut, a bath and a little work ethic won't cure.

Ahh, the dorms. Oops, I mean "residence halls." This is a must for all freshmen. Don't be a wimp. Stay all year long. It's an experience and an adventure—especially if you live in the Project (a.k.a. Bean). Don't think of the rooms as cramped, just really cozy. Rumor has it that the complex was designed by the same guy who drew up the plans for San Quentin.

Resident assistants are a nuisance. They're a bunch of arrogant juniors and seniors with deity complexes whose job is to make sure you don't have too much fun. If they get persnickety, go buy a bag of crickets at a pet store and release them in the RA's room. He or she won't be able to sleep for a week. If the kill-joy is still a problem, stack all the furniture in front of his or her door and go make some mischief.

Dorm food sucks. Plain and simple. My freshman year, my roommate thought he was in heaven—all the food he could eat. A few months later he realized that he was in culinary hell. It's not so much that they try to poison you, they just overcook everything, leave out all spices and flavor and get recipes from the United States Marine Corp. cookbook or the Culinary Handbook of the Federal Penitentiaries. Be safe and live off salad, toast and cereal. If you need protein, eat a squirrel.

### OPINION

Jesse Bohrer-Clancy

If you are a white, heterosexual male, start apologizing now. Everything is your fault (at least on this campus), so get used to it. Just smile a lot and try not to take it too personally. Use a condom. Sex is great, but don't be an idiot. You get AIDS, you die. There's no cure, and I wouldn't plan on them finding one any time soon. But of course it won't happen to you. You're invincible, know everything, and the person you're with certainly wouldn't be infected. Dying before 30 is a bitch and a complete waste of life, so don't be stupid.

Condoms are available at the Student Health Center (across from Oregon Hall at the corner of 13th Avenue and Agate Street) for free, so grab a handful. If you get yourself into a situation where you don't have one, take a romantic cold shower and then run down to the nearest 7-Eleven and buy a box.

There are also alternatives to intercourse, such as massage and other little goodies, so be creative and imaginative. Getting laid is not the end-all and be-all of human existence. Cheer up, at least you won't have to worry about Mom and Dad thumping on your door asking what in tarnation you're doing with a boy/girl in your room on a school night. Just remember that your roommate has a key. Thus endeth the sermon.

Above all, remember that you're in college and you will have experiences here you won't be able to have anywhere else. You will be taught how to think and grow, both from others and yourself, but you must want to learn if you are going to get anything at all from your time here. You only get out of this place what you put into it.

So make merry, party your arse off and celebrate life. Pull a campus-wide prank, Lord knows we need one. (Watch out—OPS and the campus administration are a bunch of cranky, old farts). A dear friend once put it to me: "You must always be true to yourself." You've only got one life, so make the most of it.

*Jesse I. Bohrer-Clancy, a senior majoring in biochemistry, is a columnist for the Emerald.*

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Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.

The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style.

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