

PERSPECTIVES

Editor in chief: Jack Clifford
 Managing Editor: Jessica Blanchard
 Newsroom: (541) 346-5511
 Room 300, Erb Memorial Union
 P.O. box 3159, Eugene, OR 97403
 E-mail: ode@oregon.uoregon.edu

EDITORIAL EDITOR: MICHAEL J. KLECKNER opededitor@journalist.com

Congrats & Shame

Congrats to the University of Oregon Alliance for Sexual Assault Prevention (and the multitude of additional University, ASUO and community group sponsors) for organizing Sexual Assault Awareness Week, which begins today and culminates in Take Back the Night on Thursday (read the full story in today's paper). A recent campus speaker irked a few people — including the editorial board — by presenting the issue of date rape and sexual assault as though women are responsible for preventing assaults. This week's events, including a facilitated discussion of the nature of masculinity in America, healing art projects and a men's discussion of Take Back the Night after the event on Friday, present a balanced picture of the ways our society, as a whole, can work to end these crimes. This is great work by all the organizers, and students should try to attend all of these events in order to fully critique the way our culture understands rape.

Shame on the University Senate for approving a completely toothless resolution about the Pacific-10 Conference schools' "arms race" that is rapidly increasing athletic department budgets, which some people argue come at the expense of academics (read "Senate laments sports budgets," May 10). The Emerald editorial board has made it clear in the past that we also believe there's a serious problem here. But in our editorial, we made a call for change. The senate resolution was terribly watered down, with language similar to "recommending that someone propose a committee to investigate the possibility of deciding to do something about the problem." The senate has other options. They could have censured the administration or the Athletic Department. They could have established a committee themselves to propose hard-nosed solutions. But no; they passed a resolution everyone could agree with — even the Athletic Department — because it was so soft. To this we say, "Good idea, bad follow-through."

Congrats to the University and WISTEC for finally working together to solve WISTEC's funding problems, which were partially created by the University's expansion of Autzen Stadium (for the full story, read "WISTEC will remain open," May 7). During the lengthy process of getting the city of Eugene to change zoning laws for the Autzen project, it seemed as though the University was being heartless. Then after the project was approved, it seemed as though WISTEC was crying wolf about its fiscal situation, claiming the scenario was instant death for the museum. Eleven days ago, however, the

two entities settled the matter in a way that works for the University and keeps WISTEC open.

Shame on the Oregon House of Representatives for its recent vote to overturn city laws that ban smoking at bars, restaurants and bingo halls (read "Smoking ban's fate rests with Legislature," May 1). Americans seem to want more local control over their lives, as well they should. Part of the point of the U.S. Constitution is that issues not specifically mentioned in it are open to interpretation at the local level. States — especially those like Oregon, where the initiative process has produced citizens who feel some control over their government — should follow this example and legislate only where necessary. In the past, we expressed our displeasure with the smoking ban in Eugene, which would go into effect on July 1 if House Bill 3953 fails to become law. However, we feel greater displeasure when the Legislature oversteps its bounds.

Congrats to the Eugene Police Commission and its Use of Force Committee, which spent the last six months examining how police use pepper spray, physical force and techniques of crowd control (read the full story in today's paper). The committee recommended, and the Police Commission endorsed three reworkings of police policy, including that they no longer use pepper spray on passive resisters at political demonstrations. Now maybe they could have defined nonviolent protesters more broadly, and maybe not. But the recommendations, to be considered by the City Council on May 29, are an important step in helping to diffuse relations between the majority of Eugene's political activists and the authorities. It may take a little more time to end demonstrations when protesters are, for example, simply sitting in trees as they were on June 1, 1997, but the goal of a robust and humane community is too important to let that stand in the way. The City Council should wholeheartedly approve these recommendations.

It might seem easy to say, "Shame on student government for not doing its job efficiently or correctly," in light of ASUO Constitution Court Chief Justice Rob Raschio's very critical letter of resignation (read "Resigning chief offers final words of wisdom," May 7). We're sure there's some blame to be had by the ASUO. But if Raschio felt so strongly about the

lack of communication between the three branches of ASUO government and what he calls the "fundamental harm [done] to the court and the ASUO," then why wasn't he making very public statements like this earlier in the year and working to fix these problems? Other ASUO officials have said that Raschio overstated the ASUO's troubles. We're not con-

vinced of that, but no matter the scope of the problem, it seems like a cheap shot for Raschio to publicly criticize the process only after resigning. So we'll amend our opinion to say: Shame on student government for performing its duties poorly, but shame on Raschio for publicly slamming the door only on his way out.

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



Giovanni Salimena Emerald

Letter to the editor

Is every unwise choice a drugging and raping?

I would like to comment on your article regarding the date rape drugs ("Drugs can facilitate date rape," April 25, ODE). You see, I feel that I have been slipped these drugs many times.

Often I go out with friends and drink, dance and meet new people. And often, the next day, I can't remember what happened to me the night before. Sometimes I even wake up in strange (very strange) places and can't recall how I got there. I feel confusion and pain, and I retch until I feel I'll die. After reading your article, I realized that I must be get-

ting drugged almost every time I go out!

Seriously, I know it's dangerous (and pretty damn insensitive) to tell someone who claims to have been victimized that, no, they haven't. But it's also dangerous to assume that, every time someone gets drunk and blacks out and does something they regret, they have been drugged and raped.

I feel really bad for Tara, who obviously went through a traumatic and painful event. However, I would feel equally bad for her so-called assailant if he were innocent of the charges against him.

Charles G. Haller II
 senior
 international studies/journalism

Poll Results:

Every week, the Emerald prints the results of our online poll and the poll question for next week. The poll can be accessed from the main page of our Web site, www.dailyemerald.com. We encourage you to send us feedback about the poll questions and results.

Last week's poll question:

Should the Oregon Legislature forbid cities and counties from passing laws that ban smoking in bars, restaurants and bingo parlors?

Results: 157 total votes

Yes — 35 votes, or 22.3 percent

No — 120 votes, or 76.4 percent

Don't know — 2 votes, or 1.3 percent

Congratulations... a legislative question got a larger response than a pop culture question. And this is also the largest winning margin we've seen. The people have spoken — the Legislature should back off.

This week's poll question:

Why was the evidence about Timothy McVeigh withheld?

The choices:

- International conspiracy
- Government incompetence
- Bureaucratic red tape
- FBI overconfidence