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BACK TO THE BOOZE

REGGON COMMENTATOR



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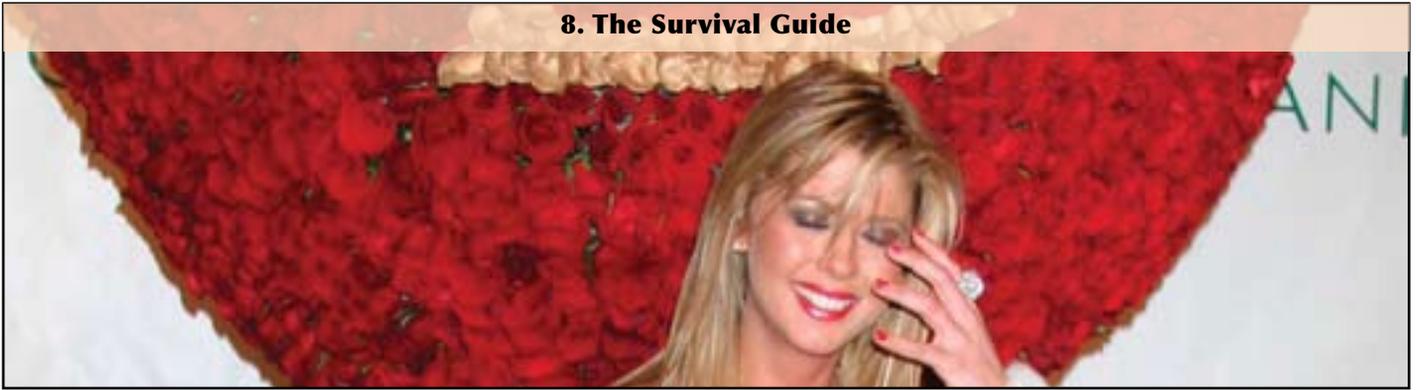
The OREGON COMMENTATOR is an independent journal of opinion published at the University of Oregon for the campus community. Founded by a group of concerned student journalists Sept. 27 1983, the COMMENTATOR has had a major impact in the “war of ideas” on campus, providing students with an alternative to the left-wing orthodoxy promoted by other student publications, professors and student groups. During its twenty-two 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.

Back to the Booze 2005

8. The Survival Guide



12. Bryan Roberts drinks, talks to himself



16. Tyler Graf names the 10 worst Americans



18. Olly Ruff says goodbye, reminiscing on all the times someone made fun of his accent



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COMMENTATOR

Back to the Booze

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Wrecked nipple.

We Have This Device...

A lot of people wonder why we title our first issue of every school year 'Back to the Booze.' Is the COMMENTATOR trying to promote alcoholism? Are we lampooning the frivolities of America's higher education system? Or is it simply a thinly-veiled swipe at the Daily Emerald's tired 'Back to the Books' issue? The answer, of course, is all of the above.

For many of us, college life isn't about listening to professors wax pompously on the evils of modern society, nor is it a backdrop upon which to mindlessly protest for the latest progressive cause célèbre. Instead, we view it as a time to develop real world-applicable skills and, of course, have a wicked good time.

College is about acquiring the tools which will one day serve you in your quest for a high-paying job, for connections to a vibrant social network, for that mansion on the hill, for that quality blow on that stripper's bosom—for whatever it is, really, you deem valuable after careful consideration, regardless of what governments or other parasitical imposing influences have to say about it. It's true enough that you're here to learn. It's also true that if your experience is a successful one, you will derive a significant portion of that learning from sources outside the classroom and your professors' syllabi:

from socializing with friends, from debating politics over drinks, from flipping through pages of the OREGON COMMENTATOR.

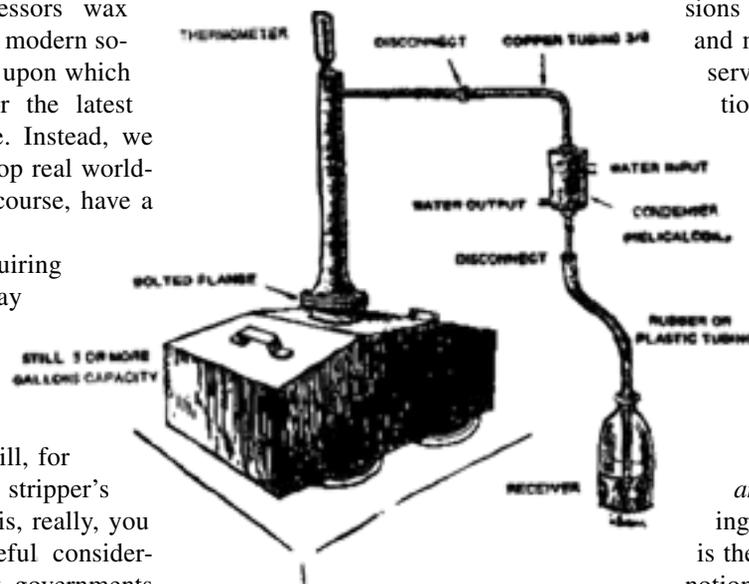
Our positions on most things are essentially based on the principles of individualism. On this campus, as throughout the world in general, you'll be confronted by people who want to regulate what you say, what you eat, where you work, what you wear, and even whom you

erent look at UO academics as tossed-off—for we are serious in our criticism. Neither should you take our word for it: instead, take a sociology class, take a gender studies class, or take a low-level political science class. Assuming you are not an illiterate moron, you'll find most of your classes here intellectually unsatisfying. Where is the challenge in copying answers from a textbook, in obtaining "participation points" for discussions comprising random accusations and mindless rhetoric, in providing lip service to a professor's smug declarations?

You may find your challenges in sifting through the detritus of modern "progressive" popular opinion, in reckoning each school of thought with its opposite, in formulating over time a stance, political or otherwise, that reflects your considered view of the world. Bertrand Russell (*fact checker?—well, one of those guys, anyway... —ed.*) is known for stating that the true mark of intelligence is the ability to hold two contradictory notions in one's mind and still function.

You may find that checking in with the OC regularly will go a long way to facilitate that function. You may even find that a glass of the good stuff doesn't hurt either.

Cheers.



love. Unhealthy, self-destructive habits should be combated through information, not majoritarian fiat.

There will be many jokes in this issue alluding to the over-all half-baked silliness of many of our University's academic programs. Don't take our irrev-

Editor's Note

Stay tuned for a special Almanac issue of the COMMENTATOR, due to appear on newsstands

Oct. 6

Campus Map



- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| 1. Student Rec Center | 24. Knight Library |
| 2. Bean | 25. Longhouse |
| 3. Hamilton | 26. Music |
| 4. Education | 27. PLC |
| 5. Gerlinger Annex | 28. Deady |
| 6. Atomic Energy Lab | 29. Deschutes |
| 7. Museum of Art | 30. Chiles |
| 8. Villard | 31. Urban Farm |
| 9. Health Center | 32. Lillis |
| 10. Susan Campbell | 33. Gilbert |
| 11. Klamath | 34. Collier House |
| 12. Rennie's Landing | 35. EMU |
| 13. Willamette River | 36. Streisinger |
| 14. McKenzie | 37. Condon |
| 15. Robinson Theatre | 38. Hendricks |
| 16. Newman Center | 39. YWCA |
| 17. UO Bookstore | 40. Allen |
| 18. Carson | 41. Johnson |
| 19. McArthur Court | 42. Beall Concert Hall |
| 20. Gerlinger | 43. CIA Bunker |
| 21. Lawrence | 44. Friendly |
| 22. Autzen Stadium | 45. Facilities Services |
| 23. Straub | 46. Intramural Field |

■ PANTS OPTIONAL ZONE

Tweaker or Vegan



A



B



C

A pop quiz by Michael Guidero

Ever enter a room full of vegans and realize how sickly some of them look? A few of them have sunken eyes, a few of them look skinny and malnourished, here and there are a few with the quickly darting eyes, and some of them possess all these qualities at once.

Learning to differentiate tweaker from vegan is one of the more crucial skills you will need to master in order to survive at the UO-- you need to know whether it's time to raise your arms in anticipation of a random knife attack, or whether to simply pick your teeth to flick some chicken in the direction at the emaciated waif in question.

Can you differentiate tweaker from vegan?

The answers are on page 15.

Scoring Guide

0-1 Consider yourself lucky: you obviously don't know many vegans or tweakers. Let us be the first to welcome you to Eugene.

2-3 Your cultural incompetence would likely keep you from getting a job at the UO.

4-5 You live in Springfield or work at Sundance Natural Foods.

6 You live in a constant state of fear, worried that at any time your dealer might start lacing his goods with egg yolk.



D



E



F

THE 2005 OREGON COMMENTATOR

THE 'IF CARS RAN ON BOOZE' LIQUOR PRICE GUIDE

FOR MINORS, BY BUYERS

	\$/375ml	\$/750ml	\$/1.75L
Whiskeys			
Jack Daniels	19.95	39.90	93.10
Jim Beam	14.97	29.94	69.86
Crown Royal	29.95	59.90	139.77
Wild Turkey	9.99	19.98	46.62
Maker's Mark	22.95	45.90	107.10
Old Crow	7.99	15.98	37.29
Evan Williams	39.95	79.90	186.43
Pendleton	6.79	13.58	31.69
Vodkas			
Ketel One	12.49	24.98	58.29
Absolut	24.97	49.94	116.53
Smirnoff	0.99	1.98	4.62
HRD	10.29	8.97	4.69
Gin			
Monarch	50.00	100.00	233.33
Seagram's	29.67	59.34	138.46
Beefeater	13.99	27.98	65.29
Rum			
Monarch	50.00	100.00	233.33
Bacardi	2.79	5.58	13.02
Capt. Morgan's	2.79	5.58	13.02
Tequila			
Jose Cuervo	12.97	25.94	60.53
Sauza	14.97	29.94	69.86
Patron	29.99	59.98	139.95
Liqueurs			
Southern Comfort	10.00	20.00	46.67
Jägermeister	100.00	200.00	466.67
Kahlua	4.27	8.54	19.93
Bailey's	7.24	14.48	33.79

THE ASKS:

WHY SHOULD YOU BE THE NEXT SUPREME COURT JUSTICE?



Hillary Clinton

I think we can all set partisanship aside and agree that having me on the court would be better than having me as President.



Michael "Brownie" Brown

I just got passed over for the assistant manager position at the local Arby's.



Ted Kulongoski

Well, with Rehnquist gone, who's going to stop Ginsburg and Souter from indulging in low-quality crank and unprotected sex in the Library Reading Room?



Zombie Andrea Dworkin

Because without me, this court would be a court of rape.



Upside-down Robocop

I grew up in a small town. Middle-class family. White picket fence, too.



Adam Walsh

Because I'd like to be the first to break the court's oppressive baseball cap barrier.



Janice Rogers Brown

Because my interpretation of the Commerce Clause will make Chuck Schumer spontaneously combust.

The Survival Guide

by Ian Spencer

Welcome to the University of Oregon, the 115th best university in this great nation. Sure, other places offer higher levels of education at far lower costs, but it's a little too late to play the woulda, coulda, shoulda game. You might as well just buck up and work towards earning (and paying for) the \$60,000 slip of paper you'll get in four (or five, or six, or seven) years. This guide is intended to help you do two things: figure out which field to enter, and how to forget about the fact that you got yourself into this mess.

Picking a Major

There are very few majors here at UO that are both challenging and captivating. What it ultimately comes down to is interest and potential:

-Will the required classes interest you enough to allow you to bat at least .400?

-Will potential employers be impressed by or frightened of your choice in degrees? Will they pay you in turnips or solid-gold commemorative turnips?

If you aren't 100% positively sure of which major you want, then wait it out for a year or two and take a cornucopia of different classes. If you decide to go into Accounting, for instance, your twenty credit hours in Medieval Art classes may seem, in hindsight, like a waste of money.

Picking Classes

Once you have a major or general interest, pick your classes early. This should be pretty obvious, but I've known people who've forgotten to get around to doing it until after the third week of the term.

You pick and choose your destiny through DuckWeb, the University's bold foray into early 90's website technology. Thankfully, the site's usually down the times when you're most prone to making terrible, drunken decisions regarding your academic career. Unfortunately-



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ly, those who begin their drinking at daybreak may find that the instant ability to drop out of required courses at any moment can get them into trouble, particularly when papers are due. But what strategy should those who are generally lucid between 9-5 use to choose classes? Well, look at the general requirements and major-specific requirements. Put them all into a list.

For your first two years of college, take whatever classes you want. Requirements? Who are they to tell you what to spend your money on!

For the last four years of college, take the required classes.

Attending Class

Despite what most people think, the first day of class is always very important. While it usually consists of a professor reading the entire syllabus for the benefit of any illiterate students who may be in attendance, it serves a more vital purpose: it's the first opportunity you'll have to convince the professor of any learning disabilities you may or may not have, which may or may not affect your grade and/or attendance. Women, consider wearing something form-fitting and sheer. Men, consider stuffing a sock into your underwear. Those who don't subscribe to nature's Orwellian gendered hegemony may wish to consider both the sock and the sheer clothing. Showing the professor that you Really Care about the content will go a long way towards convincing them at the end of the term that it isn't your fault you missed all but three of the classes. This is a public university: they want you to pass. Give them a good reason to never want to have you in their class again.

Buy a flask

Actually, you'd better buy two. You never know when you're going to need a backup.

This is one of those rules that isn't even worth mentioning since it will become so self-apparent by week three. And remember: you should never be too proud to not bring along an

insulated lunch bag filled with ice and limes.

Homework

You'll begin to get homework assignments pretty soon after classes start. Thanks to lowered expectations and the realization that most students are completely unable to study independently, most professors will insist that you complete a certain percentage of homework in order to get a good grade. The good news is that in low-level classes the homework assignments are almost always incredibly easy. You see that big, heavy, expensive textbook the syllabus told you to buy? It has big, wordy paragraphs. Use those paragraphs, and never forget the gradewhoring power of the thesaurus. If you have acquaintances in the class, get a communal textbook and marvel at how socialism really can work! Well, at least until the third week, when you realize that your acquaintances have spilled coffee on the book three times and continue to bore you to death with their ceaseless prattle.

If you have homework that actually requires analytical thinking, individualized answers, or significant study time, then congratulations! You've found a class that will challenge you to discover new things about yourself and the world around you. Drop it immediately... you don't need this sort of headache.

Examinations

Difficult tests are the bane of the lazy student's collegiate career. Easy, overweighted tests, on the other hand, are the lifeblood of the modern American student. This is why the social science and business fields are filled with successful alcoholics and drug abusers.

Mid-terms are like tests, but more important. Finals are like mid-terms, but with a week of partying time beforehand.

Grades

Finally, you'll get your grades. A's through C's are good. You tried your hardest or at least used a thesaurus or calculator at some point. D's are bad because it's just a poorly designed letter

and quite offensive to look at. F's mean the professor just didn't respect your individual learning style, while P's and N's mean they can't even be bothered to decide grades by any system more complicated than a coinflip. I's mean you forgot about the final, and Y's and X's mean that DuckWeb screwed up and has possibly erased your academic history. This is how primitivists are created.

Friends

But while grades are important, they're nowhere near as crucial as the life-long friends and acquaintances you'll encounter while in college. Twenty years after you graduate, you won't remember getting a B in Writing 122, but you will remember the time you beer-bonged a half-rack of Coors and wound up naked on the floor of a sorority with two teeth missing, a mean headache, and body paint covering half your body. Friends get you into and out of situations like that.

Greek Life

You may decide a few weeks into school that joining a fraternity or sorority is a good idea. If you're looking for lifelong connections, the Greek system might be for you. But those expecting Delta House-style shenanigans will likely be disappointed. Various houses put on entertaining parties, but they're always under scrutiny and the extensive rules may get under your skin. Those looking to put on big parties would be wise to get a 3-4 bedroom ramshackle house near campus: no rules, no valuables to break, and a backyard to serve as both a bathroom and combat area.

Finishing School

At some point you'll have to leave this fine institution, either because you've run out of money, good graces, or excuses. If you're lucky, you just may even leave with a diploma in hand.



Ian Spencer, who would do well to major in time management next time around, is Editor-in-Chief of the OREGON COMMENTATOR

Things to do with \$1.50 in Eugene

-Get a 14-inch pancake at the Old Pad. Garnish with a pint of syrup.

-Buy three Register-Guards, crumple them up, stuff them into some old clothes and burn someone in effigy.

-See "Supercross" at Cinemark Movies Twelve.

-Rent a movie at Flicks'n'Pics on Monday and you can still afford a Register-Guard! That sweet 20/Below section keeps me both amused **and** informed!

-On Wednesday at Joggers, get a microbrew and still tip the bartender a generous 50%.

-Get a forty of Big Bear and clench nirvana with your fist.

-Take another ride on LTD.

-Annoy the Albertson's butcher by requesting exactly 0.3759 pounds of sausage. Remember to bring a 0.3759 pound test weight to ensure the smug bastard doesn't stiff you.

-Call six people who care.

-Get a Polish dog from that dude (Tim) across from the bookstore. Eat it with satisfaction.

-Rent a room at the Campbell Club.

-Buy 4.054 stamps. They'll do this if you ask enough.

-Get a pretty good pile of nutmeg from the bulk section at Market of Choice; snort it.

-Get a good pile of oregano from the bulk section at Market of Choice; sell it to South Eugene students.

-Find rock bottom in a Pabst black & tan at Mulligan's.

-Get a whole mess o' jo-jos at Freddie's. If they don't know how much a "mess" is, laugh at their ignorance of legal terms.

-After asking where to put the two quarters, get thrown out of the Silver Dollar Club.

On Selected Majors

Political Science

Pros: If you enjoy arguing with people, this should be your major of choice. Conservative/libertarian students will often find themselves outnumbered, but are generally given a chance to speak their piece. The professors tend to be right of Jeffrey “Free” Luers but left of Ted Kennedy, putting them roughly near “fascist” on the Sociology political spectrum

Cons: It’s the history of bullshitters and the science of bullshitting. “Political Science is History without the studying,” as our own Dan Atkinson says. Despite the ridiculously easy graduation requirements, Political Science is a stepping stone towards more important things, like the dissemination of bullshit (Public Relations), the art of bullshit (Politics), or the perfection of bullshit (Law School).

Professors to try: Cramer, DeBevoise, Feldman, Myagkov, Tanenbaum.

Professors to avoid: Baugh, Baumgold, Diamond

Sociology

Pros: Probably the easiest major here at the UO. Want to pass a sociology class? Just remember to nod your head every time the professor starts yelling about capitalism, genderism, democracy, or whatever the hot-button issue of the day is and, of course, turn your final essay in within two weeks of the due date. While you can endure a heavy bout with alcoholism and still pass a mid-level class in any field, Sociology is one of the few in which an individual’s GPA can likely be improved through a simple PCP addiction.

Cons: Sociology is the study of why human growth is bad. Finding out who’s responsible for all this damn growth is also a key component. Primitivists, green anarchists, and other hilariously stereotypical radical individuals are all celebrated. Potential employers will generally assume that you are lazy and prone to start organized protests within the office, so it might be a good thing to keep off of your resume.

Professors to try: For pure distilled comedy value, Hunt- if he’s still around.

Professors to avoid: Pretty much all of them, particularly the GTFs.

Economics

Pros: Economics still has its fair share of idiots, but they’re usually marginalized and shunned. Potential future occupations include: bank teller, bank manager, bank investment manager, and angry anti-banking blogger.

Cons: Economics has a significant amount of math pre-requirements and, once in the heart of the program, can be quite difficult at times. This doesn’t mean that you have to attend more than a quarter of the classes while sober, but it does mean that when you do, you should probably pay attention. Worst of all, at some point your entire worldview will be shattered upon the realization that not everything can be accurately quantified and analyzed.



Women’s Studies

Pros: Perfect for people looking to spend the rest of their lives on a college campus complaining about the sexist business world. If you find that you try to fit the word “rape” into most of your conversations, this is probably the major for you.

Cons: Involves a bunch of boring and redundant reading, according to legend. Conservatives of all genders will be shamelessly attacked as either oppressors or servants. Or self-servants, if transgendered. (And speaking of which, why isn’t there a transgendered Republican lobby? If I were transgendered I’d form one just to have a blast releasing press statements, regardless of personal political sentiment.)

Professors to try: We really shouldn’t put an inappropriate joke here. Let’s just stop with the whole professor thing.

Gender Studies

Pros: You get to talk about genitalia. It’s like pornography, but without images, a cheesy story, or any real direction.

Cons: The study of why gender roles are oppressive. Do your drinking during (and not before or after) this class. Take a shot out of your flask when the following phrases are spoken or written: “breeders,” “heterosexist hegemony,” and “rape culture.” Then, in a drunken stupor, raise your hand and harangue the class with your thoughts on how the shape of one’s genitals has a direct correlation with their taste in malt liquor.

International Studies

Pros: Like Political Science, but with horribly translated source material.

Cons: Who really cares about what’s going on in Europe, Asia, the Middle East, South America or Africa anyways? That’s, like, far away, man. International Studies should require only that one read three P.J. O’Rourke books, view the movie “Coming to America,” and visit Vancouver over a three-day weekend.

Spanish

Pros: The Spanish language is becoming more and more useful in nearly every part of the business world. Even better, you can consider a case of Pacifico an academic expense.

Cons: Beyond the need to constantly memorize vocabulary, there really aren't many cons to majoring in Spanish. But the major is most useful when paired with experience in a business or other social science field.

Business

Pros: Business Administration is easy and practical. There are plenty of job opportunities for competent Business majors, and your fellow students tend to be ridiculously attractive.

Cons: Anyone with an IQ approaching 90 from either direction will be bored stiff with the content and pace of the classes. Each relevant fact and method will be explained a minimum of three times: once during lectures, and at least twice through answers to the witless students' questions. And people wonder why even management positions are being offshored.

English

Pros: Have you ever noticed the fact that a good number of the signs, billboards, etc., on public display in today's environment are replete with misspellings, grammatical errors, and the like? Have you ever experienced the exquisite joy of being midway

through one of *Infinite Jest's* multitudinous footnotes and chorling out-loud at the madcap antics of the protagonist's mother in her role as a member of the Militant Grammarians of Massachusetts? Have you skimmed this paragraph for flaws? Have you already congratulated yourself for knowing that the correct word for the previous sentence was not skimmed but scanned? If you answered yes to all of the previous questions, there is little doubt that you are an English major, one well prepared to participate in the dialogue that defines our culture, and to enjoy some of that culture's finest offerings. If you answered no, there is little doubt that you are an utter moron, and the future is ultimately yours.

Cons: Every now and then one experiences the sort of bitter-sweet epiphany that encompasses the knowledge that it has occurred too late: one realizes that the knowledge one has gained and the future knowledge that will accrete upon it will only bring with it disappointment; one finds that English as an endeavor of study only trains one to train others, that the teaching profession only allows one a position at a level remarkably lower than the level one has attained and that, likewise, one can only attain a position at an institution appreciably less distinguished than the one at which one studied. One realizes, finally, that there are a shit-ton of English graduates working in coffee shops.

On Law School

First of all, if you are reading this now you are an idiot. School started in August. It is way too late to be reading about how to survive law school, chump. Look around you. Everyone else already has a job lined up. You blew it. Go on and study Contracts, but start thinking about how your newfound knowledge will help you serve customers at Target.

But I'll try to help anyway. Look, here's how it is: law school is a little like going back to middle school, a little like a three-year-long job fair, and a little like dying. Prepare accordingly: it is imperative that you join a clique. There are many to choose from. There's the Future Corporate Lawyers, all neat goatees and networking, with a strong LDS sub-clique. There's the We're Still Greek! set, preoccupied with memorizing cribbed outlines, chugging Red Bull cocktails, and making clear to everyone else how sweet they are. You can only join if you plan on spending your summers working at your father's firm. Failing that, you could join up with the Granolas, where you'll need a frightening combination of slovenly leftwing dogma and extraordinary motivation and intelligence. This clique hosts an exciting sub-clique that welcomes self-proclaimed anarchist law students. Sue by day, burn SUV's by night!

Once you've chosen your clique, the next step is to figure out how not to study at all. Fortunately, every law school has a thriving trade in recycled course outlines. These things may be 70 pages long but that beats hell out of a 1300-page casebook.

Cases are for suckers. Look, I implore you: don't read *Hadley v. Baxendale*. Read this sentence instead: "Every student has to read *Hadley v. Baxendale*, and by god, we all therefore know that indirect or consequential damages are only recoverable if reasonably foreseeable by both of the parties at the time of the contract and arising naturally from such breach!"

With studying out of the way, the real key to survival is burnishing your resume. It's best to do this by taking on a lot of nifty tasks that aren't terribly demanding. Get on a law review, for starters. The competition is two weeks of somewhat difficult work, followed by 4 P/NP credits, a cool resume entry, and a little bit of work a trained monkey could do. Another good move is to join and ruthlessly take over a student organization. "President" looks awfully good, and all you have to do is show a video or something every couple of weeks and blow your ASUO budget on pizza.

Okay, so the resume's all set. Now: establish your reputation among your peers! This requires drinking. Once drunk, if you're a guy, make a splash by saying something really dumb on students@law.uoregon.edu, thereby triggering a shrill and hysterical political debate. Once drunk, if you're a girl, go to Rennie's on Thursday night and bare your breasts, thereby triggering a lot of dumb comments on students@law.uoregon.edu.

It's that simple. You're on your way.

The Fifth Annual Commentator Bar Guide

by Bryan Roberts

--So the thing is that you're exhausted after a full day of classes but you still need a way to unwind, to let the proverbial demons out so you can relax.

--Or the thing is that you overheard some frat dick say something so retarded in class today it was hilarious, and you're wondering where he'll likely be hanging out tonight so you can lurk at the next table and laugh at his next stupid utterance with all your friends.

--Or the thing is that you don't have any friends because you're new here, and you'd like to know the name of a bar where the people serving drinks won't sneer at you, thus intensifying the very sense of alienation you're attempting to dispel.

--Or the thing is that you already know all the bars in this little town because you've been going to school here for like fifteen years, so you're just reading the fifth annual installment of the OC Bar Guide for recreational purposes and could we just get to the jokes about passing out underneath tables already? No, not yet? A little scatological humor then, maybe?

--Or the thing is that we've been doing this Bar Guide Thingy for like forever and we're frankly running out of interesting ways to present the information.

--Getting warmer.

...

--**Max's.**

--Yes. 13th and, what, Patterson?

--Between Patterson and Ferry, I guess—close to the Bijou.

--So one could hop in there for a quick pint before and/or after a viewing of *Broken Flowers*, or the quasi-indie film



of one's choosing?

--Stepping in would be preferable to hopping, one would think.

--Probably an OLCC regulation against hopping into taverns somewhere.

--Thank heaven for the OLCC, keeping us safe from knocking our drunken noggins against any door frames.

--Or chess boards that are also booth

tables.

--What's that?

--Yeah they put this cool new front corner table in when they remodeled most recently, and it's a chess board.

--So do people play chess on it?

--What are you talking about, dude? Max's is a bar. People drink on it.

...

--So then.

--Yes?

--**Rennie's Landing.**

--Are you kidding? Right next to the bookstore, huge covered smoking patio upstairs with heat in the winter... it's the perfect bar.

--None better in Eugene.

--Dude I hear it from reliable sources that on the most recent occasion of my getting completely smashed at Rennie's I was so beyond the point of reason that I was trying to put coins into the ATM, under the delusion that it was a jukebox.

--Sort of leads one to wonder how terrible the music playing must have been.

--If only I could remember.

...

--**Doc's Pad.**

--Doc's Pad is gone, man. Like, long gone.

--Was it the smoking ordinance?

--I don't know; whatever it was it didn't last two minutes after the ordinance went into effect.

--The first time I went in there I was lured by their having cable and making a big deal out of showing this new, rumored-

of, cartoon show called *South Park*.

--They showed that?

--Oh yeah, it was a big production. Whole place was rapt with attention and no one spoke a word except during commercials. It was the episode in which Saddam Hussein was buggering Satan and then he took over Canada, and somehow Celine Dion was involved.

--Weren't those the days, when foul-mouthed grade-schoolers were a novelty and Saddam Hussein was still a viable dictator. You need a few good mustachioed dictators around, just to keep the cartoons fresh.

--Yeah but they were really the days when you could smoke in bars. People

Prince Lucien Campbell building right across the street.

--What do I care? I mean, yes, they serve alcohol, but do they also sell flak jackets? Because I'm pretty sure I might need one if I ever become so drunk as to lose all judgment and find myself walking in there.

--If the epithet-hurling jocks don't kill you, the terribly-mixed drinks just might.

...

--What's the deal with **The Beer Stein**?

--The Beer What?

--The Beer Stein, on 11th next to the pizza place? You don't know that place?

--Did it just open?

Don't even try to call it a micro if it's from California.

--Whatever. Let me just tell you, though: they have food there too, and though I didn't try any because my tab was high enough already, I hear it's as delicious as the beer.

--There's a tag-line for you: *where the food is as delicious as the beer*. Ach. I can visualize the SUV's in the parking lot.

--No need to be spiteful, sparky. Yuppies need to drink, too.

...

--Speaking of yuppies, man: **McMenamin's**.

--Dude that's completely unfair—

--What are you talking about, unfair?

Can you honestly defend the notion that there is anything more unfair than a chain restaurant/brewpub marketing itself to the sort of people who ordinarily consider themselves too discerning to eat in a chain restaurant? You've got all these late-sixties-era psychedelic Fillmore posters, in frames no less, all over the walls even as you're listening to some feel-good protesty acoustic crap like the Indigo Girls, and you're drinking some over-priced, over-hyped beer... and people go wild for it, feeling so smug and countercultural even as McMenamin's devours the landscape like Wal-Mart.

--Dude. Foul ball, man. To a large extent McMenamin's purchases historically significant buildings that would otherwise be falling into disrepair awaiting certain destruction at the hands of some behemoth ski-resort developer. They turn these places into highly interesting landmarks that acknowledge their own past and thus become legitimate cultural excursions, celebrations of Oregon. **The Crystal Ballroom** in Portland, man? There is no concert venue like it. Their restaurants do have a common theme but they are each unique in their own way, too. The in-town establishments are neighborhood bars in the truest sense—I'd wager that a good half of the patrons at **High Street** or **19th Street** at any given time are people who walked there from their houses. A place like Applebee's markets itself as a neighborhood restaurant, but every one looks precisely

Jerry Falwell was right, come to think of it: 9/11 was actually nothing more than the hand of God, smiting us down for the unnatural act of making it illegal to smoke in a bar

say everything changed after 9/11, but I say everything changed after it became illegal to smoke in a bar.

--You're so right, man. Jerry Falwell was right, come to think of it: 9/11 was actually nothing more than the hand of God, smiting us down for the unnatural act of making it illegal to smoke in a bar, which is, like, ten times worse than making it illegal to pray in a church.

--Completely. Which really, if you think about it— wait. When did the smoking ordinance pass?

--Here in Eugene? October 26, 2000.

--So really it's the non-smokers' fault, how everything's just gone to shit lately. So the next time someone tells you to put your cigarette out, you can just sort of roll your eyes and be all, *Dude, don't you remember Doc's Pad? Don't you remember the Twin Towers? Your thinking is so, like, 10/25.*

...

--**Taylor's**?

--Yeah, what about it?

--Well it is a bar, one which couldn't really be any closer to the University without being part of it. You've got your

--Yeah, like a couple months ago I guess. Place is crazy, though. It's all brightly lit and full of happy, affluent people and it closes at 11:00.

--Doesn't sound like a bar to me.

--It totally is, though. They've got approximately 9 zillion beers from around the world, which you can drink at a table there or take home with you. I got this stuff from Belgium called *Delirium Nocturnum* that came in a two-pint porcelain bottle with a pink elephant on the front...

--Was there beer in the bottle, or do you just stare at the elephant and feel very in touch with the people of Belgium and their proud *Heart-of-Darkness*-evoking, ivory-mining history?

--Of course there's beer in the bottle, jackass. Although it was strong enough as to seem more like barley wine...

--Barley wine? Gimme a break. Do they have beers on tap?

--Yeah, a whole lot of beer on tap. Micros, of course. You definitely have to try the Lost Coast Chocolate Raspberry Stout, or something like that.

--Lost Coast is from California, man.

the same and they're usually found just off the highway nestled between Chili's and The Outback. McMenamín's beers are priced commensurately with micro-brews in other bars; Terminator Stout is as dark and tasty and aggressively alcoholic as they come; *and* you can take beer, fresh from the tap, home with you in those cool jars? Who are you kidding, man? McMenamín's is— and please do not tell Snoop Dogg that I said this—the shiznit.

--You did not.

--Okay, I will freely rescind my misappropriation of hip-hop terminology, if for no other reason than to avoid a costly lawsuit, but if and only if you likewise rescind your slanderous remarks re: McMenamín's.

--Agreed.

--They have huge smoking decks there, too, you know, both at High St. on 12th and at 19th St. on the corner with Agate.

--Dude, please--

--Good food; best mustard ever.

--Enough already.

...

--What really gets me going, though, is the hipster bars.

--What have you got against the hipster bars?

--Come on, man, a place like the **Indigo District**? All the attitude, all the thick glasses and pretense and post-ironic posturing, all the high prices... it honestly makes me nauseous.

--Did you just say post-ironic posturing? Because I really have no idea what that means except that it's an example of itself.

--Regardless, man: there is no place to smoke there, unless you want to leave your drink on the table, effectively surrendering it to the fates, and step out front to chit-chat with some asshole about Death Cab For Cutie's back catalogue. Then to top it off you've got to show your ID once again to the guy at the door, who— seriously, what's his deal?— really ought to remember you by now.

--So you're admitting that you have gone there.

--What can I say except that I learn my lessons the hard way?

--Alright. As for the lack of smoking options, it's a valid point but again it's true of most bars in Eugene. But as for the high prices, I generally pay about \$3.50 there for anything including whiskey, which seems pretty normal. The music is invariably great, there are free copies of *Vice* at the front door, and the chicken strips are nothing short of phenomenal. People who have trouble seeing are generally inclined to wear glasses, so I don't find anything pretentious about it. I've had to feel like a nerd most of my life because of these damn spectacles, and now that being a nerd is momentarily seen as an asset, people like you want to take it away from me? I put in my time, man.

--So what you're saying is that you're digging the current non-nerdiness of being a nerd. You're just hoping you can afford Lasik surgery by the time the pendulum swings back again?

--We're veering off topic, my friend.

...

--What's the other one?

--The other what?

--The other hipster bar.

--Might you be referring to the **Horsehead**, on Broadway and Olive?

--That I might. That one's not so bad. There you get a smoking deck, and the bouncers are, like, really built Pacific Islanders who probably used to be *Hawaii 5-0* extras or something. At least they've got the decency to have a huge poster of Young Johnny Cash flipping a bird and, like, random Mexican flags and such. There's always something to look at, if you need to avert your eyes from hipster



assholes. A sense of zaniness to sustain you as you approach your desired level of inebriation.

--I can get behind that. But what's with the antipathy toward hipsters? Hipsters, yuppies, jocks— is there any group of people you don't roundly hate?

--I, sir, do not hate rednecks or minorities or anyone who is basically non-descript in their style of dress. It's the people with their vogueish lifestyle choices that give me trouble. People who choose a niche so as to be marketed to after a certain fashion within this consumer culture of ours, and who go on from there to kid themselves that they are opting out in some way that lesser people are too dim for. The worst are the ones who don't even realize they're looking down their noses at the rest of us. It encompasses their whole lives from the clothes they wear and the music they listen to all the way to the places they choose to drink.

--What's next, Marxist polemics? You're beginning to scare me.

--Maybe it's all this talking about bars and drinking without actually consuming any alcohol that's making me foam at the mouth.

--That, and the fact that you're an asshole.

--Have you considered the possibility that I'm simply more in touch with my inner asshole than most people?

--It's worse than I thought. We'll need to decide on a bar, and get there, fast.

...

--**Sixth Street!**

--Feeling the margarita schizophrenia, are you?

--What the hell are you talking about?

--You are referring to Sixth Street Grill, between Olive and Willamette? And you don't know about the margarita schizophrenia?

--Um.... Yes. And then, no.

--Margarita schizophrenia. Because Sixth Street has the astoundingly cheap house margarita that comes in a frosty mug for \$2.50, which you can drink, like, ten of and still maintain; but it's also got the ludicrously pricey El Dorado margarita for \$12, which— dare I say it— is worth every penny so long as you can

Hit it Hard All Week
with the
Oregon Commentator Weekly Itinerary

Sunday: Mac's at the Vet's Club— 16th and Willamette (344-8600)

Impersonate a veteran for the \$1 Pabst and find out whether they give you the beer or give you the beat-down. If you haven't been kicked out by 10:00 pm, shake it around on the dance floor until you hurl.

Monday: Wetlands— 922 Garfield (345-3606)
\$2 Margaritas and 50¢ tacos, and lots of TV's so you won't miss any of Tim McGraw's insightful musical interpretations of NFL culture.

Tuesday: Black Forest— 50 E. 11th (686-6119)
Lots of rock and blues music here, and a litany of specials— get the Jager shot for \$3 and add Red Bull for a buck. Tuesday has a \$5 steak night. Sort of a ZZ Top aesthetic here— glue-on beard optional.

Wednesday: Joggers— 7th & Willamette (343-0224)
Pay \$5 once and join the Mug Club, entitling you to \$1 micros forever on Wednesdays. (Yes, we mentioned this three times in one issue. We love a good deal on booze?)

afford it. But you never know whether to be pulled one way or the other. Which is really the bigger bang for your buck?

--Dude that's what I'm saying. I mean you're really reaching with the schizophrania thing, but as far as the El Dorado goes, I drank *one* of those things and I

ping one dollar?

--Hey: If I order them both at once, that's \$1 per order, and I think that in terms of bar etiquette that puts me in the clear.

--Asshole.

...

--**John Henry's.**

I mean, yes, they serve alcohol, but do they also sell flak jackets? Because I'm pretty sure I might need one if I ever become so drunk as to lose all judgment and find myself walking in there.

was throwing food at people I didn't know. Of course, there was other liquor beforehand on that occasion... but I'm pretty sure I can devote the \$25 in my possession tonight toward the cause of drinking two El Dorado's and thus finding oblivion within an hour.

--You have to be toying with me at this point. Are you seriously considering running up a \$24 bar tab and only tip-

--That place on Broadway? Are you looking to hear some music?

--No, I just like to say it. *John Henry's*. It's like John Malkovich, only shorter.

...

--**Joggers**, then.

--Ah, Joggers. Joggers. That bedrock of our culture at 7th and Willamette.

--That centrally-located standby of ours, with its staggeringly cheap drinks on

Tuesdays and Wednesdays.

--That purveyor of karaoke.

--That purveyor of the mysterious Blue Dolphin, singularly responsible for the black eye that I sported for a full week after my most recent birthday.

--Oh, but you loved the purplish-blue hue. You wore it with pride, like a battle wound.

--The great thing about the place is that you can let your inner asshole overtake you and you'll fit right in.

--Such a great thing, to fit right in.

--Or, failing that, to get so stupendously wasted that you don't even notice the fact that you're sticking out like a sore thumb.

--Or a black eye.

--You are so right. Let's go get booze-addled, as we were born to be.



Bryan Roberts, a senior in English once again, is Publisher of the OREGON COMMENTATOR

Thursday: Joe Federigo's Restaurant and Jazz Club— 259 E. 5th Ave (343-8488)

Downstairs from the upscale restaurant is an upscale bar— drink specials every night from 5 to 6:30 pm, but Thursdays have \$4 martinis. Order one shaken and not stirred to remove all doubt about what a pompous ass you are.

Friday: Downtown Lounge— 959 Pearl St. (343-2346)

Friday is a good night for live music, and this is some of the best in town. Happy hour on the awesome bar food is from 11pm-2:30 am (M-F). Dance club downstairs, if you're into that sort of thing.

Saturday: Who are you kidding? You can't afford the bars on a Saturday when there aren't any drink specials— not when you've been hitting them hard all week, you irresponsible twerp. Who told you to do that, anyway? Get yourself a forty of Magnum and cry yourself to sleep watching SNL.

TWEAKER OR VEGAN ANSWERS
A. This guy is a twaker, but this one should have been obvious. B. These two girls are vegans. Lack of protein in their diets has caused them to become stupid and walk around in butterfly wing costumes. C. This one has a big hint. They certainly look like twakers, but that paint on her chest spells "PETA". D. Hah, fooled you! This woman's a twaker. This is the "before" from one of those before-and-after pictures. E. A handsome guy like this? "Recovering" twaker. F. This is, of course, Tommy Lee. While he claims to be a vegan we suspect he is, at the very least, a twaker-- and possibly both. At least we can confirm that he's an idiot.

The Ten People Who Are Screwing Up America

BY TYLER GRAF

[Ed. Note: Originally Tyler wanted this piece to be entitled “The 50 People Who Are Screwing Up America” and extend it over five or six pages. He was told he couldn’t do this, so he cut down the number of screwy Americans to 25, then 20, and ultimately, for reasons of space and our collective sanity, 10. As you read this piece, keep in mind that if Tyler does not mention you personally it’s not because he didn’t go to extraordinary lengths to do so.]

Recently author Bernard Goldberg wrote a book entitled “The 100 People Who Are Screwing Up America.” Goldberg’s idea was sound... His follow through, however, was not.

Who’s number 37 on Goldberg’s list? It’s conservative punching bag Al Franken. Al Sharpton is on the list too; so is Barbara Streisand, who Goldberg considers a member of the dastardly “Hollywood blowhards (incredibly ditzzy celebrities who think they’re smart just because they’re famous).” Goldberg also hates “intellectual thugs” like New Yorker contributor Seymour Hersh and New York Times spew factory Paul Krugman.

Do you see a pattern emerging?

Here are some more of the names: Ted Kennedy, Robert Byrd, Eminem, etc. As Jon Stewart aptly pointed out on the Daily Show in an interview with Goldberg: “There are only two conservative people on the list, and one of them blew up an abortion clinic.” Goldberg took an interesting idea and destroyed it by being so blatantly partisan. A more accurate title for Goldberg’s book would have been “The Liberals I Hate”.

For the sake of completeness, I humbly present my own list of Americans who are screwing up America, in no particular order. I chose them for their shrillness, aversion to freedom, neo-liberal ideals and just plain scariness.

10: Jerry Vlasak

This former spokesperson for the Physicians’ Committee for Responsible Medicine is among the most outspoken anti-vivisection activists alive. In clear,

dispassionate and undiluted language, Vlasak has called for the murder of scientists who perform animal vivisections for the benefit of medicine:

“I don’t think you’d have to kill -- assassinate -- too many vivisectors before you would see a marked decrease in the amount of vivisection going on. And I think for 5 lives, 10 lives, 15 human lives, we could save a million, 2 million, 10 million non-human lives,” said Vlasak to a group of animal rights activists.

Vlasak has been a spokesperson for the Physicians’ Committee for Responsible Medicine, where his creepily detached supplication for murder has been met with a scrubbing of his name from the PCRM’s history. Although it could be easy to argue that anti-Vlasak smears are the products of harried conservatives who are incapable of understanding the underlying context of his words (i.e. he didn’t actually mean murder when he said “kill”) it’s hard to argue with the audio of Vlasak’s speeches, in which one hears him as he truly is – a monotone proponent of death and bloodshed.

9: Ann Coulter

Beloved by conservative wingnuts and reviled by liberal nutjobs, Ann Coulter is the apotheosis of wedge-driving political rhetoric. Try as they might, the other insufferable writers-cum-talking heads like Al Franken, Rush Limbaugh and Michael Savage just can’t seem to garner the recognition that Coulter receives. Perhaps this is because she is a woman. A conservative woman at that. But this argument doesn’t strike me as terribly convincing. I believe that Coulter receives so much attention partly because she is attractive (in the same fashion as Skeletor) and partly because she doesn’t seem to think through her arguments. She has opinions – God knows she has opinions – but she’s not even trying to convince anybody that they are correct. Her rhetorical style is filled with moments of *petito principii*, or “begging the question”. That is, she assumes the truth of what she wishes to prove at the outset. Because proving a point isn’t a factor, she can focus her attention on her

real passion – insults.

Coulter is a right-wing verbal bomb thrower of extraordinary skill, whose arsenal consists almost entirely of back-handed vituperation, ad hominem attacks and insults (we at the COMMENTATOR are uniquely aware that if one were to catalog and store all the insults and invective we’ve lobbed at people the end result would fill your average two-car garage.) More than anything, Coulter wants to sell books, and she does this by lowering the level of her discourse in order to be controversial. (But who are we to argue with this? Yay capitalism! Yay controversy!)

8: Ted Rall

On the opposite side of the political spectrum is Ted Rall. He is arguably more offensive than Coulter, but he is just as inconsequential. What Rall adds to any political debate could be written on a matchbook. Strike that! Written on a match.

When Rall attempts humor, which he does regularly with his syndicated political cartoons, the results are dire. On July 5, 2005, another in a long string of Rall’s obnoxious, not to mention patently offensive, funny page rejects ran in a number of publications. In one panel, Rall has Condoleezza Rice saying: “I was Bush’s beard! I was his house nigga.”

What we learn from Rall’s cartoon is that a Republican president cannot appoint African Americans to positions of power without a white, Yale-educated “journalist” referring to them as “niggas”. Bravo, sir. Bravo. Truly the height of punditry.

7: James Dobson

James Dobson considers himself to be the moral authority of this nation. As the director of Focus on the Family, a religious organization that emphasizes Christian morality in all aspects of family life, Dobson and his staffers proffer such profound statements as “A poll conducted through my own organization’s Web site found that 50 percent of more than 50,000 respondents had been negatively affected by pornography.”

Imagine that. And on a evangelical web-site of all places.

Dobson is well respected among evangelicals due to his views on social issues. What makes Dobson so powerful, though, is the level of respect he has within Congress. He works closely with the office of Senate Majority Leader Bill Frist, who proved beyond any doubt that he has no credibility as a medical doctor or a public figure when he insisted upon the Senate floor that Terri Schiavo, thirteen years into her vegetative coma and later proven by autopsy to be blind as a bat, responded to visual stimuli. James Dobson is to religion and ethics precisely what his cohort Bill Frist is to medicine and politics: a charlatan, a hack, and a blight upon his field.

6: Tim Winter

Where would the innocent children be without the Parents' Television Council? If you were to believe PTC President Tim Winter, they would be wallowing in digital decadence, surrounded by areolae and asses, vulgarity and violence. Winter wants more "F-Troop", not F-bombs.

Winter and the PTC are solely responsible for the flak surrounding the Super Bowl revelation that Janet Jackson's pierced feedbags would go well with a side of eggs. Count me as one of the disappointed TiVo subscribers who expected a little more perk to Miss Jackson's udders.

In the wake of Jackson's "wardrobe malfunction", thousands upon thousands of letters were sent to the FCC, almost all of which were generated by the PTC. Currently, the PTC is fighting to extend FCC purview to cable broadcasts, a disturbing idea for anyone who believes that consumers have the right to hear naughty words and see the occasional bazonga if he or she so chooses.

Winter would like nothing better than to Disney-fy all TV ... for the sake of the children of course.

5: Morgan Spurlock

In 2004, Morgan Spurlock's movie "Super Size Me" was released, garnering positive reviews from a majority of film critics, including human corpuscle Roger Ebert, who said this about the film:

"Today it is possible to ingest thousands of calories at McDonald's, and

zoom dangerously over your daily recommended limits of fat, sugar and salt. I know because Morgan Spurlock proves it in 'Super Size Me'."

Replace "at McDonald's" with "any restaurant ever" and the sentence remains accurate. Spurlock's movie is nothing but a glorified geek show in which one man purposefully does damage to his body for the amusement of others.

Spurlock is anti-choice, anti-business and anti-individual – a perfect trifecta of despicable beliefs.

We must also remember that Spurlock got his start with a show for MTV, "I Bet You Will", in which he paid hapless people on the street to eat their own hair or do worse things to their bodies. Now he's the epitome of bodily restraint, all for corporate interests that he hypocritically denounces.

Recently, he has come out with a new TV series, entitled "30 Days", and a book, "Don't Eat This Book", where he espouses poorly researched anti-corporate, pro-socialist claptrap. Radley Balko, a policy analyst at the CATO Institute and the author of the wonderful Morgan Spurlock Watch blog (www.spurlockwatch.typepad.com) has called Spurlock on his egregious mistruths, including the claim that the FDA has linked the artificial sweetener aspartame to a number of health side effects. (The FDA study Spurlock cites mentions these health effects only to dispute them later.) Spurlock also claims that McDonald's uses beef that has been fed "ruminant remnants" (remnants of other cattle). He makes this claim despite the fact that the FDA banned this practice in 1997.

It seems as if Spurlock is poised to be the next Michael Moore. This seems fitting, as their intellectual dishonesty, poor sourcing and blatant lies tie them intrinsically together as the worst American documentarians ever.

4: Glynn R. Birch

Glynn R. Birch is the President of Mother's Against Drunk Driving. And, as the name would suggest, he's a man. This leaves me with two questions: Was he the unwitting victim of a wrong-headed experiment, like Arnold Schwarzenegger in "Junior", to become the first impregnated man? If so, how did his caesarian section go?

MADD began with a noteworthy ambition: strengthening laws to prevent habitual drunk drivers from getting behind the wheel, which was a real problem in the early '80s. In its capacity as a grassroots lobbying organization, MADD did a notable job of strengthening drunk driving laws. As the current president of MADD, however, Glynn R. Birch is responsible for the usurpation of our choice to drink alcohol. MADD was behind the mandatory federal drinking age law in the mid '80s, and continues to fight the scourge of underage drinking. In doing so, MADD uses false statistics and misleading statements to continue building its organization.

Birch's teetotaling agenda may please the blue-haired ladies of the world, who'd rather pop a pill than pop a top, but the rest of us should ask ourselves how a reasonable organization built on a foundation of heartfelt grief diverged from its path and became a bloated lobbying organization hell-bent on controlling your personal choices... for the children of course.

3: Pat Robertson

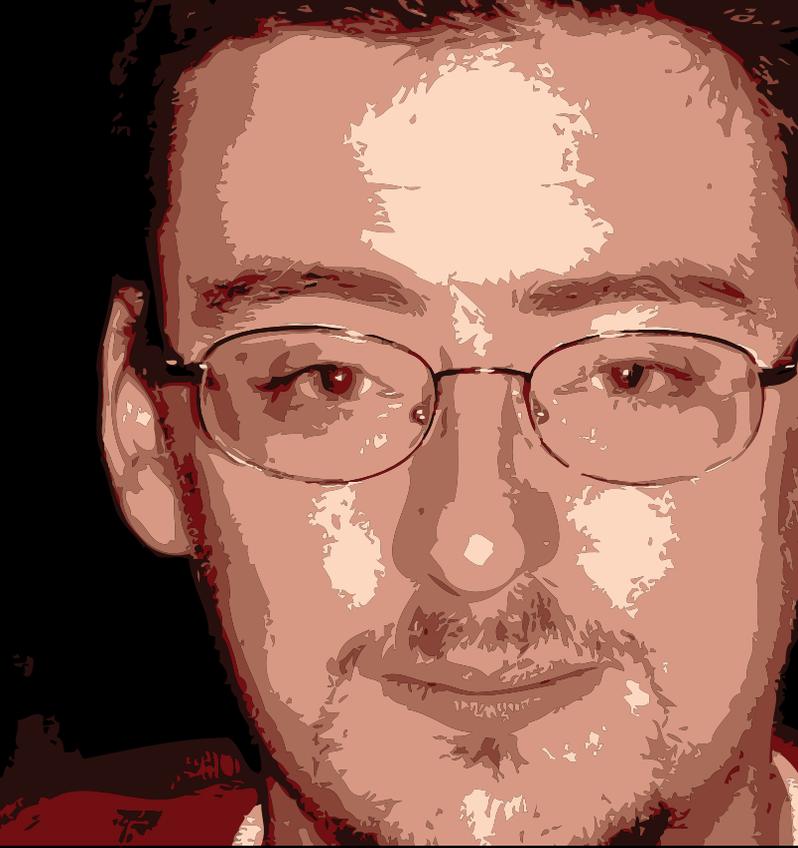
Where can I be found on a Friday night? In front of my TV, screaming at the top of my lungs as Robertson pleads with God to kill another Supreme Court Justice ... and for Heaven's sake, this time make him (or her – wink, wink, Ginsburg) a liberal.

For the past 33 years, Robertson has been the host of "The 700 Club" (the original host was Jim Baker, arguably a bigger slimeball), the most watched evangelical program in the United States. In those 33 years Robertson has said some incredibly idiotic things including, but not limited to, these chestnuts:

--"The feminist agenda is not about equal rights for women. It is about a socialist, anti-family political movement that encourages women to leave their husbands, kill their children, practice witchcraft, destroy capitalism, and become lesbians."

--"We have imagined ourselves invulnerable and have been consumed by the pursuit of ... health, wealth, material pleasures and sexuality... [Terrorism] is happening because God Almighty is lifting his protection from us."

JUMP TO 21



On Pubs and Publishing

In response to massive reader demand, we're finally getting rid of the English guy

Back in the halcyon days of Spring 2001, I was sitting in Clancy Thurber's, considering my options. This was back before the University decided they couldn't have beer being sold anywhere on campus, so I was able to do so over a pint. I was twenty-two, had been in the US for about six months, and have only that to excuse my being suckered into a year-long dorm contract from several thousand miles away. As I went over my bank statement trying to find an economically viable way of breaking my contract as quickly as possible and moving off-campus – I can now say from experience, freshmen, that it's easier than they want you to think – I overheard the bartender saying something about “your friends at the OLCC” to a disheveled group that had just wandered in. This did not endear them to me. It doesn't take six months in this state to develop an antipathy to that bastard organization.

On the other hand, assuming the bartender was being funny, there was a reasonable chance that they might be from the OREGON COMMENTATOR. I'd seen a couple of issues strewn around Carson and been intrigued – partly by the contrarian standpoint, and partly by the abundance of in-jokes. (I've always been inexplicably drawn to a good in-joke, whether or not I know anything about why it's supposed to be funny.) Gambling on that being more likely, I leaned over the booth divider and introduced myself. We had some beers. A couple of days later I submitted a piece; a couple of weeks later they offered me a column.

A question I've been asking myself relatively frequently since then is: am I a conservative now, or what? I certainly never used to think so, and was hired on the basis that I was a token lefty who could string a sentence together. With hindsight, the basis for my designation as “left” was not much more sound. The few political issues I had deeply held beliefs about were and are considered the domain of the left in America: drug

legalization, gay rights, cursing on television, etc, but the more you read around the subject the more arbitrary that identification seems. Still, the powerful aversion I still feel towards many people considered to be emblematically “conservative” – your Pat Robertsons, your Pat Buchanans – made me protest the label. Only an enduring admiration for the writing of P.J. O'Rourke hinted at my impending fall from grace. If you think that's too glib, by the way, it's far from the stupidest theory I've heard as to why I've been hanging around this office for so long. And if you think that “liberalism”, or a general leftish bent, has anything to do with tolerance or open-mindedness, I would respectfully recommend that you live in Eugene for five years to disabuse yourself of this notion.

Anyway, eventually my involvement with the magazine made any protestations moot. I've been a columnist, joke writer, editor, harvester of Spew quotes by the bushel, and the world's most uninformed sportswriter. I have been very much a part of the OC, and the OC is a “conservative journal of opinion” – it says so right on the cover most of the time. The word “conservative” has been understood very differently from generation to generation, though. We've had it construed nationally, and the magazine managed by Republicans. Perhaps more surprisingly, we've had it applied purely at the local level, with Democrats at the helm. At the moment the magazine is mostly made up of people pathologically disaffected from both parties, but no doubt the balance will shift one way or the other over the next year. It's fair to say, though, that each iteration of our staff has done its best to fly the flag for individual liberties, property rights, free speech, free trade, federalism, and globalization, to pick a few famous names off the laundry list. There are other people doing this more eloquently elsewhere – although, with all due modesty, not on this campus. Hopefully aware of our shortcomings when writing or blogging about big serious is-



sues, we aim to apply these principles to campus issues. (In practice, this mostly involves sustained kvetching about various idiocies and criminalities in the student government system, but what can you do?)

Is this controversial? Actually, it is. The most charming thing about this campus is that a fairly banal pro-business standpoint is actually enough to position oneself outside the mainstream. The disconnect between our campus' rather quaint political atmosphere and that of the wider world goes some way towards explaining the hilarity and disbelief that greet many campus controversies once they make their way beyond Kincaid Street – most recently, the Five-Year Diversity Plan. If you've only just arrived here, trust us: it's an interesting place.

Is the stance I'm trying to describe truly conservative? Some conservatives would argue that it isn't, and so would some people who have built careers on scaremongering and demonizing the Republican Party and all those who will not join them in reflexively denouncing it. To pick one example of why I find this unsatisfactory: support for free trade policies – the best way to help developing economies shed their “developing” label, and which will often be in the short-term interest of neither party – is more likely to come from the Republican side of the aisle. As for the social issues, the ones that we all find much easier to understand, I see no reason to necessarily prefer one party over the other. There is a case to be made that in the long run individual rights might be best pursued via the party that spends the most time yammering on about them. However, in the face of a particularly obnoxious species of conservative, a small but hopefully growing number of twentysomethings, including myself, have become comfortable with “libertarian” as a label. There are, admittedly, problems with the term, largely due to people who masturbate over *Atlas Shrugged* and want to privatize the oceans, but it seems to fit the bill pretty well.

But is it “conservative”? Here's the best resolution I've come up with so far. Libertarianism is a pragmatic tendency, not a workable party-political platform. If you try to come up with a purely libertarian solution to a policy problem, you'll usually end up with something that only a sociopath could love. On the other hand, presented with a binary choice between two proposals in the real world, the *more* libertarian option tends to be preferable to your humble correspondent. Similarly, “conservative” is a relative term. In Georgia, limited experience suggests, I'm a liberal. In Libertopia, I'd presumably be considered a socialist. On the campus of the University of Oregon, you're damn right I'm a conservative, albeit one who subscribes to *Reason* magazine.

Either way, this exercise in relativism is now over. My visa is up and I'm bound for points southwest, bitter and politically unaffiliated. Meanwhile, among the many good times I've had in Oregon, the OC has given me the chance to meet, argue with, and carouse alongside some damn fine writers. Some of them are off having their own impact on the national discourse in Washington, New York, and Tiller, Or. – some of them are still getting paralytic at Rennie's and calling me at five-minute intervals to tell me to finish this paragraph already. It's been fun. Thanks are due to all the folks who responded to my pieces or accosted me in bars, and extra thanks are due to the latter group for always being friendly.

Now? I don't know. But wherever I end up, I won't forget to write.



A Mathematics Ph.D. currently working his way through the Anglosphere, Olly Ruff has been an Another Perspective columnist, Sports Desk jockey, staff writer, associate editor, and all-around good mate of the OREGON COMMENTATOR.

Critter's Triumph

By Tyler Graf

Five years after setting three SUVs on fire, why is Jeffrey "Free" Luers still behind bars while his co-conspirator is free?

In 2000, Jeffrey "Free" Luers, along with Craig "Critter" Marshall, set fire to three SUVs at a local car dealership. Free and Critter doused the SUVs with gasoline and set them ablaze in protest to global warming, which they blamed on the prevalence of fossil fuel-guzzling automobiles -- as opposed to global warming caused by random SUV arsons.

Once caught, Free and Critter faced a litany of charges. After a trial beset by setbacks for Free, including the death of his lawyer, in 2001 he was found guilty and received 22 years and eight months in prison.

Over the past four years Free has become a cause celebre among activists and anarchists. Over 100 prominent activists have signed a widely circulated petition, including Dead Kennedys front man Jello Biafra, "A People's History of the United States" author Howard Zinn, and local green activist and author John Zerzan. A grass-roots solidarity movement has sprung forth, spanning coast to coast, to lend support to Free, who is considered by his supporters to be a non-violent political prisoner.

Free hasn't remained silent. Encouraged by his wholesale support within the activist community, Free regularly publishes dispatches from prison on www.freefreenow.com, where he waxes philosophic on his life, his accomplishments and his future.

In a recent dispatch, published in August, Free argues that militancy is essential to his "movement".

"[After my sentence] Militancy took a sideline. People were scared and rightfully so. But, on the whole, instead of addressing the reasons for that fear, instead of looking for ways to adapt and overcome, our movement systematically began to avoid confrontation. We took our radical energy and redirected it into legitimate and socially acceptable channels," writes Free, who later calls the

avoidance of militancy "bad form".

It's hard to imagine that Free will ever be let free.

"You can create alternatives by squatting, guerilla gardening, creating and using alternative energies. You can become a militant -- a smart one who learns how to cause the most damage and get away," writes Free in a July 28 dispatch.

It's also hard to imagine that anyone could take Free seriously. Not only could he not "cause the most damage and get away", as his immediate capture proved, he didn't even have the instinct to save his own ass, as his eventual sentencing proved.

Activists in Oregon and across the country are up in arms about the excessive sentence -- 22 years and eight months for a nonviolent offense -- but what these people fail to mention is that Free was given a choice. And he decided to be a Messiah for his "movement".

After Free and Critter were caught they were given the opportunity to cop a plea: If they pleaded guilty, then they would receive 156 months in prison; if they pleaded not guilty they would, according to mandatory sentencing guidelines, receive the maximum sentence of 22 years and eight months. Critter chose to cop a plea. Free chose to bear his cross, and pleaded not guilty, despite a preponderance of evidence to the contrary.

In the five years since the sentencing, Critter has been forgotten by the activist community, while Free has become one of the most lauded "political prisoners" in the country --all because of his choice.

It doesn't matter how you feel about mandatory sentences (in our case, we are against them). The uproar over Free borders on the absurd. If Free had copped a plea he wouldn't still be in prison. In January 2005, Critter walked free a full year ahead of schedule. In response to

this news, Free wrote:

"Now that Critter is out I can't help but wonder why I am still here. We were arrested at the same time, charged with the same offenses. Up until the very end he & I refused to cooperate with the state. Yet, the state in Critter's case decided that the exact same fire was only "conspiracy to commit arson" and "possession of destructive devices."

In the end, Free made two poor choices: One, Free decided to blow up three SUVs, endangering people in the process, despite vociferous protests on his part concerning this. (Seriously, would you trust two guys named Free and Critter with incendiary devices?) Two, although clearly guilty, Free thought he could get off on a technicality. Both poor choices, and ones he will have to live with for the rest of his miserable, unrepentant life.

And if exploding three SUVs doesn't warrant a prison sentence, writing bad poetry does. Free is rather adept at this as well, as this poem demonstrates:

*"They call me a terrorist
But there's no blood on my hands
They only point at me
to give you an enemy
to focus your attention
Away from reality:*

*"That is they who hide
Behind their happy face masks,
(with their army of thugs)
who smell like death."*

Enjoy prison, Free.



Tyler Graf, a Journalism Senior, is Editor Emeritus for the OREGON COMMENTATOR

DUCKS TO TEST TROJAN DEFENSE

The Ducks have started the season 3-0, with wins over Fresno State and two Division II schools.

Senior QB Kellen Clemens' statistics have thrived in the revamped offensive system. He has completed nearly 66% of his passes and thrown for eight touchdowns, four of them to Senior WR Demetrius Williams. Meanwhile, Senior RB Terrence Whitehead has seen a noticeable drop in his running production, with his yards per carry falling from 5.7 to 3.5.

The Oregon defense has allowed an average of 281 passing yards, but kept opposing running backs to only 3.7 yards per carry.

The Ducks play consensus #1 USC on September 24 at Autzen Stadium.

Our take: Despite the three wins, the Ducks have significant weaknesses on both sides of the ball. While it's tough to criticize the offense given its impressive production, it's quite clear that the overuse of shotgun formations has limited Oregon's ability to run the ball consistently. Whitehead certainly isn't to blame for his low yards per carry—the coaching staff just refuses to use effective

running formations.

An ineffective running game would, on most teams, be quite alarming. But Clemens' maturity and the incredible talent of the receiving corps has more than made up for the troubled ground game. Kettle Country has played lights out so far this season, averaging 318 passing yards and 46 running yards per game. We fear that he's one poorly-executed option away from a season-ending injury, but so far the offense has been a blast to watch.

The defense has been less than spectacular, allowing an average of 365 passing yards a game against first-world offenses (see: not Montana.) The Duck secondary remains terribly vulnerable to tall, speedy receivers like Fresno State's Paul Williams (and, one would presume, USC's Dwayne Jarrett.)

Speaking of USC, their offense is averaging 66.5 points through two games, Matt Leinart has completed 75% of his passes, and Reggie Bush is averaging a ridiculous 10.6 yards per carry. The Oregon defense has limited opponents to only 3.7 yards per carry, but none of those opponents were likely Heisman finalists.

To put the challenge presented by USC's offense into perspective, they

have the best running back in the country, the best quarterback in the country, the best offensive line in the country, and arguably the best receiving corps in the PAC-10.

But that doesn't mean they're invincible. Their defense has weaknesses in the secondary, particularly with starting cornerback Terrell Thomas out with a knee injury, linebacker Dallas Sartz out with a dislocated shoulder, and former starting cornerback Eric Wright no longer with the team. If the comeback against Fresno State proved anything, it's that this Ducks team has the heart to overcome serious challenges. The USC offense will score early and often, but a perfect storm involving a career day from Clemens, a breakout game for the Ducks' secondary, and some big special teams plays could potentially lead to the biggest upset in Oregon history. Some of us were there for the Michigan upset, after all. What do we think we're doing, bringing all this negativity? Ducks! DUCKS!

In fact, screw this magazine-publishing nonsense! We're betting the year's budget on the Ducks beating USC outright in Autzen this Saturday! What could possibly go wrong?

JUMP FROM 17

This makes for fine, albeit depressing, televised entertainment. Thankfully it's nippable free, so Tim Winter approves.

2: Michelle Malkin

Michelle Malkin is the author of "In Defense of Internment." There really isn't much left to say. Malkin, who is of Filipino descent, claims that the detainment of Japanese-Americans during World War II was defensible. Really.

I'm all for contrarian thinking, but as Nigel Tufnel said in "This Is Spinal Tap", there's a fine line between clever and stupid – a line that Malkin clearly doesn't recognize.

Like Coulter, Malkin is trying to sell books, not make coherent arguments. Apparently crazy sells.

1: Paul Krugman

Sometimes the enemy of your enemy is also your enemy. I am forced to agree with Goldberg's assertion that Krugman is wrong for America, though christening him an intellectual thug is taking things a tad too far.

Krugman is an intellectual in the sense that he is a professor of economics at Princeton University. He also served in the Reagan White House and on the board of directors of ENRON until 1999. He may appear to be an intellectual on paper, but when you read his prose or listen to his ramblings, something becomes quite clear: he doesn't view economics from an intellectual standpoint at all. He is a partisan hack of the highest order, who doesn't consider it beneath him to refer to Bush supporters as (groan) "Bushies"

despite how juvenile this seems.

Krugman is the premiere leftist economist of our generation, and his anti supply-side screeds have been hailed as refreshing by the sorts of people who hail such things. For those of us who believe that tax cuts are a good thing and that America is poised on the precipice of economic recovery, Krugman's smug naysaying polemics are tired and trite, not enlightened or intellectual.



Tyler Graf is Editor Emeri— Tyler, are you still here?

ON *MASTERS OF WAR*

I will STRIKE FOR PEACE all year at my school. JOIN ME for the first afternoon from noon to dusk TO STOP THE WAR!

- Brian Bogart, recipient of last year's OC Rising Star award, continues to bring the crazy in a mass email.

I am the UO's only graduate student in Peace Studies, and I have found so many weapons projects on our campus that I cannot spend my final year silently studying in class.

- You know, it's really going to be a problem for the nascent Peace Studies department if their students all refuse to study as a matter of conscience.

OUR SCHOOL solicits and receives funds from THE PENTAGON for its BRAIN-MACHINE INTERFACE project ...to improve the INTEGRATION OF HUMAN AND MACHINE...

- Bogart continues in his trademark sane and rational manner.



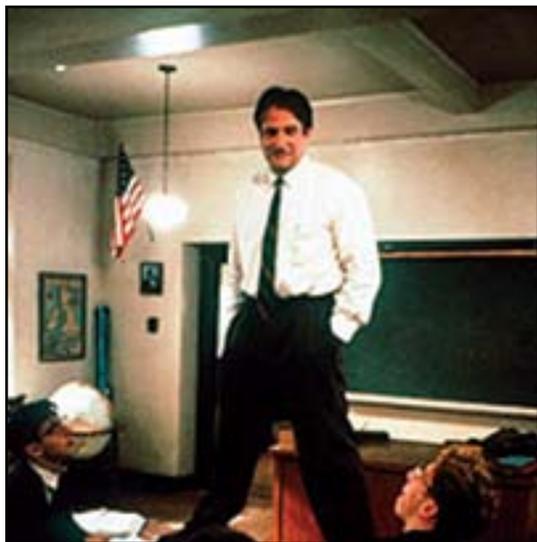
ON *ECON 101*

"I think it's morally wrong for someone to profit because I need shelter to live. It's hard enough just being a student."

- Grad student and co-op resident Sequoia Alba discusses housing, and why she should get to decide how much it costs, in the ODE.

"[Students' Cooperation Association Recruitment Director William Maxwell] also said that co-op residents tend to be community-minded."

- ODE report. As in, one mind per co-op.



ON *THE UPSIDE OF METH*

The percentage of Americans with bulging waistlines is growing in just about every state, with residents of Alabama joining the obesity ranks the fastest. Only Oregon failed to fatten...

- From CNN. Tweakers and vegans: what would we do without them?

ON *LOW VOTER TURNOUT*

The 2005-2006 staff of the Oregon Daily Emerald is proud to announce the launch of a new section of our web presence, an initial set of four blogs.

- *The ODE's Steven Neuman announces his publication's bid for blog supremacy. (Precisely one of these blogs was updated between June and September.)*

We look forward to your participation in this experiment in democracy.

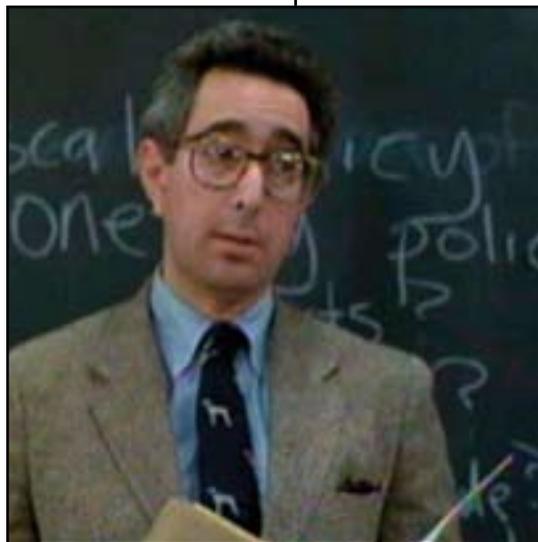
- *Ibid. Steve, it's a weblog. Most of the participation is going to consist of horse porn spam. Be careful what you wish for.*



ON *ECON 102*

"[Homeless 16-year-old] Greg went on to assert that peoples' [sic] value should be based on education and the work they do, rather than how much money they make."

- *OC favorite Ailee Slater moves from loopy columns to hard-hitting news coverage in the ODE. Um, Greg, that's the problem. You're a high-school dropout begging for change on the street. That's why you're not valued very highly.*



ON *GOING COASTAL*

Is America asleep on its ass in front of stupid television programming while the illegals (include Chinese) run amuck and take over my country? No wonder Bush can steal elections and become a new "Hitler"!

- *The heroically confused Rayma Eileen Rich, of Lincoln City, in a letter to the Oregon Peacemaker.*

Democracy is swallowed up by such a tongue, and so, alas! is America. A new Uncle Sam is at the helm: Uncle S(elf) A(nointed) M(essiah).

- *The improbably named Maxine Sheets-Johnstone, of Yachats, in a letter to the Eugene Weekly. OK, what the hell is going on out at the coast? It's clearly something bad.*



ABSOLUT SUDSY