

# PERSPECTIVES

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## A reason to RIOT?

*Alcohol and bad judgement don't have to equal unruly behavior*

**A**s Halloween creeps ever nearer, the campus finds itself visited by the specter of 1997 — the year of the riot.

But this is Eugene, after all, and in a town like this, which is all but notorious for grassroots activism, a little unrest every now and again is expected. Unfortunately, what went down on 17th and Alder last year wasn't an expression of social dissatisfaction, it was an exercise in stupidity.

In the wake of similar alcohol-related incidents across the country, some people have attempted to frame the riots in a students' rights context, namely the right of students to drink and not be unfairly persecuted by the police and the universities.

Sure, we will buy that. This is Eugene, after all. People were genuinely surprised when a phalanx of police showed up to a party where 300 people, some of whom were underage, had spilled into the streets. That makes sense.

They were so shocked and appalled when the cops asked them to disperse that they registered their dissatisfaction by pulling down street signs and throwing broken bottles.

The ultimate indignity for these crusaders for student power came when the police threw canisters of tear gas into their midst. They stumbled away bleary eyed, but still righteous. And if you listened carefully, you could just barely hear someone

softly humming "Kumbaya."

If you believe that, then we have some land in Arkansas to sell you.

Of course, this is in sharp contrast to the reality of the situation, which went something like this: several hundred people ended up at the same party. Ignoring the very obvious fact that a party with so many people was not going to last for too much longer, they stuck around.

Inevitably, the police arrived to break up the party. Drunk, and lacking any other activities to fill the hours until morning, the people decided that the thing to do was resist.

One result of this activity has been intensified scrutiny of off-campus parties and their attendees.

Everyone from the Eugene Police Department to University Housing has toughened up on how they deal with alcohol, particularly minors and alcohol. This means that even those students who can drink responsibly, if not legally, without turning over cars or taunting law enforcement are subject to even more authoritarian attention than before because of the mere possibility of another fracas.

So now the big question is this: What can be done to discourage more beer-drenched pandemonium this Halloween? Perhaps we should start by deglamorizing riots.

It could just be the word "riot" touches a primal place in peoples' souls, conjuring up images of valiant struggles against tyranny. Maybe if we used a more accurate

description, like "drunks being morons," it would lessen the allure.

The best way to avoid trouble this year? Don't be a dork. Common sense is the first casualty of alcohol consumption. If you can't find a way to express your inebriation that doesn't involve 40 cops, then you probably should not drink.

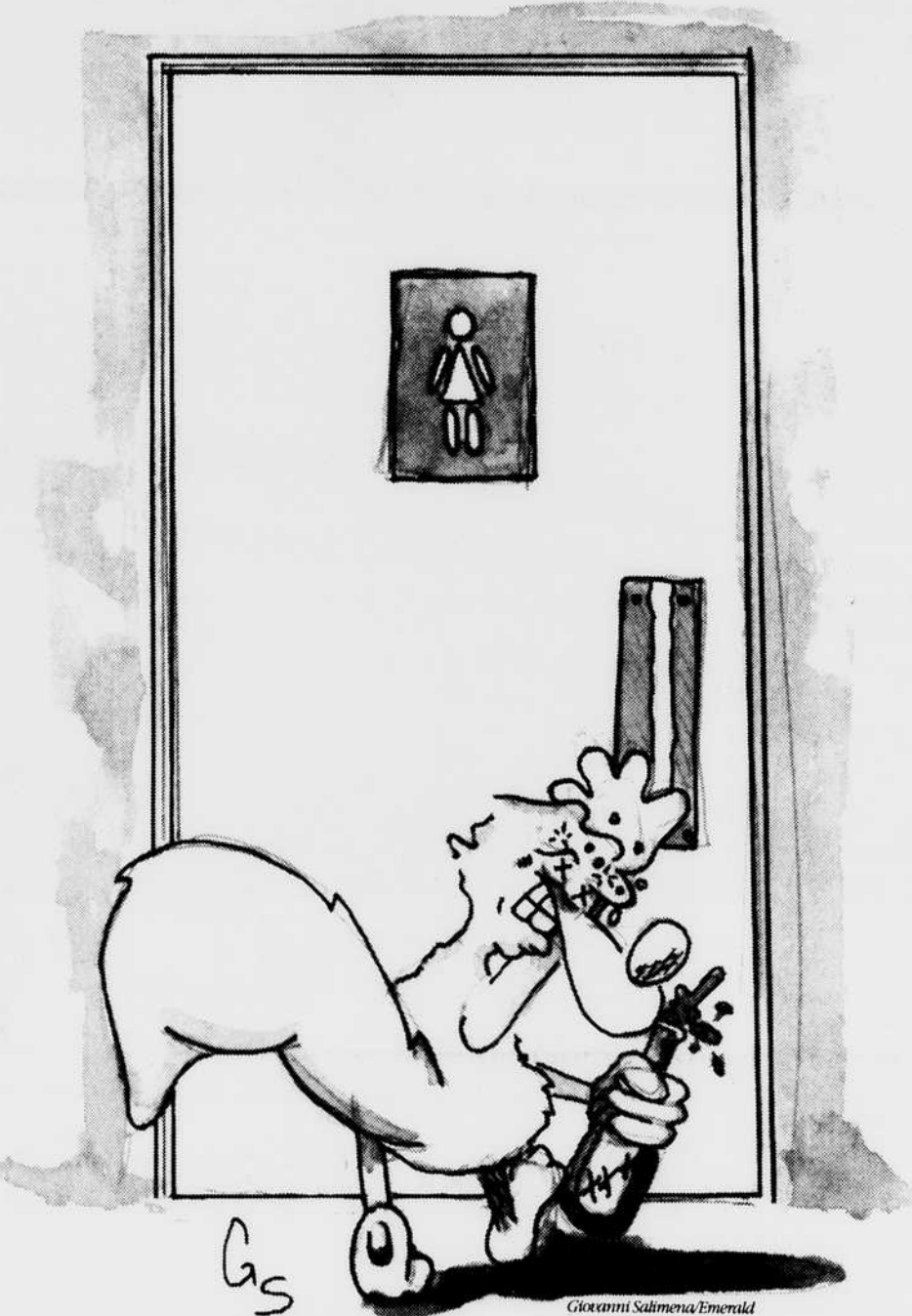
Furthermore, if there are

300 people at a party by the time you get there, turn around and go home. The police are probably on their way and the keg is probably empty.

In all honesty, we don't know what motivates people to riot. Maybe they just like the smell of tear gas. But if you really want to riot, if there burns within you the desire to experience the vis-

ceral thrill of civil disobedience, we're sure that you will have no problem finding a more worthy cause than simple intoxication. This is Eugene, after all.

*This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.*



Giovanni Salimena/Emerald

### Thumbs



**TO ONLINE DEMOCRACY:** Organizations like Corvallis-based Project Vote Smart have made it possible to do everything from registering to looking up your senators' voting records from your computer. It may not be too long before we can actually vote in our pajamas.

**TO SEN. RON WYDEN:** For coming to the EMU Amphitheater to encourage students to vote. Political maneuvering, we know, but cool nonetheless.



**TO MISINFORMATION:** Local candidates Norm Fox and Jeff Kropf used data from Project Vote Smart, a non-partisan organization, and adapted it to attack their opponents. You know guys, they are nonpartisan for a reason.

**TO CRAFTY CAR THIEVES:** They found a way to file down keys that make it easier to take off with 1980s and 1990s imports. Hmmmm ... that club with the built in taser is looking more and more attractive.

Brendan Kane  
Law

## Letters to the Editor

### Walker understands issues

There's a Democratic candidate running in House District 41 who is light years ahead of her opponent on the issues. That candidate is Vicki Walker, a 1978 UO graduate. She is a strong supporter of public education, and with two kids in the higher education system — one at the UO and one at LCC — Vicki understands tight budgets and the difficulties working families and students face when it comes to funding that education. That's why Vicki supports a tuition freeze, increased funding for Oregon Need grants and support for student child care. If you're looking for a candidate who is willing to rearrange her work schedule to help others, who

volunteers for community and school projects and who has testified at legislative hearings on important issues like teen suicide prevention, you've found her. Look no further, because that candidate is my mom.

Adam J. Walker  
Pre-Business Administration

### Measure 64 protects forests

In November 1996, a massive mudslide in Douglas County, obliterated several houses, killing four people. The mudslide resulted from heavy rains on a steep 160 acre clear cut. The economic benefits to Douglas County were layoffs and a mill closure. Once their land was clear cut, the timber company sold it and

moved on.

Measure 64 allows Oregon voters the rare opportunity to affect forest policy. Unfortunately, our choice has been confused by a multi-million dollar campaign by the timber industry that includes funding of studies claiming 50 to 60 percent of timber jobs would be lost with passage of Measure 64. Of course, the studies are silent on how many jobs are lost when raw logs are continuously shipped overseas, closing countless mills. Or that in the past two decades, technological advances have reduced by 40 percent the number of workers needed to mill the same without clear cutting. For example, the Pacific Lumber Company of California amassed 70

percent of the world's privately owned old growth redwood forests without clear cuts, pesticides or herbicides while supporting timber towns with 80 years of job security.

The issue for the voters is simple: Do we want laws that require forest health and job security from timber companies that profit from Oregon's natural resources, or do we want business as usual clear cuts, mudslides, fouled waterways, endangered salmon and reduced tourism revenues. I know how I will vote, and the blood of the victims of the next clear cut will not be on my hands.