

proven theories of security and well-being including tax cuts for the rich, military buildup and usurping retirement benefits, it's more than our conscience that's lost. Collective intellect is also missing. Our increasing knowledge of the benefits of drug treatment along with educating, stimulating and nourishing children is now futile. Newspapers and television underreport this information and lawmakers refuse to abide by it. So what's the use of proving the benefits of nutritious meals on learning or tobacco education? Let's instead make counterproductive policy with unethical, "neutral" reporting about it by leaving out the proven damage it will cause.

Mike Meyer
Eugene

MAD COW IRONY

The current upset over a mad cow in Canada is ironic. Not to make light of the painful fate of the cow, nor the potential for widespread public health calamity due to mad cow disease, but the public health costs of the beef industry are *already* enormous.

Virtually all medical and public health officials agree: The rate at which Americans eat beef (and other animal products from milk to poultry) is a public health disaster. Coronary diseases kill thousands each year and degrade the quality of life for many others in addition to those dead from eating too many burgers and steaks.

Beyond the human consequence, the environment and habitat suffer from the millions of tons of fertilizers, herbicides and pesticides to raise the grain the animals eat while hormones, antibiotics, colorings and more that are standard ingredients in the production of conventional beef. Water pollution, loss of habitat (like cleared rainforest) and waste disposal are only a few of the companions to beef and related animal factory farming industries. Genetic engineering is another hazard.

Not to mention the appalling conditions characteristic of high intensity factory farming. Crowding, filth, antibiotics (the same kind used for humans and losing their utility), the slaughter and more translate into a life of pain and suffering for animals raised in the mass production mode.

Giant agribusiness and animal food retail companies have serious political influence on public policy that is contrary to public health. These same entities are responsible for the export of the fast food culture to other countries that are now beginning to see the same kind of deteriorating public health trends as in the U.S.

So one cow is discovered with BSE.

Certainly a cause for alarm. The best remedy is for individuals to choose to eat less beef (or any other animal products) if any at all, for the government to end subsidizing its production, distribution and consumption, and for public health agencies to far more openly identify beef for what it is – a killer of hundreds of thousands every year even when no mad cow threat exists.

Jan Spencer
Eugene

ACTING OUT

I want to thank Claire Syrett for her advice that the acting community here in Eugene join Actor's Equity. What the hell have I been thinking all these years? Damn, I'm gonna run right down to Very Little Theatre and Actor's Cabaret and tell my non-union brothers and sisters they don't have to work for free anymore. And to think that I once regarded the \$75 Lord Leebrick paid me as top dollar! Shucks, I feel like a community theater hayseed.

There are people who live and work in this town and do theater. Bary Shaw, myself and many others have worked for free and will do so again. I got involved in this issue more than 20 years ago and the only thing I learned from that is justification alone is not a good enough reason for taking action. It is far more important to support our limited venues.

The half salary Willamette Rep paid me for a small role was still over three times what I usually make. And working in the Hult Center sure as hell beats working in a restaurant or old garage. And isn't the essence of this whole story the fact that a local theater is in financial trouble but keeps the belief that the next show will turn things around? Boy, there's a scoop.

So maybe sometime Ms. Syrett will let us all fawn over her Equity card. That will certainly do it for me. Until then, she should stick to calling cues. Of course, she'll only be able to do that in the one Equity house in town.

Ken Hof
Eugene

TINY TYPE

Julie Rogers (5/15) could not be more right about the ridiculously miniscule size of so much of the print in *EW*. Her letter inspired me to call *EW*'s office and share the same sentiment. I was told (by not the nicest person I've encountered in Eugene) that only five people have complained, and so it's not a problem.

I'm writing with hopes of inspiring other readers who can't read the classifieds (for which people pay to have their ads read in a

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