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■ In my opinion

Where has common courtesy gone?

Within a university, one would assume that most people have a certain level of intelligence and a certain amount of knowledge. Yet somehow a large portion of people on this campus lack a sense of common courtesy.

Common courtesy centers on the realization that there are other people who share this campus with you. I, for one, am tired of people spitting all over the sidewalk. Why is this necessary? Considering that the culprits are often men, I have to wonder if it is just a display of masculinity. It is nothing short of disgusting, especially if people are eating near by. And, if one is brave enough to wear flip-flops, there is the possibility of stepping in a stranger's saliva and having others' body fluid contact the skin. If anyone out there finds that they have to spit, for whatever reason, I implore you to have some common courtesy and aim for the bushes.

This spitting habit comes to mind right away because it is public, just like littering. Overall, I find the University to be impressively clean. Yet there are some who leave their Big-Gulp cups sitting by benches and drop their gum wrappers. I do not see how someone can litter without feeling guilty, and I also do not see how people can walk by a piece of trash and not feel obligated to pick it up. We have all heard the saying, "If you aren't part of the solution you're part of the problem," and it's true. I encourage everyone to pick up any large pieces of trash. It is absurd to expect people to dig through the leaves to get a gum wrapper, but when various sections of a newspaper are scattered around a bench, why not take a couple of seconds to stop and pick it up? That simple act can make a world of a difference.



JESSICA DERLETH
FREEDOM RINGS WHERE OPINIONS CLASH

Another simple thing to consider is how one enters and exits a room. During a recent panel discussion in the lounge of my dorm, people entered and exited the building, letting the door slam each time. There was a panel, an audience, a camera and a stream of door-slammers. I understand that the disruption was not intentional and comes with being in a dorm. But door-slamming should not be a problem in the classroom. During a recent midterm, people were leaving as they finished and every time people left they let the door slam behind them. I sat there trying to answer the essay questions as the door banged shut every 30 seconds. Where is the common courtesy? Taking a midterm is stressful enough without having loud, repetitive noise.

There are aspects of common courtesy that go beyond simply annoying those around you. Take, for example, washing your hands. You may not think that washing hands has no effect on any one else, but it does. In a study conducted by the American Society for Microbiology, more than 7,000 adults were observed in airport restrooms across the country to see just how common hand-washing is. Overall, 90 percent of women wash their hands and 75 percent of men wash their hands. This may not

seem that bad, but one must take into account that people who don't wash their hands open that bathroom door to leave. And people who do wash their hands have to touch the same handle. Then they are out in the world where the non-hand-washers touch other surfaces and shake hands. These people can easily spread the common cold, the flu virus and more serious diseases such as hepatitis A, impetigo and pinworm. Believe me, these things are not nice. I have seen countless women leave the bathroom without washing and it makes me cringe every time. Do they think that they don't have germs? To help protect yourself and others from germs, all it takes is some soap, water and 20 seconds of your time.

Hand-washing really comes down to health, as does smoking. I could never smoke. It smells gross, it is unhealthy, it is addictive and it would not mesh well with my asthma. As an asthmatic individual I often find myself having a hard time breathing if I am around someone who is smoking or wearing three layers of perfume. And I have to say that I have found the quantity of perfume to be a larger problem than the smokers. From what I have seen, people stay off to the side or go to appropriate areas to smoke. Sure, there is the occasional person who walks through a crowd blowing smoke into everyone's face, but for the most part, University smokers have a sense of common courtesy.

It is not hard to be polite and courteous. It is not hard to realize that you are not the only person out there. So please, close doors quietly, spit in the bushes, pick up your trash and WASH YOUR HANDS!

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Long live New Orleans!

New Orleans is down, but definitely not out. Like the guy who valiantly staggers to his feet, gripping the bar while slurring, "And another thing, buddy—" after having his ass handed to him in a brawl, New Orleans is not over. Not by a long shot.

I thought I would return to utter destruction. I thought that the past few days would be the most painful of my life. Hurricane Katrina has caused me her fair share of sadness and has also, at times, shaken my belief that everything happens for a reason. But the two days I spent in New Orleans two weeks ago were some of the best of my life.

I thought everyone would be broken. And the city is.

It's impossible to walk down the streets because the enormous piles of debris block the path. It's as if every house has vomited out its contents, starting with furniture and ending with the walls. A brief lesson in New Orleans topography: the land nearest the river is highest, and it slopes down towards the lake which borders the city on the north. If you lived more than a few blocks from the river, you got water. Imagine if everyone who lived farther than two blocks from the Willamette had everything on their first floor obliterated.

People who had only three inches of water are gutting their houses. It's not the water — it's the mold that climbs to the ceiling and ruins literally everything but glass and metal.

There is debris everywhere. Much of the garbage in the dumps was picked up and distributed liberally around the city. With the exception of Audubon Park, which looks beautiful (thank you, Oklahoma National Guard!), there are no streets, no yards and no sidewalks without at least a small heap of garbage.



KELLY BROWN
"Y'ALL HEAR THAT 'NOLIA CLAP..."

I woke to the sounds of my downstairs neighbors' mountain of belongings being picked up by giant claws and dumped into an accompanying garbage truck. "Oh, that's a cute comforter," I thought to myself as it dangled, along with jeans and a stuffed camel, from the grip of the construction equipment.

Out in Lakeview, near where the canal broke, things are even worse. Oak trees that had trunks six feet across lie prone, browning in the sun. The black water line stretches as far as the eye can see — a perfectly level mark of the "toxic gumbo" that flowed into our city. Driving at night is like driving in the country because all the streetlights are out, yet you're surrounded by buildings.

Amidst this mess, my room was fine. Aside from a ruined throw pillow that was under a leaky window, everything sat in the same place where I left it. The outfit I'd worn on my last night of work was still strewn across the floor; a half-written letter sat on my desk, collecting dust. It seemed incredibly unfair that my stuff was unharmed while so many others had lost so much.

I'd be lying if I said it wasn't nice to have my own clothes and my photo albums back, and I know that if I had lost everything, it wouldn't make any difference except to me. I know it's just stuff, but sometimes it's not. There are things

that have so much more value and meaning than could be reported on an insurance loss sheet.

But, in the midst of all this, I found something that I never expected. Remember after Sept. 11, when everyone felt unified, and trivial events were no longer important? Everyone in New Orleans has experienced a watershed event that will change us forever, and I have never experienced such a sense of community and solidarity as I did there.

People called out to me as I walked down the street. They wanted to hear my story. They wanted me to hear theirs. They wanted to serve me lunch, and some truly wonderful individuals presented me with some cigarettes.

People who had lost everything were concerned about how I was liking Oregon. They wanted assurance that I would be back, and when I told them I would, they asked me to stop by and visit when I got back.

At the overflowing bars — some things never change — people toasted New Orleans, each other and even the hurricane that gave us so much perspective. We drank to the past, and we drank to the future. There is nowhere like New Orleans, and it will never be the same city. We don't know what's coming, but no matter what it is, we're New Orleanians and we'll always be a part of it.

"Screw the ones that don't return — we didn't need them anyway!" was a common theme, but I think most people will be back.

I'm not sure I'd put it that strongly, but it's hard to imagine my life without New Orleans. It's my hometown, and I've learned so much — good and bad — from the past two years there.

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■ Out loud

"It's easy to tell everyone to do this and not give money to do it."

— University Director of Telecommunications Services **Dave Barta** on a new order from the Federal Communications Commission that might cause the University to have to revamp its communications systems.

"I'm not saying that this is for all students. Not all students smoke weed, throw beer on people and burn bears. It is showing that we're taking a stance and that these stupid, stupid people will not be tolerated in public."

— Athletic Department Finance Committee Senator **Kyle McKenzie** on an ADFC proposal to punish one-time disorderly offenders at games.

"Sports is just so much more to me than politics, and I think that being a journalist is so much more to me than being a politician."

— Athletic Department Finance Committee member **Spencer Crum**, who stepped down from his position in order to pursue journalism and write for the Emerald as a freelance sports reporter. Emerald policy prohibits printing news articles by students who are simultaneously involved in student government.

"I'm on a fixed income. For \$355 a month I could live in a cockroach-infested apartment on Seventh and Blair."

— Westmoreland Apartments resident **Darlene Hampton**, a GTF in the English department, at a meeting Wednesday night with University officials. The University recently announced future plans to sell the apartment complex, displacing its 360 leaseholders.

"We started out as family housing, and we're not really housing very many families. We started out full, with a lot of demand, and that's not really the case right now. We started out trying to serve children, and there aren't very many children living there."

— **Mike Eyster**, interim vice president for Student Affairs and director of University Housing, discussing the shortfalls of the Westmoreland Apartments.

"I wish there could be someone held responsible for what happened, whether it be a student or housing."

— Hawaii Club co-Director and University junior **Lily Bender** discussing a Hawaiian freshman who lived in the residence halls this year and left during his first week at the University because of alleged racial harassment and death threats. The incident prompted the University to send an administrator to Hawaii.

"This wouldn't be a reason or an extra reason to go, but it clearly is an opportunity to answer questions."

— Interim Vice Provost for Institutional Equity and Diversity **Charles Martinez** discussing the causes of his visit to Hawaii.

"There are no finer marketers, I believe — in certainly the sports industry — than Nike, and we have a very good relationship with them here at the University of Oregon."

— Athletic Director **Bill Moos** on the involvement of Nike in helping to secure Eugene as the location of the 2008 Olympic Track and Field Trials.

"I wouldn't be suicidal if it did pass, but I don't think it will."

— University Development Gift Planning Director **Hal Abrams** on the U.S. Senate's impending decision on whether to repeal a tax on inherited estates, a move some say could drastically cut donations to nonprofits and universities.