

reviews, without Lois Wadsworth, are amateur, self-aggrandizing and without social value. I am shocked at how many of the great films I see are underattended and play for only a week. Unless you're paying close attention, they are here and gone before many people realize it. And that wastes the Bijou's limited resources, as well.

Case in point: Gus Van Sant's beautiful film *Restless* (shot in Portland) came and went in a week without fanfare. To be replaced this week by Miranda July's new film *The Future*. Miranda is one of the emerging young filmmaker/artists that define their generation, and we all should pay attention. Like Van Sant, she did some of her coming up in Portland.

The Bijou seems lost in the ocean, undecided which way it wants to swim. A tendency is to play to the college crowd with quirky late-night offerings and it doesn't have the time to promote the world-class cinema slipping past its projectors. *EW* reviewers would rather exhibit their version of critical erudition

than help anyone decide why they might want to see the film. Any more, they prefer to review the big theater, Hollywood offerings at the Cineplex, anyway.

There is no excuse for booking, exhibiting and then failing to adequately publicize their films. Anyway, go see *The Future* before it and the Bijou are gone!

Loren Sears
Eugene

DEFAZIO NOT HELPING

As an ardent past supporter who is now openly critical of Rep. Peter DeFazio's recent diatribe against President Obama, as well as his vote with Republicans against the stimulus and other bills, I had to laugh at his explanation for his unseemly behavior (cover story, 10/13). "I'm trying to help. He has to succeed. Democrats have to succeed so we don't wind up with someone like (Texas Gov. Rick) Perry as president." So railing against Obama is helping?

Recently I read an article in which

DeFazio was named as an example of Democrats who do not support Obama. This article was intended to encourage Republicans. I suggest that DeFazio's poor excuse of an explanation is simply an ill-conceived strategy to try to pull disenchanted supporters back into his circle of donors, while his behavior seems to indicate that he will say whatever he can to appeal to conservatives and grumpy liberals in the Fourth Congressional District. Personally speaking, he will have to do a lot more to show his support for President Obama and the Democratic party agenda before this extremely grumpy liberal will return to the fold.

Kathleen Epstein
Eugene

BE NICE TO COPS

I find it quite sad when I pick up a local newspaper to find more than a few articles and letters criticizing our own local police officers.

What everyone needs to realize is

that police officers are human beings just like us, living daily lives. They are mothers, fathers, sons and daughters, trying to provide for their families. They put their own lives on the line in order to keep other mothers, fathers, sons and daughters safe from drunk drivers, robbers, killers and any other threat that may hurt an innocent person.

I was proud to hear such a supporting response from our community when such a cruel incident happened within our own community, the shooting of Chris Kilcullen. It was a devastating loss within the police force, and so many people showed their support, and viewed him for what he really is, a hero.

What I wish for all of us is to view every police officer everyday like we do Chris Kilcullen. Let's continue to show our support to such brave people and not criticize their every decision and their every move, and appreciate their efforts to keep us safe.

Chelsea Stevens
Eugene

Viewpoint

Direct Democracy

A statement from Occupy Eugene

As the Occupy Eugene movement enters its second week it continues to represent an honest experiment with direct democracy. Like related occupations around the country and around the world, OE participants have taken it upon themselves to stand up against corporate greed, the unequal distribution of economic opportunity, and the lack of social and economic justice throughout our society. The rage that is now materializing in the worldwide occupations is part of a growing sentiment felt by many in America (e.g., a recent *Time* poll showed 86 percent of respondents believed that "Wall Street and lobbyists have too much influence in Washington," 79 percent believed that "the gap between the rich and the poor in the U.S. is too large," that the economic system is not fair and the game is being manipulated by the very wealthy, the so-called 1 percent).

As the OE movement has become more organized and has started settling into its new occupation area in Alton Baker Park, a few things are increasingly apparent: Democracy is messy and chaotic, yet beautiful and fulfilling. The process that OE, its committees and its subcommittees have operated under often forces procedure to take precedent over substance, especially as the movement has struggled to establish itself. The process has not been perfect and the organization has not been without incident, but as some of the OE members who also work in local government have noted, it is no less disorganized than the way local bureaucrats conduct themselves; but in our case, there is much less ego and partisanship.

Much of this process is being directed by young people barely 20 years old who are learning as they go, trying to work within the borders of consensus gathering and a horizontal structure that makes individual accountability impossible. As the OE movement has increased in size, committees are growing and helping take on the increasing workload that occupation members are trying to accomplish, including camp logistics such as food, medical and security as well as legal, outreach, event organization, communications to local media outlets, social media and in recent days the beginnings of an established liaison system to connect with other occupations around the state. Movements exist in both Salem and Portland with a statewide rally planned for this Saturday, Oct. 29, in Salem.

Some of the challenges faced by OE, and certainly by other occupations, are easily microcosms of what American society in general faces. One of these challenges is the general lack of experience with democratic institutions. Besides voting every couple of years, how often do most people participate in a democratic process on a regular basis? Most work places are hierarchical with direction and decision-making coming from the managers. Schools, too, mirror corporate systems of authority with students at the bottom possessing no power to make decisions.

The occupations have been challenging and engaging exercises in democracy and have shown that when people come together in an attempt to reach consensus, instead of looking for reasons to divide one another, each person's views can be expressed and the most good for the most people can be achieved. While many of us have work or school obligations that also require significant time commitments, we will hold steady doing the dirty business of democracy because we think this noble experiment deserves our attention and full devotion. If you are concerned with the issues facing this country, come down to the occupation and try out the role of citizen for a few hours. It is truly empowering.

This statement was drafted through consensus by the Occupy Eugene Communications Committee.



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