

'Passion' review misses mark

How did I know that a film reviewer from the Emerald was not going to give "The Passion of the Christ" a positive review ("Gibson's directing robs 'Christ' of passion," ODE, March 4)? Ryan Nyburg does his best to obliterate Gibson's Gospel accounts of the last 12 hours of Jesus of Nazareth's life through nonexistent problems and attacks on his credibility as a director. Jumping on Hollywood's bandwagon, Nyburg contradicts his follow-the-leader approach to reviewing the film more than once.

GUEST COMMENTARY

Nyburg claims that in Gibson's attempt to divinize Jesus, he completely forgets to make him a relatable character. However, in describing a scene that shows the carpenter's human emotion and interaction with his mother, Nyburg dismisses this simply as failing, and fitting "poorly into the film." Nyburg forgets the range of emotions Gibson gives to Jesus that include elation and hope while preaching the Sermon on the Mount and betrayal at Judas' kiss and subsequent

arrival of Jewish authorities. Instead of taking aim at the real problems with the movie, such as the Hollywood-esque additions that are neither Biblical nor historical, like Satan appearing holding a dead baby and a rotting, dead cow smiling up at Judas as he hangs himself, Nyburg dismisses Gibson's work as "a wasted effort."

It is nothing less than comical that in today's day and age, works like "The Last Temptation of Christ" and "The Da Vinci Code" are praised and celebrated, while a historical depiction of the last 12 hours of Jesus' life as shown through the Gospels is seen as controversial and condemned for violence. Comedy aside, if anyone fails to see Christianity as being under fire in today's increasingly secular society, it is time to come out from under your rock. On March 1, the California State Supreme Court ruled that Roman Catholic charities must offer birth control coverage to employees, essentially going out of its way to attack the church because of its rejection of birth control. Of course, the decision was hailed as a victory from the American Civil Liberties Union, as one spokeswoman called it "a great

victory for California women and reproductive freedom."

So, Ryan Nyburg, how many reviews of the movie did you read before you wrote your own? I agree with you that in the movie some in the crowd are portrayed as mindless followers. Didn't I see you in that crowd?

Michael Tarascio is a junior majoring in Italian and religious studies.

Willamette River needs solution to toxicity

I remember the days when I carelessly swam in the Willamette and threw tennis balls to my roommates' dog. That was a great way to spend a hot summer afternoon. When August transforms Eugene into a stuffy oven, our only refuge are the crowded public pools full of baby pee and the Willamette River.

GUEST COMMENTARY

I've always preferred the natural setting; besides, it offers a little bit of something for everyone. You can kayak, tube, swim or fish in the Willamette; at least that's what I thought. Then I started to notice the pollution foam congregating at the edges of the river. I knew it got bad when I had to wash after swimming. The question I have to ask is, What is that smell? It's toxic waste, farm runoff and oil from our streets. Fish that swim there aren't even fit to eat. Companies dump their garbage

there without fear of penalty and the people who are suffering are the average citizens. The people who can change this are you and I.

Last year, Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski promised to do something about this shameful river that runs through the Northwest. He promised to take action to reduce toxic emissions, eventually giving the average citizens back their river. So far Kulongoski hasn't done a thing, and it's time to take action. Don't you want to have a clean river for children to play in, healthy fish for catching, and a feeling of pride when you walk the bike path? Write to your congressman, write your senators, just tell them that you use the river too! Together we can take the Willamette back from the polluters, but until then I think I prefer to swim in the pool full of baby pee as opposed to the toxic Willamette.

Rachel Lazar is a senior majoring in environmental science.

ACADEMICS

continued from page 2

basketball program.

Maybe. But it is more than offset by the boost it gives credibility of a university no longer tolerating excessive spending for sports while academic

programs go hungry. It also provides a great opportunity for the University Development Department.

It's about time it convinced big donors for a gym their money could have far greater value if given to academic projects.

George Beres lives in Eugene.

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