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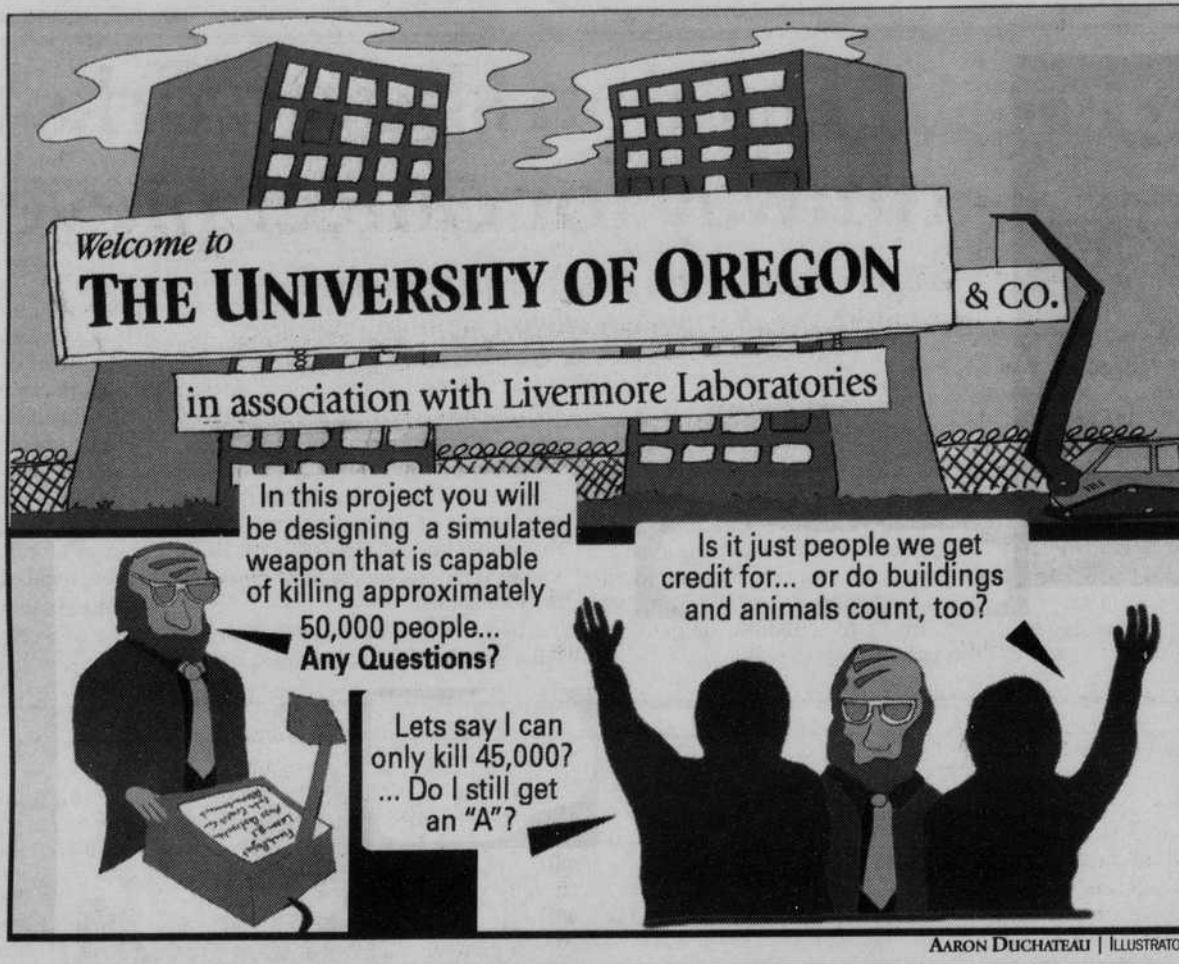
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AARON DUCHATEAU | ILLUSTRATOR

■ In my opinion

Life is bad; art is good

In my opinion, the world at large is increasingly null and void, in and of itself. We're all going to die, be it from Avian bird flu, nuclear weapons, or some form of feisty, stormy air molecules.

We're all going to die, but you knew that already, right? I myself have only 80 years to live, tops.

If humans can't solve the political, social and environmental decline of the Earth, the least we can do is a little bit of self-healing through some good pieces of modern artistry. Who cares about politics and opinion and "society"? Let's talk about art and culture and ways to make humans a little happier. In our constant process of life and death, here are a few nuggets of cinematic beauty to revel in along the way.

"La Mala Educacion"

You can guess a film is foreign when a quarter into the plot it turns out that the main character has been dead for years. And you know the film has been directed by Pedro Almodovar when that dead main character, as well as almost every other character in the film, is gay, transvestite, transsexual, or all three.

In "La Mala Educacion" ("Bad Education"), Spanish director Almodovar intertwines the past and the present to produce a story about (among other elements) homosexuality and molestation problems in religious school systems. An American movie on the same topic might utilize traditional ideas of good and bad and right and wrong, but Almodovar's plot features the sexually abusing priest as an eventual love interest of the main character. The audience comes to sympathize with an intravenous drug user who delves into blackmail for the purpose of sexual reassignment surgery. In Almodovar's



AILEE SLATER
FURTHER FROM PERFECTION

world, love for money is still love, and exchanging murder for celebrity status becomes a method of healing fragmented families. If you've never seen beauty in how truly fucked up the world can be, "La Mala Educacion" is a good place to start.

"Dirty Filthy Love"

Ever wonder what that crazy old guy on the street corner with the long hair and nutty mannerisms might have looked like 20 years ago? "Dirty Filthy Love" follows the story of an obsessive compulsive man with Tourette's syndrome as he tries to move on after a fallen marriage. Main character Mark experiences the emotional turmoil that any divorced man might, but for some reason everyone seems sharply critical of Mark's mental mayhem over his ex-wife. Perhaps it's because Mark barks at people on the street and can't walk up a flight of stairs without retracing his path along certain steps.

"Dirty Filthy Love" provides Mark with a love interest who is a group therapy leader and can't cope with odd numbers. If Charlotte finds herself in a restaurant booth with two other people, someone will have to leave. The plot seems slightly odd, yet fairly traditional.

It's the images in "Dirty Filthy Love"

that truly separate this movie from the usual squall of modern love stories. When Mark's hair has grown matted and shoulder length, and Charlotte's wig has been removed to uncover a now publicly compulsive hair puller, the two run hand in hand across the beach. The camera becomes unfocused, and a fuzzy silhouette of Charlotte and Mark against the shoreline eliminates the public eye from their love life. "Dirty Filthy Love" reminds audiences that the world will think you're crazy no matter what; all you can do is tune them out and be happy to find companionship with a trichotillomania who can laugh at the fact that you growl at strangers.

"Mulholland Dr."

The thing I love about David Lynch is that no amount of analysis can quite uncover exactly what this director's movies mean. The unclear theme of "Mulholland Dr." is matched only by the confusion in trying to follow the plot of "Mulholland Dr." But the film is an entertaining and artistic masterpiece. Modern horror films cannot compete with the eerie cinematography of a dank theater house doused in deep red, blue and a woman singing in morose tones in Spanish.

"Mulholland Dr." is not a scary movie in the traditional sense, but it is a murder mystery. Kind of. It's also about becoming a celebrity. And same-sex love. And what it means to dream in the sense of hoping as well as being unconscious. "Mulholland Dr." is about a lot of things, but more than that, it's about sitting down and enjoying a film, then spending the next two weeks happily deciphering exactly what it was that you so enjoyed.

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■ Editorial

Apartment sale another I.O.U. to housing?

University officials last week surprisingly announced that they want to sell Westmoreland Apartments, the University's largest apartment complex. The 404-unit compound provides relatively affordable housing for students with families, graduate students and international students — students who may have to move if the sale is finalized. The 26-acre property also includes a childcare center.

Officials said they want to sell the 45-year-old property because it is costly to maintain and because of potential costs to repair major structural problems. The site was also built to accommodate families with children, and only about 13 percent of residents have children.

Money from the sale, conservatively estimated at between \$15 million and \$18 million, may be used to improve housing close to campus, although some funds could first go to other purposes, officials said.

While the sale process can't move forward without the Oregon State Board of Higher Education's blessing, we find this move by the University administration dubious at best.

Administrators have a history of misusing Housing Department funds. As an auxiliary entity, the department's funding is generated by room and board fees and is independent of general University funds. Housing funds are "primarily intended to serve the student bodies' housing needs," according to the University's Business Affairs Office Web site.

Yet in past years, administrators have greedily reached into the housing pot to acquire land for non-housing purposes. Case in point: During 1964-66, the Housing Department paid about \$200,000 for three parcels of land now occupied by the Riverfront Research Park. The land was purchased with bond money under the auspices of building student housing, but housing footed the bill even after the designation for the land changed. Four decades after the purchase, the administration last year decided to compensate housing just \$34,746 — a move administrators considered generous.

We believe housing should have been fully reimbursed. Melinda Grier, University legal counsel, decided that repayment wasn't legally required because the use of the property changed after the Housing Department paid off bonds used to purchase the land. This technicality, however, doesn't change the fact that students paid money to housing that has not been reinvested in housing projects.

With the sorry state of residence halls today, using money from the Westmoreland sale for renovations or to construct new residence halls sounds somewhat appealing. But new residence halls probably won't accommodate families or provide more childcare options.

Moreover, administrators might decide to use the money for projects entirely unrelated to housing. Such a move would be egregious and deplorable given the need for housing improvements.

There are advantages to the sale: Westmoreland is located more than 2 miles from campus, it is falling into disrepair and other family housing options, such as Spencer View, are more popular. But newer and closer facilities are already full, and officials admit that not all residents living in University housing who want to return next year will have accommodations.

As the State Board considers approving the sale in early November, we urge its members to carefully ponder administrator's true intentions for the sale money. Will they try to rob the piggy bank and leave another I.O.U.? Based on their track record, we can't rule out this possibility.

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