

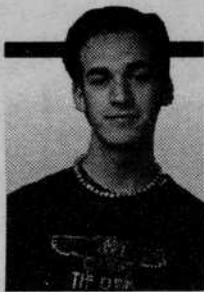
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# Perspectives

Oregon Daily  
**Emerald**

# I need YOU!

**O**K, people. As you may or may not know, I am the official "student life" columnist for the Emerald. Sounds official, doesn't it? But the truth of the matter is that I haven't got much of a life. I'm in college for Pete's sake! I am locked in my dorm for large periods of the day reading and doing homework and playing Tetris on my computer.



Mason West

I'm just one man trying to make a difference in this world. (Cue violin music.) I'm out there with my nose in it just so twice a month you can see my ugly mug on page 2. But dangit, that's not enough. I want to make a difference!

So, I need you, the readers, to help me out. Take a look at the end of the column really quickly. You see what's there? It's my e-mail address. There's this amazing thing called the Internet, and you can use it to send electronic letters to people instantly. Wow, isn't technology swell! To this date, only two people have ever e-mailed me in response to my columns. I must say, I'm a little hurt. Without feedback how am I supposed to know if I'm accurately representing you? Even the little things are great. Did you laugh a little? Did you receive valuable information?

My wisdom extends only so far. I know about drama, music, "The Simpsons" and Tetris. That leaves a whole lot of uncovered areas — areas that you are involved in. You are my eyes and my ears, my children. I place myself in your hands to mold me and make me a better columnist.

In times past I have turned to others for guidance. You may recall my last column about resident assistants. Now, I don't want to shock anybody, but that wasn't entirely my idea. Before your reality crumbles into little pieces, you have to get rid of this image of us columnists as supreme beings. We're just as smart as you are! Maybe even less so, in my particular case. I just

pretend that I'm important because when I was in kindergarten, the kids called me "poopy head." Needless to say, I'm still working through those issues.

From now on, I want you to think of me as Mason West, "The People's Columnist." Not to be confused with "The People's Communist." The last two sound a little similar. I want to know what you think, what you're doing, what you had for dinner last night.

This is not to say that I am abandoning my personal views; I'm just being open to other input. Be aware that I can't use every idea that you will, I hope, give me. I will pick and choose at my discretion. There is a reason that I'm writing the column and you're not: I paid off the editors!

As a sign of my dedication, I played "man on the street" and found out what some students want.

"More human interest stories. Things I can relate to," said Karen Smith, a sophomore educational studies major.

"More Pac-10 news and national sports," said Nebiyu Yohannes, a sophomore computer science major. (Sorry, but the only sports I know about are trampoline and frisbee.)

"It's good to see both sides of the issues," said A.J. Swoboda, a freshman business major. (Sounds great, I could have the angel side and the devil side like in cartoons.)

"How does our dorm food measure up to other universities?" said Tom Peryan, a freshman English major. (I'd only do that if



Bryan Dixon Emerald

I got to eat for free.)

"I'd like to read about the problems that international students have in some classes," said Emma Ko, a senior international studies major.

"Perspectives on what's the purpose of the University (in the general sense) by undergrads, graduates and professors," said Terrance MacMullan, a humanities Graduate Teaching Fellow.

"I like campus-related stuff. I don't really read the Emerald for local things," said Vickie Nelson, a Computing Center librarian. "I think a lot of people would go for some humor in the paper. It seems like there are lots of students who don't care

about the serious issues," said Luke Williams, a junior psychology major. (That's exactly how I feel! Amen, my brotha'.)

So what do you want? The e-mail address is still at the bottom of the page. And it's even closer than before!

I would love to hear from all of you. The future of this column may depend on it! And even if you don't have any opinions, you can write me, and we'll go play Tetris.

Mason West is a columnist for the Oregon Daily Emerald. His views do not necessarily represent the views of the Emerald. He can be reached via e-mail at mwest1@gladstone.uoregon.edu.

## Letters to the editor

### Candidates should get second chance

I went to the coffee hour on Feb. 4 that was hosted by C.J. Gabbe and Peter Larson. I did not feel pressured in any way to vote for them. They were encouraging people to vote but to make their own choices in who should be elected. I felt very happy that they reached out to the international community to encourage everyone to vote. I was glad for the opportunity to meet some of the people running for office. Gabbe and Larson should be given a second chance and be able to get back on the ballot.

Helen Whitlock  
international studies

### Gabbe, Larson's actions inappropriate

In response to James Pippen's comments (ODE, Feb. 14) regarding the violation of election rules by C.J. Gabbe and Peter Larson, I think Pippen is correct that the candidates have a responsibility to "influence the outcome of the election." The manner in which Gabbe and Larson attempted to do so, however, was neither appropriate nor fair. Elections regulations prohibiting candidates from offering voters a "thing of value" were

established in order to maintain an ideal of open access to all potential nominees. The sponsorship of any University function by a candidate compromises this ideal.

Pippen trivialized the significance of Gabbe and Larson's infraction. What about those candidates who find themselves lacking the financial privilege to offer major organizations such as the International Student Union coffee and snacks while promoting their campaigns? Does economic status determine how qualified one is to represent University students?

The standards and guidelines of this election were clearly presented prior to any campaigning. All candidates were required to sign an agreement to the rules established by the elections board. Gabbe and Larson's insistence that they did not realize their actions were in direct violation of ASUO election rules suggests one of two things: Either Gabbe and Larson were sincerely unaware of the rule when they sponsored the coffee hour or they were aware and chose to defy the rules anyway. Gabbe and Larson were either ignorant or unethical. Neither of these qualities has any place in our student government.

Ruth Williams  
undeclared

### Candidates expected to follow ASUO

I find it imbecilic that two gentlemen supposedly as bright as C.J. Gabbe and Peter Larson could fail to read and follow rules as simple as that of the ASUO elections. Instead of taking full responsibility for their actions, they stay true to the course of ASUO corrupt politics as usual and pull a predictable, career-politician end-round. Is this really the sort of dishonest malarkey you want plaguing the executive office next year? I should hope not!

Of course, there will most likely be those in the Gabbe/Larson camp who will cry foul because of my own ASUO Executive candidacy, so let me set the record straight: I do not care if you vote for me. In fact, don't vote for me if you don't want to.

If you really want to elect an official that will go into the next academic year ready to fight for your causes and your voice and who will maintain integrity and accountability in such a manner that will make you proud to be a part of this association, then cast your vote for Jay Breslow. A vote for Breslow is a vote against the apathy and clinical stupidity that the Gabbe/Larson campaign represents.

Scott D. Austin  
ASUO Executive candidate

### LETTERS POLICY

The Oregon Daily Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. Letters must be limited to 250 words. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length, clarity, grammar, style and libel. Letters may be dropped off at EMU Suite 300.

### CORRECTION

The story "PFC budget decisions frustrate programs" (ODE Feb. 11) failed to mention that the budget for the Designated Driver Shuttle, which had originally been cut by 30 percent, was reconsidered and decreased by only 12 percent from last year's budget.

Also, the story "Austin takes on ASUO exec race with confidence" (ODE Feb. 14) incorrectly stated that Peter Watts was planning to run with Austin as ASUO vice president. Watts had never planned to run with Austin.

The Emerald regrets these errors.