

Oregon Daily
Emerald
 Editor in chief: Laura Cadiz
 Editorial Editor: Bret Jacobson

Perspectives

Newsroom: (541) 346-5511
 Room 300, Erb Memorial Union
 P.O. Box 3159, Eugene, OR 97403
 E-mail: ode@oregon.uoregon.edu
 On-line edition: www.dailyemerald.com

On our own...



Beata Mostafavi

The sense of freedom that college offers can often overshadow the pressures sometimes felt by students.

College life. It's a whole new world for students coming from households where they've learned to count on homemade dinners and free laundry. We didn't know the true meaning of being broke, tired, unhealthy or what it was like to lack the security of our parents. What we did know was that college was a first step toward being on our own. And this idea thrilled us — we didn't think we'd ever miss that security we once had.

I watch the incoming freshmen walk the University streets with smiles that reveal anxiety, joy and enthusiasm. But the ones who have a real clue are those whose eyes are filled with fear. College is one step closer to real life, and we should all be scared.

Since elementary school, we've been hit with the phrase "when you go to college..." countless times. Graduating high school marked the end of a huge era. We all tossed our caps into the air as a sign of celebration. But what the hell were we so happy about?

Freshman Amanda Lowe has at least one good reason.

"I'm not depending on my parents here, and I'm really excited about that," she said.



This is exactly the kind of thinking that makes me cringe but laugh at the same time. I remember having that same feeling of joy to be away from Mom and Dad only because I felt I could finally do so many more things.

Sophomore Tyler Hayward also remembers this freshman feeling.

"It was totally awesome to finally be on my own," he said. "I loved it because I could do as I pleased, in the sense that nobody was worrying if I wasn't home until 3 a.m."

But this type of freedom produces an illusion that life will only get better the more independent we become. Usually, the moment you enter the college experience you come to understand the feeling hamsters get when you stick them in a cage together. Except that instead of a hairy creature to share breathing space with, it's your first roommate. And in place of a 2 feet by 2 feet glass box, it's your

University dorm room, though measurements are painstakingly close.

But it doesn't even matter. All you know is that you are here and free to do anything behind your parents' backs. Even dorm life becomes exciting.

This newfound independence makes us feel like we have the freedom to do whatever we want, but why are we so anxious to become adults who have to take responsibility for their own actions anyway?

Carolyn Povlish is one freshman who is on the right track. "I'd be more comfortable if my parents were here. I'd have them to fall back on for advice," she said. "The responsibility is on you now (in college), and you're the one giving yourself advice."

That's right. Every choice we make from now until we graduate will help determine where we will end up in life. We thought we didn't want the folks watching over our shoulders be-

cause we wanted to "be on our own." But at least our parents made decisions that were for our own well-being; we make choices because we want to.

College is nothing but a tease. It makes us feel like we can get along just fine by ourselves, but in all the excitement we forget that this is only an imaginary world — a place of limited liability where independence is relevant.

Independence sounds so great when we first enter the college scene. But sadly enough, we won't know what it really means until we find ourselves trapped in the real world of working for a living and overcoming hardships that don't have any security blankets to fall into, that same comfort we were once so happy to give up.

It is then that the scary realization will hit us that we are truly on our own. And this is when we'll finally see that freedom isn't what we ever thought it was.

Beata Mostafavi is a columnist for the Emerald. Her views do not necessarily represent those of the newspaper. She can be reached via e-mail at bmostafa@gladstone.uoregon.edu

Letters to the editor

National journalists miss facts of tax cut

Journalists of the national media should be called "repeaters" instead of reporters. The White House counts on the oft-repeated lie being more believable than any simple truth and practices propaganda in a style that would have been the envy of Stalin or even Hitler. Is it journalistic laziness or collusion?

President Clinton has said that the Republican tax cut is "huge" and "risky." The media continually repeat that "the American people would rather preserve Social Security or pay down the debt using the current tax surplus." In fact, the Republican tax cut lock-boxes the Social Security surplus and does indeed use some of the tax surplus to pay down the debt.

Furthermore, only 25 percent of

the non-Social-Security tax surplus would be used to provide this puny tax reduction. On the other hand, Clinton's "tax cut" proposals envision 81 new spending programs that would consume all the non-Social-Security tax surplus and SOME of the Social Security surplus while paying down NONE of the debt!

Thank you, American Journalism.

Roger W. Cain
 Somerville, Ala.

Refusal to use mascot names applauded

I am writing to applaud your decision to refuse to print the names of Indian sports mascots (ODE, Sept. 28). Although it is long overdue, I appreciate the gesture, and will pray for strength and resolve for you and your fellow staff members who are sure to come under attack for taking this stand. You have done good today. Your an-

cestors will be proud of you, and our children and our coming generations will be better for not having to be subjected to this type of negative stereotyping. Sepk'ec'ca, thank you.

Tom Ball, Modoc and Klamath,
 Ph.D.
 U of O alumnus (1998)

More money for Pell Grant a good start

As we all know increasing funding for student aid is one of the best investments Congress can make in America's future. Giving even more students the ability to afford a college education will build a stronger workforce and even expand opportunity.

Unfortunately, our elected officials have neglected this fact in the past. Over the past two decades, student aid funding has not kept pace with inflation or the rising costs of college. The largest of student aid programs, the Pell Grant

is a great example. Currently, it allows over 3.7 million students to go to college. In the late 1970s, the maximum Pell Grant a student could qualify for paid for three-quarters of the average cost of attendance at a four-year public university. Due to poor funding over the years, those figures have dropped precipitously. Today, the maximum Pell Grant pays for only one-third of the average cost of attendance at a public university.

With the outlook of federal budget surpluses, there is no reason for this situation to continue. Rep. DeFazio, and Sens. Smith and Wyden should do everything possible to give student aid the funding increase it desperately needs. Raising the maximum Pell Grant that a student can qualify for by \$400 would be a step in the right direction.

Robin Miller
 ASUO Federal Affairs
 Jereme Grzybowski
 OSPIRG Higher Education Project

Ad inappropriate for student newspaper

This letter is in regards to an ad run in the special Edition of the Emerald (ODE, Sept. 20). The ad was on page 4C, 6D and 3E for Lazar's Bazaar Dept. Store. I find it inappropriate for your paper to advertise drugs. The ad has a large picture of a bong and bold print for "1000's of pipes and smoker's supplies." I realize they try to pass it off that it is for "tobacco use" but we all know those supplies are for smoking pot. Eugene is already known for its marijuana friendly atmosphere, I do not believe that you need to help further that image in any way. In recent years the University has concerned itself with the drinking problems of its students. However, in printing this ad you are saying that pot smoking is not a problem with its students — which is incorrect.

Tracy Lindberg
 Chemistry