

Newsroom: (541) 346-5511  
 Room 300, Erb Memorial Union  
 P.O. Box 3159, Eugene, OR 97403  
 E-mail: editor@dailyemerald.com  
 Online Edition:  
 www.dailyemerald.com

# COMMENTARY

Editor in Chief:  
 Jessica Blanchard  
 Managing Editor:  
 Michael J. Kleckner  
 Editorial Editor:  
 Julie Lauderbaugh  
 Assistant Editorial Editor:  
 Jacquelyn Lewis

Wednesday, November 21, 2001

## Yesteryear's Editorial

### Home for a Holiday

Americans laugh at themselves sometimes because they have set aside a special day on which to be thankful for all the good things that have come their way during the year. Thanksgiving is more likely to recall to their minds a picture of a

University of Oregon

**125TH**  
ANNIVERSARY

Originally published on Nov. 19, 1945

table loaded with tasty dishes and of a quiet day spent with close friends and relatives. Even if the meaning of Thanksgiving is somewhat obscured by these more present realities, the holiday has an atmosphere that adds something to American life. There is some of the peacefulness and good will of the Christmas season without the frantic rush of gift shopping. There is a recollection of the historical past of the nation, a memory of common people building a new life in a wilderness. It isn't a day for pride in military might or celebration of a victory.

Within its atmosphere we are drawn more closely to family and friends. "Home" seems more important, and we center our attentions on its activities instead of looking for outside excitement.

This year Thanksgiving will be more heartfelt than it has since the beginning of the war. Some of the tension of the war years has been released, and Americans will give thanks with more faith.

For us as students, Thanksgiving this year means a vacation from classes and a reunion with the family and friends at home. In the years when traveling was frowned upon, we learned to appreciate the privilege of spending this particular holiday at home.

We may laugh at ourselves for setting aside such a day, but we have come to realize that it means more to us than surface impressions may indicate.

Editor's note: This column was taken from the Nov. 19, 1945 edition of the Oregon Daily Emerald.

#### Letters to the Editor and Guest Commentaries Policy

Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged. Letters are limited to 250 words and guest commentaries to 550 words. Please include contact information. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style.

#### Clarification

In Tuesday's column about the American Red Cross ("Crossing the red line," ODE, 11/20), it was implied that only a portion of the Red Cross' "Liberty Fund" would be spent on families of the victims of the Sept. 11 attacks. On Wednesday, Nov. 14, the Red Cross announced that all of the money collected for the Liberty Fund would be spent on families.

## Letters to the editor

### Commentator not given proper credit

On Oct. 22, 2001, Oregon Daily Emerald reporter Diane Huber sent an e-mail requesting I reply the following day, outlining when and why I joined the Oregon Commentator staff, what posts I had held and what I thought of the magazine. I answered most of her questions by e-mail, but suggested she call my office to continue the "interview." She never called.

Huber's belief that members of the campus community don't take the Commentator seriously must be the reason behind her lack of interest in reporting on the story ("Commentator celebrates 18th," ODE, 10/24).

To clarify, editors of the Commentator have taken on the University System and OSPIRG in court over the mandatory student incidental fee that funds political lobbying organizations. They've spoken out against the irresponsible administration of the so-called "overrealized fund," they have covered U.S. Senate races, they have served on the Associated Students President's Advisory Council, and they've been covered by both The Oregonian and The Register-Guard for their vocal stances on the use of student fees and illiterate "liberal" reporting. They have, in short, served as an important watchdog of campus politics and journalism.

The Commentator has always been a viable platform for dissent, as well as a place for irreverent humor. These are details Huber would've discovered, had she placed a single phone call. While the Commentator is busy following the money trail as a student advocate and questioning the status quo, the Emerald has its hands full conducting "interviews" by e-mail.

Farrah Bostic  
 Studio City, Calif.

### Medicinal marijuana should be left to states

When Senators Smith and Wyden vote on the confirmation of John Walters for "drug czar," I hope they remember the desires of the citizens of Oregon. By referendum, they overwhelmingly voted to allow patients to use marijuana for medicinal purposes.

Our founding fathers feared a strong federal government and spelled out the federal government's responsibilities and restrictions in the Constitution. The 10th Amendment specifically reserved all other responsibilities to the states. Self determination, with regards to medical use of marijuana, should be the sole responsibility of each state and its citizens.

## Emerald facts misrepresented diversity issues

We are writing in response to the misrepresentation of facts in the Emerald article "University outranks state system on staff diversity," published on Oct. 15. The problems are apparent in at least two places, including the "minority faculty" chart and quotes taken from interviews with us. In particular, we are concerned the article conveys the sense that lack of diversity on campus is not a critical problem at the University, a message clearly communicated by the title.

In fact, the number of faculty and students of color at the University is appallingly low, showing that the institution engages in practices that contribute to the exclusion of underrepresented groups — African Americans, Asian Americans, Chicana/os and Latina/os, and Native Americans — in the University community and the broader society.

The first problem in the article is that the University numbers in the "minority faculty" chart are greatly inflated and bear little relation to the actual situation. The most recent official source for this information in the Oregon University System is the OUS Fact Book 2000, which is available online — and this source indicates that the Emerald's numbers of "minority" faculty are roughly doubled in

## Steve Baggs Emerald



In an administration that prides itself on returning power to the states, Walters' drug policies regarding medicinal use of marijuana would do just the opposite and would counter the wishes of the voters of Oregon and other states.

A drug czar should work with the states, not in opposition to them. It should not be the policy of our federal government to arrest, prosecute and incarcerate patients whose only crime is attempting to alleviate the pain and suffering that results from cancer and AIDS treatments.

As the primary sponsor of medical marijuana legislation in Maryland, I commend the legislature of Oregon for giving the voters a voice on this issue. Don't let the nomination of the new drug czar silence them.

Donald E. Murphy  
 Annapolis, Md.

### Iran has been misjudged

I would like to correct some inaccurate and misguided comments made by Tony Biz ("U.S. must overthrow Iran's rulers," ODE, 11/09). First, Iran has two rulers. One is President Mohammad Khatami, a moderate cleric with popular support. The other is Ayatollah Ali Khamenei, an ultra-conservative who is Iran's supreme religious leader. He lacks pop-

ular support but has the power to veto legislation by the reformist government.

Iran is a theocracy, but it is also a republic. Americans should not lump it with the Taliban. Iranian women can vote, drive cars, attend universities and run for public office. Many professors are women, as well as twelve members of the parliament. A woman, Dr. Massumeh Ebtekar, is vice president in charge of environmental protection.

According to The New York Times, two-thirds of Iranians were born after the 1979 Islamic Revolution, and they dislike fundamentalism. Along with many women and some dissident mullahs, they support Khatami, who was re-elected last spring with 77 percent of the vote.

The "mass demonstrations" numbering "hundreds of thousands" that Biz cites reflect their enthusiasm for democracy and freedom. The United States should support them by normalizing relations with the moderate government. We should stop calling a whole nation "terrorists." Finally, we should refrain from supporting repressive leaders like the Shah, whose brutal policies and unchecked corruption resulted in the Islamic Revolution in the first place.

Philip Huang  
 law student

#### GUEST COMMENTARY

each category. While the numbers the Emerald used indicate that 213 of the University's faculty members are people of color, OUS shows that the figure is 110.

When you consider that the OUS Fact Book numbers are themselves inflated because they include temporary faculty (including some students) and employees who do not have teaching responsibilities, the situation becomes even more serious. Compare these numbers with population figures from the last U.S. census (using national figures to compare, since faculty members are hired nationally and not locally), which indicate that people of color comprise approximately 30 percent of the population, and it becomes clear that there are deep-rooted structural problems within U.S. society that exclude people of color from educational institutions, including the University of Oregon.

Next, we would like to reemphasize the points we were trying to make in our interviews, which we feel were not presented clearly. We both insisted that the University must hire a more racially diverse faculty in every unit, including (but not limited to) Eth-

nic Studies. In addition, the article omitted parts of the interviews indicating that we, along with many of our colleagues, understand the lack of racial and ethnic diversity is an extremely dire problem at the University. Although some individual departments have recently undertaken efforts to address hiring, recruitment and curricular issues, the University administration has never generated a coherent and comprehensive plan to respond to these urgent problems. We call on them to do so.

The University of Oregon must address these problems for the sake of white students as well as students of color. Education on diversity issues, including power and inequality, is essential to understanding the increasingly heterogeneous society we all inhabit. If we fail to address these issues in the classroom and to combat discrimination in the institution, we are not fulfilling our responsibilities as educators. Before we undertake these tasks, however, we must understand the nature of the problems. Regrettably, the Emerald served to obfuscate, rather than clarify, these issues.

Shari Huhndorf is director of the Ethnic Studies Program and an associate professor in the Department of English. Mario Sifuentes is an ASUO Multicultural Advocate.