

CONTACTING US

NEWSROOM:  
(541) 346-5511  
E-MAIL:  
ode@oregon.uoregon.edu  
ONLINE EDITION: www.uoregon.edu/~ode

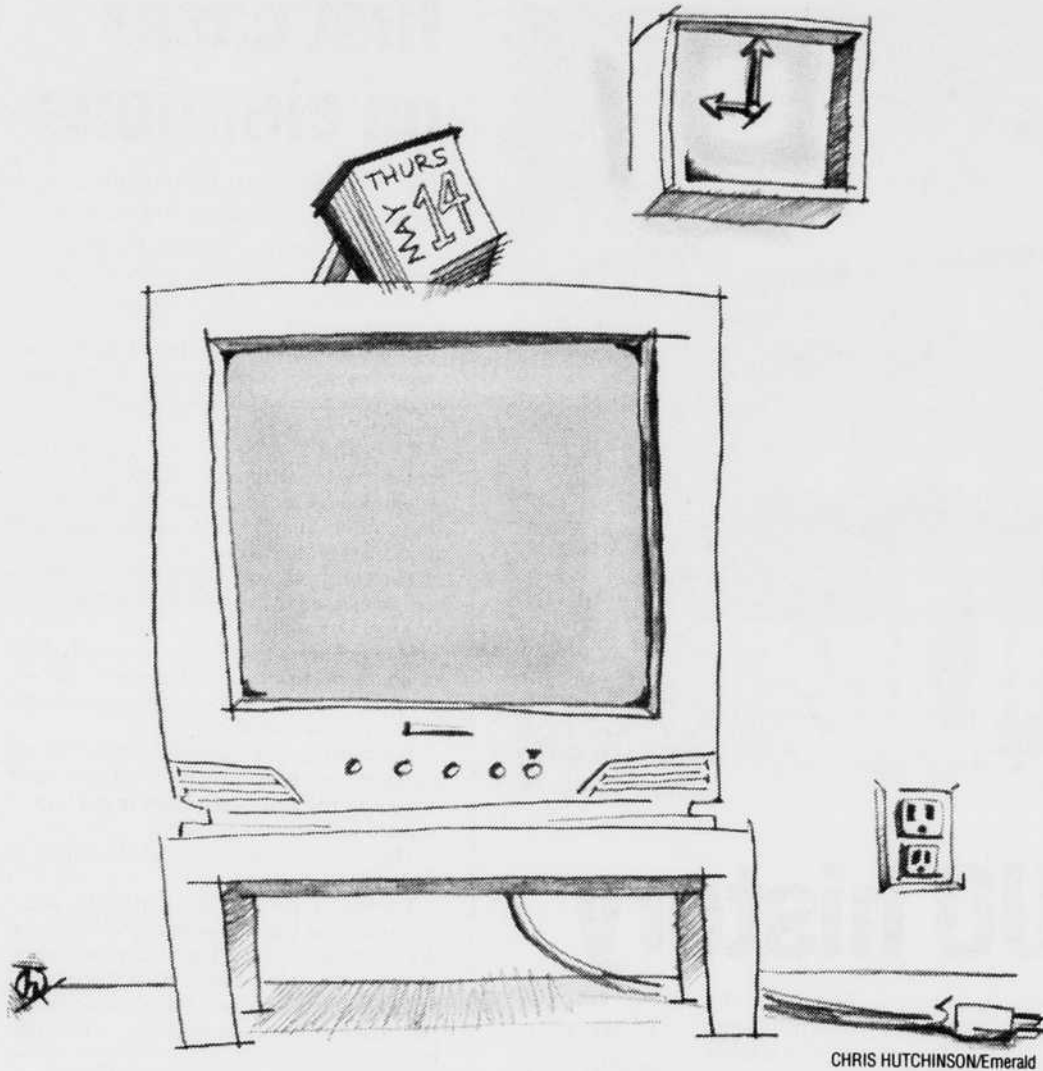
ADDRESS:  
Oregon Daily Emerald  
P.O. BOX 3159  
Eugene, Oregon 97403

# PERSPECTIVES

EDITOR IN CHIEF  
Sarah Kickler  
EDITORIAL EDITOR  
Mike Schmierbach  
NIGHT EDITOR  
Holly Sanders

## A society fixated on nothing

*'Seinfeld' is ending and everything would be fine if pop culture pundits would follow it to the grave*



CHRIS HUTCHINSON/Emerald

Talking to someone about television can be a lot like talking to them about religion. Opinions clash, ideologies are challenged, and even when no offense is meant, someone usually gets huffy. With that disclaimer in place, I'd like take this opportunity to discuss my personal indifference to the "Seinfeld" series finale. Now, if my past experiences with human behavior are any indication, this is right about the point where some reader will groan, inwardly or outwardly, and wonder why I have to dampen the collective excitement surrounding this bona fide television event. To this reader I can offer only one justification: someone has to do it.

On Thursday, the world will gather around the television and bid a collective goodbye to "Seinfeld".

I, for my part, have never seen the show, and I don't intend to watch the series finale. I have, however, been passively aware of the countdown for some time now. It didn't really matter to me one way or the other until recently, when the relentless hype started to creep, fungus-like, into my life. People started asking me about my favorite episode of "Seinfeld" or my favorite character. They seemed shocked, sometimes appalled, when I told them I didn't watch the show. It was as if I had violated some kind of social contract.

But I didn't get really irked until I started reading about the gaping hole in popular culture that would be left in the wake of "Seinfeld's" final episode. Granted, this is a sentiment espoused largely by self-proclaimed pop culture experts, who hardly qualify as legitimate authorities on anything, even on their best days. But according to them, "Seinfeld's"

run has been one of the defining events of the 1990s. Its finale will be the touchstone for the various generations that coexist in this pre-millennium era, from baby boomers to their grandchildren. And in a sense, they're right. "Seinfeld", being a show about nothing, was the perfect complement to the 1990s, a decade about nothing.

The '90s, more than any other time, have been about homogenization. Meaningless trends piled on top of each other are accepted as culture. This is why it is perfectly acceptable to many people that they can not only be defined, but defined by something as trivial as a television series.

So you see, it's not so much "Seinfeld" that I have a problem with; it's the myth of mass culture.

Very little of what pop culture has produced in the last decade can accurately be termed representative of a majority of people, even those who willingly consume such products.

I think what it ultimately comes down to is that I have a hard time relating to the perceived significance of a show I've never seen. This may very well shut me out of participation in what I'm often told is a very important cultural phenomenon, but that's okay.

I'm sure someone will tell me all about it Friday morning.

*Kameron Cole is a columnist for the Emerald. Her work appears on alternate Wednesdays. Her views do not necessarily represent those of the newspaper.*

OPINION



Kameron Cole

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

**Fit and fortunate**

As a former director of the men's intermural and recreational sports programs, I was pleased to be present at the ground-breaking ceremony for a new and enlarged recreation and fitness center.

Congratulations are in order for all who will have taken part from the inception to the completion of this center. However, I wish to transmit a special thanks to the ASUO, which has issued a promissory note to themselves and future generations of students for its payment.

Users will have the opportunity to enhance their lives expeditiously.

John Borchardt  
Eugene

**Improve communication**

In light of the recent student elections, which, while not official yet, are for the most part over, there now exists a new group of students who are about to take control of student government here at the University and this point in time marks the beginning of a transitional period. There is a great potential for the incoming group of representatives to start something that will take student government to another level of effectiveness. Not only in what can be started, but in that there are people at the formative stages of working relationships. Thus it is imperative, in order to achieve any significant gains on behalf of the students, for all of those involved to make a conscious effort to create open and positive lines of communication and to maintain those lines once they are established.

Without a doubt, this should be the foremost item on the agenda for all of those involved. This especially means those who are members or leaders of student-run and student-funded programs because they have access to, and influence over, a large amount of resources and, more importantly, access to students themselves. We can, through collaboration, easily outdo any individual effort when we harness the collective strength of student-funded programs that is now an unrealized potential. That potential will be realized when we put aside individual agendas and act in a way that benefits the student body as a whole. Through cooperation and collaboration, people become accustomed to dealing with each other and learn how to work together more effectively. This can be done in several ways.

First, I urge the incoming student government to make strong efforts to foster the growth of these lines of communication and to ensure that everybody on this campus has access to their representatives. Furthermore, it is necessary to respect the internal structure of student programs and accept that each program is run by its own guidelines that serve it best.

Second, I want to urge the student programs to cooperate with each other and with the student government. There has not been a high level of collaboration among student groups, which is unfortunate because much more could have been accomplished on behalf of the students. I conclude by urging all of these people to influence to make a point when establishing your program and personal agenda to keep an open door though which outsiders may bring an idea or a request that may help us all.

Spencer Hamlin  
Political Science

**Miner misinformed**

This is in response to the two letters to the editor printed in Friday's issue of the Emerald (ODE, May 9) and the "Open Letter to the Campus Community" posted everywhere.

Good ol' Bill Miner. He just loves to open his mouth and let all kinds of things come out without listening to how stupid he sounds.

On Friday, the President and CEO of Gardenburger let everyone know that Bill Miner doesn't know anything about the company he has been attacking. Not only did Bill submit "inaccuracies and misrepresentations" about the company to the newspaper, but Gardenburger is not even affiliated with NORPAC—the target of the boycott.

Strike one.  
On another note, Bill is leading a "Committee to Re-establish OSPIRG." Excuse me, but when did OSPIRG end? I only recall OSPIRG being denied the incredible sum of money that they "needed" for their budget. Since when does the existence of an organization that thrives on volunteer projects depend on whether or not they get their budget?

Don't be fooled by this big sob-story. If OSPIRG really wanted to continue its efforts, it could. It just wouldn't have the \$147,000 to spend on budget items we still don't know about.

Strike two.  
Careful Bill ... you don't want to strike out with only a month left of school.

Daren Welsh  
Pre-engineering