

COMMENTARY

Editor in Chief:
 Michael J. Kleckner
 Managing Editor:
 Jessica Richelderfer
 Editorial Editor:
 Pat Payne

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Editorial

Hey kids: Party like an adult this weekend

It's almost here: spring break, the time-honored college tradition involving drunken debauchery and other really fun stuff. However, we want to offer a word of caution. No one needs more riots.

Over the past few weekends, the Eugene Police Department has cracked down on minors in possession. More than 50 MIPs were handed out by EPD in the past two weeks alone. And we've heard stories recently about less-than-pleasant student interactions with police. And with the approach of the end of school, students are ready for release.

We understand that for the most part, the police are only doing their job. Although we've taken issue with police tactics in the past, their conduct with most parties isn't part of it. What we fear, though, is the rhetoric on both sides being amped up by recent party busts. Students could see the police as enemies who live to break up parties, and the police could see students as out-of-control enemies who hate the police. Neither of these stories are true, and we worry these hostile feelings could erupt into more riots.

So take care this weekend. The term will be over soon enough. Host parties that don't draw the attention of police, and if they do come to your house, act like an adult. Spring break should be about having a good time, not having to call the parents to explain the bill for a riot.

FCC repression will not happen between Sarah Jones' thighs

Score one for the underdogs. Sarah Jones, an indie spoken word/rap artist, has recorded works in the past that show the hypocrisy of society in gender issues. "Your Revolution" was one of these works — one that fell afoul of the FCC.

"Your Revolution" uses the words of popular male rappers and takes the most offensive parts of their raps — passages glorifying murder, violence, rape and the sexual objectification of women — and fires it back at them. It is a piece of politico-sexual protest that opens with the words "Your revolution will not happen between these thighs."

The FCC saw differently. When KBOO-FM, a Portland radio station, played "Your Revolution" in October 1999, the FCC immediately slapped the station with a \$7,000 fine and declared the record "indecent."

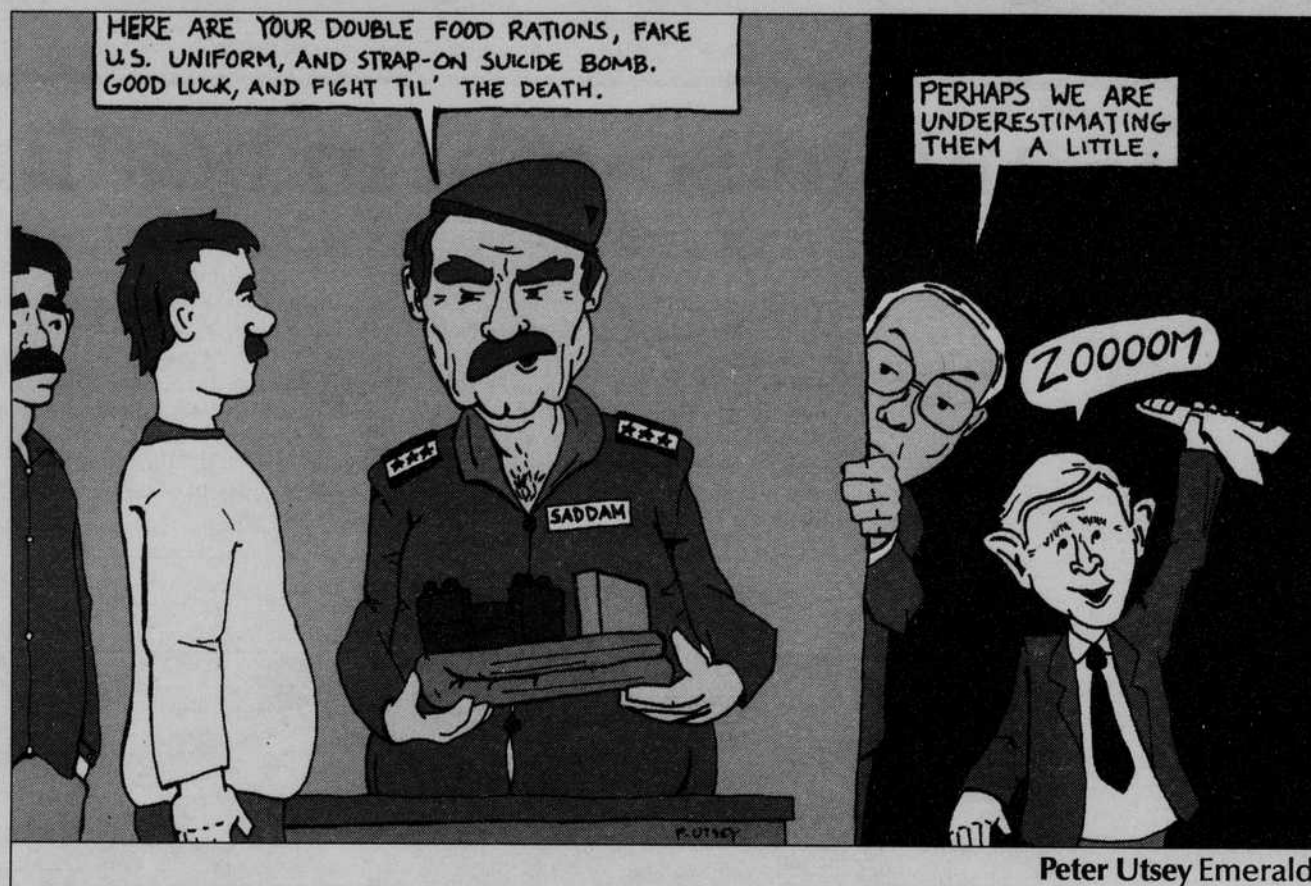
Recently, Jones won the battle — after nearly three years of petitions and vocal protest against her song's censorship, the FCC dropped both fine and "indecent" ruling, and Jones' "Revolution" rages again.

The irony is that the men from whom she took inspiration say many of the same words in their own raps, and yet the FCC can't seem to find them indecent. Apparently, it's fine by the FCC for someone to rap in earnest about rape, murder and the joys of mindless violence, but heaven forbid anyone make a piece that protests it! Does her free speech somehow become less worthy because she dared to reveal that she does, indeed, have a vagina and that she's angry that male rappers seem to think it's all right to use it as their playground?

The revolution may not be televised, but thanks to the First Amendment and people who gave a damn, "Your Revolution" will be on the radio.

Editorial policy

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



Peter Utsey Emerald

Anti-reparations points poorly reasoned

Guest commentary

After reading "Pay one group, pay all," (ODE, March 3), I am amazed by De La Cruz's oversimplification of the matter of giving reparations to the descendants of slaves. I am also astounded by her failure to provide sufficient factual information regarding the topic. The only reference used in the article was an advertisement by David Horowitz that he placed in 27 out of an attempted 52 college newspapers, an ad that many institutions later apologized for running.

Horowitz claims, and De La Cruz agrees, that "There is no single group clearly responsible for the crime of slavery." They go on to claim that "several races benefited from using slave labor, and that includes black Americans." Their main piece of supporting evidence is that 3,000 slave owners in the antebellum United States were black Americans. I questioned this, but found it's true, according to "The American Negro" by Raymond Logan. However, I also found that, according to the 1860 federal census, there were nearly 4.5 million black Americans in the United States. Therefore only

0.7 percent of blacks in America at the time owned slaves. The same census counted the number of slave owners at 385,000; meaning that only 0.8 percent of all slave owners were black. To claim that black Americans as a race benefited from, or were responsible for, being enslaved is absurd — not to mention that some black "slave owners" had simply purchased the freedom of their loved ones.

As far as responsibility goes, it's true that a few Africans were involved in selling other Africans into slavery. What the article failed to mention was the fact that 99.2 percent of the people buying slaves and profiting off their blood and sweat were indeed wealthy, land-owning, white men. Had these aristocratic white men not demanded slaves, there wouldn't be a slave trade.

Next, De La Cruz doesn't have a problem with paying reparations to the "direct victims of the injury, or their immediate families," and asks about the "Union soldiers who died during the Civil War trying to free these slaves ... Do the descendants of these people deserve reparations?" First, a large majority of the soldiers fighting the Civil War were volunteer soldiers. They were not ripped

from their homes, shackled, thrown into crowded and filthy ships, taken across the ocean, purchased as soldiers and forced to fight. Even drafted soldiers didn't experience this.

Second, families of American soldiers killed in action are compensated for their loss, a practice the military has been involved in since the Revolutionary War. The names of Civil War widows who received U.S. military pensions can be found on the Web site of the National Archives and Records Administration. In short, attempting to draw a comparison between Civil War soldiers and slaves is ludicrous and illogical.

De La Cruz said herself that "slavery was hideous." Africans brought to this country as slaves — and for years after slavery's abolition — were seriously mistreated, to put it lightly. Who's to say they don't at least deserve an apology?

I suggest De La Cruz do some research if she wants to construct a convincing and reputable article. Simply regurgitating the ideas of another person without investigating their implications, relevance or motivation is no way to go about writing.

Ellen Buller is a junior sociology major.

Letters to the editor

Commentator thieves can't tolerate free speech

There has understandably been some confusion revolving around the Commentator's most recent issue in which we preemptively parodied material from another campus magazine. It is important for the campus to know that the Commentator did not steal or plagiarize material from the Voice, despite a common impression to the contrary.

The only knowledge the Commentator had about the upcoming Voice issue were the titles of articles that were posted on a public Web page. Despite allegations by the Voice, that publication has no copyright on hangover cures or spring break hot spots. The Commentator attached its own parody material to those titles and did nothing wrong. The Voice's response has been one of hysterics and it is ridiculous that they have filed a nuisance grievance against all Commentator staff members.

There is a greater concern surrounding our last issue, and that is the dumping of issues by campus members who were too cowardly to engage in a war of ideas. Instead, these individuals chose to trash over 1,500 Commentator copies. While, thankfully, the issue can still be seen online and there is another print run on its way, such petty acts shouldn't be tolerated here. Such action sets a poor precedent for the free exchange of ideas at the University and further illustrates that some consider being offended grounds to interfere in the constitutionally protected speech of those with whom they disagree. It's sad the Voice and other narrow-minded individuals would try to silence our speech. Thankfully, they will not succeed.

Bret Jacobson
 publisher
 Oregon Commentator

Put an end to University athletics "arms race"

I understand that there will be a ribbon-cutting ceremony for a \$90 million

Autzen Stadium project this spring. Would it be appropriate to stuff both of Frohnmayer's skyboxes with food for the hunger crisis like the LTD's "Stuff the Bus" campaign? Will Frohnmayer invite the Nike representatives who are part of the panel studying the state's hunger crisis? Will Frohnmayer give a speech where he cancels the McArthur Court II idea and redirect the funds to slow spiraling tuition costs or to preserve the 105 homes the University owns and rents to diverse, low-income families?

I doubt it. They'll continue their pattern of evicting families, bulldozing their homes and lying about it. Mac Court II at the fairgrounds is a proposal that shows just how arrogant and over-reaching University administrators and overly cooperative members of our City Council have gotten. Congratulations to the mindful faculty members who have chosen to rise up against the "arms race" in sports spending that threatens the University's future.

Zachary Vishanoff
 Eugene