ASUO Elections 2000

911 Fails on Campus

Oregon State Public Interest Research Group (OSPIRG) Just Won't Quit

Process for Something
MISSION STATEMENT

The Oregon Commentator is an independent journal of opinion published at the University of Oregon for the campus community. Founded by a group of concerned student journalists Sept. 27, 1983, the Commentator has had a major impact in the “war of ideas” on campus, providing students with an alternative to the left-wing orthodoxy promoted by other student publications, professors and student groups. During its seventeen-year existence, it has enabled University students to hear both sides of issues. Our paper combines reporting with opinion, humor and feature articles. We have won national recognition for our commitment to journalistic excellence.

The Oregon Commentator is operated as a program of the Associated Students of the University of Oregon (ASUO) and is staffed solely by volunteer editors and writers. The paper is funded through student incidental fees, advertising revenue and private donations. We print a wide variety of material, but our main purpose is to show students that a political philosophy of conservatism, free thought and individual liberty is an intelligent way of looking at the world — contrary to what they might hear in classrooms and on campus. In general, editors of the Commentator share beliefs in the following:

• We believe that the University should be a forum for rational and informed debate — instead of the current climate in which ideological dogma, political correctness, fashion and mob mentality interfere with academic pursuit.

• We emphatically oppose totalitarianism and its apologists.

• We believe that it is important for the University community to view the world realistically, intelligently and, above all, rationally.

• We believe that any attempt to establish utopia is bound to meet with failure and, more often than not, disaster.

• We believe that while it would be foolish to praise or agree mindlessly with everything our nation does, it is both ungrateful and dishonest not to acknowledge the tremendous blessings and benefits we receive as Americans.

• We believe that free enterprise and economic growth, especially at the local level, provide the basis for a sound society.

• We believe that the University is an important battleground in the “war of ideas” and that the outcome of political battles of the future are, to a large degree, being determined on campuses today.

• We believe that a code of honor, integrity, pride and rationality are the fundamental characteristics for individual success.

• Socialism guarantees the right to work. However, we believe that the right not to work is fundamental to individual liberty. Apathy is a human right.
Through this door is the answer to the enigma of the ASUO Election process. Do you dare step through it? Do you care?

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Whom Unmerciful Disaster

Gabbe and Larson, off the ballot? Too good to be true, it seems. Under most circumstances, the Commentator would recommend that you avoid the ASUO ballot box like the plague. This time around, the fate of the ASUO may depend on your vote.

As of press time, C.J. Gabbe and Peter Larson are back on the ballot for the primary election, pending a formal hearing before the ASUO Constitution Court on Feb. 25.

This is bad. Bad.

Where the likelihood of the Gabbe/Larson juggernaut mustering so much as a second-place showing as mere write-in candidates seemed unlikely to say the least, their reinstatement to the Feb. 23 & 24 primary opens the door for their minions (albeit well-organized minions) to command a potentially persuasive victory for this malignant and deceitful campaign.

For those of you who are just joining us: Student Senator C.J. Gabbe and fellow ASUO-involved Greek Peter Larson hosted the Feb. 4 International Student Association Friday coffee hour in the Taylor Lounge of the EMU. Fair enough.

The catch is that Munger — er, sorry, Melissa Unger, sister of Bunger and “CJ & Peter” campaign manager, paid $40 for the refreshments — refreshments which were distributed to students along with buttons and posters urging students to vote for the “CJ & Peter” ticket.

Any University student with a little bit of UO history behind them (much less three and four years of ASUO experience like these two) should know that this violates Election Rule 2.4 (a), which states that no campaign may provide a “service, opportunity, or other thing of value” in order to influence the outcome of the election. Unlike a lot of the verbose and technical word play that makes up most of the ASUO’s legal troubles, this one really isn’t all that hard to understand and comply with, if you want to.

The Elections Board ruled in favor of the grievance filed by Senator Jennifer Greenough (one of the only two current Senators opting to make a go of it next year), a pleasant surprise, given the Elections Board’s dubious performance in the very recent past.

The ConCourt’s decision to issue a stay on the E-Board’s order should be construed by all students, politically conscious or not, as a message, loud and clear and not to be ignored. That message?

Get out there and vote.

Vote against C.J. Gabbe and Peter Larson.

Even if you hadn’t been planning on sitting down to Duckweb this week, you now have more of a reason than ever to make yourself heard.

Why?

C.J. Gabbe comes from the same corrupt, self-interested political faction that has dominated the ASUO Executive for time immemorial. The interests they represent have little to do with the collective interest of the student body and more to do with the propagation of OSPIRG, the Progressive party, and less prominent wastes of time (OSA and USSA, just to name a few).

No matter that the Progressive Slate is not officially active this year — even its leadership apparently concurs that the slate had become meaningless — the P-Slate lives on in shadow form, and C.J. Gabbe is its heir apparent.

Last year, the student body’s wise decision to elect Wylie and Mitra over the weak Progressive option of Dan Reid and Matt Swanson dealt a serious blow to the P-Slate’s vise grip on student government. Forseebly, we could be at a turning point in ASUO politics. Then again, maybe not. A vote for Gabbe/Larson would all but negate what has been a promising change in the political climate.

Gabbe, may we remind you, is the only candidate to have a grievance unrelated to the election still pending against him.

Gabbe’s ticket is the only one to egregiously break the election rules (unless you count the Breslow/Manger posters affixed to unsanctioned University bulletin boards).

Gabbe is the only candidate to neglect his elected duties (as Summer Senate President), refuse to own up for his actions and repay the money as common decency would dictate.

Gabbe is the only candidate to have allocated incidental fees to a group unaffiliated with the ASUO in any shape or form.

All available evidence seems to point to the obvious conclusion that he is not someone to be trusted, not someone to be voted for, and not someone worthy of filling the ASUO Executive next year.

Who should you vote for? Well, throw your vote behind Jay and Holly, for lack of a better option. Sort of like Netscape Navigator versus Microsoft Internet Explorer; neither option may be wholly appealing, but Jay and Holly are the only other ticket with any serious designs on winning, and that makes them the obvious choice.

The ConCourt has historically been the closest thing to a voice of reason that the ASUO can boast of, but with a by and large inexperienced court, this election cycle, it is of dire urgency that you use your votes to send a message back to them: this is not the kind of student government you want at this school.

Don’t be a minion.

Vote against dishonesty. Vote against corruption. Vote against C.J. Gabbe and Peter Larson.
Zero Tolerance

As of this moment, the Programs Finance Committee is not exactly the most popular allocating board in the ASUO.

Everyone from Wylie to the Drunk Bus to student groups you have never heard of nor ever will, is upset at the budget decreases to their own programs and others. The OREGON COMMENTATOR, on the other hand, would like to congratulate the PFC for meeting the zero percent benchmark it aimed for. To the groups upset at the fate of their budget hearings: deal with it.

Spencer “The Littlest Senator” Hamlin, told the Oregon Daily Emerald, “I think it screws over low-income students and their opportunity to serve on the Senate,” which is stupid because the $30 increase sought by the Senate wouldn’t affect the finances of any student enough to make a difference. (Besides, Spencer, when you get caught with your hand in the cookie jar, then kick and scream and refuse to give back what you took, don’t expect any favors.)

On the other hand, the Senate’s decision not to refund the Executive Coordinator position, cut by last year’s Exec, is a mistake. Had or would the position been available, student groups (including one which shall remain nameless) would have been able to obtain funding outside of the ASUO, something that would have ultimately saved everyone money.

The anarchist ethic of causing physical damage to outlet malls sure makes for good television news, and to be certain, no one will shed any tears over the corner Starbucks, but a glance around Eugene makes it abundantly clear that it hardly stops there. Indeed, leftist slogans printed on stickers can be found on public and commercial property without much effort; the University area is no exception.

To wit: Homemade stickers bearing the revolutionary cry of “Fuck the Emerald” surfaced on the UO campus last week, some slapped directly over the clear plastic fronts of the Emerald’s distribution boxes.

Judging by the discarded copies of the sticker prototypes (alongside prototype stickers for the Worker Rights Consortium) currently scattered about the EMU Student Media Center, here the short money is on Suite One. Several groups operating out of Suite One had checked out the key to the SMC in the days before the stickers began appearing around the place.

This kind of guerilla “criticism” deserves a good smack upside the head. Don’t get us wrong: the COMMENTATOR is no fan of the Emerald, but this kind of vandalism isn’t a very persuasive argument, if indeed it is meant to be an argument at all. Lower yourselves beneath their level and find out what a total lack of credibility is like.

Conventional Wisdom

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F*** the Emerald

Student directories have been sitting around the EMU for months now. Grab yours now — before no one else does.

Viggy “Supafreak” James’ Haiku Corner

WTO

John Zerzan is dangerous
Gabbe/Larson too.
FREE ADVERTISING?

BY BEN NAHORNEY

On Feb. 10, the Oregon Daily Emerald ran a front-page story entitled “Small bookstores feeling the squeeze.” The article was a jumbled mess concerning large franchises, online booksellers, textbooks and retail books, not necessarily in any particular order.

This story came out four days after the Oregon Commentator published an article entitled “www.beat-the-bookstore.com” that compared the cost of textbooks at the bookstore to the cost online.

Was this a case of Bookstore damage control or just coincidental timing? Either way, it shows that the Bookstore is starting to feel the pinch of online competition, while the unfocused Emerald article demonstrates the lack of a solid point.

The article likens the University Bookstore to the independently owned Mother Kali’s Books, describing them as “small, hometown bookstores.”

At annual sales of around $16 million, the Bookstore is far from being on the same plateau as Mother Kali’s, nor is it a “small” business. While both stores carry textbooks, Mother Kali’s features a wide array of retail books that are not easily found in large chains. The bookstore does not.

A walk through the Bookstore’s retail book selection shows the same homogeneous selections you would find at a Barnes & Noble or Borders. The Emerald article would have done better to stick to textbook sales rather than branch out and include retail books in the story. The topic of small, independent bookstores feeling the pinch from large chains is a story topic in and of itself and does not reflect the status of the textbook market.

When asked about the Emerald article, Bookstore General Manager Jim Williams said that he was out of town when the article was published. In discussing buying books online versus buying at the bookstore, he cited a study conducted by the campus bookstore at Arizona State University.

According to Williams, the study found that none of the online bookstores could beat the prices of a typical university bookstore. When presented with the Commentator’s findings, William stated that it was “contrary to the information we have.” According to Williams, the University of Oregon Bookstore is only one of 10 to 15 campus bookstores in the country to offer any sort of discount on textbooks to students. “If there was no bookstore, there would be chaos on campus,” said Williams.

The Emerald article goes on to discuss the company Barnes & Noble College Bookstores, Inc. and its large share of the textbook market. How this relates to local bookstores is unclear, considering the Barnes & Noble textbook division holds no share of the textbook market here at the University of Oregon. The textbook division is involved solely in distribution to college bookstores and does not sell directly to students.

The Emerald cites Bookstore Coursebook Manager Chris Standish saying that most students like buying their books at the Bookstore because they “don’t have to worry about shipping costs or waiting for weeks for their textbooks.” As stated in the Commentator article, shipping is often free and books usually arrive in one to five days, depending on the site (See Oregon Commentator Vol. VII, Issue VI for more details.)

In defense of the Emerald’s journalistic integrity and non-biased approach, they were able to get an interview with John Bates, the co-founder of BigWords.com (this company that placed number two in the Commentator’s review). Bates discusses how online companies are not making monopolies, but rather breaking them. However, the interview does not show up until close to the end of the article.

It is also interesting to note that the Emerald has run ads for both VarsityBooks.com and BigWords.com since the beginning of fall 1999.

The Bookstore stands to lose a fairly large chunk of revenue in the college textbook market, but don’t expect it to go out of business as a result. While textbooks make up 39 percent of the Bookstore’s revenue, the business has diversified into UO apparel, retail books, art supplies, computers, and many other items.

If the Bookstore wants to remain competitive, it will have to lower the prices of college textbooks. A PR boost from the Emerald will not change this fact.

For further information see:
Dear COMMENTATOR,

I want to thank you for once again proving that your publication lacks both journalistic integrity and newsworthy information. On page 22 of your Feb. 9 publication, you chose to make fun of my preference for the movie, “Dead Poets Society.” You say that I was “sounding [sic] off as incoherently as possible on [my] gladstone account about ‘Dead Poets Society’, [my] pick for the best film of all time” (actually in your quote you wrote Dead “Poet’s” Society, which is wrong. “Poets” does not have an apostrophe... great research guys!). Regardless of that little fact, there are two points that I wanted to get across.

First, the brilliant person who wrote that comment said that it was my pick for the best film of all time. HELLO... is anyone home? Why don’t you try reading my quote again. I said, “I think this is the best movie ever made [sic] by Williams”, [sic] not “the best film of all time.” Did you guys even bother reading my webpage? And besides, there are a million more ridiculous things about my page that you could have made fun of.

However, I think that we both know that the reason you made fun of me had nothing to do with my taste in movies, but with the fact that I am a former Emerald employee. How’s that for integrity?

Second, I wanted to remind you that if you decide to print your mission statement you should probably abide by it. In it you write “We [sic] believe that a code of honor, integrity, pride and rationality are the fundamental characteristics for individual success.” I wasn’t going to say anything about it, but last year you STOLE a picture off the Emerald website taken by yours truly. It was for some story about “tree huggers” saying goodbye to a tree the city was going to cut down. Don’t you think that it takes a whole lot of integrity and honor to steal a photo and break numerous copyright laws in the process?

Way to go, and keep up the great work.

Scott Barnett
Former Photo Editor
Oregon Daily Emerald

I do not give [sic] permission to print this letter unless it remains intact and unabridged.

Kudos to the OREGON COMMENTATOR for setting Associate Law Professor Robin Morris Collins straight. I too have not seen any concentration camps in, near or around the Eugene/Springfield area. Lastly, if you are going to plaster asses all over the spew pages, make ’em pretty ones.

Gil Burgess III
College of Business, Finance

You know, when we get mail like this, sometimes we start to wonder if not everyone at the UO is a mindless drone. You know, every once in awhile.

—Ed.

Send us stuff.

It gets lonely up here on the mezzanine level of the EMU. Send us some mail. Maybe we’ll print it; we might not even call you a jackass.

ocomment@darkwing.uoregon.edu
In the event of an emergency people generally know exactly what to do. The routine has been ingrained into our brains since we were little — dial 911. But when dialing from a phone on the University of Oregon campus, this is not always the best way to get a response to an emergency. On some occasions it is difficult to pinpoint the origin of an emergency call.

The problem lies in the custom phone system used by the University. When attempting to find the source of a 911 call from a campus phone using Enhanced 911, a line-tracing feature available in the Eugene/Springfield area, the information returned shows the location as the bottom of Oregon Hall — the location of the phone system. Oregon Hall turns up no matter what the call’s origin.

Norm Ziolkowski, captain of the fire and EMS station at 1695 Agate Street, doesn’t think that this is a problem. “We usually don’t use the Enhanced 911 feature unless a person hangs up the phone,” said Ziolkowski. “We try to keep a person with an emergency on the line and get specific directions to their location. At the same time we’re relaying that information to the officers en route.”

But there are possible cases where a person may not be able to relay their location. Danielle Carter is a junior majoring in Journalism. In some cases, such as fires, she thinks that “people aren’t going to be thinking about staying on the phone” if they are within harms reach. In some situations such as cardiac arrest and various forms of assault, an emergency call could easily be interrupted. Carter worries about cases such as rape, where a phone could be easily disconnected. “Having been in the dorms, I think that rape situations are a serious issue,” Carter says.

While Ziolkowski claims that there is not a problem...
responding to emergencies, the Associate Director of Oregon Public Safety (OPS), Tom Hicks, said otherwise. “The paramedics have often driven up and down the street looking for a campus address.” The first seven minutes are the most critical time frame as far as responding to medical and fire emergencies, according to Ziolkowski.

Hicks does offer one solution to the current problem with 911: the campus emergency line. While it doesn’t come to mind as quickly as 911, the number for the campus emergency line is 6-6666.

According to Hicks, by dialing this number OPS will know the exact location of the phone call. He also mentions that OPS officers often know the campus better than off-campus response teams. OPS can often arrive on the scene quicker, given their location on campus.

David Barta, director of Telecommunications Services here at the University, said that the reason that Enhanced 911 does not work for university phone lines is because of the Point Branch Exchange (PBX) switching system used by the University.

The purpose of the PBX system is to keep telecommunication costs down.

“There are around 7,000 phone lines on campus,” said Barta. With the PBX system, the University only has to pay for 500 lines. The rest are maintained by the PBX system. “Under these circumstances we pay about $60 a month per line for 500 lines. If was didn’t have the system, it’d be around $20 to $30 per line for 7,000 lines.”

The University’s PBX system could feasibly be hooked up to the Enhanced 911 system. A server that contains a database of all campus phone numbers and the locations of those phones could be set up and connected to the PBX system. According to Barta, there are two main reasons the University has not set up Enhanced 911 services for the campus area—cost and maintenance. In order to install such a system, the University would have to contract US West, at a cost of about $25,000 a year, to use one of their systems. The other option would be to buy a system for anywhere from $50,000 to $100,000.

The cost of maintaining the database is separate in either case. Barta stressed the fact that phone numbers are frequently added, deleted and moved around campus.

Given such circumstances the data-

### When Attempting to Find the Source of a 911 Call from a Campus Phone

The information returned shows the location as Oregon Hall, no matter where the call originates on campus.

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Ben Nahorney, a senior majoring in Journalism, is a staff writer for the Oregon Commentator
The debate surrounding OSPIRG’s role on the UO campus may have died down, but it hasn’t stopped the organization from violating the ASUO Constitution.

by William Beutler

H

ow much does it take to hit a bull’s eye enough times, and the target just isn’t much use anymore; the easiest target to hit is always the biggest. At the University of Oregon, perhaps the most frequent sitting duck (so to speak) is the Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group, known to most students as OSPIRG.

While the organization lost funding in 1998 and a massive controversy erupted when an attempt was made to refund the group during the winter term of 1999, the question of OSPIRG’s role on campus has not been at forefront of discussion this year to date.

However, trouble may be afoot for OSPIRG once again. OSPIRG is unique from all other student groups in that instead of submitting a line item budget to the ASUO Programs Finance Committee (the PFC,) which allocates $2 million worth of incidental fees to over 90 student groups, it goes to the ballot every two years to seek the popular support of the student body. In off years, their budget is submitted to the PFC for approval, and each year that this has happened, the organization has been rubber stamped on the good faith of the student vote.

One of the chief criticisms in 1998 was that the money allocated to OSPIRG on a biannual basis was unaccountable to students; the lump sum subsidy was sent directly to Portland and little, if any effort was made to demonstrate if and how that money returned to the campus where it originated.

This argument was persuasive enough to that year’s voting populace to deny the group funding for the first time in 27 years. The next year, when the unsubsidized Committee to Re-Establish OSPIRG was founded in its wake, the state group that is supported by the student money issued an estimated budget to explain where the money went to. The statewide budget, divided into nine areas (see the graphic on the page 11), includes one particularly questionable item.

According to OSPIRG itself, three cents out of every incidental fee dollar is put toward fundraising.

According to Senate Rule 9.13(b)(B), “Incidental fees shall not be allocated for ... Fundraising, the purpose of which is to generate funds for a purpose that could not otherwise be funded by incidental fees.” Though OSPIRG’s money is not allocated by the Senate, in light of current rules, this is a problem.

The Clark Document is the governing charter that recognizes student governments such as our own to collect incidental fees from enrolled students. OSU, Portland State, and all other public universities in the state of Oregon finance student governments like our own under the power of the Clark Document, though none so large as the ASUO.

This year, the Oregon State Board of Higher Education modified the Clark Document to require student ballot measures to adhere to the same standards that all other ASUO programs must follow. Technically, until this year, a loophole existed whereby OSPIRG would be allowed to allocate funds in such a manner that no other group (providing they did not seek their primary funding by the popular vote) would be.

In years past, this had not been an issue. According to ASUO President Wylie Chen, “The Clark Document was just changed to bind all ballot measures to the Green Tape Notebook, but prior to this year the ballot measures were not bound by ASUO rules.”

For the purposes of this article, several attempts were made to conduct an in-person interview first with Chapter Chair Erin Pursell and then with (state) Board Chair Merriah Fairchild; the COMMENTATOR was eventually successful in obtaining a brief e-mail interview with Ms. Fairchild.

When presented with this incongruity, Fairchild dismissed the notion that student fees were being put toward fundraising. “A. Fundraising is not Fee money,” she wrote. “B. The fundraising that we do do [sic] starts and ends with the Environmental Federation of Oregon, the [sic] money you see here is from the EFO for the EFO, it just happens to be part of the student budget.”

Regardless of whether the use of the fee was in conflict with the Constitution prior to this year, the PIRG’s leadership seems confused as to the use of the fee. Fairchild asserts that no incidental fee money is put toward the organization’s budget, yet the graph to the
right appears to contradict her statement. Indeed, on OSPIRG’s web site, the sentence “How the Approximate $2.88 per student per term of the UO Incidental Fee that goes to OSPIRG is spent, by program area” precedes the explanatory pie chart. Either the information provided to the students of the University is erroneous, or Fairchild’s statement is; either way, OSPIRG directly contradicts itself.

This information can be obtained at: http://gladstone.uoregon.edu/~ospirg/qanda.htm

Additionally, the Environmental Federation of Oregon Fairchild mentioned, a coalition of 28 Oregon environmental groups that raises money for “Oregon’s leading environmental groups,” requires that for a member organization to receive fundraised benefits, they must first put money into the EFO; that could only have been Fee money.

While this has yet to come up, “the following year it may be an issue,” Chen said. Fairchild on the other hand did not address the issue at all, and Chen indicated that he had not heard of it from OSPIRG.

The second and more pressing issue is the constitutionality of OSPIRG’s practice of going to the ballot every two years. Section C of the Clark Document states: “Multiple-year funding commitments can only be approved for students provided by agencies or programs external to (not managed by) the EMU, ASUO and Athletic Department or for capital projects.” The reason for this is simple; the three aforementioned administrative bodies are the only three areas which receive incidental fee dollars.

Student fees go to the Athletic Dept. to subsidize student seating at sporting events, money is allocated to the EMU for the use of all students, and as previously stated, the ASUO funds all manner of student groups that are generally open to all who pay the fee.

The problem is that OSPIRG, while not receiving its funding in the traditional method that other groups do, is no less under the jurisdiction of the ASUO, and for them to be receiving multiple year funding commitments is in violation of the Clark Document — a violation not just of ASUO regulations, but of state law.

The first year of OSPIRG’s funding supposedly complies with the law; for the group to receive its funding for a second consecutive year, it would not.

“Everything was approved and nothing has actually been broken as of this year,” Chen said, “because it has only been a year of funding.” However, this issue was overlooked by last year’s Constitution Court when the measure went to the ballot. The ASUO Executive also passed along the measure, though Geneva Wortman and Morgan Cowling would have been less likely to hold up the measure on constitutional grounds; their legacy stand as having called a quasi-legal special election which could have refunded the group. Regardless, the measure placed on the ballot during the regular elections of 1999 still did not comply with the law.

Conceivably, the ASUO as a governmental body would face losing its privilege to collect student fees were OSPIRG to receive a second year of funding in this manner.

To defend against this possibility, at the February 17 Student Senate meeting, the Senate voted to move the second year of OSPIRG’s budget into the jurisdiction of the PFC, alongside the rest of the ASUO programs. The two Senators who voted against this move were Shantell Rice and Emily Owens Sedgwick, Chair and Vice-Chair of the PFC, respectively.

This highly unusual move solves the problem for the time being, though it does not address the fact that the money was allocated incorrectly to begin with.

Now that OSPIRG is, at least for the time being, subject to the the PFC, the possibility exists that it could be required, like all other groups, to submit a line item budget and obtain its money through the ASUO Comptroller’s office via purchase orders. This is not what happened. Instead, the Senate approved the budget as is, and the issue is more or less at rest.

The year following, however, the group must comply with the Clark Document, now that this is out in the open. “They would have to, from now on,” stated Chen.

When asked what the implications of going to the ballot yearly would be, Fairchild would only say “I don’t know.”

The primary debate has never centered around OSPIRG’s purported goals — improvement of the environment, advocacy of consumer rights, etc. — but rather around the legitimacy of their organization.

These recent developments only reinforce the longstanding arguments against the PIRG, and yet the OSPIRG continues to feign indifference to the rules that everyone else must abide by.
FIGHT FOR YOUR LEFT-HANDED RIGHTS

Paid for by Daniel Atkinson

lefty.web.com
It is customary that at the dawn of a new century people get this peculiar need for new priorities, responses to new challenges, renewed commitments and improvements of all sorts. What most of these end up being is nothing more than silly plans in response to a false dramatic atmosphere.

In that tradition, the University of Oregon initiated in October 1997 the Process for Change (PfC). According to John Moseley, university provost and head of the PfC operation, PfC is “a way that UO, students, faculty, staff, students have tried to look into the future and see what changes the University can make to improve education.” A good idea, but the problem is that it is just a very good idea (at least up until now.) The truth of the matter is that the situation in education is not falsely dramatic — it is dramatic, but the PfC treats it as if it were falsely so.
On Jan. 7, 1998 university president Dave Frohnmayer tried to convey the seriousness of the situation. As he talked about a projected $5 million shortfall for 1999, he also asked, “Would you send your child to the University of Oregon? If your answer is not unequivocally, immediately and enthusiastically ‘Yes!’ then we must do better.”

Since then many things changed. There was a change in the distribution of money among the Oregon universities that greatly benefited the UO. There was (and is) the continuance of economic growth which made the donations roll in, and finally a recent increase of spending by the legislature for higher education of $100 million. As it is to be expected, good times retard asking the hard questions. Nevertheless, the changes that are about to happen in higher education are more than dramatic.

There are two main causes of change. One is that by most projections the number of students in the future will decline. Thus, in the future universities will be in tougher competition with each other.

The other change is that a bachelor’s degree will not pay as highly as it used to. As a result, students as customers of the universities will be more cost-conscious. Perhaps this is why we have an increase in the number of in-state students and a decrease in the number of out-of-state students at the UO.

Of course, the people of PfC concern themselves, neither directly nor indirectly with such questions. Any improvement in education that they “try” to achieve would make the University’s product better, but the bitter truth is that the changes proposed in PfC will at best improve the quality of the education only marginally. PfC, after all these years, still looks like a huge unorganized brainstorm of wishes, ideas, plans, and sheer contradictions. Let me give you some examples. The reform neophytes of PfC want to simultaneously increase the research grants that the faculty gets, and increase the presence of the faculty in classes and their involvement with students.

The problem is that increasing the number of research grants means increasing the number of faculty who receive them. That means the faculty must spend a considerable amount of time in order to receive the grants and use them.

Thomas Dyke, vice-provost for research, said that the difficulty with research is that “you have to write proposals, you have to run a laboratory, or run a research group. It takes a lot of time.” Karen Sprague, biology professor and leader of the PfC task force for undergraduate education, said, “It’s tough.”

So, how is this supposed to occur at the same time involvement with students is increasing? Thomas Dyke sees “synergies.” For instance, students could be involved in the research too. But how many? Could it be enough so as to offset the loss in involvement of faculty with students in regular settings? No way.

Even if there could be such an accommodation, it does not take into account what university research really is. Most of university research, not just here but nationwide, is at best a rearrangement of existing knowledge with minor and insignificant modifications.

Even if students had the opportunity to participate in that kind of research would they benefit more from it than traditional ways of teaching? Again, no.

Let us address the Pathways. “A pathway is a coordinated collection of courses designed to meet group requirements in a coherent way and provide personal contact between beginning students and faculty members.”

In some respects Pathways is one of those ideas that benefits students. First of all, it is a very efficient way of meeting the general education requirements. Secondly, it brings faculty and new students closer together. Freshmen get a better first experience with the University and hopefully increasing retention.

As of now, it seems that both faculty and students who participate in Pathways are satisfied. Another positive characteristic of Pathways is that it will always remain as an option for students. On the negative side, it does cost more for the University. Even worse is that it fails to accomplish its main mission, which includes improving the quality, not just the organization, of undergraduate education.

A report mentioned over and over again by the Boyer commission in the initial stages of PfC found that research universities like ours are “shortchanging undergraduates” because the are “lacking a coherent body of knowledge” and barely know “how to think logically, write clearly, or speak coherently.”

Even though, a student who participates in the Pathways will end up having more knowledge of a subject plus some skills (i.e. how to organize a portfolio), it is extremely doubtful that at the end he will have significantly improved his abilities to “think logically, write clearly, or speak coherently.” Just because students take a lot of courses all around the same sub-

THE PROCESS FOR CHANGE CONTAINS MANY GOOD IDEAS. THE PROBLEM WITH THE PfC IS THAT IT FAILS TO MAKE THE DISTINCTION BETWEEN GOOD IDEAS AND GOOD DECISIONS.
ject doesn’t mean that they gain a coherent body of knowledge.

PfC contains many good ideas. The problem with PfC is that it fails to make the distinction between good ideas and good decisions. Many of the good ideas, as stated before, contradict each other. In the end, the costs are greater than the benefits.

I suppose that it is very encouraging to think that we are all doing fine and dandy, that the only thing we need are a few minor changes and that we do not have to do anything but create a sense of community and a sense of certifiable vigilance.

Of course, some people tried to make the best of the matter. Thus, the University Senate, the professors club, thought that at the dawn of the new century the University should make the following changes: “remove competitive basis for internal funding,” “Free up faculty to do what they do best,” “Institute tuition breaks for children of faculty and stuff,” and finally, “Reduce the cost of athletic events to faculty.”

Right on, gentlemen. Those kinds of reforms are probably the only ones PfC people would like to consider. Some of the faculty, who participated in the PfC and wanted to remain anonymous, expressed the feeling that PfC is a public relations operation for internal and external use. It gives the impression to students, faculty and stuff that they participate in the important decisions, and to the greater public the idea that UO really prepares students for the challenges of a new era. Some on the other hand are really excited about PfC. When I talked to Thomas Dyke and Karen Sprague both seemed animated about its prospects.

Whatever the true motives behind the PfC, a number of things remain clear. Judging from the history of PfC, there is no clarity of purpose nor of execution. To that, we can add something even more distressing. Hundreds of days were spent, dozens of issues raised, solutions proposed, implementation teams, task forces, more than 200 faculty, staff, administrators and students involved — one little problem: no one ever asked the hard questions.

Napoleon Linardatos, a senior majoring in Economics, is a staff writer for the Oregon Commentator

They read* the Oregon Commentator…

Muhammad Ali
Pat Buchanan
Carlton Banks
(Alphonso Ribeiro)

Do you?

*Or rather, they have yet to send back the issues we sent them.

FREE MINDS, FREE MARKETS, FREE BOOZE. SINCE 1983.
To assess this year’s candidates, the Commentator employed a battery of critical analyses and acid tests, not to mention several cases of Hamms. Great pains were taken to ensure total objectivity in putting together our...

2000 ASUO Executive Endorsements

The Players:

• All these people are idiots
• Daniel Atkinson
• Scott Austin
• Jay Breslow / Holly Magnier
• Autumn DePoe/Caitlin Upshaw
• C.J. Gabbe / Peter Larson
• Joel Rueber

How we arrived at our conclusions:

I. The Dane Method

First, the Oregon Commentator editorial board took a pack of Great Danes and the Dane Himself, UO Ducks backup (read: only when all other reserves have already fouled out) center Chris Christofferson over to South Eugene High and assigned each a candidate name. The order in which each candidate/beast located the small pyramid of Hamms in the middle of the parking lot was carefully recorded and thoughtfully considered. Scott Austin, a six-year old female, scored quite well, while Joel Rueber, a 7’2” former water polo star, ranked a distant seventh.

[Note to SETA: We have signed affidavits from each of the canines stating that they were not harmed or exploited in any way. Mr. Christofferson, however, lost his on the way to class.]

II. The Acid Test

Several sheets of blotter acid were distributed free of charge to freshmen in the Bean Complex by a twentysomething Eugene resident with dreadlocks, Birkenstocks, and a suspicious odor. Each square bore the face of an individual Exec ticket (hey, at least the PFC granted us our requested budget increase). That evening, we made a series of calls around the dorms to assess the damage. Gabbe/Larson, perhaps unexpectedly, finished head and shoulders above the rest, causing an unprecedented number of psychotic breakdowns. DePoe/Upshaw, by contrast, could be traced to only a handful of unpleasant side effects, and most ended up staring endlessly at the Knight Law Building until OPS moved them along.

[Editorial intrusion: Under no circumstances should you write in C.J. and Peter. How about we not flirt with disaster and say we did.]

Need some help?

Due to the unprecedented number of open slots, you will be forced to write in at least a handful of candidates on the ballot. Here are a few the OC recommends:

• Bob Dornan
• Waweru Gatimu
• Boognish
• Lyndon LaRouche
• Viggy “Supafreak” James
• Dave Frohnmayer
• P.J. O’Rourke
• Rasheed Wallace
• Bobby Lee
• Jason George
• Alan Greenspan
• Payne Stewart
• Amy Goldhammer

[Editorial intrusion: Need some help?]
I don’t vote. There are people out there that’ll tell you that if you don’t vote then you have no reason to complain. If you vote then you have no reason to complain. You’re the one who elected these morons into office, you’re the one who helped screw everything up so you have no reason to complain. You made this mess, not me.”
—George Carlin

So are you all geared up for the upcoming ASUO Elections? Are you giddy with a sense of eagerness that in a few short days you’ll be able to rush to the polls and “exercise your voice in campus politics?” Or are you instead like 96 percent of your peers, too busy sucking on the smoky end of a murky Rainbow Brite bong to concern yourself with anything “political,” let alone more pressing matters like laundry and defection?

Figures. You can stop reading this now. But if you think there’s any chance that you might actually lower yourself to democratic participation, keep reading.

Currently there is a link in ASUO’s online voter’s guide titled “What Elections?”

There are only four people on this campus that have any reason to care about the upcoming Executive primaries; their names are CJ, Peter, Jay and Holly. And do you really think they’re kept awake at night by such issues as diversity or lighting on campus or whatever else they’ve printed on the little neon flyers their Greek minions have wallpapered the campus with?

Sorry to be the bringer of bad news, but they all have their eyes on that nifty $400 per month stipend, and are only interested in what this all might look like on a future resume. Just like all the big boys and girls out in real politics, they couldn’t care less about you or your concerns. Once elected, the only thing they’ll focus on is avoiding anything that might cause them to lose this future reference.

Buzzwords like “diversity,” and “tuition-freeze” will flee from their swelling heads faster than Andy Dick from a car accident.

Don’t believe it? Besides occasionally getting their names mentioned in Emerald articles titled “ASUO Exec. Praises Campus Blood Drive,” can you think of anything the last year’s Executive did to contribute anything to this campus besides insipid headlines and costly amphitheaters? Can you conjure anything Wylie and Mitra have actually accomplished this year besides getting their pictures taken with Johnny Kitzhaber? Didn’t think so.

When people who actually care about a campus issue are elected to the executive office, their efforts are quickly reduced to a Scott Austin wet dream. Take last year’s epic Wortman/Cowling/OSPIRG debacle. For those of you just joining us, the last year’s Executive made headlines with their disreputable and unconstitutional special election, engineered solely for the purpose of OSPIRG’s refunding.

Perhaps it is for the best the ASUO now tends to concern itself with figuring out the hidden words in Jumble than things like “relevant issues,” “student empowerment,” or “making any discernable effort to earn their salaries.”

This year’s execs and those after them have learned and will learn respectively from the mistakes of Geneva and Morgan. It’s best to lay low during your presidential stint and avoid interacting with your constituency at all costs. The new mantra of the ASUO Kremlin is: If you want to keep getting that stipend, you’ve got to hide in Suite Four like a groundhog, only popping your head out once a term for more Doritos. And if anyone asks your opinion on any relevant issue, run away real fast.

Will the 2000-01 administration be any different? Will Jay, if elected, magically “improve diversity on campus” or “build school spirit by finally convincing Dave Matthews Band to play a show in the amphitheater”? Will C.J., after entering office keep giving you free coffee and donuts? Of course not. Anyone capable of coughing up positive change on this campus knows better than to involve themselves with something as tumultuous, tedious and soul crushing as campus politics. They are well aware of the lethargy and laziness that hangs over every single desk in Suite Four like a transparent...
III. The Hat Method

Some credence was given to each candidate’s background in the ASUO, previous experience, record of conduct, and position on student issues. However, in the interests of meeting the deadline, the best way to adjudicate these factors was to pull the candidates’ names out of a hat. Breslow/Manger clearly prevailed, since their ticket was the first to be pulled from the PepsiOne promotional baseball cap. Mr. Atkinson was disqualified on account of the editorial board’s neglect to write his name down on a piece of paper and include it in the first place. Mr. Atkinson has no one to blame but himself.

IV. THE DECISION

After much deliberation, Scott Austin was the unanimous choice of the editorial board for the ASUO Executive. While he has his notoriety among certain circles in the ASUO, there are a couple of solid reasons to vote for him. For one, it’s a safe bet that he would actually dismantle student government, something that should have been done a long time ago. Second, as the picture at right demonstrates, despite being a self-proclaimed born-again Christian and social conservative, Austin clearly has a sense of humor and is secure in his own sexuality. For these reasons and more, the OREGON COMMENTATOR is confident that Scott Austin has the qualities and characteristics necessary to deserve your vote for the ASUO Executive.

Contrary to popular belief, there are other candidates running this election cycle, not to mention there are ballot measures. In boldface italic are the candidates the OREGON COMMENTATOR thinks you should vote for. And we’re not just being antagonistic.

ASUO PROGRAMS
FINANCE SENATORS

Senate Seat 1:
One-year term
Jackie “Lynn” Ray
Write-in

Senate Seat 2:
Two-year term
Mary “John” Madden
Write-in

Senate Seat 3:
One-year term
Marie Brink
Aaron “Insect Sex” Weck
Write-in

ATHLETIC DEPARTMENT
FINANCE SENATORS

Senate Seat 7:
One-year term
Kate “Take me off your list” Kranzush
Jeff “I got a 3.29 in high school” Oliver
Write-in

Senate Seat 8:
Two-year term
Jennifer Greenough
Write-in

Senate Seat 9:
One-year term
William Beutler
Write-in

EMU BOARD
FINANCE SENATORS

Senate Seat 4:
One-year term
Ian Clayman
Erin “I’ll talk” Pursell
A.J. Swoboda
Skye “Pie” Tenney
Write-in

Senate Seat 5:
Two-year term
Kristin V. Dean
Ted “Kennedy” Ehler
Randy “Chappaquiddick” Newnham
Write-in

ACADEMIC
SENATORS

Senate Seat 10: (Undeclared majors)
Two-year term
“Jessica Burmaster”
Write-in

Senate Seat 11: (Undeclared majors)
One-year term
Eric J. Bailey
Ray “Zoot” Suit
Write-in

Senate Seat 12: (AAA/Interdisciplinary majors)
Two-year term
Write “Insert Amy Goldhammer here” in

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE
Senate Seat 13: (A&L/Journalism majors)

One-year term
Serene “Happy Happy” Joy Khader
Write-in

Senate Seat 14: (Social Science majors)

Two-year term
Jesse “I am not a moron” Harding
Katie “I’m attracted to morons” Howard
Write-in

Senate Seat 15: (Social Science majors)

One-year term
Rebecca Cambreleng
Jeffrey “I Can’t” Read
Sean “MP” VanGordon
Write-in

Senate Seat 16: (Science majors)

Two-year term
Tex “Ranger” Arnold
Etopi “Utopia” Fanta
Write-in

Senate Seat 18: (Graduate/Law students)

Two-year term
Peter “O. is for Obsequious” Watts
Write-in

Building Fee Committee

Two-year term
Arlie “Guthrie” Adkins
Write-in

ASUO Programs Finance Committee, At-Large

Two-year term
Write “Insert Bobby Lee here” in

One-year term
Willie Thompson
Write-in

EMU Board, At-Large

Two-year term
(vote for two)
Eric “Communist” Banister
Jessica L. “Camino” Richelderfer
Christa “Cucina!” Shively
Write-in
Write-in

One-year term
Nicklaus “Presto!” Affolter
Write-in

ASUO MISCELLANEOUS BOARDS

Associated Students Presidential Advisory Council (ASPAC)

Two-year term
Daniel Paul “Right-Handed” Adkisson
Amanda Langston
Erin “Mr. T” Rowland
Write-in

Student Recreation and Fitness Advisory Board

Two-year terms
(vote for two)
Kirista “I can’t lose” Trask
Write-in
Write-in
Write-in

BALLOT MEASURES

As of press time, the whole mess had yet to clear up. For lack of better information, you may as well just vote them all down; it’ll probably save you money in the long run.

All ballot measures
Yes
No

OC Disclaimer:
The Oregon Commentator intends no harm to your respective campaigns (except for you, C.J.). The good news is, if you are not elected, you probably won’t have to face ridicule again.

Brandon Hartley, a junior majoring in English, is an Associate Editor for the Oregon Commentator
Perhaps more pernicious than the omnipresent construction signs I wrote about last time are those relentless admonitions to vote in the upcoming ASUO elections. The houses surrounding campus are virtually wallpapered with vacuous slogans: “Vote CJ and Peter!”; “Vote Jay and Holly!”; “Vote Who Gives and A Shit?”

Anyone who has been at this school for a year or more has already come to the realization that student government cannot possibly do anything sufficiently valuable for the student to justify spending time deciding for whom one should vote. It becomes a thorn in one’s side to have those meaningless messages reinforcing themselves in a mind in which valuable information is already crowding for room.

The only candidate who might conceivably address this problem would be a joke candidate, one whose very campaign is a statement about the futility of politics. Alas, this is also futile because the vast majority of voters is the minority of the student body that isn’t fed up with the charade, the herd of dunderheads that will approach the polls and vote en masse for the name that has gotten the most exposure.

The candidate with the most poster money and the best regurgitation of last year’s winning claptrap will inherit the office, while the numerous joke candidates will receive fragmentary portions of the total vote, according to the cuteness of their jokes and how many of their friends they convinced to vote for them.

The majority of students, while they might be amused or even intrigued by a few of the runners, will stay away from the polls knowing that no candidate with any merit has a chance.

I have a solution to the problem; there is someone to vote for. Everyone who understands that there is usually every reason to avoid the polls should vote for Dan Atkinson of the Sinister Students United for Left-Handed Rights. I know he is the one for the job because he is the one with balls. Perhaps we need a little history here.

In December 1998, I didn’t know Dan or anyone else at the COMMENTATOR. I guess I recognized that the magazine had some intriguing ideas and a few hearty laughs. I felt the same way about the Insurgent. Really, I did.

But at Christmastime that year a life-changing event befell me: my mother bought me a copy of Our Times: An Illustrated History of the 20th Century. I devoured that book and came to know a lot of facts about the villainy that has shaped our world which, at the time, horrified me with their newness.

I never knew before that Che Guevera’s death was orchestrated by an arm of our government as he was attempting to liberate the oppressed people of Bolivia, and that his is the visage celebrated on all those Rage Against the Machine tapestries. I never knew that that same arm of our government replaced a democratically elected government in Chile with a quasi-fascist dictator and continued to support him as he killed thousands of his countrymen and some of ours. Or that Nazi war criminals went to work for, and were shielded from prosecution by, that selfsame arm of our government after the World War II.

Certainly, these assertions and the many factors that compose them are all arguable, but at the time they struck me like stark realities and corroded my very strong belief in America and democracy. I guess I went sort of insane.

I was also a little pissed about the media’s insufficiently critical coverage of the bombing in Iraq, so I approached the Insurgent to congratulate them for being dissident. I was trying to...
When I cried foul, Dan wrote me in an e-mail that I should get in touch when I grew some balls. When I grew some balls?! Who didn’t have balls enough to print my first letter?

When I cried foul, Dan wrote me in an e-mail that I should get in touch when I grew some balls. When I grew some balls?! Who didn’t have balls enough to print my first letter?

Not much later I was offered the privilege of being the guy who writes the column in the back of the magazine, as “a counterpoint to the magazine’s content and editorial position.” Well, okay, I’ll go out on a limb to save face. And aside from a sabotaged photo in the Back to the Booze issue, Dan has done great things as Managing Editor for my column.

There you have it: Dan Atkinson single-handedly rescued my sanity by forcing me to have a sense of humor. That’s balls. That’s what this campus can use. It’s all a pretty cute joke, don’t you think?

For a full copy of the above letter, visit http://gladstone.uoregon.edu/~broberts/letter.html, fruity.
The court has contended that the measure I offered was poorly written and was done so with consultation from that very same justice who so vehemently criticized it.
—Sen. Spencer “By the rules” Hamlin, in response to the ConCourt’s decision to deny his factually incorrect and logically deficient ballot measure. The irony is murderous.

Governments may be bad at other things, but they are really good at collecting taxes.
—Professor Cheyney Ryan, in Philosophy 309. Hold on just one second — that’s the only thing governments are any good at.

Was it sexist and racist for us to bomb Pearl Harbor?
—Actual question asked in Professor Linda Schafer’s Women in Politics class. If you want proof that you’re currently attending a mediocre university, look no further.

Don’t talk in my class, dear... How did you graduate from high school?
—Linda Schafer, in response. Excelsior!

Anti-gun folks sit at home and commiserate the NRA and gun lobbyists power. They’ve got the Constitution. They’re too big and powerful. Wasn’t that the lament of the day when slavery was legal in America?
—Frank Schramm, opining in the January Elixir. Apart from the fact that he is utterly, uncontestably wrong, he may yet be on to something. If the solution to the first societal ill was to free the slaves, can free guns be far behind? To arms!
**ON BOOTY CALL**

We can’t be having oral sex orgies in stairwells of public schools. I think everybody in America would agree with that, I hope?
—Fox News opinion man and former Portland television news anchor Bill O’Reilly, on — oh hell, does it really matter?

It’s difficult, quite frankly, to remember the women that said no.
—Hugh Hefner, still going after all these years. This is a man who has seen his fair share of high school orgies.

**ON WE DISAGREE**

It seems ridiculous and not in the University’s best interests to penalize candidates for “attempting to influence the outcome of an election.”
—Student James Pippin, in a letter to the Oregon Daily Emerald. He’s right you know; expecting politicians to follow the rules is totally absurd. Our only question is, what kind of nonsensical logic led you to such a wrongheaded conclusion?

Admittedly, I don’t understand the specifics of elections regulations.
—James Pippin, same letter, more or less answering our question. We’ve got it all straightened out now, thanks. That explains everything.

**ON MUNGING**

Obviously we were there to promote our campaign. But we weren’t there to promote the outcome.
—Melissa “Munger” Unger, in the Feb. 9 Oregon Daily Emerald, on the true purpose of the Gabbe/Larson Executive campaign. Idiot.

**ON YOU EARNED IT**

This sucks, man.
—Disgraced ASUO Executive candidate C.J. Gabbe, on the circumstances surrounding his initial removal from the ballot. Idiot.
C.J. Gabbe, 1991

(Coffee stunts your growth.)

Brought to you by Students for Anyone Else for ASUO Exec.