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DESPITE YOU I WILL ALWAYS PRAY

MAY 2007

the portland Spectator

HONOR LIBERTY VIRTUE

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MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Portland Spectator is to show that a conservative philosophy is the proper way to approach issues of common concern. Our viewpoint originates from the following principles:

Individual Liberty

The Importance of Values and Customs

Free Market Economy and Free Trade

The Rule of Law

The Portland Spectator is published by the Portland State University Publication Board; and is staffed solely by volunteer writers. The Portland Spectator is funded through incidental student fees, advertisement revenue, and private donations. In general the staff of the Portland Spectator share beliefs in the following:

-We believe that the academic environment should become again an open forum, where there is a chance for rational and prudent arguments to be heard. The current environment of political correctness, political fundamentalism and mob mentality stifle genuine political debate.

-We support high academic standards.

-We believe that each student should be judged solely on his/her merits.

-We oppose the special or preferential treatment of any one person or group.

-We believe in an open, fair and small student government. .

-We oppose all efforts toward an equality of condition, for this violates any principle of justice that can maintain a free and civilized society.

-We oppose the welfare state that either benefits individuals, groups or corporations. The welfare state in the long run creates more poverty, dependency, and social and economic decline.

-We believe in the Free Market, and that the sole role of government in economic matters is to provide the institutional arrangements that allow the Free Market to flourish.

-We do not hate the rich; we do not idolize the poor.

-We believe in an activist U.S. foreign policy that seeks to promote and establish freedom, political and economic, all around the world.

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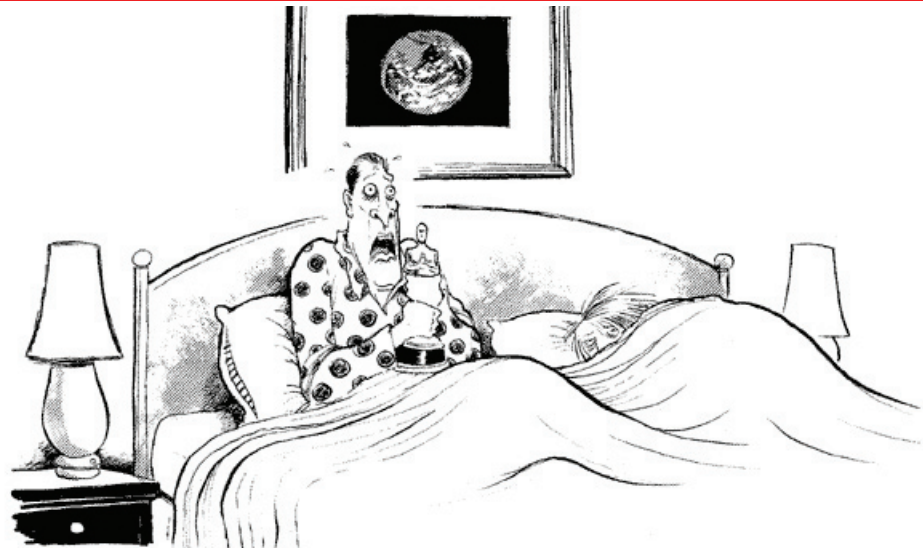
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"(GASP!) I JUST HAD THIS TERRIBLE DREAM THAT THE SUPREME COURT ORDERED A RECOUNT OF MY OSCAR VOTES!"



NOW THAT
DON IMUS
IS GONE
The WORLD
IS SAFE
AGAIN



Comics found from Daryl Cagle's Professional Cartoonist's Index

“Education without values, as useful as it is, seems rather to make man a more clever devil.”
~C. S. Lewis

Virginia Tragedy

Our prayers and well wishes go out to those impacted by the shootings in Virginia this past month. Tragedies impact massive numbers of individuals, and The Portland Spectator would like to take a moment to honor the lives of those lost.

Photography courtesy of Bryan Glenn

Immoral Messages

Privacy issues are a worldwide dilemma. In Iran, the Telecommunications Ministry has been ordered to filter “immoral” video and audio messages sent utilizing mobile phones and state television. No guidelines have been set in place in regards to the definition of “immoral” or the timeline that will be put into place to monitor the messages, but authorities will now be peering into the personal sector of Iran citizens on a new level.

Alien Life Forms?

European astronomers have discovered a planet 20.5 light years away that has the same configurations as planet earth, and may have the requirements necessary to sustain human life forms. Although information is limited at this time, astronomers are claiming that this planet holds the best chance of life that has been found to date, and will most likely be the destination for expeditions in search of extraterrestrial life forms. The promise alone has resulted in bookies being forced to alter their odds in relation to the existence of alien life forms. Only time will tell.

Blame it on Text Messaging

The education commission in Ireland is taking a stance against text messaging claiming that it is posing a threat to writing standards among Irish schoolchildren. Spelling errors and literacy is becoming a problem, and the State Examination Commission is blaming text messaging for phonetic and grammatical errors. Short, incomplete sentences are just one of the results, studies show, of text messaging.

It Pays to Be a Criminal

A Canadian man was tackled by store security while attempting to steal \$93 worth of razor blades. As a result of the contact, the man experienced several injuries, and was awarded \$10,645 by the Canadian courts as compensation. The justification was that the criminal had been forthright in his testimony and that excessive force had been used in his capture. Ironic.

Campus Update

RIISING TUITION. AGAIN.



Why You Should Love Wal-Mart

Although Wal-Mart consistently faces the brunt of complaints in regards to consumerism, they are currently creating a system that will make healthcare more affordable in America. Wal-Mart recently announced that they have begun the process of contracting with local hospitals to open up to 400 in-store health clinics within the next two to three years, with up to 2,000 additional clinics opening in the five years following. Upon a trial of 76 clinics nationwide, Wal-Mart is moving forward with the idea of offering affordable healthcare. Paired with \$4 generic prescriptions, Wal-Mart is aiming to fill a need in the community to have access to the basic human right of health.

Sheryl Crow and Toilet Paper

Sheryl Crow has posed a suggestion that would radically change the habits of many Americans and simultaneously help to reduce global warming. The singer recently stated that Americans should use "only one square per restroom visit, except, of course, on those pesky occasions where two to three could be required". This suggestion is just one in the string of suggestions created by Crow which would enable the United States populous to pitch in to battle global warming in practical, everyday ways.

Why Drinking May Actually Improve Your Health

According to a recent study conducted by U.S. and Thai researchers, fruity cocktails may provide health benefits. Ethanol, which is found in hard liquors, has been proven to boost antioxidant nutrients in fruits such as strawberries and blackberries. The study was published in the Journal of the Science of Food and Agriculture.

Tuition is on the rise- again. At this point, rather than being surprised, the typical student is nothing more than fed up and ready to see a positive impact for the additional fiscal demand of attending Oregon Universities. Next year, another 18% hike in tuition has been proposed due to the lack of the Oregon Legislature to push for educational funding. This hike, rather than deliver students with an enhanced experience, will cover nothing more than what is currently being offered.

Although it may seem pointless to express your opinion in relation to this hike, it does impact each and every one of us as students, so it is in your best interest to make your voice heard. The most effective way to do this is to write your state representative expressing your concerns with the proposed tuition increase. This is the most direct form of communication and also the most powerful. Rather than complain next fall when your tuition check is considerably higher than it has been in previous years, take the time now to make your voice heard.

Compiled by Crystal Joele Rea
Information has been derived from various media sources.

Attacking Freedom of Speech Pertaining to Religion in the Workplace

Freedom of speech, it appears, may no longer as free in the state of Oregon. On April 19, 2007, the Oregon House of Representatives voted to pass House Bill 2893. Among other restrictions, this bill issued a ban on prayer and other forms of religious expression in all state and local government bodies. Extending beyond the actual workplace, the bill prohibits various forms of religious exchange (be it prayer or worship) between employers and employees outside of work hours. This extends beyond coworkers as it moves to restrict religious influence in any relationship REALTED to work.

Realistically, a large body of individuals will never agree to one common set of religious ideas. However, in a society that values tolerance and pushes to make alternative viewpoints mainstream, this bill is contradictory. Oregonians continually move to construct a culture of acceptance and diversity yet fail to integrate mainstream ideology (such as religion) into the mix. This liberal push is another attempt to censor a conservative body as they display intolerance toward religious expression.

Those in support of House Bill 2893 argue that the slant being taken on the bill by religious activists does not coincide with the intent of the bill. Jennifer Sargent, who is the spokesperson for the bill, states that the purpose of the bill "is all

about whether workers should be forced on the job to listen to things they don't believe in." Although this may be the initial intent of the bill, the implications of the actions to be taken as a result of the bill suggests otherwise. The indirect repercussions of House Bill 2893 will lead to a strong movement against religious freedoms of speech.

If House Bill 2893 is to be put into effect, it would indirectly force employers to cease all forms of religious expression related to the workplace because it provides such a strong foundation for workers to sue their employers at a later date. Although on the surface the bill does nothing more than forbid religious influence on mandatory meetings, it will consequently tie the hands of employers and force them to rid the workplace of any action or relationship related to religion because of false accusations that may fall on them from departing employees if religion is present. The risk of being sued in the long run would become too high.

In addition to the standard workforce, many political bodies traditionally open sessions with prayer. These prayers, as a result of the proposed bill, have come into question. Since there are specific individuals that must be present for political sessions to proceed, the prayers could be considered an infringement on the rights of those individuals and therefore would become illegal. Members of

political bodies have questioned if these longstanding traditions will be considered legal if the bill does pass; an answer has not yet been presented.

House Bill 2893 is an attack on Christians in the workplace. It is a violation of the rights of both employers and employees to express themselves through a religious lens and it enables government to overstep its bounds. While the bill may appear to be harmless, the implications that arise as a result are detrimental. Already, it is illegal to fire or discriminate against an employee on the premise that they hold different religious beliefs. This bill is simply another attempt to censor religion. Religion is a personal choice and should be able to be freely expressed just as individuals have the right to make their sexual orientation known. If employees disagree with ideas presented by his or her employer, they should disregard the statements made. Further, if an employee is in an environment that he or she is not comfortable with, he or she has the right to leave their job.

House Bill 2893 is another example of government attempting to assert too much control over its citizens. Rather than push unjust bills through the system, we need to turn our focus to supporting laws and regulations already in place.

"To make Christianity a private affair while banishing all privacy is to relegate it to the rainbow's end or the Greek Calends."

-C.S. Lewis

Ziggurat Con!

By Mikel McDaniel

Six-thousand years ago, in the ancient empire of Mesopotamia, the Sumerian ruler Ur-Nammu erected towering monuments to the gods of his people all across his cities. Of these, one of the most impressive classes of monument was the famous Ziggurat: a stepped pyramid of mud-brick, supporting a hallowed temple at its apex from which the city's inhabitants could lobby for the aid of the divine. Ziggurats were built in most major Sumerian cities, and today survive as the legacies of an enchanting ancient culture. This June, in the shadow of Ur-Nammu's regal ambition, several hundred young American men and women will gather to leave there mark in the annals of Mesopotamia's awe-inspiring history. Introducing Ziggurat Con: the world's first gaming convention ever to be held in a war-zone.

On June 9th, 2007, at Camp Adder/Tallil Airbase in Iraq, American military forces will hold a one-day convention from 1200 to 2100 hours for all our beloved geeks currently serving in Iraq. The Airbase's ping-pong room is being vacated to host tabletop gaming – including collectible card games and miniatures – while the DVD movie room will be playing anime throughout the duration of the convention. The con is being organized by SPC David Amberson and a handful of other volunteers and is currently expected to attract three-hundred attendants from all across Iraqi military stations.

For those not familiar with the tradition, tabletop gaming is the sacred pastime associated with the Sci-Fi Fantasy subculture. It is a chance for avowed geeks – who may otherwise feel a certain level of ostracism from mainstream society – to gather in numbers for the twin purposes of constructing adventurous group narratives and drinking Mt. Dew. In this case, however, instead of emerging from their parents' basements for the ritual congregation, these young men and women will be emerging from combat bunkers.

There is, however, one significant obstacle to the realization of

this noble enterprise: a surprising lack of gaming-supply outlets in the 3rd Air Defense Sector. These soldiers are currently strapped for resources and are asking for donations to support their brief opportunity to enjoy some of the comforts of home while engaged in desert warfare. These troops need sourcebooks, cards, miniatures, and lots and

lots of dice if they hope to fill those nine precious hours to the brim. If you have any material you wouldn't mind donating, or if you want to go out and make a special contribution, the games they will be running including D&D RPGA (of course), GURPS, Shadowrun, Xcrawl, Rifts, Babylon 5 RPG, White Wolf System (I heard they're playing Vampire, I'm uncertain what other adventures they might try to run, if any), Starship Troopers, and Cyberpunk 2020. They also need miniatures for MechWarrior

Miniatures and Historic Miniatures Battles as well as legal cards for a Magic: The Gathering tournament. In addition to these necessary resources, the organizers are also trying to amass prizes for the con, which may simply include other gaming paraphernalia (sealed Magic decks, sourcebook sets, etc.) or any related merchandise (sci-fi books, DVDs, etc.).

If you are interested in making a donation, details can be arranged with SPC Amberson by contacting him at david.amberson@iraq.centcom.mil or you can simply mail your contribution directly to him:

SPC David Amberson
A Co 86th Sig Bn
APO, AE 09331

With any luck, this event will stand as a monument in gaming history, where a few brave geeks rolled for initiative in the sands of ancient Ur. Our hopes go out to them, both that they will make it home safely and that they'll hit crit when they need it most!

Send e-mails to mikelm@pdx.edu



Tau Kappa Epsilon is establishing a new chapter here at Portland State University and is seeking exceptional young men to found its ranks. TKE represents excellence, in both intellectual and moral faculties, and is an opportunity for men to challenge, expand, and develop themselves as students and as citizens. If you aspire to improve yourself in character and wisdom, if you believe in cultivating virtue with learning and fellowship, and if you simply want more out of your college experience, then take the time to investigate everything that Tau Kappa Epsilon can offer you.

*Check out their website at www.tke.org
Or e-mail their expansion consultant, Josh Yeager, at JYeager@tke.org*

The Truth About Panhandlers

by Jared Stilwell

“Spare some change?” is a common refrain heard on the campus of Portland State University. It seems like an innocuous request. Americans are a compassionate people, and we want to help our fellow man who is down on his luck. However, is giving money to panhandlers a charitable act?

Many people give in to the beggar and go on their way. I have often wondered why people do this. Is it because they don't want to be bothered? Are they scared that the beggar might become belligerent? Do the givers feel warm and fuzzy as they meet an altruistic need in themselves?

Are these vagrants just down on their luck? Perhaps the evil Bush tax cuts have caused their employers to lay them off and the lack of affordable housing has rendered them homeless. I don't dismiss the possibility of certain homeless people who just have had circumstances beyond their control cause their plight. However, with the proliferation of government programs it is hard to see how someone would slip completely out of the social safety net, a net that is like mesh. In fact, the government has paid for commercials advertising food stamps because not enough people are accessing the program.

Not your Grandfather's Vagrant

Americans have a somewhat idealized vision of transient populations. Films and television shows glorify the hoboes of old. *The Grapes of Wrath* is an excellent book that deals with the Joad family, who moves west as a result of the dust bowl in Oklahoma. In *Cat on a Hot Tin Roof*, Harvey “Big Daddy” Pollitt, played by Burl Ives, reminisces about his father who was a hobo. Big Daddy remembers that even though his father could not provide for the family and lived a roaming life, he still did the best he could to care for Big Daddy.

Homeless people are not like the Joads or the Pollitts. Barring the occasional unlucky person, most homeless people have sought that lifestyle. I had a conversation with three homeless guys. I asked them why they don't just get a job. They informed me that they like the freedom that lifestyle affords them; they are free to come and go as they please. They don't have to burden themselves with the traditional accoutrements of mainstream society – a job, a rent payment, and other bills.

In the late 1960s and 1970s, the American people decided it would no longer house the mentally ill who were not a danger to themselves and others. These people had been institutionalized to provide a living space for them and to treat their mental illness. But groups like the ACLU clamored for these harmless crazies to be released from the institutions. However, these mentally ill people did not have the skills to cope with American society. In our compassion to prevent harmless sick people from being locked up, we have turned them out on the streets. There are always unintended consequences to public policy decisions. But the ACLU crowd felt good about making a difference. Consequences be damned.

Later, many of these same people who were released from the mental institutions joined the homeless population. In the 1980s Ronald Reagan was criticized for the vast numbers of homeless in America. The feel-good crowd did not stop to think that many of these same people were the ones they had released from the mental hospitals.

The third group of people who are homeless are addicts. Alcohol and drugs become the masters of these unfortunate souls. The next high is what these homeless people crave. Their thirst for alcohol or illicit drugs has made every other aspect of life meaningless. They don't hold jobs, nor pay rent. These are the proverbial winos.

Enabling, not Ennobling

How does the misplaced beneficence of the change giver do any harm? You might argue that giving a little spare change to a vagrant doesn't make the giver responsible for the vice that the panhandler chooses to pursue. While it is true that each individual has free will, why should responsible citizens pay for it?

Giving a crack addict your spare change does not help that person. Subsidizing a vagrant's lifestyle does not help him to learn self-respect or dignity. Calling a ramshackle colony of vagrants, smelling of urine and feces, "Dignity Village" does not give them dignity.

Those with soft hearts and soft minds give money thinking that giving some spare change actually helps the supplicant. Such misapplied charity does the opposite. That spare change further debases the beggar. For the quick fix of feeling charitable, the giver of spare change enables the panhandler to live a destructive life.

However, there are additional consequences of giving money to panhandlers. Although the money you might give a panhandler is small, on the aggregate this spare change adds up. There is a reason why they ask for money in the first place. Guys standing on the corner of an intersection make enough begging to have them do it. This money could go to

people who really need the money. Every dollar that these vagrants receive is one less dollar a starving child in Africa receives.

Each of us has a desire to make the world a better place, it is part of the American psyche. The problem is that when someone gives money to a vagrant, the giver goes on his or

her way thinking that they have made that difference for the day. So, instead of giving a sizeable portion of their income to a charitable cause, they give the spare change in their pocket and call it good. In a recently published book titled *Who Cares More?*, Arthur C. Brooks has documented the differences in charitable giving between conservatives and liberals.

Brooks found that conservatives give a larger portion of their income than liberals. He found that liberals earn more by about six percent, but conservatives give more – both as a proportion of income and as an absolute value.

So join me in saying no the next time a panhandler asks you for money. If you want to make a difference in the world, give your money to a real charity. However, if you want to feel good without realizing the harm you are causing, you can continue to give your spare change to a bum- just don't pretend you are morally superior for doing it.

“Liberals earn more by about six percent, but conservatives give more – both as a proportion of income and as an absolute value.”

WANT TO GET INVOLVED?

The Portland Spectator is looking for staff. We have positions available for writers, editorial staff, and photographers. Benefits related to participation include: academic credit, resume references, salary, and participation free of charge in conservative events. **YOU DO NOT HAVE TO BE CONSERVATIVE TO GET INVOLVED.** If you have any interest in becoming involved, send us an e-mail at portland.state.spectator@gmail.com.

If writing is not of interest to you, there are numerous conservative movements on the Portland State campus. Some groups are new, some are longstanding. If you are interested in participation with the conservative movement at any level, feel free to contact us and we will direct you to the correct group.

■ FAITH and RELIGION

By Mikel McDaniel

What we believe about how the world works has an unspeakably profound effect on our behavior and, by extension, the condition of our environment. It is therefore almost tragic how attached we become to some beliefs. One would think that with something so important we would want to be more conservative and skeptical in our beliefs, for fear that we may be wrong. But there is almost a physical pain one experiences when a belief is rattled, and we have to consider that our conviction is at fault. Sometimes we must admit that the idea to which we clung just isn't realistic, that the candidate we supported just isn't the man for the job, or that something we loved deeply simply is not worthy of our love.

For better or for worse, religion has long been the bastion of unassailable beliefs. If one ventures to express an opinion on films, music, celebrities, books, fashion, or politics, one can never afford to expect civility from a public forum. Some of the most savage and uncivilized debate occurs over topics as trivial as the conviction that Coke is superior to Pepsi. But if someone presents their Bible at a discussion, you can be assured that everyone will lower their voice. Imagine the critical fire spat across the public image of the movie "Gigli" being similarly wielded against a belief in the triune nature of God. If ever a public figure were to make such a criticism, the media would ostracize him or her so severely as to make the reputation of the Dixie Chicks seem almost indistinguishable from that of one of the founding fathers of our nation. In our culture, religion has many social safeguards installed to ensure that a great deal of respect and sanctuary is afforded to our most sacred beliefs.

Religious conviction touches almost every aspect of our world; there are people and organizations killing, legislating, administering, boycotting, protesting, and voting in the name of God every day. At this, it should be even more incumbent upon citizens to take their beliefs seriously and to weigh them carefully, but yet it is still considered taboo to ask hard questions about religion. In a civilization where technologies exist that are capable of disintegrating entire cities in a manner of minutes, and where our beliefs determine if and how such technologies are used, it is nothing short of flagrant irresponsibility and belligerent cowardice that compel people to leave their most important ideas starved of healthy examination.

The word "religion" has itself always been a source of great difficulty, since it is often applied far too liberally to be useful in most issues of public policy. For the current discussion, it seems appropriate to describe religion as the marriage of four elements: morality, spirituality, community, and faith. It is doubtful that the word "community" will cause any trouble in a discussion of religion, but the other three merit brief elaborations – even at the risk of committing stipulation. Morality is the field of inquiries concerning suffering versus happiness; it may be oversimplistic to thus say that what produces happiness is good and what produces suffering is evil (though such is an actual school of thought), but it is by considering the prospects of happiness and suffering that we identify issues of moral significance. Matters of spirituality are those concerning states of consciousness. Experiences that alter the way we view the

world, that realign our perceptions according to an ideal, can be considered "spiritual experiences". And finally faith, which is perhaps the least explicit element on the list, can here simply be defined as a belief that is held without sufficient evidence. This definition will, of course, not sit well with many, and for those that describe faith more as a feeling than a belief, please recognize that such an experience has – for this discussion – already been assigned to the word "spiritual", and that this definition sufficiently captures the important essence of the notion of faith.

Identifying these features of religion is important because it allows us to be clearer when having a discussion about what role religion plays in our lives. Specifically, it must be recognized that it is common wisdom to consider faith absolutely essential to the health of all the other benefits that religion provides. It is this assumption that underlies much of our hesitancy to ever criticize a belief that flies the flag of religion. To many, it seems obvious to assume that criticizing an article of faith is tantamount to attacking the foundations of morality, spirituality, and community all at once. Where extreme, religious entities will warn that any individual that attempts to use sensible words and compelling arguments to dissuade believers of their faith is an agent of the devil and must be avoided at all costs.

This is an exceptionally strategic contention; it is the heuristic equivalent to constructing an impregnable fortress in which to house one's most precious ideas, with as little traffic in and out as possible. The failure of this tactic is in its indiscrimination: foolishness and wickedness can be just as well guarded in such a fortress as benevolence and wisdom. A far superior strategy is to invest in reason. It is a considerably more intensive and challenging resource, but reason will diligently police our minds, protecting wisdom and expunging foolishness.

Can we reasonably maintain the contention that faith is the foundation of all morality, spirituality, and community? Isn't our innate propensity for love and geniality enough of a foundation for community? Is it truly impossible to have a spiritual experience beyond the sanctioned boundaries of religious doctrine? One must admit that there is something truly spiritual in even non-religious art and music, in watching a good movie, in enjoying a sunset, and even in the ecstatic throws of sexual intimacy. And why does one need to believe in anything without sufficient evidence in order to behave morally? Happiness and suffering are tangible enough to affect the mind of any person, irrespective of what they believe or don't believe.

The danger of our society collapsing into a state of hollow, immoral anarchy seems remote enough not to further forestall an important discussion about what we really believe. For that is all we need: a discussion. Keeping our mouths shut and our ears plugged only allows truly dangerous ideas to fester, and all we truly stand to lose from an open and honest dialogue is our ignorance. It will not always be foolproof, but by supporting a standard of reason and subjecting our beliefs to scrutiny, wisdom will always find much safer purchase in our world.

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“Guilty of not believing in the Gods the City believes in, and of introducing other strange divinities; and he is guilty of corrupting the young.”

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the portland
Spectator

Guilty

Combating Climate Change

by Tessie Lopez

The increase of the world's temperature, believed to be mostly caused through the greenhouse effect, has strongly required the involvement of the world's attention. According to the IPCC, (Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change) changes in the atmosphere are promoted through carbon dioxide, methane and nitrous oxide, which are greenhouse gases. These gases are exceedingly expelled through human and agricultural activity. Further documentation expressed through the IPCC reports recognizes that: cold days, cold nights, and frost events have become less frequent. Hot days, hot nights and heat waves have become more frequent. President Bush acknowledged the issues that climate change is springing forth in the 2007 State of the Union Address, by suggesting: "we must increase the supply of alternative fuels, by setting a mandatory fuels standard to require 35 billion gallons of renewable and alternative fuels in 2017...At the same time, we need to reform and modernize fuel economy standards for cars the way we did for light trucks -- and conserve up to 8.5 billion more gallons of gasoline by 2017". The plan President Bush has proclaimed, through the appeal for diversifying fuels, extends to establishing stronger trading alliances with Latin American countries

and any nation willing to join forces in creating alternative fuels for the benefit of alleviating the dilemma and destruction caused by climate change, which is augmented through our human activity with our consumption of oil.

Recently, on February, 16, 2007, President Torrijos of Panama visited the Oval office and met with President Bush to discuss matters of alliance and free trade involvement. Among their conversation in the press conference, President Bush mentioned that his interest in trading with Panama involves a great deal of creating bio-fuels: "I reminded the President that I said in the State of the Union address that the United States is committed to having about 35 billion gallons of alternative fuels as a part of our fuel mix within a 10-year period of time. Bio-fuels means ethanol, or...derived from palm. It just so happens Panama has got the capacity to make a lot of bio-fuels." The President of Panama demonstrated strong agreement to the President's connection and responded by stating that he looks forward in seeing both of their economies grow: "all the cooperation that we can have in research of bio-fuels will help all of our countries be less dependent on oil".

Additionally, on February 27, 2007, President Tony Saca of the Republic of El Salvador, came on a brief visit to the

Oval office in matters of global diplomacy. Expectedly, President Bush mentioned his interest in trade for bio-fuels, which El Salvador can massively produce through their sugar cane plantations, like Panama, which assists in the creation of ethanol: "We talked about interesting opportunities available. And one, of course, is bio-fuels. We both recognize that the development of bio-fuels is in our national interests", stated President Bush during the press conference. President Saca responded by revealing that his intentions of passing a new law on bio-fuels is in the works in El Salvador, because like in the United States, he "wants to work hand-in-hand with President Bush for the development of these bio-fuels in the region".

According to our President, the strive for seeking alternative fuels does not halt in Central America alone. He and the President of Brazil, Luiz Inacio Lula da Silva, have considered forming unification for producing ethanol fuel. In fact, according to an article written by Alan Clendenning from the Washington Post, it is stated that both Presidents, Bush and Silva, will meet on Friday, March 9th, to sign an accord "to develop standards to help turn ethanol into an internationally traded commodity, and to promote sugar cane-based ethanol production in Cen-

Combating Climate Change With Bio-Fuels

"I'm heartened by the fact that in the State of the Union address, the president finally said those two words - 'global warming,'"

-U.S. Sen. Dick Durbin, D-Ill

tral America and the Caribbean".² Many drivers in Brazil have switched to using vehicles that operate on ethanol fuel because the cost is half as much as using regular fuel. International demand on this alternative energy is increasing and apparently the U.S. will set a tariff tax of 54 cents per gallon on Brazilian imports of ethanol. An assessment the Brazilian government has made on the United States is that ethanol can be produced more cheaply with sugar cane rather than with corn, a production which has been particularly chosen to be bountifully grown by farmers in the United States for the sole purpose of extracting ethanol.

Perhaps it has been brought to the attention of many, that our President has visualized creating alternative fuels not only from corn, but soybean, switch grass, wood chips, and other cellulosic selections. Since his plan involves setting the goal of obtaining 35 billion gallons of alternative fuels by 2017, it is difficult to contrast to the 500 gallons of gasoline Americans use each day; effectively in the United States, 146 billion gallons of gasoline is consumed each year. Further research in creating alternative fuels lies in the recent discovery of the portentous poisonous plant in India, which is currently being promoted as an alternative substitute for oil. The plant, jatropha, found to be grown in 98 million acres of India is a small plum sized fruit that grows in wild bushes, and according to Michael Casey from the Washington Times, the Indian government is in hopes that "it will replace 20 percent of diesel consumption in five years".³ The Indian government affirmed to achieve this goal by mixing five percent of jatropha with 2.6 million tons of diesel by the following year, depending on the success of the farmers in its cultivation. These jatropha seeds are crushed and milled in order to generate a yellow like oil, which will then be mixed with diesel.

As in Latin America, sugar cane plantations and oil palm are India's largest cultivations, yet further inquiry into creating more oil palm plantations spark great debate, especially by environmentalists who oppose the Indonesian government's desire to convert millions of rain forest acreage into oil palm plantations. One reason for this opposition lies in the realization made by scientists that creating alternative fuels may in fact cause more harm to the environment than good. The argument is in part due to the competition of food and fuel; by utilizing more agricultural products and converting them for

the exploitation of extracting ethanol and mixing for the purpose of creating biodiesel, many parts of the world and the United States face problems with starvation. Although it is interesting to note, that ethanol expels 13 percent of greenhouse gases in comparison to fossil-fuels, the argument of a starving world, generates another issue that can involve more serious focus as well. All of the plantations and cultivations and newly created factories founded by the governments, can be used to feed the poor or used to be stored for emergencies in countries where famines typically dwell.

Specifically concentrating on the United States, Nebraska faces issues associated with the production of ethanol; in particular, focusing in matters of water conservation. When dealing with the world and ethanol, the choice is between food and fuel. When dealing with Nebraska and ethanol, the choice lies between water and fuel. Thirteen ethanol plants are established in this state and ten more plants are under construction; the government has also proposed funding another 30 ethanol plants for further production of the gasoline alternative. In an article from Nebraska's "Lincoln Journal Star", the problem evolves when there is no choice in producing less corn in order to suffice the need for high water demand. Critics say that the preservation of water is more important for the people in Nebraska, then running vehicle's on alternative fuel, yet what exactly is more important for the environment as a whole?

While many take more concern towards preserving water in Lincoln Nebraska, many others are concerned in cleaning the environment through emitting less greenhouse gases into the atmosphere in Springfield, Illinois. In an article from the State Journal-Register, titled "State urged to act on global warming; Lawmakers offering ideas for Illinois", the suggestion of setting forth 13 policies by a group of state law makers backed up by Governor Rod Blagojevich, are offered in order for Illinois to "reduce its global-warming emissions by as much as 25 percent by 2025".⁴ Among these policies is the example of following California's standards in capping "carbon dioxide emissions from automobiles and coal-burning power plants". As the nation's fifth largest state and world's 23 largest producers in fuel, the motivation is high in producing alternative energy sources.

2008 Republican Presidential Candidate, Senator Sam Brownback from the

state of Kansas, proposes another idea. He desires to grant tax incentives for the purpose of developing alternative fuel vehicles. While meeting with the Michigan Society of Association Executives in late January, Brownback stated to reporters that "big auto manufacturers in this country" are needed and that "we need to produce good cars, we need them to be competitive in this marketplace and around the world". According to the Senator, the average American drives about 25 miles per day; 25 miles per day that cars which use electricity as an energy source would "dramatically cut the nation's oil consumption".⁵ Senator Brownback firmly encourages that federal tax incentives be driven towards the creation of alternative vehicles, perhaps as opposed to alternative fuels. His reasoning to seeking alternative energy efficient vehicles naturally relies upon the concept of global warming, caused by carbon dioxide emissions from regular vehicles that run on oil.

President Bush is not the only leader who firmly believes that bio-fuels are one solution to combating climate change. Latin American Presidents Torrijos, Saca, and da Silva are in accord with Bush and not only desire, but seek expanding plantations on cellulosic agricultural products that can assist in the extraction and creation of ethanol, along with various nations with a similar agenda. The goal set for the year 2017 in reducing greenhouse gas emissions by at least 25 percent into the atmosphere, is for the benefit of lessening the effects of global warming. To an extent, the creation of alternative fuels also present controversies dealing with the rise in production of agriculture for the purpose of oil substitution as opposed to assisting in dealing with an international crisis of starvation and conservation of water. Even though this is so, many agree—including the United Nations—that climate change is caused through human activity and consumption of oil, due to the high emissions of greenhouse gases. The suggestions of creating alternative fuels and alternative energy utilizing vehicles to combat climate change is an initiation to the realization that something must be done.

2. Washington post: ALAN CLENDENNING, The Associated Press- March 4, 2007

3. Washington Times: Michael Casey, ASSOCIATED PRESS- May 1, 2006

4. The State Journal-Register. "State urged to act on global warming ;Lawmakers offering ideas for Illinois". Copyright 2007 The State Journal-Register (Springfield, IL).3 Feb. 2007

5. Copyright 2007 Detroit Free Press , Detroit Free Press (Michigan) Distributed by McClatchy-Tribune

West Columbia Gorge Humane Society

by Jared Stilwell

About thirty miles east of the campus of Portland State University, there is a cathouse that PSU students should make themselves familiar with. No, this isn't the type of cathouse that Bill Clinton or Bob Packwood might frequent. I am speaking of an animal shelter called the West Columbia Gorge Humane Society, located in Camas, Washington.

As students at Portland State, we often get caught up in homework or in other endeavors that will enhance our marketability upon graduation. College students tend to be idealistic. While some of this fervor is born of naiveté, students have a fresh outlook on life. A major part of why we seek to be educated is that we want to make a difference in the world.

Many organizations try to tap into this idealism. For instance, I once met an older gentleman who is trying to set up a student club for the Socialist Party, in spite of the fact that such statism is responsible for the death of millions of souls and the misery of countless of others. However, his mild manners are a pleasant contrast to the combative exhortations of the LaRouge cronies, with their noxious pamphlets, who never open their mouths without subtracting from the sum of human knowledge. OSPIRG has its agents who solicit support as students make their way from class to class. Walking from Smith to Cramer is seldom done without a man with a clipboard inquiring whether I am registered to vote in the state of Oregon.

These organizations seek to tap into the idealism of Portland State students. Most students want to give back to the community. We want to feel as if we are improving the lot of mankind or lessening the suffering of those who are unfortunate. Most of all, students at Portland State want to make a difference in the world.

The West Columbia Gorge Humane Society is an organization that makes a real difference in the community. WCGHS was founded in 1994 as a "no kill" shelter to preserve the human-animal bond. The shelter is run solely on the efforts

of volunteers. The philosophy of the shelter is simple – no companion animal should be killed just because humans don't have space for it. Therefore, no animal that is accepted by the shelter is ever euthanized because it cannot find a home.

Now, I don't have much sympathy for fringe groups like People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA) or the Animal Liberation Front (ALF), nor do I think animals are on the same level as humans. Clearly, there is a clear hierarchy that establishes the needs of humans above the needs of animals.

However, there is an obligation by humans to be kind to animals. Those who are cruel to animals are likely to be cruel to humans. Practice kindness and you become kind. Practice

cruelty and you become cruel. Evidence shows a link between domestic violence and animal abuse. Intuitively, this makes sense. If one is cruel to his dog, that person seems more likely to be cruel to his children or significant other.

Every day in America, some 10,000 children are born. At the same time, 70,000 puppies and kittens are born each day. What happens to these surplus animals? They are abandoned at their local shelter or dog pound. Kittens under six weeks are routinely killed. Nearly 90 percent of all cats who find themselves

in a shelter will die. Surely, America can do better.

As a conservative, I cringe every time I hear about PETA putting up a billboard that shows a picture of a steak and a title that reads: "Holocaust on your plate." To me, this means the real Holocaust performed by Hitler and the Nazi thugs of Germany. I am appalled by the hypocrisy of Peter Singer, who thinks that no animal should be euthanized but that parents should have two years after birth to decide if they want to keep their baby. But I don't think these extreme examples should keep the majority of Americans from building upon common ground.

I don't have to agree with someone about whether animals should be subjected to experiments to work towards a common goal. Both the Left and the Right in this country

"If I believe that God wants me to be a better steward over His creations and a secular atheist believes humans are just another animal, can't we both work together to ensure that all companion animals that are born are wanted?"

should agree that we should reduce the amount of unwanted animals through spaying and neutering. Humanists and Christians should both agree that animals should be treated kindly without letting their philosophies get in the way. If I believe that God wants me to be a better steward over His creations and a secular atheist believes humans are just another animal, can't we both work together to ensure that all companion animals that are born are wanted? Must we make the perfect the enemy of the good?

WCGHS is opening a low-cost, high-volume spay and neuter clinic this year. Every person should make sure their animals have been spayed and neutered. These procedures have been cost prohibitive for some in the past. I don't think the shelter has set a firm price, but the cost will likely be around \$30. The shelter also has plans to offer a reduced price to those who cannot afford the fee. At any rate, the cost a pet owner would pay to WCGHS for that service is a lot cheaper than the local veterinarian. Plus, a drive to Camas is always a beautiful jaunt through the Gorge.

A common misconception about cats is that they are always solitary. In fact, cats will live in colonies. These groupings can become quite

large – as many as 30 to 40 cats living in the same colony. One of the amazing programs WCGHS has is what it calls its Trap Neuter Return program (TNR). This is a program where members of the shelter catch feral, or free-roaming, cats. These cats are then neutered and released back into their colonies. That way, the surplus population of cats is reduced through attrition, not euthanization.

Americans don't have to agree on every issue. That is what makes America great. However, Americans of all ideological persuasions should be concerned about how we treat our companion animals. We can all build on common ground and make this world a little bit better. We can support the fine efforts of West Columbia Gorge Humane Society.

West Columbia Gorge Humane Society

P.O. Box 270 Washougal, WA 98671 360-835-3464

Location: 2675-9th South Index Street

www.WCGHumaneSociety.org

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We have regular updates on West Columbia Gorge Humane Society news - from the shelter and around the County. Please include your e-mail address here and we'll send them to you.

My e-mail address:
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QUALITY AND UNIVERSAL

The myth behind quality universal healthcare and why all is not lost.

by J.A. Hoffman

The presidential election in 2008 will more likely than not, include focused discussion centered round healthcare. Pundits will continue to sound off on the issue up until Election Day. However, as an active member of the Republican Party, I must come to a conclusion on the issue in addition to coming up with an intellectually, philosophically and fiscally responsible answer.

I believe that our system is flawed and is at a point where the public opinion must be answered. In developing my answer to this question, I interviewed a medical doctor Chris Nelson, who practices medicine in the specialty of pediatrics. I presented him with the proposed Californian plan (see the editorial in the Spectator's February issue). His response was one of apprehension to the required pay-in to the system by employers, hospitals, and doctors. He held reservations and did not see it having a positive overall effect on the industry and the macro-economy.

The California plan has employers paying all the cost of healthcare for their employees or paying 4 percent into the system. Dr. Nelson commented that this would have an adverse effect on the macro economy by forcing corporations to lower compensation to employees which would in turn limit the incentive for operations to keep high employment in the American sector. The most likely move by employers would be to move jobs overseas to compensate for the heightened prices related to doing business within the boundaries of the United States. It limits the incentive for employers to continue creating jobs with the expressed knowledge that they would be required by governmental mandate to provide healthcare for their employees. This mandate, in effect, would force businesses to find other venues for employees in less restrictive political environments.

Additionally, the plan includes forced payment by doctors of 2 percent gross compensation, which Dr. Nelson opined that could be as high as 10 percent net of medical doctors pay. The plan also includes a 4 percent tax on hospitals in addition from dipping into the pockets of its doctors. Taxes imposed on the hospital are the most damaging tax, says Dr. Nelson. Most hospitals only break even by the end of fiscal year and are not turning over a profit. Consequently, this tax would have to be balanced by something else. Most likely, the answer would be a continued increase in medical costs and a decrease in incentive

for highly educated medical professionals.

Dr. Nelson also commented on how the average family pays for medical expenses. The most common method is co-pay with private insurance provided by an employer or bought privately. As well, many people who seek medical care for their children are on some form of governmental plan. Further, some people choose to pay for care out of pocket simply by the good old method of cash. The system is very forgiving as well. Dr. Nelson informed me that if a patient cannot pay, hospitals under the Providence Healthcare System write it off (which is the reason most hospitals do nothing more than break even). It is against

the spirit of healthcare to send collections after people who cannot pay for a hospital visit.

Technology is another area our medical system is known for. While it is expensive, our medical technology is first class. Part of the problem with universal systems is there are no profit incentives for firms who innovate and manufacture medical technology such as 3-D Ultrasound. In Canada and the Scandinavian countries, there is no profit incentive for technology. For example: if you are suffering from headaches and other systems of a brain tumor, you will have to wait up to a

“Our costs are not due to greedy doctors, nor are they due to greedy insurance companies. While they are difficult to work with sometimes (Dr. Nelson can vouch for this), they serve their purpose. Rather, it is the “jackpot” settlements (those settlements for millions of dollars) that increase costs for everyone.”

year to get a simple CAT scan in countries who live under a universal healthcare system. Realistically, you could be dead before then. Nelson commented this is why so many Canadians come to America for cancer treatment.

To stop the raising cost of healthcare, we need to pass Tort reform. When someone sues a hospital for 50 million dollars, that hospitals insurance costs skyrocket. This is why healthcare is so cheap in Cuba, India and other similar countries. You cannot sue the doctor. If they leave a sponge in you after a surgery, that's to bad. Our costs are not due to greedy doctors, nor are they due to greedy insurance companies. While they are difficult to work with sometimes (Dr. Nelson can vouch for this), they serve their purpose. Rather, it is the “jackpot” settlements (those settlements for millions of dollars) that increase costs for everyone. There is an incompatibility of our economic system with socialized healthcare. While our system is imperfect, I would rather have a system that is a world innovator and leader. Yes, it takes a few minutes to fill out paperwork and deal with insurance issues, but if I take ill with something serious, I know that I live in a nation with a first class healthcare system.

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President Bush Enters Latin America

by Tessie Lopez

March 8th, 2007 is the official day President Bush arrives in Latin America for his 8th visit. No other U.S. President has ever gone to Latin America so many times. Not only did he meet with Presidents Vazquez of Uruguay, Uribe from Colombia, Berger of Guatemala, and Calderon from Mexico to discuss matters of diplomacy, trade, immigration reform, and a successful future, but to strive, support, and promote safety through the progress of a more productive democracy, where terror and poverty reside.

Clearly our President is a strong fighter for defending our democratic way of life, who hesitates not in aiding leaders with similar ambitions. It is a wise decision for our President to show support and offer assistance to leaders who have the goals of improving their people's

living conditions by creating more work opportunities, implementing educational institutions, providing health benefits, and enforcing justice upon terrorists who violate human rights.

When meeting with President Vazquez of Uruguay, both leaders made public their strong agreement of their allying focuses which is emphasized on the defense of democracy as an organization, which is a function of their societies as well as a form of survival. Both Presidents are determined to improve environmental standards for their people to live in, by creating more work opportunities, granting access to educational and health institutions, as well as benefits. A solution to creating more jobs as a possibility, lies in the ability for the United States to allow more bountiful levels of fruit importations from Uruguay. This will grant unemployed citizens more opportunities for a stable income to their families.

Apart from President Vazquez expressing his gratitude towards President Bush, for his assistance during Uruguay's most devastating economic epochs of its history, President Bush too, recognizes the struggle the nation finds itself in alleviating poverty among its people. In fact, President Bush is one of the very few United States Presidents to have ever visited Uruguay, and this action in itself proves the interest in efforts of assisting a comrade in need.

President Bush's visit to Colombia may not have been warmer than from the citizens of Uruguay, but it certainly was cordial with President Alvaro Uribe. Uribe, known for his strong leadership against terrorism, narcotic trafficking, and violations against human rights, deeply concurred with President Bush on a plan to continue the promotion of

a healthy democracy. Alvaro Uribe is passionate about strengthening the living conditions for his people and in enforcing justice upon human rights violators.

By finitely eliminating Marxist Guerillas and paramilitaries such as the FARC and ELN, no longer will desperate people be persuaded to follow corruption. No longer will hatred between classes spark revolutions that worsen the poverty rates. And, no longer would there be victims who witnessed or suffered from the result of Guerilla murder sprees and assassinations against governmental officials. In fact, these violent organizations who intimidate and endanger their victims in the name of democracy, are in fact killing democracy, forming a dictatorial terrorization against those who are helpless.

It is a wise decision for our President to show support and offer assistance to leaders who have the goals of improving their people's living conditions by creating more work opportunities, implementing educational institutions, providing health benefits, and enforcing justice upon terrorists who violate human rights.

To finitely eliminate these guerillas and paramilitary organizations, is a nearly impossible task but not improbable; case in point, there is a way to halt and limit their terrorizations and that would be to

cut their financial sources. Their economic stability subsists on the income received by narcotic traffickers. If drug traffickers are caught and if production is limited, then so will the economic state of the rebels be limited. Uribe is known and feared for proving a man of his word in regards to trapping drug dealers.

What is not an impossible task too, however, is promoting peace to the citizens and reforming the security policy in Colombia against guerilla warfare. Victims and witnesses of any guerilla or paramilitary actions are protected by the state. As opposed to the past, Guerilla criminals are now forced to give reparations to their victims and not have amnesty granted for any crimes atrociously committed against the humanity. Through truth, justice, and reparation, as President Uribe, fundamentally believes, the pace for the peace process in Colombia will succeed, and his hopes are high for eliminating guerilla warfare for good.

Another country in the difficult struggle against drug trafficking is Guatemala. Along with the Maya plan that is already under operation, so is the United States' invitation for alliance among Mexico and other Central American countries to fight in this struggle. Part of this strategy seeks to train the security bodies that are in charge of fighting drug trafficking, and the intelligence that is going to surround these teams, who will then be able to identify sources in a permanent and regional strategy.*1

Also, for Guatemala to join forces with the United Nations in order to extend further investigative operations to prosecute those involved in organized crime, would mean making a greater leap towards advancing the peace process ahead; this would send out an excellent example of youngsters who are typically recruited by Guerillas and paramilitaries.

These rebellious organizations are not the only terrors citizens are faced with in Guatemala. Gangs are a huge threat to society and are violators of human rights as well. To promote education, extending farther than the capital perimeters is an excellent solution to the forty percent of the population of Guatemala, who happen to be less than fifteen years of age. Our First Lady, Mrs. Bush, is a key player in promoting education so it would not be a bad idea that she and The First Lady of Guatemala, Mrs. Berger, form a strategy to keep children off of the streets and away from the grasps of terrorist organizations and gangs. Since children are the next generation, it is imperative that they have access to learning the tools they will need in order to be successful in the twenty-first century, in a world striving to be free from violence.

As the Presidents of Uruguay, Colombia, and Guatemala, President Felipe Calderon of Mexico too, has expressed his desire to generate more opportunities for the development of his people. Recognizing that the issue for creating a more suitable environment for citizens in want of a better way of living is an excellent position to be in. Creating more work opportunities will allow immigrants to stay in their homes where a steady income can be expected instead of running away to another land, in order to evade poverty. In order for President Calderon and President Bush to share a safe border that closes its doors to narcotic trafficking, arms and terrorism, and an open door to trade, the United States must take some pressure off of the Mexican government by collaborating with cutting the economic supply of terrorist organizations; through halting drug traffickers: "where there is demand there is supply". The United States hold the responsibility to encourage the utilization of less illegal drug consumption, to the extent of no consumption if ever possible.

Assistant Secretary of State for Western Hemisphere affairs, Tom Shannon, is an active member in assisting President Bush join forces with the Latin American Leaders promote safety:

This trip is about deepening U.S. relations with those countries that want to work with us. The President will be meeting with presidents whose governments span the political spectrum. From our point of view, we will work with any government - be it left or right - that shares our commitment to democracy and open economies. With these countries, we share a common desire to work together to create jobs, reduce poverty and social exclusion and ensure that all citizens enjoy the benefits of good government.*2

Working citizens in Latin America need to have the opportunities of trade and work and education at hand in order for poverty to be alleviated. This can not happen in a society where safety is not a commonality history does not recently serve, yet, through development focused initiatives such as CAFTA, crime and insecurity can be controlled to a higher degree and law enforcement as well as judicial reforms will limit terrorist actions, such as in Colombia.

Assistant Secretary of State, Tom Shannon, works with these Latin American leaders by establishing programs such as the International Law Enforcement Academy which aids in the development of the fight against crime by preparing police forces with advanced technical skills to help vulnerable children steer away from gangs and terrorist organization.

Assuaging debt, welcoming trade, promoting reform, and providing aid that sanctions the poor, is the motivation this country has in order to halt violence against human rights and to encourage a successful democratic way of life.



Spring Term: *What Now?*

by Joey King

For students at PSU, there is no term quite as fun and exciting as Spring. The sun finally peaks out from behind its thick blanket of clouds, bringing with it reinvigorating warmth that transforms the Park Blocks into an actual college campus and makes it nearly impossible to attend afternoon classes. However, spring also brings a very stark realization for the hundreds of students that are preparing to graduate: What the heck are they going to do next? I know the feeling well because I went through the exact same stage of bewilderment a year ago.

It was amazing how fast my college career flew by, and all of a sudden I was faced with the prospect of having to (gasp) become a grown up and get a real job. The truth is that everyone enters college with some sort of expectation, whether it's to lay the groundwork for that future CEO position, or to just lay around for four years squeezing every penny out of mom and dad (and then gathering those pennies together to buy beer). Regardless of the intentions behind its inception, at some point college ends, leaving many people light-years away from where they expected themselves to be (or at least light-years away from being confident in the next step to take along the journey of life). I say all this not to scare anybody into developing an anxiety disorder, but rather to offer advice as a self-proclaimed expert who has been through this transitional period.

In my time, I've come to realize that graduates have four main options to pursue. The first is to start a career. It sounds easy enough, but this option seems to have the lowest enrollment mainly because it requires a tremendous amount of dedication and commitment to a particular job avenue. Additionally, it takes a fair amount of luck, because getting hired into a desirable position at a desirable company/organization can be tough for a newbie graduate. The second possibility is just getting a job...any job. The distinction between the job and career options is that here, the employment opportunity is much more short-term, often times is unrelated to the individual's specific area of study, and serves to merely make a little money and waste some time before something better comes along. The third option, and the one I chose, is to continue going to school. Whether motivated by ambition or fear, this is a great way to become more specialized and delay real world integration just a little bit longer. The final and most terrifying option is doing

nothing at all (WARNING: this typically requires moving back in with your parents).

The variance between these options and the implications that go along with each one of them, just go to show the truth about undergrad degrees....essentially, they mean nothing. Okay, that may be a little harsh, but let me explain. The vast majority of students shy away from highly specific and rigorous majors such as Electrical Engineering and opt for the more ambiguous and encompassing fields of study like English or Sociology (not that there's anything wrong with that). Therefore, when a graduating class walks away from PSU with their bachelor's degrees, the specialized majors have at least some direction to where they are going while the non-specialized individuals often

find that they really aren't qualified to do much of anything at all. For instance, two years ago both my roommate and one of close friends graduated; one with a degree in psychology and the other with a degree in communications. After months of job searching and uncertainty, both ended up at the same company selling large printers and copiers to various

office-based businesses in the Seattle area. Needless to say, this is not what they spent four years aspiring to do, but you gotta pay the bills somehow, right?

Now, before you drop out of school, let me stress that college still has a lot of importance. It is true that getting your degree does not ensure that you are going to have a job waiting for you at the end of four years, however, it is (at the very least) a testament to your level of responsibility and your willingness to see something through to completion. And, although I downplayed them earlier, the fact of the matter is that having a BA or BS looks a lot better on a resume than having nothing at all. Regardless, college is truly about the experience. It is the richness of this experience that can directly affect the quality of life from this point forward. The friends you make, the laughs you have, the networks you construct, and the self that you discover all add up to mean a whole lot more than that little piece of paper and all the Scantrons and Blue Books you filled out to get it.

So, is there life after college? Yeah. Is it the life you have always wanted and dreamed of? Probably not, but that does not mean it cannot or will not be. No matter where you end up, see those friends, those networks, those memories, and those discoveries to help make that journey through life as rewarding and enjoyable as possible.

“Spring brings a very stark realization for the hundreds of students that are preparing to graduate: What the heck are they going to do next?”



Portland State
UNIVERSITY

WRESTLING WITH KARL MARX

by Robert S. Reece

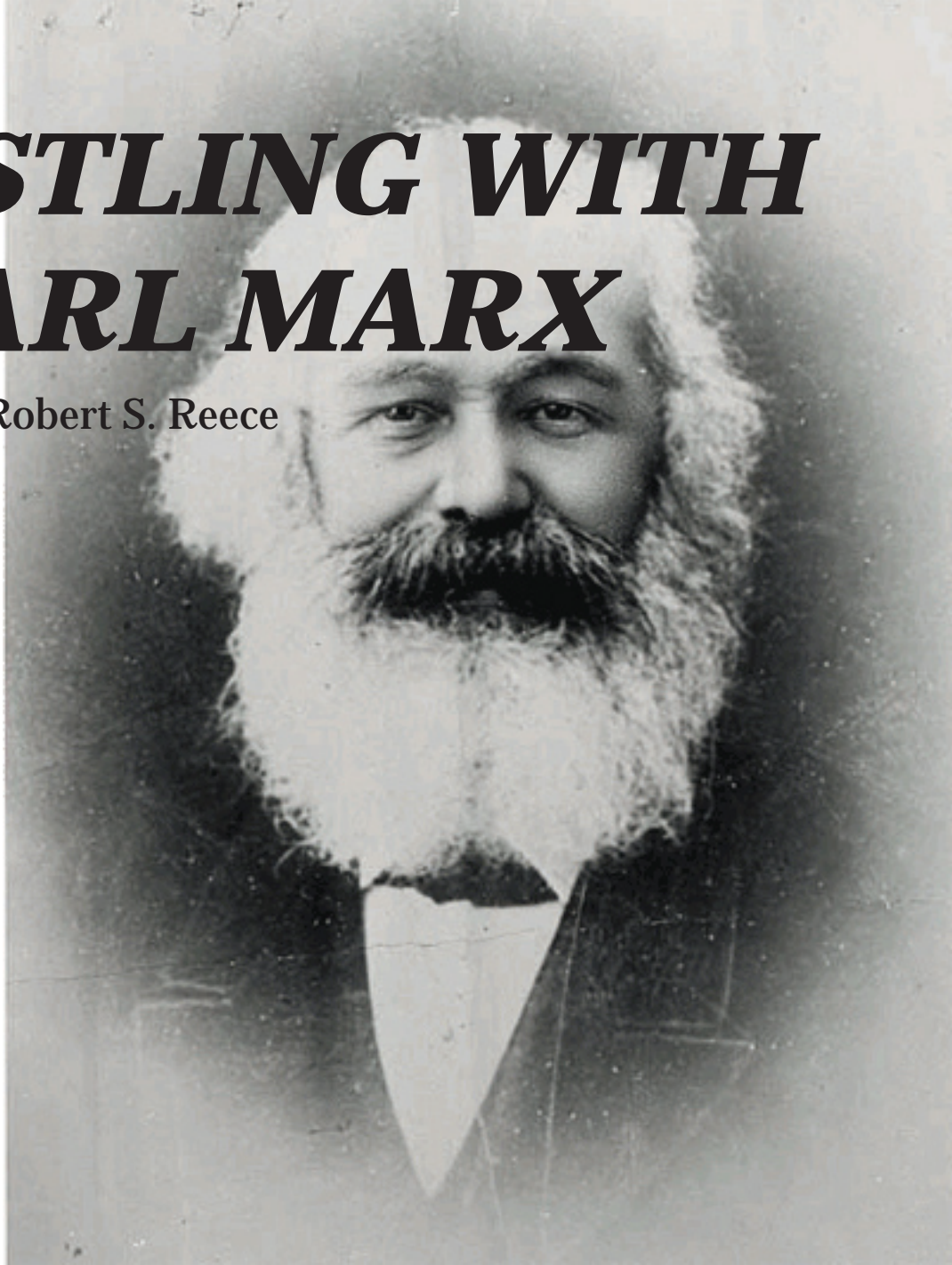
Happiness

Just what is it that is essential for happiness? Let us examine the assertion that in order to live a successful, happy and prosperous life, each of us must have our health. Does this assertion mean that no handicapped person can be successful? Must every blind person be unhappy? Must a woman with prosthesis give up any hope of being rich? Was Helen Keller unhappy? Is Christopher Reeves not prosperous? Is the lady with the hook on her arm not successful? I saw a man with one leg playing goalkeeper. People in wheelchairs still play basketball. Can a totally deaf man be the most successful and prosperous "talk show" host in the world? A person with thalidomide syndrome still manages to paint oil paintings with her toes; a paraplegic, by holding the paintbrush with her teeth.

Maybe, just maybe, "universal health care" is not the answer.

Who says?

Who is it? Who is making these kinds of statements that you must have your health to find happiness, and want to try to guarantee it for you? It is the same bunch of people who want to make all your decisions for you. You can recognize them when they make statements like, "Most people don't know _____!" (You fill in the blank) Don't be mistaken, these people, these "elites", really believe that they are smarter, and can make better decisions than others, including what is good for you and how YOUR MONEY should be spent. Yes, they will make statements like, "Most people spend too much money on _____!" (Again, you can fill in the blank) Don't doubt their sincerity or their desire to "do good." And don't doubt they consider you to be too stupid to take care of yourself, to be able to decide what makes you happy, especially in relation to your healthcare. They will not tell you to your face that you are too stupid to take care of your own business, but they will try to suck you in with a statement such as, "Just look at all the people on welfare" or "What about all the people who have don't health insurance."



Who should make the decisions?

Who should make these decisions? How many layers of bureaucracy will need to be paid for? Who will pay all the salaries?

It sounds like someone wants to get their hands on the money earned by the "doctors," the "hospitals," the "emergency workers," and the "insurance companies" to give it to government workers.

Honesty

Then there is the question of honesty. How many people must be hired just to keep the "doctors," the "hospitals", the "emergency workers," and the "insurance companies" from "ripping off" the system?

Unnecessary procedures

Another slice of the pie must be paid to regulators, inspectors, trial lawyers, etc. to keep doctors, patients, and hospitals from having unnecessary procedures.

Points I want to make

1. Another huge bureaucracy would:
 - a. Cost far too much
 - b. Remove decision making from the doctors and patients
2. Unnecessary, expensive tests and procedures which would abuse any system not a direct part of our capitalist free market.
3. Government regulations and the lack of market forces would exert a negative force on the system.
4. For an example of how the Government runs a hospital, take a look at "Walter Reed!" (Do you really want "Congressional oversight" when you go to the doctor?)
5. As with any bureaucratic program, you introduce the potential for inefficiency, waste, fraud and graft. For instance, the welfare system, the public schools, congressional earmarks, etc.
6. Government subsidies increase costs, reduce efficiency and discourage productivity.
7. Of all the ways to do almost anything, having the government do it is just about the worst way; doing it for a profit, the best.

Some questions

1. Are these people who want to administer our health care the same elites who want 300 million to learn Spanish so that 30 million people don't have to "give up their native language (which isn't really Spanish. It is Aztec, Mayan, or maybe, Inca)?" Verdad?
2. Are you ready to sit back and watch people make a conscious choice to use, or even abuse, tobacco, drugs, and alcohol, and then have you fork over the dough to pay the medical bills they incur?
3. Just how much is a human life worth? (Yes, I know that yours is priceless, but what about everybody else's?) How much should be spent to keep people healthy? How long should money be spent to keep a person healthy, or just alive? If it is my money, it's my call, but if it is your money, . . . ?

Karl Marx hasn't been around for a long time, but his ideas still exert a powerful influence. He envisioned a perfect world that would be fair and equal to every person, and unfair and unequal to none. Humanity was to operate on a level playing field and life's necessities were to be shared from each according to his ability and to each according to his need. His plans, set down in his book *Das Kapital*, detail his ideas of the way things ought to be. A great many people bought in to his ideas, and many people still do.

Long before Karl Marx arrived on the scene, the same ideas were tried. December 1620, "The Pilgrims organized a joint-stock company with some London merchants to finance the voyage through a partnership that was to last for seven years. The Pilgrims agreed to put the results of their labor

into a common fund which would provide the necessities of life for the settlers. At the end of the seven years, all the profits and property were to be divided among the shareholders. This experiment did not work out, and in 1623 private ownership was instituted in the colony (World Book, 1960)."

The Plymouth Colony was an experiment in communism preceding Karl Marx by about 21½ centuries. The experiment failed and a capitalist system with private ownership was instituted with success.

In the last century, two different groups tried, with disastrous results, to implement these ideals of "from each according to his ability and to each according to his need." On the right you had the "National Socialists" (Nazional Socialismus) and on the left you had the Marxists, that is, the "Communists." In both groups there was a small group of "elites" who were supposed to run the country and the economy. There were no "personal property rights". In National Socialism, the state "owned" everything. In communism, everybody "owned" everything in common. (What a great "sense of community")

What did the Pilgrims do for healthcare? How did they try to solve this need? They had far more pressing problems than healthcare. Their biggest problem was the right to worship according to their own consciences. They risked their lives to try to solve this problem. Closely following, of course, was food care, clothing care and shelter care. They tried their experiment in "universal survival care". As told by history, this experiment did not work out

Final thoughts

Question: Should healthcare be a universal right to Americans? (I want to know, at whose expense? I think I feel someone reaching into my pocket for my wallet!)

Answer: One, in order to live a successful, happy, and prosperous life, each individual must have his or her health.

[GO-BEHIND - KARL MARX] Two, Californians soon will. Arnold Schwarzenegger has a plan. It will only cost \$12 BILLION per YEAR. [TAKEDOWN - KARL MARX]

This plan is supposed to minimize costs!! "Under the guidelines, companies with ten or more employees would be responsible for paying the full cost of healthcare for all employees or place 4% of payroll (extortion) into an account to provide care." [NEAR PIN - KARL MARX] "Insurance Companies would help foot the plan" [PIN, MATCH - KARL MARX]



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“To do just the
opposite
is also a form of
imitation.”

- Georg Christoph Lichtenberg