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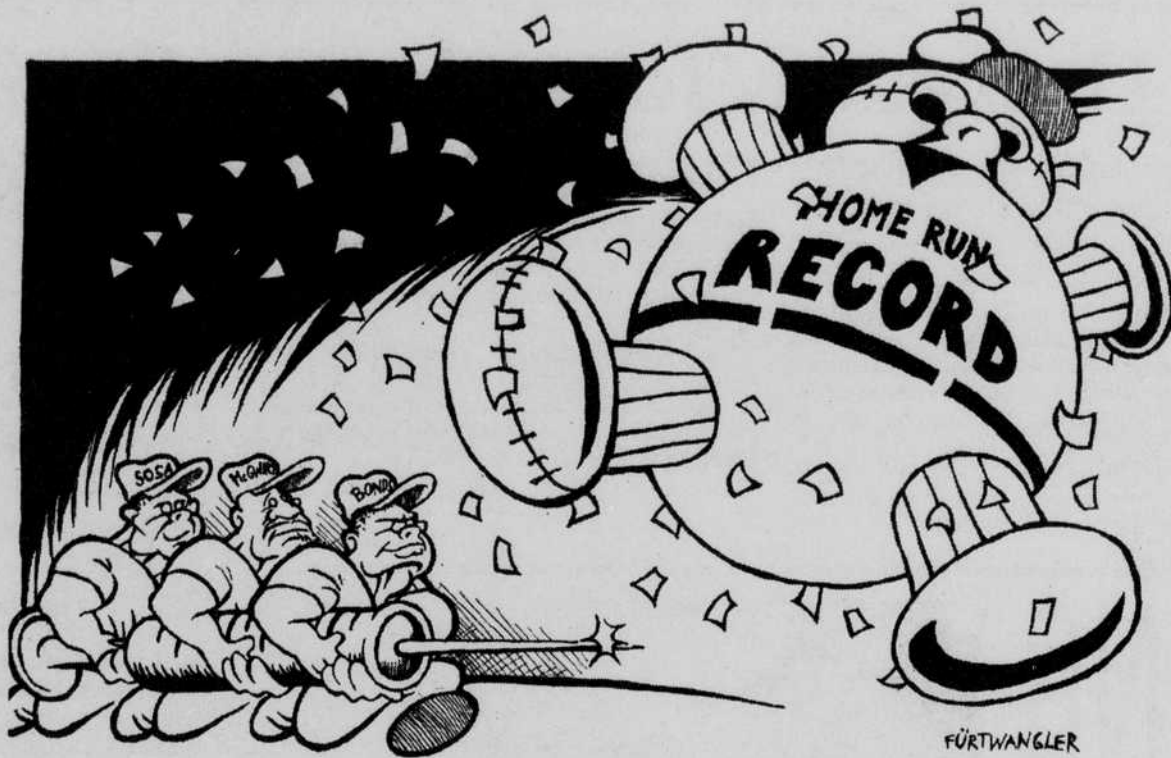
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## In my opinion

# Bullets or bullies

You can blame the bullies. You can blame the Prozac. Blame it on parents, violent flash animation, explicit lyrics or the fact that no one saw the warning signs. Or you could blame it on the two factors that truly resulted in the death of six high school students and four adults: a loaded gun and a violent kid.

School shootings, such as the one that occurred on the Red Lake Indian Reservation last Monday, occur because of two main, intricately entwined issues. First is a statement that I would consider fact, but many consider debatable: guns kill. According to the U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, firearm deaths totaled 29,573 in 2001. The classic saying goes that guns don't kill people, people kill people; however, it is painfully apparent that guns belonging to already violent people are not just hanging around and watching crime being committed from their cozy positions in locked cupboards.

Published last year, David Hemenway's book "Private Guns, Public Health" calls attention to an important idea: The United States is not necessarily a nation more violent than the rest of the world. As director of the Harvard Injury Control Research Center at the School of Public Health, Hemenway comments that the crime rate in our country is comparable to other industrialized nations of the same size; however, lethal violence because of easy gun access represents the real disparity.



AILEE SLATER  
FURTHER FROM PERFECTION

"It's not as if a 19-year-old in the United States is more evil than a 19-year-old in Australia — there's no evidence for that," Hemenway writes in his book, "but a 19-year-old in America can very easily get a pistol. That's very hard to do in Australia. So when there's a bar fight in Australia, somebody gets punched out or hit with a beer bottle. Here, they get shot."

The United States' acceptance of guns will always lead to lethal violence in schools, and lethal violence in society. Which leads to the second reason why school shootings are probably not going to end in this country: The United States cannot simultaneously promote and decry violence. Remember that the United States attacked Iraq not because of an action taken by the Iraqi nation, but because of the threat of violence from them toward ourselves. Kind of like a school yard drama in which the nerds feel threatened by the jocks, and suddenly a kid has a pistol (or army, if you will) resting at someone's forehead. It may be painstakingly pacifist, but the logic

remains that to kill is to kill. Jeff Weise caused the death of ten; the United States has caused the death of well over 100,000 in Iraq alone.

Schools are not a separate entity from the world; rather, they are a microcosm of it. In every grade level, within every classroom, are the children representing the roles of brown-nosing coworker, submissive housewife, or crazy bag lady engulfed in a life of generic formula mind-altering substances and "For Maximum Value" TV dinners. Children and teenagers are aware of the world and society in which they reside, and will mold their individual values around their settings. If the United States remains lax on gun laws, not to mention the absurd army-worship in which our country increasingly engages, homicide in schools by gun will not end.

There is not a problem with violence in schools, there is a problem with violence, period. Metal detectors won't solve the problem, and neither will parental advisory warnings on video games and music. If the U.S. government wants to make a real change in violence within schools, then they need to set up a real change in the mindset of this nation. As long as citizens are supplied with lethal weapons and violence is promoted as an acceptable solution to problems, improvements will be few.

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## INBOX

### Neon campaign signs pose environmental threat

As I walked through campus the other day, I couldn't help but notice the bright campaign signs. Election season is upon us, and I expect we'll be seeing many more of these campaign signs in coming weeks. How

ever, using neon paper for these signs must cease immediately.

Neon paper is made with toxic heavy metals such as cadmium and arsenic that leach into the environment if the paper is thrown away. If neon paper is recycled as colored paper, the bleaching process produces

cancer-causing dioxin. Neon paper can only be recycled as low-grade, which is hard to market and not cost-effective. I urge all candidates to keep in mind the health of our community and environment as they run their campaigns.

Jessica Thompson  
Eugene

## OREGON DAILY EMERALD LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged, and should be sent to letters@dailyemerald.com or submitted at the Oregon Daily Emerald office, EMU Suite 300. Electronic submissions are preferred. Letters are limited to 250 words, and guest commentaries to 550 words. Authors are limited to one submission per calendar month. Submissions should include phone number and address for verification. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style. Guest submissions are published at the discretion of the Emerald.

## Editorial

### Early ASUO election date leaves students uninformed

As the term begins and the University springs back to life, the freshly tanned student population will return only to be caught off guard by an event of premiere importance that flies below most of the school's radar — the imminent ASUO elections.

The first round begins only a week from Wednesday with the primary elections leaving voters, who often return on the eve of new classes or even midway through the first week, woefully uninformed and unaware of the candidates.

We appreciate the hard work the Elections board does each year to inform and aid potential candidates, but setting the primary election for April 6 hardly seems in "the best interests of the student body," as the ASUO Green Tape Notebook specifies. The Emerald aspires to provide the best coverage, yet the scheduling of elections soon after the break severely limits the availability of candidates and drastically lowers the visibility of the election.

ASUO rules stipulate the board has from Feb. 1 until April 30 to complete regular elections and sadly, every single year the Elections Board gets it wrong — apparently stabbing blindly at their desk calendars without regard to the importance of the dates they have selected. Last year's proposed election date twice coincided with the Law School's Dead Week, and this year's date is almost equally inappropriate.

The board cannot be faulted for weak candidates, simplistic campaigns or apathetic constituents, but considering the static nature of spring break, its poor planning and lack of consideration of students' needs does deserve some blame. If this year is any repeat of previous low-turnout ASUO elections, steps should be taken in the future to strategically plan an appropriate date for elections.

### Two publications strip down definition of pornography

H Bomb and Boink certainly sound like weapons of mass destruction, and that's exactly how these publications have been treated by their university campuses. What objections could administrators from Harvard and Boston University have with these two magazines? Both H Bomb and Boink use editors, writers, and models from their respective schools and both publications address themes concerning sex. H Bomb operates under the notion of sex as art, but Boink editor and founder Alecia Oleyourryk has repeatedly emphasized her goal to promote the magazine as exactly what it is — porn.

What stands out in both of these instances is not the locales or the education level of the participants; rather, it is the deliberate effort made by the creators to shy away from traditional pornography, which is centered around heterosexual, primarily male desire. The sexual imagery found in H Bomb and Boink includes pictures ranging from two men kissing in the nude to a naked woman sporting only tattoos and a large reptile. As purveyors of sexual education, and entertainment, these and a few other college sex magazines like them have all taken impressive steps in moving away from a history of exploitation in erotica. Oleyourryk herself posed in the pages of her publication, nicely blurring the delineation between sex employee and employer, which has traditionally lead to painful business relationships in the porn industry.

Although it is understandable that a university may not support or endorse porn, perhaps there is, somewhere, a liberal college willing to take the plunge and stand behind a sex-themed piece of media. College represents a time of education and growth in the sexuality of many. Perhaps recognizing this fact and supporting a source of enlightened, positive imagery and education would be just the ticket to producing a new generation of sexually healthy young adults.

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