

PERSPECTIVES

Friday

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Letters to the editor

Diversity is ethically necessary

I realize I'm giving Bret Jacobson the satisfaction of a response to his column ("Paternalistic ideals masquerade as diversity," ODE, Oct. 23), but a response is more than due.

Jacobson argues that "it is not the role of a public university to indoctrinate its students in any fashion with a concerted effort to draw certain demographics to the community." First, Jacobson has the gall to de-personalize minorities by describing us as "certain demographics." Step out from behind your five-dollar, polysyllabic words and have the courage to name the groups on this campus you feel are receiving special treatment.

Moreover, I interpret his statement as saying the University should not attempt to recruit black, Latino or Asian students or faculty in order to teach students that acceptance and tolerance of people of different cultural backgrounds is a desirable condition of society. I, on the other hand, believe the University has an ethical responsibility to enrich the learning opportunities on campus. This absolutely includes increasing the number of minority faculty and students and establishing an environment that welcomes difference.

Finally, Jacobson's suggestion that the University place a higher priority on prostrating ourselves before Phil Knight than fostering diversity on campus is misguided. Are we a football factory in disguise as an institution of higher education? The irony is [that] the only diversity I see is on the football field.

Adam Alabarca
planning, public policy & management

Columnist light on thinking

Bret Jacobson's column ["Paternalistic ideals masquerade as diversity," ODE, Oct. 24] demonstrates that he does not understand the difference between fostering critical thinking and subjecting students to indoctrination.

A "center for the study of ..." can do a lot to encourage the former by calling attention to important issues and gathering useful and relevant information at a centralized location. They can, as the Center for the Study of Women in Society has, also provide a valuable "meeting place" for scholars from various departments to pursue interdisciplinary studies,

which often results in the best, most innovative work.

"Indoctrination" is what often happens in the absence of such centers, when students imbibe information or cling to traditional ideas without even pausing to consider other points of view. Based on what I have read of Jacobson's columns in the Emerald, he is the one who prefers indoctrination to critical thinking.

Ursula Wiljanen
doctoral student
comparative literature

Facts support carrying a gun

In response to Lori Brown's letter ("Check the Facts," ODE, 10/23), my argument was that *anyone* should be allowed effective defense with a gun. I used women as an example because of the size discrepancy common in male/female attacks. I believe every person should have that right.

According to John Lott Jr., senior research scholar of the Yale Law School, "One additional woman carrying a concealed handgun reduces the murder rate for women by about 3-4 times more than one additional man [carrying] reduces the murder rate for men." It's about size.

Since she requests that I check the facts ... why skew hers? She compares the times an intended rape victim kills someone (rare) she doesn't know (exceedingly rare) with the times a woman is murdered with a handgun. Brown probably knows that a rape victim usually knows her attacker, and if a gun is used in self-defense, over 95% of the time it's not fired. Is that a less successful defense?

One cannot say whether Nicole Brown Simpson would be alive had she carried a handgun and been trained in its use, but I doubt things would've turned out much worse.

As for Ms. Brown calling me manipulative, disrespectful and not speaking from personal experience: The six men who approached us at a state park, and demanded that my uncle and I "take a walk and leave the women (our three female companions) to us" — they were disrespectful. Skewing your facts is manipulative.

Mick Briscoe
graduate student
fine arts

Cops use emotions for monetary gain

Extremist rhetoric during elections

is common, but a new low was hit when Eugene Police Lt. Rick Ziel stated "If you've a girlfriend or wife that's just been raped, you have to stand in a room" — the police lobby — "with other people and tell [the officers] what you want to tell them" ("Sparks fly over the details of Measure 20-36," ODE, Oct. 23). Ziel is promoting the \$47.5 million tax to fund a three-story police station and land/design for a fire station.

Proponents of Measure 20-36 tout the police lobby's lack of private interview areas. Twice, I've been ushered into back rooms for private meetings — once to ask Sgt. Kathy Flynn to address the signs from car dealerships posted on telephone poles. Activists posting flyers concerning homeless issues were ticketed hundreds of dollars. The second visit, with Capt. Thad Buchanan, again happened privately.

If police are forcing rape victims to describe their assaults in the lobby, they should be brought up on charges. There are many private rooms available at City Hall. Ziel's comments are merely an emotional sales pitch to get student voters to boost property taxes for the next 20 years.

I trust thinking students will see through the rhetoric and oppose 20-36, a completely unwarranted and expensive proposal. City facilities director Mike Penwell told me the police lobby could be expanded for private interview rooms. Certainly for a fraction of the proposed \$47.5 million tax hit.

Carol Berg
Enough is Enough Committee — No on 20-36, 20-38, 20-39

Some football just doesn't compare

PAC-10 football? Somewhere, the football gods are snickering. The difference between football in the South and football in the West ["Memoirs of a Florida snob: the trek to Autzen," ODE, Oct. 20] is like the difference between masturbating and making love to the woman/man of your dreams — one makes you feel kind of silly and makes you wish you had a life, while the other fills you with excitement, anticipation fulfilled, and makes you tired and in need of some rest (and perhaps a cigarette).

Anyway, go Ducks! I hope we get to see you in the Orange Bowl!

Scott Dudley
Tallahassee, Fla

A vote for Nader, Bush means eco-destruction

COMMENTARY

Michael Bond

An area of America's most beautiful wildlands — larger than Oregon — may get trashed as a result of this election. George W. Bush and Dick Cheney have promised to open more than 60 million acres of public lands — wilderness areas, national wildlife refuges and monuments, and other irreplaceable treasures of our nation's outdoor heritage — for logging, off-road vehicles (ORVs), oil drilling and pipeline construction. Tragically, Ralph Nader may help them do it.

The immediate environmental impacts of a Bush/Cheney victory, which is unlikely without Nader's candidacy:

- Poorer environmental protection for national forests — including the Willamette and Siuslaw
- More destruction of our public lands — 20 percent of the United States — with logging, road building and ORV degradation
- Opening for logging the nation's last 60 million acres of roadless National Forest — an area of virgin forest as big as Oregon
- Elimination of several recent national monuments, including Grand Staircase-Escalante, a million acres near Grand Canyon National Park, and Canyons of the Ancients National Monument, our country's greatest concentration of Native American archaeological and cultural sites.

- Desecration of our magnificent Arctic National Wildlife Refuge with oil drilling, roads and pipelines. This is an extremely fragile habitat for millions of animals, and the impact of these oil projects on its vegetation and wildlife is immeasurable.

Under Bush, Texas has dropped to dead last of 50 states in environmental standards like toxic air emissions, toxic chemical accidents and livestock waste production. Add Dick Cheney's rabid anti-environmental record, and you have a prescription for national

environmental disaster. But to make it happen, you need Ralph Nader.

Nader can do permanent damage to our environment without even 2 percent of the vote. Because 2 percent will make the difference between Al Gore and Bush. But Nader doesn't care. Vote for me, he says, because Gore and Bush are the same. And that's a BIG LIE.

According to an article in Time magazine, Gore has made the Clinton administration more pro-environment than any in a generation. Gore's environmental record over the last 22 years in public service is extraordinary. With the Clinton administration, he helped to create 13 new national parks and five national monuments, accelerated the elimination of ozone-depleting chemicals, forced passage of the Superfund Act and strengthened clean air standards and the Safe Drinking Water Act.

Gore has been a world leader on global warming. He helped to lead the largest cleanup of toxic waste sites in history and quadrupled funding for parks and conservation. He proposed the recently passed legislation to restore natural water flows in the Everglades.

Most importantly for Oregon, Gore has guaranteed complete protection of the last three million acres of Oregon's roadless National Forest. These lands are crucial habitat for Oregon's big-game species and other wildlife, and provide recreation resources to fill our growing need for the outdoors. Moreover, Gore has promised to protect all of America's last 60 million acres of roadless national forest, not only in the lower 48 states, but also in Alaska's Tongass National Forest.

As one who has hiked and camped in Oregon for more than 30 years, I'd hate to see its environment, and the nation's, get trashed by Bush and Cheney just because a handful of people voted for Nader.

Michael Bond has more than 30 years of experience as an environmental activist, Wild and Scenic Rivers planner, ecologist, author, and forest protection advocate in southern Oregon and throughout the United States, Europe, and Africa.

CONTACT US!

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