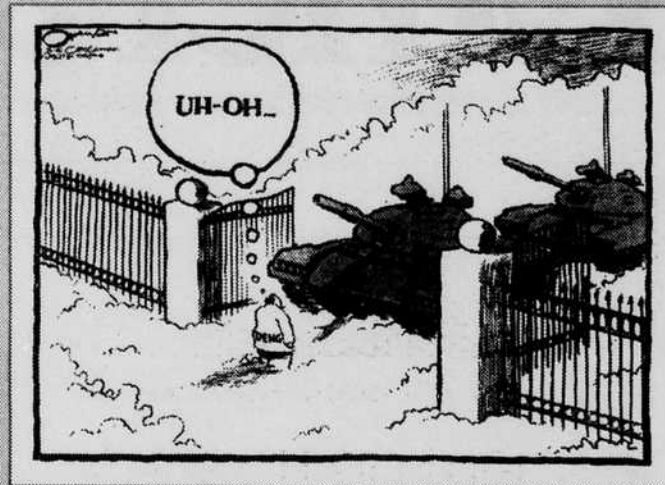


## The Drawing Board



## College students lack perspective

**OUR OPINION:** Students who come to Eugene from out of town should understand how local issues affect residents before they get involved

Eugene is a college town. There is no getting around that. Green and yellow decorate the city miles away from the campus area. But there's more to Eugene than just college spirit — there are college students.

There are currently 17,100 undergraduates attending the University. According to University records, 41 percent of them come from a state other than Oregon. Of the students that do come here from in-state, most come from a city other than Eugene.

That means in a relatively small city, at least compared to cities like Portland, a large proportion of the politically active members of the community haven't lived in Eugene for more than four years. This can mean some problems when native Eugeniens and students disagree on the future of Eugene.

Most people enrolled in the University only plan on living in Eugene while they are at school. To them, Eugene is great place to hang out for a few years while they get an education. As for the long-term future of the city, most students couldn't care less.

Because these students haven't lived in

Eugene long and don't plan on remaining in Eugene very far into the future, how they view issues facing Eugene often differs from how native Eugeniens do.

For instance, the Skinner Butte Cross was one of the more controversial issues facing Eugene this year. To people who have lived in Eugene for a long time, emotions were strong on both side of the issue.

Some people felt great personal attachment to the cross, while others had been fighting for years to get rid of it. To an outsider it may have seen like a silly issue, but to long-time residents it was an important decision for the city.

Most college students' reaction to the cross debate was "who cares?" After all, to someone who doesn't understand the background of the debate, it's just a cross, not worthy of a city-wide debate.

This kind of thinking reflects the lack of perspective most students have in dealing with issues in Eugene. Most students would like Eugene to conform to their ideas of what a college town should be. They don't particularly care what the people who have lived here for their whole lives think.

And because they probably won't have to deal with the long-term effects of the decisions they make, it is easy for students to develop a short-sighted mentality in deciding the future of the city.

For instance, many students would like to see the city expand so they can take ad-

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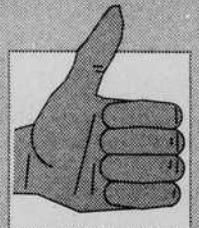
vantage of all the attractions that come with a big city. They don't have to worry about the problems expansion might bring in future years, so they rarely consider the concerns of those who choose to live here.

It's great for college students to want to get involved with local issues. After all, what happens in Eugene has a direct effect on most college students' lives. However, when students do become involved in issues, they should take the time to consider the background to those issues.

For many of us, Eugene is just a pit-stop on our paths to other places. For Eugene natives, it is a place they plan on living for a long time. Issues that face the community have special importance for them. We, as college students, should understand that before we get involved with local issues.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board.

## All thumbs



**"Ellen"**  
After months of dallying, "The Hollywood Reporter" says ABC may finally be bringing its Wednesday night character "Ellen" out of the closet. With reports of an April 30 unveiling, we can only hope the reports are true. The hype has been going on long enough.

**Tampa police**  
Deputies in the Florida city took 34 minutes to respond to a 911 call that reported a woman was being beaten across the street. After the woman was found dead at the scene, police defended the delay, citing rush hour traffic, a shift change and lack of available officers. Yikes. Let's hope problems like this never pop up in Eugene.

**Speech tourney**  
The Bower Aly High School Forensics Tournament came to campus last weekend and was supposed to increase local business, including in the EMU, with about 900 high school students. Instead, the students left the EMU trashed, jumbled and smelling of sweaty feet.

**Kenneth Starr**  
The Whitewater special prosecutor announced his resignation last week from the post effective Aug. 1 then reversed himself days later. After rounds of criticism from both Republicans and Democrats, Starr was right to stay with the investigation.

**The Academy**  
Kudos are in order for the Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences for recognizing independent films in this year's Oscar nominations. Among the nominees: *Breaking the Waves*, *Secrets & Lies* and *Shine*.

**Lobby Day**  
This time, accolades are in order for University students' role in the lobbying process. About 200 college students from all over the state descended on the capitol on Feb. 20, including our very own ASUO president. Keep it up.

## Corrections

In the Feb. 19 article, "Posner explains brain exploration in lecture," erroneous information was included about the history and nature of the award given. Professor Michael Posner is one of three recipients of the Distinguished Professor Award, an award which was established in 1996. Posner was given the award by the College of Arts and Sciences.

The Feb. 21 story, "New associate dean position added to help with multicultural issues," contained a factual error. The new position of dean of student life for multicultural affairs was the result of recommendations made by the Task Force for Racial Diversity, not the Race Task Force.

The Feb. 24 "Winners & Losers" section mislabeled baseball player Albert Belle. Belle is a member of the Chicago White Sox and a former slugger for the Cleveland Indians.

The Emerald regrets the errors.

## LETTER

### ASUO correct

This letter is in regard to the seats that were withheld from students at the Arizona men's basketball game. The ASUO Executives issued this action in accordance with the occurrences at the UCLA game. It seems that some type of action needed to be taken. Too many times this type of incident is simply swept under the carpet.

Racist comments have no place in our University, much less our sporting events. Many younger children attend these events and look upon the students as role models. Although we may not want it, these children look up to us. Therefore, we cannot excuse this type of behavior.

Many people think that this inci-

dent has been blown way out of proportion and the punishment is too heavy. It may punish innocent fans who have nothing to do with the few persons who are not creative to cheer and heckle cleanly. However, we need to start taking responsibility for the actions of our fellow fans.

If we ever, as a society, want to end racism and ignorance, we need to stand against racist comments. Where better to begin this stand than a highly regarded University that is considered one of the most politically active in the U.S.?

So we are presented with this opportunity to let the ignorant few in our University know that we will not stand for racism. It would have been a shame to have let this just blow over.

Incidents like these have happened in every basketball court in the U.S.; it has happened here at Mac Court in the past, and nothing has been done about it. Luckily, our ASUO Executive is brave enough to take this step toward fighting racism, and hopefully we will all come to realize this action is not about punishment. It is about responsibility.

The responsibility we all have, as adults, is to end racism. Eliminating racist comments and slams is the first step. A step our ASUO Executive was strong enough to take, and a step that we are willing to take with them. Job well done.

Bryan Mercier

Public Relations Director

MCC