

ANGLOCENTRIC SCHOOL BOARD

On Feb. 18, Latinos and Latinas turned out to support the renaming of south-side elementary to César Chávez. Latino educators, students, parents, and non-Latino groups showed their support for a more inclusive Eugene school district. This process has been eye-opening for me, not because of the participation — it has always been there. The process has been eye-opening because it illustrates how lack of diversity in the school board can marginalize community members.

The school board is one hundred percent white. Although the superintendent is black, he is held accountable by white board members, which excludes him from truly yielding power for all children. There are no Latinos, Latinas, or Asians, which makes the power imbalance worse.

So what happens when power is most exercised by one group? In this case, issues are framed around white criteria. The criterion for naming the school is a perfect example, which excluded names that required non-Anglo pronunciation.

The school board will decide on March 18 whether it will include or exclude César Chávez in its final decision. Given similar power dynamics in the school board and the city council, chances are that last year's controversy of re-naming Centennial to Dr. King can bubble over into the re-naming of south-side elementary to César Chávez. The Latino community will be prepared for the worst.

Javier Ayala
Eugene

UNDERSTANDING UNDERCOVERED

I look forward every Thursday to reading the "undercover" column by Kate Rogers Gessert. I am deeply interested in her articles on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict and the role of current U.S. government. She provides information that mainstream media don't. With her articles I can go and check for myself and read further about this disturbing conflict.

Her information comes from reputable news sources. Many pro-peace Israelis would appreciate her effort to inform us about events that don't reach us.

I find Mr. Bob Kholos's recent attack on her work and character extremely disturbing. Yes, we need real discussion on the problems in the Middle East. To do that, we need to be informed and Ms. Gessert is doing just that. In her writing I don't see any sentiment against Jews or any inciting of riots against synagogues. The tone of Mr. Kholos's own discourse is dangerous and will not contribute to any understanding of the conflict(s), either political or personal. But since he identifies himself as a member of the peace communi-

ty, I hope he can see the contradiction in his own statements.

Anuncia Escala
Eugene

SPIRIT OF DEMOCRACY

The power and morose responsibility Ms. Fabian (2/12) allots the Green Party is earth-shaking. To blame the retaliatory War on Terrorism and the resulting deaths of thousands of innocent lives on the Green Party is a gross fallacy at best. "Lest we forget for one-second," we have the current political administration, George W., to blame for the last four years of greed. Not the Green Party, as Ms. Fabian erroneously believes.

The Green Party continues to stand up and get active. They are people of courage and conviction, exercising their true democratic right to vote their conscience; not utilize their "kindergarten degree in electoral politics" to use their vote as a tool to not "split the left" by electing the lesser of two evils; but to vote for the only alternative that makes any sense.

Come on now, Ms. Fabian. Try to remember back to the last election, when by the popular vote, Al Gore was the fore-runner and Bush trailed behind. And remember all those voters in Florida whose votes weren't even tallied. And remember how Bush was *appointed* our president and not *elected*. Now if you really want to blame the last four years of horror on somebody other than the current administration, begin with some of those hard facts.

I suggest you focus all your steam to oust the current administration by encouraging people to vote, period. A democracy means that we all have a say in our politics and every vote should be counted, no matter for whom that vote is cast. That's the spirit of democracy — standing up for what you believe in and getting the opportunity to have your voice heard. If more people had voted in the last election, and voted their conscience, the results may have been a lot rosier, if not possibly even greener.

Gail Diehl
Cedar Flat

DRAMATIC SPINNING

I attended the Sunday matinee of Lord Leebrick's *Spinning into Butter* and I saw a very different play than the one reviewed by Ms. Smith in your 2/19 edition. She spent one-third of her review bemoaning the fact that there were not any black characters. She evidently reviewed the play she wished it had been rather than the play as it is.

I hope her review doesn't keep audience members away because the play that I saw had a clever and thought-provoking script, talented actors who brought both subtle humor and emotional depth to their parts, a set that suited the mood and movement of the play, and music that underscored the building tension between the white characters and



their growing discomfort with their realization of their own prejudice.

Barbara Edmonds
Eugene

SUPERB PRODUCTION

My husband, myself and two other "drama-sophisticated" friends of ours thoroughly enjoyed everything about the play *Spinning Into Butter*. The play was subtle, provocative and just humorous enough. The acting was superb. We all thought the review completely off-base and are concerned about the number of people who may not have attended due to the scathing review. It's not too late, however, to see this fascinating play since it is still running.

Mary Dwan
Eugene

Editor's Note: We received two other letters, although too late for this issue, praising *Spinning into Butter*, which continues through March 6 at Lord Leebrick. See www.eugeneweekly.com for those and other letters.

CODDLING KALI'S

If you value the community resource that Mother Kali's has been for 28 years, I urge you to tell any faculty members you know how urgent it is for them to place their textbooks there for spring term. At least two-thirds of Mother Kali's annual income comes from textbook sales in October, January, and April.

All the women involved on both sides of the current conflict are good people and strong feminists. Whatever mistakes they may or may not have made, it makes no sense to boycott a store that has been fostering feminism and progressive movements all this time and

take the money to a large institution or a chain store or an online behemoth. Progressives must learn the difference between an ally who is not living up to their hopes and ideals and an enemy to vanquish. If we do not, it is suicide, and Bush and his cronies win by default.

There were factual errors in the *EW* articles, and I'll write about those later. But if you wait to try to figure out all the details of who is right and who is wrong about what, or just withdraw until the dust settles, the store will be bankrupt by fall.

General political rhetoric is not helpful when the rent is due. If you are concerned, give the board and the union specific, practical, affordable suggestions; urge both sides to mediate; help them find a good mediator; then go buy a book at Mother Kali's. Today.

Lorraine Ironplow
Mother Kali's Board member
1979 - 2002

PRIMARY COLORS

The current primary voting schedule does not, in my view, give voters in states with later primaries any voice or choice in the selection process. For example, by the time Oregon's primary comes around, the Democratic candidate will have long ago been chosen. Sure, one can always write in a candidate of their choice, but beyond making a statement what is the point?

I can understand why many would be apathetic and disillusioned with this system. Having said this, I still will most definitely vote because I see voting as both a privilege and a responsibility. In other countries I read that people have fervent political discussions in the pubs and streets, and in other countries

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