

# COMMENTARY

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Tuesday, April 30, 2002

## Editorial

### Students can rock the vote

Today's the last day for Oregonians to register to vote, and students should make sure they are registered and take time to become informed voters.

It's important for us to remember the 2000 presidential election, when a few hundred votes made all the difference in the outcome. Students should take the initiative to make their voices heard at the local and state government levels.

Now more than ever, it is important for students to exercise their right to vote. The leaders we elect this year will be the ones who will have to resolve the education funding shortfall we are facing.

In the governor's race, there are three Democratic candidates and three Republican candidates vying for the top state office — at this point, it's anyone's race. And it's important that students have a hand in selecting the state's next governor, since that person will likely be the one to help combat the state's high unemployment and lead Oregon out of this recession.

At the local level, two candidates are campaigning for the Ward 3 seat, which encompasses the University. Recent changes to the district boundaries means this ward now encompasses even more of the neighborhoods surrounding the school. The decisions this councilor will be required to vote on will directly affect University students, so it's important to find out how the candidates feel about the issues most students care about — such as public safety, a Eugene housing code and development.

There are also several measures and levies on the primary ballot that could have an impact on University students, including Measure 10, which would allow the University to own stock in research ventures they conduct, and Measure 20-56, which would allocate \$116 million in tax dollars to the Eugene School District to provide better instructional facilities and replace aging buildings. Voters will also be asked to decide whether to pay for a new downtown fire station.

In order to determine which candidates, state ballot measures and citywide levies you want to support, it's important to become an informed voter. Read about the candidates, state ballot measures and citywide levies — the Emerald is running a question-and-answer series with the candidates for Oregon governor and the city council ward that covers the University. And even better, see the Ward 3 City Council candidates in action at an ASUO-sponsored debate from 6 p.m. to 8 p.m. Thursday in McKenzie Hall (event organizers have yet to pin down a room number).

But most importantly, once you've registered, remember to vote. Students make up a large portion of eligible voters and could have considerable voting power. But politicians often ignore our concerns and don't campaign as vigorously for our votes because they know we are unlikely to vote. It's especially difficult to fight voter apathy and drum up interest outside of a presidential election year.

Let's prove them wrong and stop being a silent majority.

### Editorial Policy

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to letters@dailyemerald.com. 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

No Oregon Daily Emerald staff members participated in the tobacco counter-promotion at Club Tsunami on Friday night (ODE, April 29).

### CORRECTION

In 'And the bands will play on' (ODE, April 29), it should have read that John Henry's will hold live performances through Friday, May 3. For more information, turn to page 8.

## Where the Wild things are

Things are so much easier in the movies. When one walks through a cemetery at night in a horror movie, it's almost a given that the only creeps you're going to have to worry about are popping out of their crypts. Here at the University, however, fears of nonexistent zombies and vampires has been supplanted by an all-too-real horror lurking inside the darkened confines of

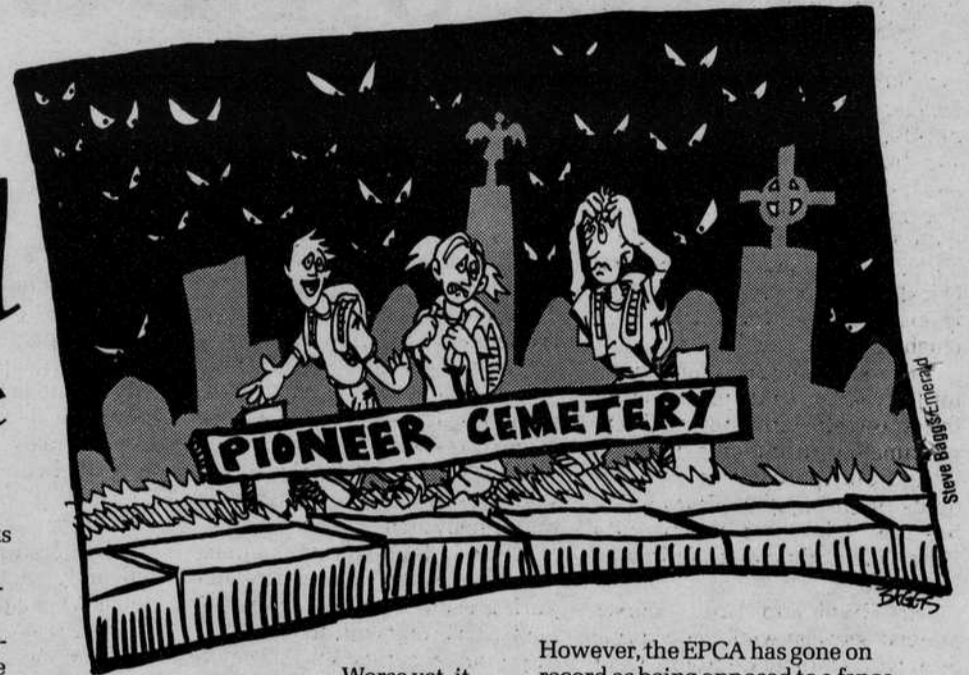
the Pioneer Cemetery: rapists and muggers. Last year, the campus was up in arms about the "campus predator," a man who attacked women in the vicinity of the cemetery. On March 12, a man was mugged at gunpoint on the fire lane between the cemetery and Gerlinger Hall.



Pat Payne  
Columnist

The next day, in almost the same area, a woman was very nearly raped, although she fought off her assailant.

Much of the problem over campus safety, in my opinion, centers on the Pioneer Cemetery. What we have in the cemetery is a large, unlighted tract, right on the edge of campus, that the University doesn't own. For those who may have not gone into the cemetery, it is a large, labyrinthine space, shrouded in trees with large headstones that give ample cover during the dark of night.



Worse yet, it tends to be the shortest path from the Beall Music Hall to other parts of campus.

A large, unlighted area with students passing through in the middle of the night is a magnet for types who hunt human prey for money or sexual gratification. According to police reports, since 1996 there have been at least 45 incidents of suspicious people in and around the cemetery, including at least one rape attempt and a man sitting in the bushes masturbating. Technically, anyone inside the cemetery after 10 p.m. is breaking an old Oregon state law.

There has been precious little that the Eugene Pioneer Cemetery Association, which preserves the plots, has been willing to do, partly because of funding problems and — as I see it — partly an unwillingness to change the cemetery's character, even if it would reduce crime. I can understand their reluctance to lighting in the cemetery as a "fix-all" solution: Without police patrols or other discouraging features, all the light provides is the opportunity for the rapist or robber to see their victim. However, the University has suggested being willing to pay for part of the construction of a wrought-iron fence, one that can be locked at 10 p.m. This would solve a large part of the problem.

However, the EPCA has gone on record as being opposed to a fence, even one that they would not have to pay for. It seems to be that they apparently dislike vandalism more than rape. Fine. If they hate it so much, they can patrol the cemetery for a week and then see which is worse. Another thing they may want to consider: With nothing between the vandals they apparently fear so much and the cemetery, what's to prevent those so inclined from taking a sledgehammer, waltzing inside and letting loose?

The sad part is, as private property of the EPCA, the Department of Public Safety has no jurisdiction. The best they can do is to shine floodlights into the area along the fire road that separates the cemetery from Gerlinger Hall, trying to flush out those who can be seen. But this doesn't alleviate the problem like it should. The fire road is only one side of the cemetery, and those inclined to hide there can retreat further back into its stygian fold, where the lights can't reach. The Eugene Police Department patrols the area randomly, but even they can't be everywhere.

This situation has gone on far enough. It's time to close off the cemetery at night.

E-mail columnist Pat Payne at patpayne@dailyemerald.com. His opinions do not necessarily reflect those of the Emerald.

## Catholic cartoon anything but comic

### GUEST COMMENTARY

Jenny Hansen

personal safety on campus from some nut that may associate me as being a sexual predator because I'm Catholic.

The University stresses the beauty of diversity and the need for cohesiveness so I must ask: How do you see that comic as supporting diversity ideology? I am not saying that the University is perfect when it comes to diversity issues, but I've not seen any other campus work as hard to try to get it right. Why work so hard to dismantle it?

As a Catholic, I have been called a cannibal, idol worshiper, statue worshiper and a Virgin Mary worshiper. I have seen my faith repeatedly and openly mocked and ridiculed in Eugene and Springfield. Mr. Utsey, when you splash such hatred and stereotypes about Catholics in a "comic" (if you can call it that), you propagate hatred, fear and stereotypes about my faith. This has a ripple effect like a pebble being thrown into a pond and soon the "us"

vs. "them" dichotomy comes into play: Christians vs. Muslims, men vs. women, blacks vs. whites. I could go on ad nauseam. It's people like you that continue distrust and hatred between people of all faiths, cultures, races, genders, sexual orientations and ethnicities.

Since you didn't bother to do any journalistic investigation, let me tell you how I, as a Catholic, feel about what's happening to my faith: I am glad it's being dealt with, but so sad for those poor people and families who have suffered. I feel betrayed and outraged. I want any clergyman involved in the abuse of innocent children to be defrocked, excommunicated and sent to prison for a very long time, if not indefinitely. Many people in the Catholic community feel this way.

Someday, Mr. Utsey, your ignorance and prejudice will come back to bite you in the butt, and when it does you will have no one to blame but yourself. You desperately need to heed and understand why comics like yours are a bane on both the local community and on a larger scale, the United States.

Jenny Hansen is a senior English major.