

are seeking alternatives to our failing public schools and some parents just don't, or can't, prioritize it.

My son started his schooling at Adams Elementary, the school you pointed out as having the highest turnover and weakest neighborhood population (cover story, 1/27). After kindergarten and one term of first grade, we pulled him out. He went to three different 4J schools before we made the decision to home-school.

There are more than just funding and diversity problems within 4J: incompetent, un-supportive administration, burned-out teachers, large class sizes, special education and medications as a form of income, inappropriate discipline. Nancy Willard may want to take a harder look at why Adams is not as successful as other schools.

The biggest problem with Oregon schools is the management of funds, but it will never be admitted. In a 2002 Secretary of State audit compiled by Citizens for Oregon's Future, Oregon's school districts received \$7,242 per student in the 2002-2003 school year; 80 percent of which was spent on personnel. That's \$181,050 for one 25-student classroom per year! When I see these dollar figures, I question how it is possible that teachers aren't making enough money, programs are continually cut and availability of educational tools and supplies is limited.

A recent article by John C. Lundt, *Learning for a New Paradigm for Education*, states, "What education needs is an end to the public-school monopoly on funding," and until then, there can be no reform.

Pamela Simons
Eugene

DIFFERENT MINDS

To all of the kids who feel confused, hurt, angry, misunderstood, punished, and disgraced, I want to let you know that there are adults who care about you.

I support the kids who are made to feel inferior and incompetent and are always under attack. I respect the kids with stinging smoke in their eyes from the fiery stigma of mental health and disability discrimination still alive in our schools.

I respect "troubled," "disturbed" or "oppositional" children. Cheers to the kids under constant scrutiny, while many, "highly qualified" teachers and administrators view children with ADD, learning disabilities or mental illness as unstable "burdens."

I respect the kids who face school each day all alone. It's hard to focus, stay awake, or feel optimistic when home is hard and school is only harder. Sometimes it's tough to function when you're different and intelligent, invisible and silenced.

I respect the child next door, in another town, or the one sitting right next to you. I want to assure these kids, Life is worth living! Respect yourself! Empower each other! I was you, and I'm still fighting for my education rights. Just remember this truth: You will succeed. Never give up and always be you.

I respect the kids with different minds. You are the reason I continue. To those who lie, mislead, judge, and harm people's lives, we will only become stronger. A great educator once wrote, "I never let schooling get in the way of my education." Mark his words.

Jon Young
Veneta

NOT SO PARANOID

Kalin Hlavinka's (1/27) "Profit Motive" letter may seem a bit paranoid at first glance, but with recent revelations that major drug companies, with the acquiescence of the FDA, knowingly committed mass murder by heavily marketing "prescription" drugs secret studies showed to be highly dangerous, it is clear that corporate greed is quite into committing atrocities on a grand scale for fun and profit.

The same fun/profit disease is behind the Bushies' mass murder of tens of thousands of Iraqis and thousands of Americans in their Iraq atrocity, not to mention their diseased addiction to human torture. These diseased and morally challenged creeps need to be removed from power ASAP and prosecuted for war crimes and health crimes.

Bob Saxton
Eugene

MISSED MESSAGE

Over the last several years Lois Wadsworth has become my great (anti) herald of new and important works of film. "This one is a DUD," Wadsworth commenting on *The Life Aquatic with Steve Zissou*. I knew right away that this film must be great! And it was! Masterfully executed and acted, beautiful cinematography, art direction, animation, and locations, it was a very new and interesting flavor of comedy/action/drama. *Life Aquatic* is a very funny, soft-hearted, sharp minded portrayal of a man's journey to honesty, sensitivity, to maturity, to self-embodiment, to fatherhood — through an absurd existence. There are layers of sub-text going on as well, which will become clearer on second viewing.

Wes Anderson is giving us a new way of looking and seeing/feeling ourselves with humor, a bit of detachment, yet psychologically aware and loving, and noticing that we are often caricatures of ourselves.

And so it continues, this pattern with Lois's reviews as it has been times before with such works as *The Russian Arch* (one of the greatest masterpieces of film ever made and to come to Eugene! A cultural criticism about art and enlightenment), Bob Dylan's *Masked and Anonymous* (another profound multi-leveled and highly allegorical film), and David Lynch's *Straight Story* (which she thought was a "straight story"), to name a few of the best.

With all concern and compassion, I must say that Lois Wadsworth's reviews are a great cultural disservice to our community and are as obscene as those pornographic ads that run towards the back of the *Weekly*. Just as those images repeatedly imprinting on our minds and our children's minds are damaging in their playing a role in the conditioning of a limited, superficial, immature, patriarchal, objectifying, and a cold misunderstanding of sexuality, Wadsworth's reviews promote a similar practice of misunderstanding in the arena of art.

Sabrina Siegel
Eugene

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[syn: tuck away, put away]

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