

SOUND OFF
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OPINION

editorials, letters, commentary and perspective

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Eugene on top of college-town heap

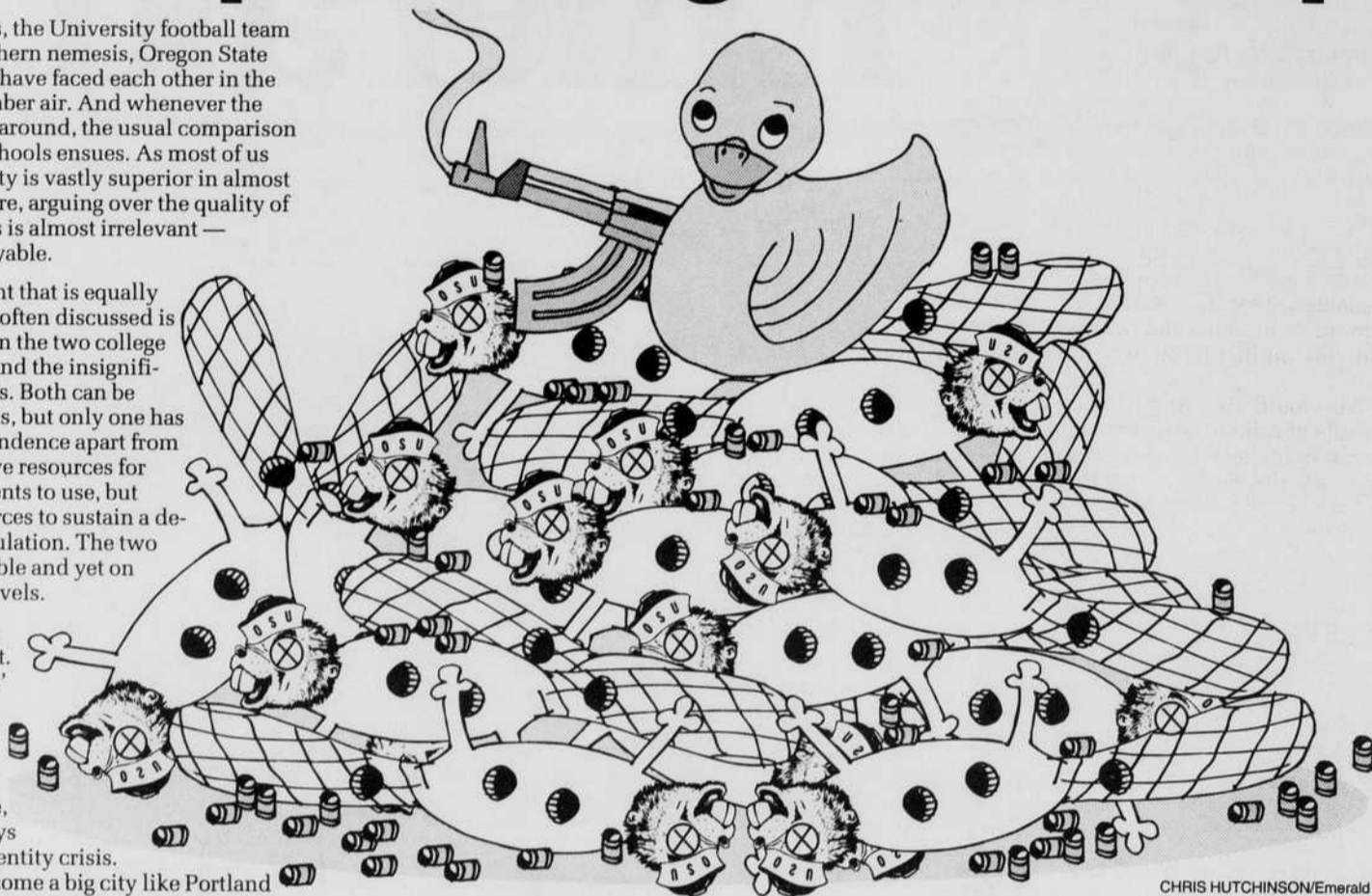
OUR OPINION:
As Civil War approaches, we have to say that the home of the Beavers doesn't measure up to our schizophrenic city

For 100 years, the University football team and its northern nemesis, Oregon State University, have faced each other in the cold November air. And whenever the "Civil War" comes around, the usual comparison between the two schools ensues. As most of us know, the University is vastly superior in almost every way. Therefore, arguing over the quality of the two institutions is almost irrelevant — although very enjoyable.

Another argument that is equally lopsided yet not as often discussed is the "battle" between the two college cities, our Eugene and the insignificant other, Corvallis. Both can be called college towns, but only one has any level of independence apart from its school. Both have resources for their student residents to use, but only one has resources to sustain a decent, civilized population. The two towns are comparable and yet on entirely different levels.

Eugene, we must admit, is not perfect. Many of its citizens' habits are downright detrimental to the city — usually by being blatantly illegal. And Eugene, of course, has always suffered from an identity crisis. Is it or should it become a big city like Portland — offering something for everyone? Or should it keep its small town roots, remaining friendly and devoid of any problems plaguing the big cities. Unfortunately, it is not both, like many city officials would like to believe. Instead, Eugene is neither — doomed to be eternally confused.

Nevertheless, Eugene is a virtual utopia compared to Corvallis. A rural metropolis with 47,000 people to call its own, Oregon State's home is tired and just plain boring. While its Convention and Visitors Bureau touts the city's "beautiful scenery, mild seasons and plentiful activities," Corvallis actually offers nothing but a supply depot for the many farmers in the area.



CHRIS HUTCHINSON/Emerald

College students, especially, find only emptiness in their search for activity outside of campus. Just ask one. While most Beaver fans won't say it, they actually hate Corvallis as well — more than any of us could. They just can't admit it. Fortunately, we're here to help them do just that.

Eugene, on the other hand, actually has events and activities, not just people. There's more than three movie theaters, more than one decent newspaper and more than one major theater company. There's a diverse culture instead of a very limited one. And numerous parks and hiking trails exist inside the city limits instead of 20 miles outside, like in Beaverville.

Many college campuses, especially smaller, private ones, become shelters for their students. They never venture out, except for the necessary food and supplies. At Oregon State, the students can't venture out. There's nothing there — just Corvallis. Fortunately, in Eugene, we have the luxury of a life. Not only are there things to do, but we actually get to make choices. And most importantly, we attend a good university. The Beavers can't even say that.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board

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LETTERS

SAA hates apathy

The members of the Student Alumni Association wish to respond to your Nov. 8 editorial concerning Homecoming activities. We were disappointed by the lack of support for the many activities offered for students during Homecoming weekend. Instead of promoting the events, you took it upon yourselves to trivialize and even ridicule these events that we work hard at each year to make enjoyable.

We feel that everyone is entitled to their opinions, but before you criticize our events, it may be wise to get your facts straight on information regarding the Homecoming activities. For example, you claim in your article that Homecoming events are only for "a select group with open wallets." In fact, the events we plan are intended to be directed at all college students regardless of their financial situation.

You also asked, "What ever happened to parades, bonfires and true school spirit?" We agree that bonfires are fun and have done our best to sponsor them in the past, but the city is very reluctant to issue permits for burning within the city limits because it pollutes the air. Wouldn't this be cause for another editorial?

The problem is not that there is a lack of activities to foster school spirit. Rather, it is a combination of student apathy and editorials such as yours that convey a negative attitude toward Homecoming and re-

lated events.

The bottom line is the Student Alumni Association prides itself on the diverse activities we plan for students and the Eugene community. This year's Homecoming and Parent's Weekend were extremely successful in that we had greater attendance in years past. It is fortunate for us that the majority of students who do take pride in the school take your editorials with a grain of salt. It is also these students who will continue to plan events in order to maintain and increase student pride.

**Celicia Tatsumi,
Patrick Tandingan
& 23 co-signers**
Student Alumni Association

Misplaced identities

Recently, I read a letter to the *Emerald* (Oct. 28) by a woman who referred to herself as "an actively out lesbian" — I think. I'm not sure anymore because the special interest labels keep changing. Thus, I wrote this letter.

Maybe I am insensitive, but I get really sick of having to stumble around rhetoric, innuendo and buzz words just to be politically correct. Or is it "P.C." now?

The double standard of special interest categorization actually separates instead of uniting. The more we invent student unions for 9,000 different minorities (Can I say minorities?), the more we divide.

The letter to the *ODE* on Nov. 18 is a good example. A woman in support of increasing the number of multicultural student unions spent half of her text using the correct terms for the cultures.

Some may call me a gay basher; others, a commie fag. One thing I'm not is rigid. However, I am not without bias. Being born and raised in Oregon and not being able to afford to buy a house here helps me to support my bias against people moving here from other states. But I don't believe I should receive special rights in housing, schooling or employment.

Besides my Oregonian status, I am also an alcoholic. I believe that I was born an alcoholic. I am not seeking special status due to my disease. I abused alcohol and other drugs for 25 years, and though I haven't used those substances for more than 12 years, I still choose the mantle of alcoholic. I do not seek special treatment or recognition, yet I have been turned down for jobs, relationships, insurance and driving privileges due to my disease. This is true even after I quit using the drugs.

Though an alcoholic, I do not get my identity through it — just freedom. If I was gay or "actively" gay, my identity, rights or privileges would not come from who I slept with. If yours does, there are a couple of 12-step programs for you.

Colin Campbell
Eugene