

# COMMENTARY

Monday, January 6, 2003

## Free from Oregon's MOLD

I've lived in Oregon my entire life, and I've had a certain pride about living here — the forests, the beaches and the open-mindedness of people.

It wasn't until I met someone from Missouri that I realized there was so much more out there. Oregon isn't everything that I thought it was.

At first, it was just the little things that he pointed out to me. When I said hello to people, the smile never reached their eyes. It was the way people didn't hold doors open for others. And if I didn't express the same views, I was called ignorant and obtuse.

One day we went to a restaurant here, and to our surprise a man held open a door as we walked through. I was delighted and said thank you. He said, "I just didn't want you touching the glass." Apparently, he had just cleaned it. Well, that's fine, but he could just have said, "You're welcome." This is just one crude instance that has made me think twice about wanting to be an Oregonian.

What really makes people true Oregonians? Is it their unwavering stance to "Save the trees," or to believe they're right all the time? Must I love the Ducks just because I attend the University?

During my time at the University, I've realized that Oregon is open-minded — but only if you believe what everyone else is saying. You must also believe that saving the trees should be our No. 1 priority. And to talk bad about the Ducks is just short of blasphemy.

During the summer, my friend and I went on a road trip to Missouri, having never really been anywhere outside of Oregon. This was just the experience I was looking for. We went through Idaho, Wyoming, New Mexico, Colorado, Okla-

homa, and Missouri. The minute we crossed the Oregon border, I realized people were so much friendlier. People smiled and waved at us.

When we made it to Missouri, it was like a dream, at first. People welcomed me with open arms, or maybe it was just the family. Thanks to the Barrons.

In Missouri, in the mornings or afternoons we'd sit on the porch and drink homemade iced tea and people would drive by and wave, whether they knew us or not. When people said hello, their smile actually reached their eyes. I had conversations with people who may not have believed my views but were able to take in what I said without calling me stupid or ignorant.

When I write my columns, I want people to disagree. I want the heated debate that comes from them — but how can I consider your views when all you say is that I don't know what I'm talking about or I'm stupid and uninformed? Tell me why you think these things. Give me examples; maybe you can sway me to your way of thinking, but at least ideas create discussion without the mudslinging. I'm not a politician.

So, I may not think the Ducks are the No. 1 team. I may believe that some trees and forests need cutting. And hey, I may not be right all the time — but at least most of the time. If I'm wrong, tell me.

But if you are like I was, living in my little Oregon shell thinking everything was perfect, then get out there and see what else there is to experience. I hate to break it to you: Oregon isn't all white, nor is it as open-minded as you think. There are many different people out there of all different races, ethnicities and beliefs, and the only way to know that is to take the leap. May I suggest the Midwest? Thanks, Nick.

Contact the columnist at [salenadelacruz@dailyemerald.com](mailto:salenadelacruz@dailyemerald.com). Her views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.



Salena DeLaCruz  
Say it loud



Peter Utsey Emerald

### Online poll

Each Monday, the Emerald publishes the previous week's poll results and the coming week's poll question. Visit [www.dailyemerald.com](http://www.dailyemerald.com) to vote.

**Last week:** How should the University address diversity issues?

**Results:** 122 total votes

Focus on recruitment — 13.1 percent, or 16 votes

Focus on retention — 17.2 percent, or 21 votes

Hire more faculty members of color — 18.9 percent, or 23 votes

Things are fine as is — 33.6 percent, or 41 votes

What is diversity? — 6.6 percent, or 8 votes

Leave me alone! — 10.7 percent, or 13 votes

**This week:** Has the KUGN issue been sufficiently addressed by the cancellation of Michael Savage?

**Choices:**

Yes — enough already!

Yes — good compromise!

No — this is censorship!

No — KUGN is still "the voice of the Ducks";

The University had no influence;

Leave me alone!

### Letters to the editor

#### Bush threatens free thought

As an ardent opponent of the Bush administration, I often find myself (hourly) wondering how, in the face of obscenely obvious evidence of extreme hypocrisy (corruption, greed, megalomania, etc.), the current administration continues to enjoy high approval ratings. For all those who share my sentiment, I propose five elements that land us in this predicament.

First, a number of the people have had their intellect paralyzed by greed. Second, a number have had their intellect paralyzed by hatred. Third, a large number have had their intellect paralyzed by fear. Fourth, a large number have actively abandoned their intellect in favor of self-righteous dogma. Fifth, the rest, who lie in the great majority, have no means to stop their intellects from being arrested by the ubiquitous hatred, fear, dogma and greed that the first four groups manage to force into the daily lives of nearly every American.

If my assumptions are correct, a greater and greater percentage of Americans with intact intellects will begin to feel alienated from their own "homeland." I wonder what the alternative will be for the many who were born into, but do not wish to live in, a society governed by ignorance, fear, hate, dogma and greed. Will there be numbers and organization enough for at least a few to demand autonomy from that which they morally op-

pose? Will many emigrate in search of freedoms that we are supposedly guaranteed? Will Americans' most threatened minority become those with the capacity for free thought?

William Moglia  
junior  
German

#### There's no economy without resources

I am writing this letter in response to Julie Lauderbaugh's article, "Let your conscience be your guide" (ODE, Dec. 4).

In her article, Lauderbaugh wrote that she felt refraining from buying anything on Nov. 29, the biggest shopping day of the year, would be "un-American" and would only further hurt our economy.

Short-term, ethnocentric and uneducated views like these are exactly what Adbusters, the organizers of Buy Nothing Day, are trying to address with their campaign. Americans are so worried about the "failing economy," we forget most countries don't even have this luxury. Yes, we are currently experiencing a bear market.

Our gross overconsumption of natural resources, however, is a much larger and more threatening problem. Without natural resources to support it, our economy will not just suffer, it will cease to exist.

We live in a country that has a nationally endorsed and highly marketed day of gorging. I don't think it is too much to ask of American citizens to stop and think during the holiday season about their consumption

habits and how they affect our planet and the other nations we share this planet with.

Because, while we Americans eat heaps of homemade mash potatoes and pumpkin pie and buy that new Ralph Lauren jean jacket to help strengthen the economy, people starve to death and natural resources are stolen from those in third world countries who need them much more than you and I ever will.

Jeanmarie Arnold  
senior  
multimedia design

#### Photographs contradicted facts

While the article (ODE, "Adding their voices," Nov. 21) by freelance reporter Jenny Sherman accurately reported the events as they occurred, I am extremely disappointed with the two front-page photographs.

The photos, one showing a handful of "Bush Cheney" signs and the other showing 14 or so students milling in front of Johnson Hall, appeared to purposely misrepresent the enthusiasm, power and voice that were present at the rally/march.

Indeed, by just looking at the pictures, one would imagine a small Republican soiree was staged, and not, as actually took place, an anti-war protest which attracted nearly 300 supporters.

It must be said, however, that while the photos were a discouraging contradiction to the entire article and to the actual facts, they did provide a very

good example of poor journalism.

Marya Lusky  
sophomore  
Spanish

#### Apology misses one point

The Emerald published an apology ("An apology to the community," ODE, Nov. 25), written by editor-in-chief Michael J. Kleckner, for printing two completely unrepresentative photos of the Nov. 20 anti-war rally and march.

Unlike most newspaper corrections or retractions, this one was substantial, thoughtful and very visible. It was honest and gracious, not defensive, and I appreciated its professionalism and thoroughness. It addressed most of the issues I think are relevant to how opposition to the (proposed) war is represented in journalism.

The issue Kleckner missed noting — and it is a political one — is how amply the voices supporting a war in Iraq are represented in the mainstream media. This makes it not just regrettable, but actively harmful, that the Emerald's photos misrepresented the opinion of the vast majority of those attending the rally. As we know, the media don't just report public opinion — they help shape it.

But thanks again to the Emerald for covering the event, for printing Jenny Sherman's story on it, and for offering a reflective apology for the badly chosen photos.

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