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Portland State University. Student Publications Board

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KYOTO PROTOCOL • GUN CONTROL • ABOLISHING THE OLCC

# The Portland Spectator

November 2003



# Toxic



# MISSION STATEMENT

The purpose of the Portland Spectator is to provide the students, faculty, and staff with the alternative viewpoint to the left-wing mentality forced upon all at Portland State University. The Portland Spectator is concerned with the defense and advancement of the ideals under which our great Republic was founded. Our viewpoint originates from the following principles:

*Individual Liberty*

*Limited Government*

*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 editors and writers. The Portland Spectator is funded through incidental student fees, advertisement revenue, and private donations. Our aim is to show that a conservative philosophy is the proper way to approach issues of common concern. 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 believe that equal treatment yields inequality inherent in our human nature.
- We oppose unequal treatment in order to yield equality, 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, social and economic decline.
- We believe in Capitalism, and that the sole role of government in economic matters is to provide the institutional arrangements that allow capitalism 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.
- We believe, most importantly, in the necessity of patriotic duty consistent with the preservation and advancement of our Republic.

**The  
Portland  
Spectator**

LIFE LIBERTY PROPERTY

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The Portland Spectator accepts letters to the editor and commentaries from students, faculty and staff at the Portland State University. Please limit your letters to 300 words.

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## It's A Woman's World

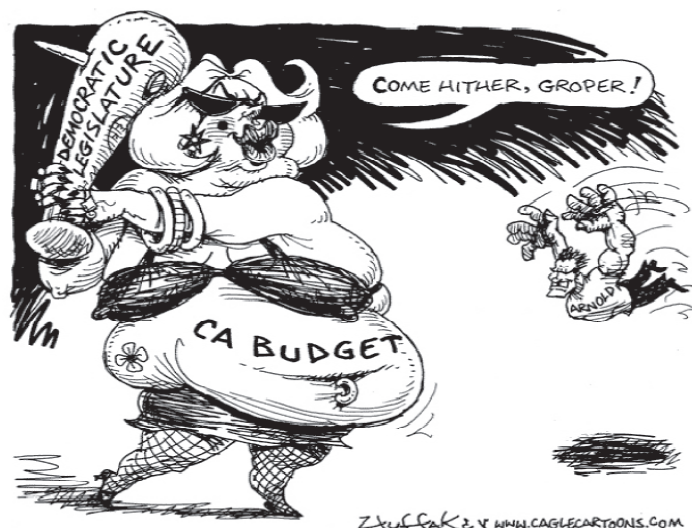
Find out why the ladies really do rule the roost,  
while the white guys bite the  
dust.

By  
Justice  
McPherson

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# PARENTHESIS

## Police Chief Drains Lizard

Dixieland Fun Park's 'feed-the-fish' pond is receiving unprecedented attention in Atlanta after Riverdale Police Captain Carl Freeman allegedly urinated into it. When the park's owner asked the police chief to leave, an altercation ensued, and now Freeman is facing charges of criminal trespass, assault, public indecency, and disorderly conduct.

## Topless Toddler Controversy

A Detroit-area aquatic park called the police on a three-year-old girl for dressing too provocatively. Apparently, the child's mother forgot to bring along a bikini top, and the girl was dressed only in the bottom part of her swimsuit. Security guards deemed this to be a violation of the water park's "family friendly" rules, and summoned the police. No arrests were made, however, since the cops informed park officials that the girl had done nothing illegal.

## All In A Day's Work

Last fall, hundreds of car tires and other debris were cleared from a creek in Beaver County, Pennsylvania. One year later, county employees have yet to receive any financial compensation for the cleanup. The service employees' union demands payment, and has filed a grievance against the county. The only problem is that county employees never actually did any work. The project was performed free of charge by a local high school recycling club. The union wants money because the county was "taking work away from the employees."

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## ELLIOTT SMITH: REST IN PEACE



"Everybody gets a tag. If you listen to a Velvet Underground record, you don't think, 'Godfathers of Punk.' You just think, 'This sounds great.' The tags are there in order to help try to sell something by giving it a name that's going to stick in somebody's memory. But it doesn't describe it. So 'depressing' isn't a word I would use to describe my music. But there is some sadness in it -- there has to be, so that the happiness in it will matter."

- Elliott Smith, *Rolling Stone*, 2000

## WE DON'T NEED A LAW AGAINST EVERYTHING

No-call may be a great idea-but only if the arrangements are controlled by private contract and not by government regulation. A phone customer does not own the lines coming into his home, so he may not restrict their use. Once a call enters his house, the customer has a remedy: Hang up. That's not much different than radio or TV. If you don't want to see a commercial, turn off the TV or switch channels. Your ownership of the television doesn't give you the right to prevent advertisers from broadcasting into your living room. Similarly, your ownership of a phone doesn't mean you can suppress usage of incoming lines.

- Robert A. Levy, *Investor's Business Daily* on October 10, 2003

## FRIENDSTER PHOBIA



I'm too old for Friendster, and I'm scared of it. It seems like all the awkwardness and hassle of real-world interaction (and then some) without any of the benefits.

We all have friends that we can't legitimately account for, and whom we assiduously strive to keep isolated from other parts of our friend networks. Meathead friends, friends with no class, friends who think Friends is funny. Or, on the flip side, friends given to hyperintellectual pretensions who think terms like "bounded rationality" are perfectly acceptable in a beer-and-wings type of setting. Friendster breaks down the delicate social barriers that we depend on.

And we all know people that we don't particularly like who are oblivious to our disdain. Friendster removes the ambiguity that keeps us from insulting them. There is no "Acquaintance-ster" intermediate category that we could use to let them down easy. We have to either accept their classify-me-as-a-friend overture, or tell them, "sorry, you didn't make the cut". It's a social horror. Why don't you people come clean and just go back to online dating?

-Gene Healy, *AFFBrainwash.com*, September 22, 2003

## WHO WULOD HVAE THOGUHT?

Aoccdnrig to a rscheearch at Cmabrigde Uinervtisy, it deosn't mtttaer in waht oreldr the ltteers in a wrod are, the olny iprmoetnt tihng is taht the frist and lsat ltteer be at the rghit pclae. The rset can be a total mses and you can sitll raed it wouthit porbelm. Tihs is bcuseae the huamn mnid deos not raed ervey lteter by istlef, but the wrod as a wlohe.

-Author Unknown, found floating aimlessly on the internet



## An Evening with Michael Moore

In an appearance at Memorial Coliseum, Moore confirmed rumors that he is a total jackass. As one of his cheap stunts designed to stall his unsuspecting victim, he decided to call someone in front of the whole crowd. "Who?" he asked. "Lars Larson" the crowd replied. With the speakerphone on for everyone to hear, Moore reached Larson's voicemail, which gave his personal cell phone number. Larson received harassing calls all night.

## PUD Gone DOA

Proponents of the government takeover of PGE are unfazed by their brutal defeat in Multnomah County elections on Tuesday. Measure 25-52, which would have de-privatized the Enron-owned energy company, was voted down by over 70% of voters in the state's most liberal county. Nonetheless, backers of the 'people's utility district' are still planning to put similar measures on the ballot in five other Oregon counties.

## Bad Medicine

A Portland doctor is being sued for medical negligence after performing a botched vasectomy. Leo Winebarger and his wife conceived a child despite the procedure, and are now asking for over \$300,000 for its future upbringing. The couple alleges that the doctor knew the operation was a failure, but never revealed his mistake. Lesson: think twice before getting clipped.

## Tit For Tat

After eight months of budget gridlock, the legislature was able to trim the state payroll by 136 full-time jobs. But they apparently did not intend to reduce the size of state government for long. On November 6, state lawmakers returned to the capital proposing to add 152 full-time jobs.

# Campus Update

## AFFIRMATIVE ACTION FORUM

An Affirmative Action Forum was held in the multicultural center that was to be free of debate. On the panel were... four people who agreed with one another. How lame. The director of the Affirmative Action program was even on the panel himself. It was also made clear that it was to be a forum, not a debate. In a university environment, where ideas compete and interact with one another, why the fear of debate?

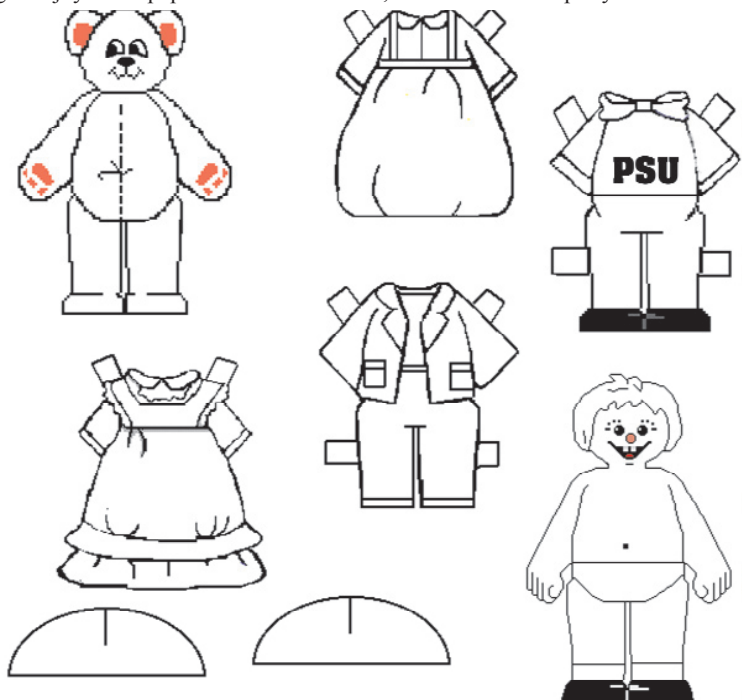
## STUDENT MONEY TO STAY ON CAMPUS

The Student Senate recently approved new Student Fee Committee guideline changes that clarify the "on campus" clause. Basically, it says that student fees are for students. Last year, due to the misplacement of a comma, hundreds of thousands of dollars almost left campus. Now it looks like student fees are here to stay.

## Planning a Vulgar Vagina

"The Vagina Monologues" is back with its vulgar, monochrome portrayal of human nature. A lot of effort goes into giving the play an appearance of social honesty. As the monotony of each skit unravels, however, it becomes clear that its mandate is purely political. The planners of "The Vagina Monologues" may want try something new this year (it lost most of its shock value the first two shows).

To be honest, I ran out of productive ideas for this space. Rather than leave it blank I thought you might enjoy these paper dolls. Color them, cut them out and party.



# EDITORIAL

## Chalk Another Blunder For The Vatican

Only a month ago it was revealed in a BBC1 Panorama program called "Sex and the Holy City," that the Vatican has been telling Catholics in developing countries that they should not use condoms. Church officials claim that HIV and the AIDS virus "are roughly 450 times smaller than the spermatozoon," which easily pass through the protected netting of a condom. Cardinal Alfonso Lopez Trujillo further stated that "These margins of uncertainty... should represent an obligation on the part of the health ministries and all these campaigns to act in the same way as they do with regard to cigarettes, which they state to be a danger."

Health organization all over the world, including the World Health Organization (WHO) have spoken up adamantly to condemn the actions of the church. The WHO states that correct use of a condom reduces the risk of spreading AIDS and HIV by 90 percent. They explain that while human error is a factor that reduces the effectiveness of condoms, there are not holes in them through which communicable diseases can conceivably pass. It appears that the Vatican

has failed to base its conclusion on any reliable scientific data whatsoever. It seems that the church is instead attempting to further its historic anti-contraception agenda.

The church believes that protected sex breaks the pro-creative bond between man and woman.

The Guardian reports, "in Lwak, near Lake Victoria, the director of an Aids testing centre says he cannot distribute condoms because of church opposition." The BBC1 program even reveals a Catholic nun who advises her HIV positive choirmaster to stop having protected sex with her husband because "the virus can pass through."

These patently absurd statements by the church are potential very dangerous. This is not merely a sun-revolves-around-the-earth mistake, but one that could endanger real people all over the world. If the Catholic Church wishes to convince the world that it is a compassionate and loving religious institution, it must reevaluate and renounce such destructive viewpoints.



## Help Give Oregon Voters A Voice

As Oregon voters, we may yet have a chance to make our voices heard with regard to the recently passed 1.1 billion dollar tax increase. The Legislature, and our kind hearted Governor Ted passed the increase into law without asking the consent of Oregon citizens. One can

assume that we were not consulted because our political leaders already know what we would decide. Last January Oregon voters rejected a tax increase, and there is no reason to believe

that a majority favor one now.

A grass roots campaign headed by various taxpayer advocate groups such as the Taxpayer Associating of Oregon and the Recall the Tax office are working hard to gather signatures, which would refer the tax to voters later this year.

Regardless of whether one opposes the recent increase or not, every Oregon voter who values the democratic process ought to sign their name on the petition. Even those who favor the increase must respect the right of their fellow citizens to disagree and cast their vote. Ultimately, the current campaign boils down to a conflict between persuasions vs. force. If the state can take more money out of the pockets of individuals without first convincing them that it is necessary, then there is little difference between lawmakers and common thieves.

# Prohibition Lite

It's time to put an end to the OLCC. **BY AARON JOHN SHAVER**

The disastrous national prohibition of alcohol ended in 1933. Oregon and 17 other states decided to regulate alcohol rather than continuing to ban it. More accurately, our then-governor and legislators made the decision for us by creating the Canadian-style Oregon Liquor Control Commission. Their primary aim was to keep prohibition-era bootleggers out of the distilled drinks business. Just 16 years after its creation, the organization ballooned to include 10 separate divisions. Today, the Commission has over 200 employees at 11 offices. Illegally, the OLCC holds a monopoly; it exercises total control over more than 240 liquor stores.



## Control Freaks

The OLCC's success in controlling underage drinking is questionable. For instance, the latest tactic is to bar the sale of so-called "alcopops" outside of state-controlled liquor stores by 2004. These drinks include Mike's Hard Lemonade and other sweet drinks that avoid the bitter, malty taste of beer by filtering out the fermented grain base. Under the OLCC's naming scheme, these are "distilled spirits" rather than malt beverages. Though their reasoning is intuitive--young drinkers start with "alcopops" because they taste better--there is simply no evidence that underage drinkers consume these beverages more often than adults. Furthermore, these drinks provide a low-alcohol alternative to wine and beer. (For example, Seagram's "Wild Berry" drink contains only 4% alcohol.)

Another lapse in the Commission's

goal to stop underage drinking came recently. The OLCC banned performers under 21 from working in drinking establishments. This earned a lawsuit from the American Civil Liberties Union in September. As dubious as the new OLCC policy is, though, there's an

oversight that's even worse. What good is banning underage performers when the Commission already allows servers under 21 years old to handle customers' drinks? This is the kind of contradictory, arbitrary policy at which the Commission excels. In the same vein, for example, distilled spirits are taxed at a rate many times greater than beer and wine, even when taking into account the percentage of alcohol in each type of drink.

## A Rule for Every Occasion

Liquor retailers, bar owners, restaurants, and consumers shoulder an enormous number of ridiculous rules. The regulatory burden placed upon businesses is excessively voluminous. Even the bullet-point outline of Oregon Administrative Rules for the OLCC spans ten pages. Not only are the OLCC's OAR rules extensive, but their control over them is too.

Liquor store employees cannot change their stores' outdoor signs, shelf dis-

plays, interior advertising, or location without the Commission's consent. They can't sell food in their stores. They can't even make recommendations to customers. Store employees also cannot preemptively refuse service to suspected drunken patrons, shoplifters, or minors, but must instead wait until the customer's blunder is obvious. From the business and consumer standpoint, OLCC laws are obviously overbearing.

Liquor retailers aren't allowed to determine which items they can stock, or even adjust the prices for their products, which are heavily taxed (markup is over 105%). Illogically, the OLCC (whose list of goals includes generating tax revenue) continues to raise prices as sales decline (3.5 million cases have been lost since 1981). In an ironic twist, the OLCC's policies have forced the return of bootlegging. The Oregon Retail Liquor

## What does the OLCC control?

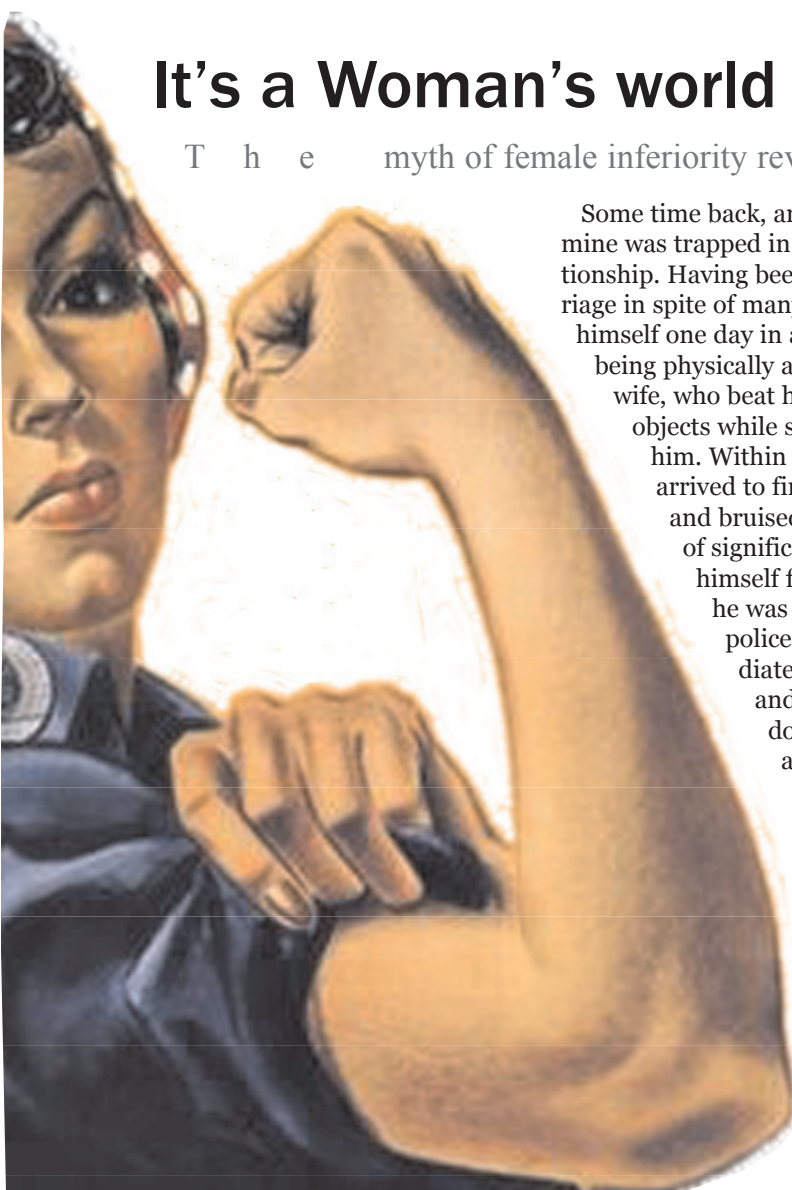
- \* No minor may perform in bars
- \* Liquor stores can't change hours without approval
- \* Exotic dancers may not touch their own bodies on stage
- \* Stores may not recommend products
- \* Stores may not change location
- \* Prices of some beverages cannot be reduced without approval
- \* Stores may not change interior design
- \* Stores may not change their operating hours

*Continues on page 26*



# It's a Woman's world

The myth of female inferiority revealed . BY JUSTICE MCPHERSON



Some time back, an acquaintance of mine was trapped in an abusive relationship. Having been tricked into marriage in spite of many abuses, he found himself one day in a hotel parking lot being physically assaulted by his wife, who beat him with household objects while screaming insults at him. Within minutes, the police arrived to find him cowering and bruised, doing nothing of significance to defend himself from the beating he was receiving. As per police policy, they immediately arrested him and charged him with domestic violence, apologizing to his attacker.

After sentencing him and pushing him through the court system, he had to cope with massive difficulties trying to escape his situation. He only finally received grudging acknowledgment of his real

plight from the legal

system months later, when the woman in question held a federal social worker at gunpoint and fled the state with her child, only to reappear in Vegas.

An unjust fluke? Hardly. His story is typical of many others around the country. Men are becoming fearful of women nationwide, as realization grows that they may be accused of rape, child abuse, or sexual harassment at any time without evidence, and are immediately assumed to be guilty. Women have access to free legal support that men lack, 75% of divorces and almost all divorces involving children are initiated by the woman, and 87% of all divorces result in loss of parental rights by the father. Men are accused of being “dead-beat dads” often – when they cannot even see their own child on account of

no mechanism to enforce their visitation rights, what reason should they have to pay? – but even in this, men have a better record than women, who only pay their child support payments 57% of the time as compared to men’s 68%. Women receive 60% of their child support nationwide from separated fathers, as compared to 48% for the opposite situation.

At every step of the way, the obstacle appears that the culture of the US is unable to conceive of a woman doing wrong, or if it can, then she is to be treated more leniently. Much has been said of the discrepancy in sentences received by blacks and other minorities in the court system as compared to whites, but little has been said of the great discrepancy between women and men charged with identical crimes.

One court, faced with the prospect of making sentencing unbiased and blind to race and gender, objected to the process based on the fact that by making punishments fit the crime in a fashion that removed bias, women would be ‘unfairly’ penalized because of the exceptionally lenient punishments they now receive.

Feminists make much of the claim that women make less money at work than men. However, no mention is commonly made of the fact that while men account for only 54% of the workplace, they are involved in 92% of job fatalities in the US. In addition, women tend to select different professions than men, shunning careers in math-intensive fields such as engineering in favor of lower-paying positions. The differences can be seen by comparing gender rates of applicants to the Sociology and Psychology departments of a college against those same rates in fields such as Computer Science and Engineering. Women also often take time out of their working lives for children and family at some point in their life, setting themselves back on the corporate ladder in a statistically meaningful fashion. Finally, a typical “full time” workweek is shorter for a woman than for a man by an average of more than three hours. When

They are the suicide sex. Bereft of hope, they end their lives 400% more often than their counterpart. They are limited in their options for how to best take care of their family. Devastating crimes can be blamed on them, and regularly are, without evidence or examination. In wartime, they die in droves, and yet it is their counterpart who politicians announce loudly suffer worse. Their life spans are shorter, struck down by common diseases, and yet it is their counterpart who receives the lion’s share of funding for health. The very language in which they speak is biased against them, with asymmetrical words depriving them even of the language about which to speak of their plight. Welcome to the world of the western male.

one is counting total take-home pay, those late nights at the office count.

Images and statements that demonize men flow through our culture. From a young age, women learn that they are 'sugar and spice and everything nice,' something which men are most decidedly not. And who decided that my caring and nurturing aspects were my "feminine side?" We have terms such as "Testosterone poisoning" to indicate negative aspects of traits such as aggression – in spite of the fact that such traits correlate not to an excess of testosterone but rather to having too little. While it is true that the female equivalencies to such terms exist, they are being worn away in a storm of politically correct retuning – yet the male equivalents remain, untouched and even celebrated.

Even language has been turned against men. Consider two terms that should, in an unbiased world, be symmetrical: Misogyny and Misandry. Only one of these is recognized by my spellchecker. Is it because misandry does not exist? No, as the statements by some of the more extreme figureheads of feminism suggest. News anchor Katie Couric recommended castration for infidelity on national TV. Can you imagine what would happen to a male news anchor who recommended genital mutilation of an adult female as a punishment for infidelity on a major US network? Clearly, these examples fall within the "reasonable" use of the term misandry. Yet Misandry is mocked as an unreal term, or even defined by some feminists as healthy, much in the way that many leftist academics have modified the definition of "racism" and "bigotry" explicitly to exclude the possibility of it originating from any non-white source.

The core of this is a dispute over relative power. Power is often characterized in the most direct and measurable aspects: Money, political clout, or physical force. It is claimed that women need more concessions because of their lack of explicit power of this kind. But ignored on this balance sheet is the reality of implicit power, that is, the ability to cause things to happen regardless of means. In the matter of implicit power, women are far ahead. While men



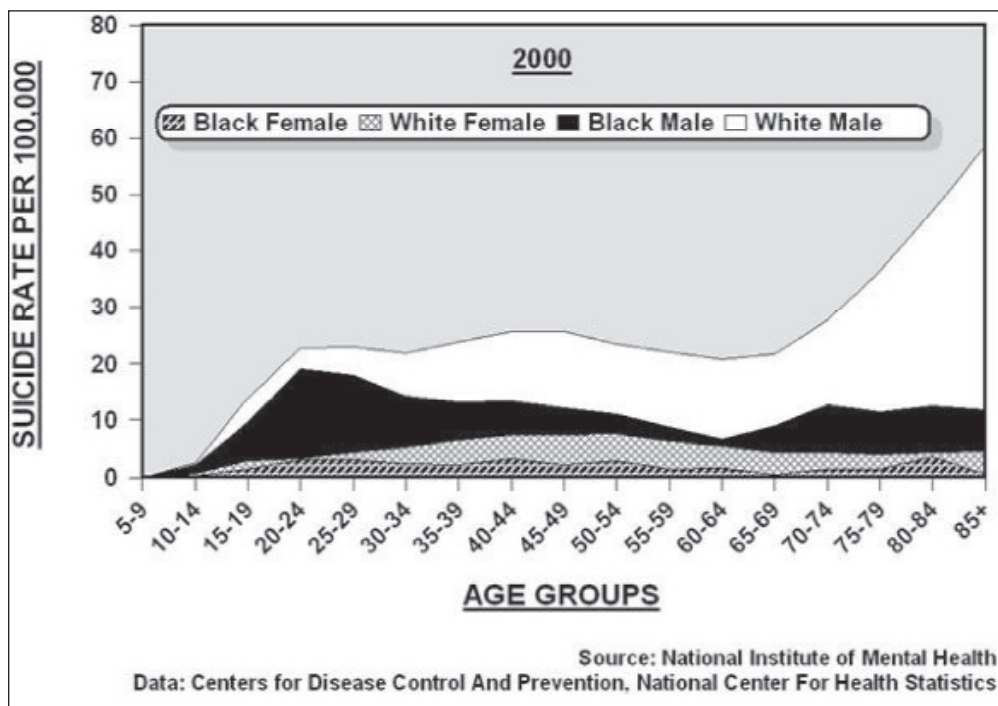
would likely be seen as political suicide; pressing for "women's issues" is the theme of the times.

Men are blamed for wars. Men are certainly involved in war, since the draft is entirely discriminatory in its selection

process by gender. Never have I heard any feminist attempting to clear this inequality up. Men are direly affected by war, being placed in harm's way. But do they want war? Another way to look at it is that men are expected to provide well for their family. When no real standard of "well" exists, this becomes perverted to simply "more." Given limited resources, this inevitably creates conflict, and sometimes, war. Not for "fun," but for their families.

The fact of the matter is that women in today's world still expect and demand the perks of their previous, pre-liberation "sheltered" lifestyle, while successfully demanding the options once held by men. The previous situation was inequitable, yes, but not one-sided; the current situation is inequitable and trends to becoming one-sided. This cannot be allowed to continue. Only recognition of the problem and an immediate quest for symmetry, rather than mere redress of perceived slights, will correct this issue, or else we will see more injustice pile up until a backlash comes - a backlash which is not assured to bring equality any more than the feminist movement has brought true symmetry.

g





# Elite Liberals Attack

A “fair and balanced” look at elite liberal hypocrites. **By Brian Danielson**

Nobody can argue the fact that politics and the media are hot right now. Sean Hannity and local star Lars Larson have recently joined the ranks of Rush Limbaugh as conservative talk icons each with varying degrees of conservatism. Left vs. Right referee Bill O'Reilly just launched his third book, *Who Is Looking Out For You Now?*, setting a record for having three consecutive New York Times Bestsellers. You also have leftist satirists like

Oscar winning Michael Moore and best-selling author Al Franken making a big splash and gaining significant popularity.

The differences between these icons, is evident, however, to anyone who has paid attention to politics in the elite media lately. If you have, then you likely noticed a very disturbing and hypocritical trend from members of the elite liberal media. A tactic that liberals constantly blast right wingers for is insensitivity and tolerance to those with opposing viewpoints and it seems that liberals in the elite media have forgotten their attacking ground and picked up that very tactic.

The most publicized battle so far starts with the incredibly popular talk show host Bill O'Reilly. O'Reilly's first incident involved the liberal satirist Al Franken during a book expo over the summer where a panel of journalists here hawking their new books. When Franken took to the podium he proceeded to launch a surprise attack on O'Reilly, calling him a liar among other ad-hominem attacks. O'Reilly has a section dedicated to him in Franken's newest book, *Lies and the Lying Liars Who Tell Them: A Fair and*

Balanced Look at the Right. The victory of this encounter went to Franken for getting under O'Reilly's skin quickly and breaking the composure of the usually well-spoken O'Reilly.



**Proof that Michael Moore is actually a**

The most recent attack was in mid-October when O'Reilly appeared on National Public Radio's *Fresh Air*. Terry Gross, host of *Fresh Air* made a huge mistake when interviewing O'Reilly on his latest book. Gross showed a clear disdain towards O'Reilly and conservatives, challenging many things O'Reilly has said in recent months. O'Reilly picked up on this and challenged Gross as to why she was giving him such a hard time when just days before Gross gently questioned and coddled Al Franken. Gross made a fatal error, admitting both her and NPR have a liberal bias. O'Reilly wound up walking out on the interview because of her unfairness and relentless attacks. The winner here is clearly O'Reilly as he helped prove NPR's blatantly liberal bias.

Michael Moore is quite possibly the most popular liberal in the elite media now, as he has been making big waves with his latest film *Bowling for Columbine* and rumors of his next film showcasing how the Bush family is uncharacteristically similar to the Bin Laden family. As shown in the October 2003 issue of *The Portland Spectator*, Moore is simply an

angry white man who loves spreading lies and anger towards conservatives. In a recent interview with Moore, the interviewer accused Moore of staging the gun buying scene of *Bowling for Columbine*. This apparently did not sit well, as it sent Moore into a raging tirade.

The most recent example of Moore being childish and immature was a stunt pulled in his recent tour across the country. A supposed business acquaintance of Portland based and nationally syndicated talk show host Lars Larson gave Michael Moore Larson's home phone number. Hoping for an ambush debate, Moore dialed the number on a speakerphone for everyone in the audience to hear. Unfortunately, Larson was not home and his voicemail picked up which includes his cell phone number for personal friends. It is not difficult to figure out what happened to Larson, as he recounts the night Moore's stunt happened, "[They were] calling with profanities, veiled threats...and Michael Moore made it happen.... Moore let the crowd have the number...and for hours last night...his followers called and called and called...Funny thing...when I took a few and asked the caller what he or she wanted to say to me...I was met with dead silence. I went to sleep with my suspicions about Michael Moore and his friends confirmed."

Since the day Rush Limbaugh became popular in the media, he has been a target of leftists, even making the cover of Al Franken's book, *Rush Limbaugh is a Big Fat Idiot*. Rush was, however, considered too extreme by many and did not always garner the mainstream popular support that liberals gave him credit for. What worries these liberals is that the currently popular mainstream figures are on the whole not seen as extremists and are gaining significant popularity among everyday people. Just ask Bill O'Reilly and Sean Hannity. O'Reilly

*continued on next page 26*

# Let's face it, I'm superior by nature.

If only I had known sooner. **BY TRUXTON MEADOWS**

I have never thought of myself as being superior. In fact I've always considered myself to be quite average. Oh, there are the normal qualities of ego that everyone has, which come to the surface occasionally. Overall though, I consider myself to be an average Joe.

Lately I've been considering that maybe I'm suffering from a lack of self-esteem that leads me to be unaware of the super-human genetics I possess. This is all due to many conversations I've had with others that claim that I'm "lucky", "more intelligent", and "stronger" than most people.

Governments themselves have indicated that I'm "rich." When Bill Clinton raised taxes on the "wealthy" in 1992 my then annual salary of an impressive \$26,000 was placed into a higher tax bracket and I was forced to pay more of my "fair share." After all, I was "lucky" to be able to work 40+ hours a week at my job. Many other people that I thought were just like me weren't given the same opportunities as I had been offered. I've just gotten luckier by the year as I continue to create more opportunities for myself. After all, my tax return tells me so.

While I was standing in a grocery line one day I stumbled upon my superior decision making skills, my infinite wisdom, and my brute strength of will. I was purchasing a small amount of groceries for my family. Keep in mind that my wife and I discipline ourselves to not use credit cards for anything but absolute emergencies. Anyway, there was a lady that appeared to be in her late twenties and able bodied. She purchased

her rather large amount of groceries with her Oregon Trail card. You know, that "stigma-free" card they give out instead of the traditional food coupons. Upon ending her transaction for the groceries she pulled out \$80 in cash and

taking every possible paying gig I can to provide for my family is of an extraordinary quality that I and a few "fortunate" others alone have. Could this be true?

In considering all of this I'm going to take stock of my super-human life.

Maybe I should stop my continuing fight for freedom and liberty for all and just realize that many people aren't capable of using their freedom as wisely as I do. Maybe I should start a club where all of us "superior" people could meet and dictate how these other poor, pathetic souls, should run their lives and provide for them anything they want. Oh wait, that's already being done. I think they call it "government." Still, maybe I should start charging my friends a fee for the privilege of knowing and hanging out with such a superior specimen of museum quality super-humanity as myself.

At any rate, we might as well admit and deal with it: I'm superior. Now if you'll excuse me, I need to go change my shirt. I spilled sarcasm on myself. g



purchased a couple cartons of cigarettes. This made me question in my mind why the taxpayers should be subsidizing her food when she makes the choice to spend her resources on cigarettes.

Now I use this story regularly as an illustration of the choices people make in their lives daily that lead to their own "poverty" situations. Many people—that I am assuming also possess a superior genetic make-up—chime in with their own experiences of witnessing the same scene on a regular basis so we can conclude my experience was not an anomaly. I'm sure if I was to do the grocery shopping more than a couple times a year I'd see more examples.

Still there are many that hear this illustration and reply that maybe I've been "given opportunities" that this woman hasn't. Maybe I possess a superior intellect that can reason and make decisions that she can't. That my capacity to work into all hours of the night, making and

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# Journalism, Kyoto and misconceptions

The true science behind the political agenda. **By Dan Mikhno**

The fruits of thorough analysis are often left out of mainstream media. It's no surprise then that journalism has never been regarded as a credible source of information in the eyes of academia. PhD's assessing an issue or accumulating empirical data for a theory use a methodical approach to research all possible inputs. This approach yields a diverse plethora of information from which conclusions can be derived. Journalists, and the media in general, neglect this aspect of accuracy, and instead opt for a succinct overview. Of course, the benefits of such an approach are saved time and resources; but the costs however outweigh the benefits—inaccuracy of information, exaggeration, or simple manipulation of facts.

Journalistic approaches to highly politicized and controversial issues such as global warming magnify the inaptitude of many reporters to keep their own personal biases out of the context of what needs to be reported. What the average "news" leaves the individual with is bits and pieces of false information. False information is in turn used for calls to action on behalf of a cause. The outcome? Perverted policies like the Kyoto Protocol that call on the world population to return to an almost agrarian society, all with insufficient and inconclusive data that the researchers themselves

acknowledge is incomplete. The apocalyptic calls are then swiftly picked up by such organizations as Green Peace that require the injection of new controversial issues every so often in order to keep

tion of many world markets by adopting the Kyoto Protocol? The objective consensus is no.

When the first United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, "Climate Change 1995," was published, it "was heralded as proof positive of a scientific consensus that human activity was causing the earth to heat up. Yet here again, the hype was hollow," states the Director of Environmental Studies at the Competitive Enterprise Institute, Jonathan H. Adler in "Global Warming—Hot Problem or Hot Air?" Mr. Adler further goes on to point out that the press relentlessly quoted only one part of the enormous report, and even that sentence was deemed somewhat controversial because it was arbitrarily added by the editors of the report at the last minute "so that the report would more closely conform with the 'policymaker's summary.'"

One sentence is all it took for the alarmists along with the media to make an elephant out of a fly so to speak. However this was in 1995, thus more evidence must have been accumulated in support of the IPCC conclusion that stated, "the balance of evidence suggests that there is a discernible human influence on global climate." Except that all of it still helplessly inconclusive. In June 2001, the National Academy of Sciences released

a certain report, requested by the White House, heralded as the definitive proof of the negative effects of global warming on the climate change in the world. CNN claimed the report is "a unanimous decision that global warming is real, is getting worse, and is due to man. There is no wiggle room." However, Richard Lindzen, a professor of meteorology at MIT, and



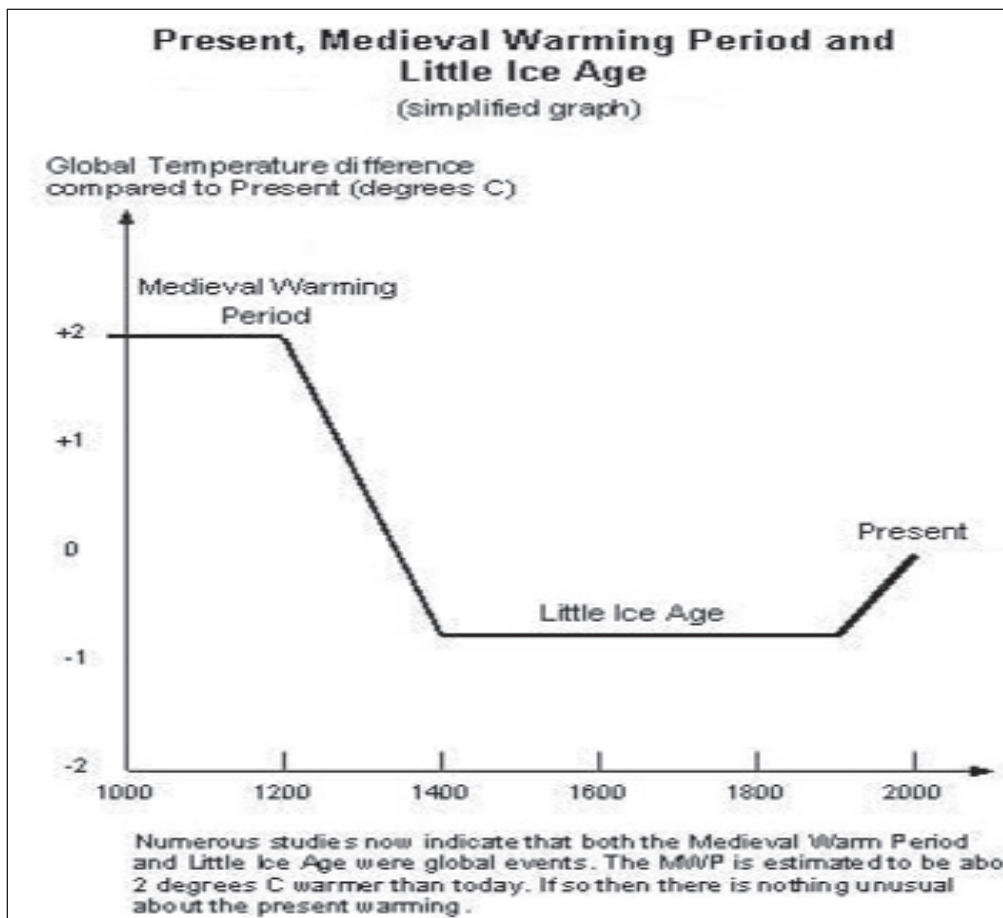
a salient presence in the extremely competitive world of international NGO's (Non-Governmental Organizations). But really, is there serious cause for concern, notwithstanding the media and other emotionally frantic individuals? Is there a tangible reason for crippling the world economy and turning back recent progress made in economic liberaliza-

a member of the National Academy of Sciences panel on climate change that prepared the report refuted this conclusion in a piece in the Wall Street Journal. "As one of 11 scientists who prepared the report, I can state that this is simply untrue. For starters, the NAS never asks that all participants agree to all elements of a report, but rather that the report represent the span of views. This the full report did, making clear that there is no consensus, unanimous or otherwise, about long-term climate trends and what causes them."

Although some journalists may not be intentional in their claims to certain events and outcomes,

reporting, such as evidenced here is simply counter productive to actually finding a solution to the problem. It's simply irresponsible to make such definitive conclusions when no evidence yields. This doesn't mean that carbon dioxide as a greenhouse gas does not play a role in warming the earth, all it means is that it is one of many, and not the largest factor (water vapor and clouds being the largest) contributing to such a phenomenon. What it does mean is that jumping to irrational conclusions, and pushing for even more irrational solutions like the Kyoto protocol, in order "to save humanity" and so forth is uncalled for. It is further unhealthy policy to declare such pessimistic conclusions in light of constantly contributing developments that show an increasing diver-

gence among world scientists, that current global warming is simply part of a larger, century long process that is highly volatile. For example, according to a study done by the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics, reported by Environmental Scientist Kenneth Green,



of the Fraser Institute "A review of more than 200 climate studies confirms that both the medieval warm period and the little ice age were global, not regional phenomena." Furthermore, "For a long time, researchers have possessed anecdotal evidence supporting the existence of these climate extremes. For example, the Vikings established colonies in Greenland at the beginning of the second millennium that died out several hundred years later when the climate turned colder. And in England, vineyards had flourished during the medieval warmth. Now, we have an accumulation of objective data to back up these cultural indicators."

Objectivity is indispensable in the quest for truth. Unfortunately not all societal factors see it as incumbent upon them

to provide objectivity to the public. This is true of more than just journalists, reporters and media at large. Objectivity is often lacking in government, business, laws, rules, and regulations. These are the consequences and tradeoffs of modern societies. That should not imply

that we reserve our selves to half truths, or complete fallacies such as the Kyoto Protocol treaty that would inevitably create a worldwide economic catastrophe. The Kyoto Protocol stipulates that the United States for example reduce its emissions and carbon dioxide levels a full 7 percent below the 1990 levels. All this without any conclusive data supporting such drastic measures. If certain public entities are willing to bow to such absurd, no one is holding them back. The too want recognition in history. The objective voice of practicality however must prevail in order to ensure the constant

growth and viability of all people on this planet we call Earth. g



# The Rush to destroy Limbaugh

A circle of hypocrisy. By Marco A. Nunez Jr.

Ladies and gentlemen...the King of Talk Radio has fallen. For over a decade Rush Limbaugh has impacted and ever growing audience in a myriad of ways. For the lifelong conservative who has never truly understood the intellectual moorings of his or her party identification he has provided layman's arguments to bolster what they believed to be true. For the soul searching independent and Democrat he has shone a light down an alternate path of policy that was rarely presented in other forms of electronic media. He stirred some to laughter at the unapologetically fervent manner in which he attacked the opposition, some to anger as he took on conservative leaders like George W. Bush for their enamor with the trappings of big government and downright infuriated the host of liberals who saw his rhetoric as dangerously un-P.C. But the anger has taken on a different tone now. The seething disgust has morphed into a morbid lust to dismember the dying carcass of the one they call the 'Blovigator'

From the first day the National Enquirer released allegations that Limbaugh had been purchasing drugs through an illegal Florida drug ring the sound of sharpening knives could be heard around the nation as those who hated him most prepared for the destruction they hoped would soon come. Individuals have streamed out of the woodwork to bask in the flames created by Limbaugh's personal combustion and gleefully predicted the end of his reign. In their eyes, the one individual most responsible for destroying "true discourse" through his no-holds-barred attacks on everyone from "feminazis" to "environmentalist wackos" has gotten just what he deserved. Unfortunately, not only is the joy Limbaugh opponents have derived from his personal problems a direct attack on the values they hold so dear but they have also drastically underestimated the impact Limbaugh's addiction will have on his position of power within the conservative community.

Consider comments made by Democratic Presidential candidate John

Kerry at a recent debate: "There are two ways you can lower drug costs in this country: 1) You can hire Rush Limbaugh's maid or 2) You can vote for me as President." What's striking about Kerry's willingness to make such remarks is his own belief, as stated on his website JohnKerry.com, that part of the war on drugs must include "making a commitment to sufficiently fund drug prevention and treatment programs." If the issue were truly as important to Kerry as his list of positions would make it seem one would think he would see this as an opportunity to advance the cause of prevention and treatment rather than use Limbaugh's corpse as a punching bag for the sake of a 5 second sound bite. While Kerry's insensitivity is almost forgivable (he got caught up in the moment, he let politics blind him to the humanity of all, etc, etc) what is absolutely inexcusable is the hypocrisy of the media themselves in covering the fall of Rush.

Cyber-sleuth Matt Drudge summed it up perfectly on an October 10th interview with MSNBC's Buchanan and Press "This story is very sensitive in a lot of ways and before all the big media bigwigs point their finger, they should really question their medicine cabinet." One of the worst kept secrets for years has been that media and Hollywood types bear a disproportionate burden in the struggle with drug addiction. You would think Rush would find some compassion in their corner...or not.

Talk radio icon Don Imus recently commented on Rush's precarious situation saying that "Rush is a fat, pill-popping loser and an undisciplined slob who was turning his maid into a drug pusher." Interestingly enough Imus himself spent

portions of the 70's and 80's away from the microphone battling drug and alcohol addiction, according to a recent New York Post online article. When a listener suggested he give Limbaugh a break in light of his (Imus') past struggles with drug addiction Imus cited Karma as his justifier claiming he was just "giving what he got."

Ironically Limbaugh's decent into a realm of vice often excoriated by conservatives as one of the major problems plaguing our nation has energized rather than alienated his core constituency of listeners. This is just more evidence that, in a time when

the country finds itself even divided over liberal and conservative issues, political power takes precedence over political honesty.

A recent CBN.com (Christian Broadcasting Network) article entitled "Limbaugh's Addiction Common in America" took a sympathetic approach to Limbaugh's addiction claiming that while more and more celebrities are joining their ranks the affliction still remains one that largely affects the average individual. Couple that with a recent survey done by Critical Mass Media that indicates that 95% of Limbaugh's audience believes his foibles should be forgiven and forgotten (22% also claimed to have gained even more respect for Limbaugh through his handling of the situation) and it becomes clear that, in politics, it's not what was done but who did it. g



# Poverty for all?

Helping the poor through globalization. **BY DOUG BANDOW**

Long a fixture on Friday afternoons, anti-globalization protesters in Portland's Pioneer Square have seen their numbers steadily dwindle. Perhaps Oregonians have begun to realize the First World demonstrators, who pose as defenders of Third World peoples, actually advocate leaving the latter destitute.

The process of development, of moving traditional, agricultural societies into the industrial and information age, is extraordinarily painful. It was difficult enough for Western societies, which took hundreds of years to develop. It is even harder for today's developing states, which are attempting to telescope the process into a few decades.

However, that pain must be endured to achieve a better life. Economist Joseph Schumpeter termed capitalism "creative destruction." Every innovation creates losers: Automobiles ruined the buggy industry, computers destroyed the typewriter industry. It is fair to encourage the development of social institutions to ease the transition. It is not fair to shut off development.

Some trendy Western activists wax eloquent on the wonders of rural living. Presumably they have never visited a poor country, let alone a poor countryside. When I traveled the hills of eastern Burma with the relief group Christian Freedom International, I found ethnic Karen villagers living in wooden huts open to rain and insects. There was neither electricity nor running water. People lacked latrines and let their livestock run loose; filth was everywhere. In such circumstances, life is hard, disease is rampant, and hope is nonexistent. No wonder people flee to the city. Not one Portland protester would likely choose such a "dignified" way of life.

Indeed, the problems of globalization must always be "compared to what?" Yes, factories pay lower wages in Third World countries. However, workers in them have neither the education nor the skills to be paid at First World levels. Their alternative is not a Western university education or Silicon Valley

computer job, but an even lower-paying job with a local firm—or unemployment. The choice is clear: According to Edward Graham of the Institute of International Economics, in poor countries American multinationals pay foreign citizens an average of 8.5 times the per capita GDP.

Overall, the process of globalization has been good for the poor. During the 1980s, advanced industrialized countries



grew faster than developing states. In the 1990s, as globalization accelerated, poor nations grew at 3.6 percent annually, twice that of their richer neighbors.

Despite the illusion of leftwing activists that money falls from the sky, poverty has been the normal condition of humankind throughout most of history. As even Marx acknowledged, capitalism is what eliminated the overwhelming poverty of the pre-industrial world. That remains the case today. Resource endowment, population level and density, foreign aid transfers, past colonial status—none of these correlate with economic wealth. Only economic openness does.

The latest volume of the *Economic Freedom in the World Report*, published by the Cato Institute and think tanks in 50 other countries, finds that economic

liberty strongly correlates with economic achievement. Policies that open economies strongly correlate with economic growth. By pulling countries into the international marketplace, globalization encourages market reforms. With them comes increased wealth.

Concern over the distribution of income understandably remains, but if nothing is produced, there is nothing to distribute. And, in fact, globalization has shared its benefits widely. In a recent World Bank report, economists David Dollar and Aart Kraay conclude that the "Income of the poor rises one-for-one with overall growth."

Globalization also has important political ramifications. Freedom is indivisible; economic liberty tends to undercut political controls. Countries such as South Korea and Taiwan, both primary markets for Oregon exports, threw off authoritarian dictatorships once their burgeoning middle classes demanded political rights to match economic opportunities.

International investment and trade also help dampen nationalism and militarism. Globalization is not enough: Rising levels of foreign commerce did not prevent World War I, for instance. Yet investment and trade create important economic incentives for peace. They also put a human face on people who might otherwise seem to be the enemy. The result is a better environment in which to promote international harmony.

Like most human phenomena, globalization has ill as well as good effects. But the good predominate. In most ways for most people, globalization is a positive. By seeking to destroy this process, the Portland demonstrators would keep the world's poor outside of the global economy. The more responsible strategy is to build moral restraints and social institutions to ensure that those with the fewest options are not left behind as the forces of globalization transform their lives and societies. *g*

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# Toxic

Cleaning up our river By Shahriyar Smith



**E**nvironmental problems in Oregon have persisted for decades. Not because anyone has actually advocated them, but because of the monumental failure of environmental groups. From the very beginning, the solutions advocated by these groups have been not only ineffective but politically divisive, damaging a unified effort to deal with environmental problems.

Past the truism that the environment affects us all, and thus, that everyone has an interest in environmental solutions, lies the fact that extra-environmental agendas have taken hold of Oregon's environmental lobby, resulting in a political schism that cripples what would be a unified effort toward environmental solutions. These groups have set the tone for environmental politics in Oregon, making opposition to the extra political implications of their agendas appear un-environmental. And so the nature of the environmental lobby, its various policies and solutions, and

its generation and portrayal of data is skewed toward one political extreme. It is imperative that environmental solutions be reached; however, contrary to popular belief, the establishment of a command economy is not necessary to accomplish this goal.

## The Green River

The largest environmental issue in the state of Oregon is the Willamette River. The release of toxic metals into the river has increased three fold in the last decade, to over 4 million pounds every year. As a result, fish from the river are contaminated, swimming is hazardous (especially during heavy rains), and there are basic human health concerns. Three quarters of Oregon's population and economy resides within the Willamette basin. Even though groundwater is treated, the idea that we are sitting over toxic waste has a variety of alarming implications. And while there were politics involved (a federal grant

to DEQ by superfund for research), the Willamette has been declared a federal superfund site. All of these facts paint a shameful and embarrassing portrait of the Willamette for Oregonians. Even more shameful and embarrassing are the environmental efforts that have been put forth to address this issue.

## The Environmental Lobby

Efforts at cleaning the Willamette River have generally centered on one theme: control. The idea is that since the problem is caused by businesses polluting the river, the solution is to simply force them to stop doing so. By banning discharge of toxic chemicals into the river, the logic runs, businesses will be unable to pollute. It doesn't stop there. Further government control mechanisms are needed to enforce the law and ensure that businesses continue to comply. Some groups, such as OSPIRG, even go so far as to advocate businesses themselves bearing the costs of pollution

cleanup. This is not just a solution to clean up the Willamette river, this is a three part plan to destroy business, and by extension, Oregon's economy.

The implications of such policy on the free market are tremendous. Advocating new government policies and controls over business in the context of environmental politics is a sneaky, subtle way of addressing the broader role of government in business. These policies do not only deal with the Willamette River, they deal with the fundamental nature of American government and economy in general. This is the root of political division that keeps real solutions at bay.

Aside from advocating bad policy, Oregon's environmental lobby is ineffective in a less potentially harmful manner. OSPIRG for example, spends a good portion of their time making signs prompting people to "honk if you are angry about our toxic Willamette!" There are also the constant calls to legislators, the annoying door to door visits, their constant (and notorious) fundraising practices, and a cute little letter to Governor Kulongoski on their website asking him to "keep his promises and clean up the Willamette River." While this kind of relatively benign environmental advocacy is humorous to the average observer, it is at the same time a serious misallocation of time and energy that could be used to actually solve problems. The bottom line: lots of noise, little results.

### **Cleaning Up Our Toxic Willamette**

No business has the right to pollute. But understanding why they pol-



lute is the first step in cleaning up the Willamette River. Businesses do what is most profitable to them at any given time. And presently, it is simply cheaper to pollute. Therefore, making it cheaper for businesses to not pollute is the most effective method of stopping the discharge of toxic chemicals into the river. This can be done in a variety of ways. There are disincentives, which impose costs upon businesses for polluting (such as emissions costs). And there are rewards or incentives for the responsible management of waste such as tax credits. Using one or both of these policy instruments to change the status quo makes it cheaper for businesses to manage their waste responsibly.

Changing the status quo, however, also involves getting rid of or revising part of the Clean Air Act, which effectively

created licenses to pollute. Under the Clean Air Act, businesses can go to DEQ, pay a fee, fill out a form, and are presented with a piece of paper giving them license to pollute. There are licenses allowing small or large (over 50 million lbs) amounts of pollution. The latter is more expensive.

Consequently, the number of businesses applying for 49.99 million lbs of pollution is surprisingly high.

This approach works to support and accommodate business. This is especially important when considering exactly how important businesses are to Oregon's economy and the welfare of its citizens. Oregon's environmental lobby has spent a lot of time building up negative public sentiment against businesses to bolster their policies. But enacting business-hostile environmental policies actually hurts Oregonians by damaging their economy. More expensive goods, lower product quality, and fewer jobs make the lives of people more difficult. It is important to recognize the value of business, and that it is possible to have a healthy environment and a healthy economy. It is too easy to view the issue as a simple struggle between good and evil. Reality is far more complex. Advocating sound environmental solutions involves taking this into account and remembering that the environment is an issue of common concern.

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# Lies of mass destruction

Candidates suddenly abandon WMD rhetoric. **BY ADAM WILKIE**

Since shortly after the war ended the American people have been patiently waiting for proof of a WMD (weapons of mass destruction) program, one of the numerous reasons our nation was led into war. Months into the search with apparently nothing found the left celebrated regularly blaring, "Where are the WMDs?" The media consistently took pleasure in reporting, whether the story was related to WMD or not, that none had been found. Then



finally on October 2, 2003, the Kay Report was released. As no surprise to us on the right, the ISG (Iraq Survey Group) revealed that they had "discovered dozens of WMD-related program activities and significant amounts of equipment that Iraq concealed from the United Nations during the inspections that began in late 2002." The only good news for liberals and the liberal media was that only a small amount of bio or chemical weapons were found. Aside from 97 vials of material to produce bio-weapons (BW) agents, the following illegal activities were uncovered, all undeclared and hidden from UN inspectors:

- \* Network of laboratories containing equipment for weapons research
- \* Prison laboratory complex, possibly used for human testing of BW agents that was not declared to UN inspectors
- \* Further research on various BW-applicable agents, Brucella, Congo Crimean Hemorrhagic Fever, Ricin, and Aflatoxin
- \* Mountains of documents and equipment hidden in scientist's homes to be used for uranium enrichment by centri-

fuge and electromagnetic isotope separation (EMIS)

- \* Undeclared UAVs that exceeded the permitted range by 350 km

- \* Continued ability to produce fuel propellant for SCUDs that scientists were told to conceal from UN

- \* Plans and design work for long-range missiles with ranges up to 1000 km (150 km permitted)

- \* Evidence of recent clandestine attempts to obtain ballistic missiles from North Korea

The only reason I went into such detail is because this is probably one of the few places other than the CIA website that you could actually find this information. The really scary part about all this evidence is that this is only what the ISG found. Imagine everything that is still being concealed or is likely buried as some of their fighter jets and bombers were.

After months of continuously bashing the President on the issue and rejoicing that no WMD program had been found, Democratic candidates suddenly realized they better come up with a new issue fast. One of the more hilarious events of the day was Nancy Pelosi emerging from a meeting with Inspector Kay and proclaiming that there was no evidence of an "imminent threat". The subjectivity and relativity of "imminence" aside, this was particularly amusing to so many because the issue of "imminence" had hardly been mentioned since before the war and it indicated an immediate shift in strategy for the Democrats. I cannot stop laughing thinking about what level of "imminence" would have been necessary for Democrats and our Socialist pals Germany and France. After realizing that Bush was right, some major saving of face was necessary for the Democrats.

This strategy was highly predictable as the surging economy, once a hot topic, was also suddenly swept under the rug as tax cuts have begun to dramatically propel economic growth and the stock market (shameless plug for my column in last month's issue).

Despite all of the good news for Bush and loyal conservatives the days that followed were bittersweet as the media glossed over the report, distorted the results, and moved on quickly, all in a slow news week. A Yahoo/AFP article the following day carried the headline "No WMDs found so far in Iraq as attacks on US troops continue." It isn't until the 16th paragraph that the article mentions "Saddam had not given up his goal to acquire WMD" and that evidence of long-range missiles were found. This only after repeated paragraphs that no WMD had been found, even though some had been found, mention of a NY Times report about the supposed high cost of the search, quotes indicating dissatisfaction with the results, celebration about how many US soldiers have been killed, and other tidbits that lead you to the impression that no WMD programs had been found and it was all bad news for Bush. This in a nutshell is outrageous. This was so outrageous that the Bush administration has recently launched an all out campaign griping about the media filters and their reporting of the war.

The next potential weapon of choice for the left is the screaming about where Saddam or Osama are. They have not surprisingly been reluctant to step up the rhetoric on this issue fearing it could backfire, especially after Uday and Qusay took a great big bite out of a lead sandwich. Patriotic Americans remain hopeful and optimistic they will be found while some Democrats seeking to oust Bush from office hope to death that they are able to remain free. g

# Slim Pickin's

The Democratic Primary Campaigns are looking feeble. **BY LEAL DANIELS**

Candidates in the 2000 elections actually had contrasting and decisive campaign platforms, unlike the mess we see in the current Democratic Primaries. Gore and Bush were clear front-runners in their respective parties back then. The 2004 contenders in the Democratic Primaries may be the best and brightest of the Party, but they do not provide any real compelling platforms, nor is there anything particularly noteworthy about the contenders themselves. The most impressive element in the Primaries so far is the sheer quantity (and not quality) of the candidates.

These days, anyone with a handful of supporters makes a Democratic presidential candidate. The last count was nine, now that Bob Graham dropped out. In many ways, this contest seems akin to the circus in California, except that no candidate is any more compelling than the next one. Interestingly, Hillary Clinton, who is not even in the fray, has more popular support than any of the people who are currently in the contest.

In a recent CNN-USA Today-Gallup poll among Democratic voters, Wesley Clark garnered a popular support of 19 percentage points, Howard Dean was in second place at 17 percent, Joe Lieberman was at 13 percent, and John Kerry and Dick Gephardt were at 10 percentage points apiece. John Edwards, "the son of a mill worker," had about four percent. Candidates Al Sharpton, Carol Mosley Braun, and

Chris Kucinich, who are long shots at best, have less than three percentage points of support.

Most of the campaigns are primarily based on "Bush-hate" platforms. The only original platform is that of Carol

ning the Democratic nomination.

Regardless of the glut in candidate choice, the voting populace, except for the hardcore Bush-despising extreme leftists, is indifferent to the Democratic campaigns. This indifference is evinced

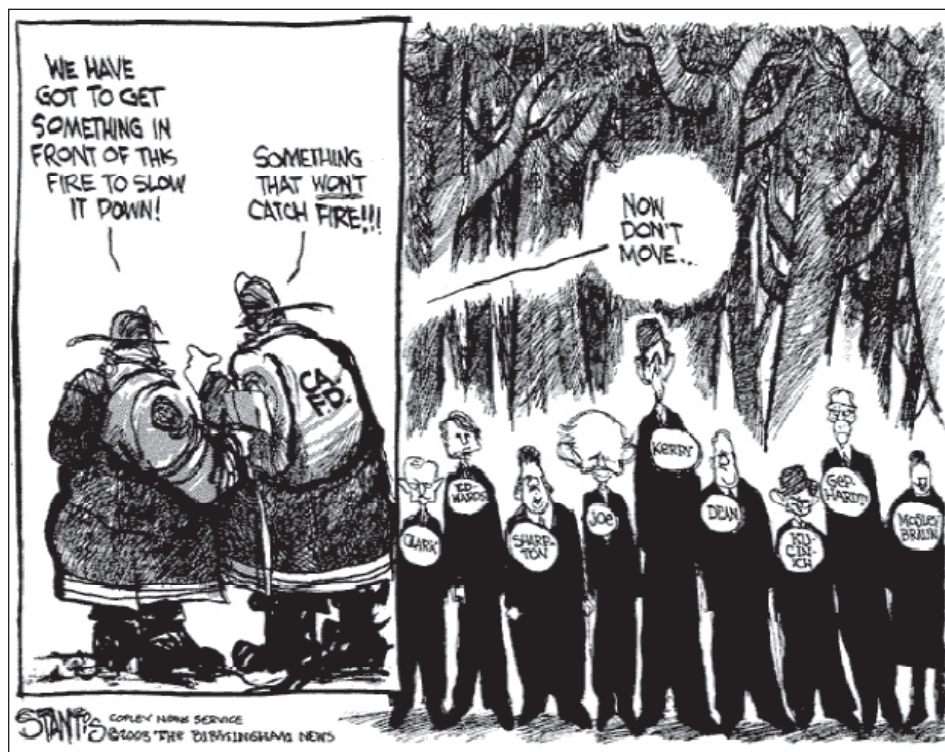
by the poll numbers of recent months. Poll numbers among Democratic voters show that over half of the voters are clearly unfamiliar with most of the candidates. Why the apathy? The most obvious reasons are: the lack of a clear message from the individual candidates, rampant vacillation on platforms, and routine contradictions on the various issues; it often seems that the posi-

tion a candidate takes is based on polls de jour.

More importantly, as can be seen from their debates and various speeches, their criticisms of Bush are mostly ad hominem rather than cogent and decisive reproaches of Bush's policies. "Bush is evil" is the mantra espoused by most of the Democratic candidates. This pandering to base emotions is popular among extreme leftists, and campaigns, like Howard Dean's, cleverly exploit such cheap and hateful sentiments – and it's working quite well for him.

There are two very pronounced issues that the various candidates attack the Bush Administration on – namely Iraq

*Continues on next page*



Mosley Braun who commands a whopping three percent of popular support. Her pledge on record is to take the "Men Only" sign down from the door of the White House. Her platform, which seems to be, "How come only men become presidents? Vote for me because I'm a woman," inclines one to question her priorities, or lack thereof.

One reason for the size of the candidacy pool in the Democratic primaries is the perceived decline of Bush's popularity (now at around 58 percent). But Bush's popularity figures maintain decent levels for a president at this stage in his presidency. Another perceivable reason is the lack of a strong candidate in the contest, affording the contenders a hope that each one has as good a chance as the next one in win-



and the economy. Even though they frequently flip-flop on their individual viewpoints regarding these issues, the campaigns inevitably force themselves in some way to be in disagreement with Bush. After all, these are today's hottest topics.

The need for political ammunition may force the Democratic contenders to blame the lack-luster economy on Bush, but that tactic is fallacious and dishonest. They conveniently forget that the downward shift in the economy commenced sometime in mid-2000 when the venerable Bubba (read: Bill Clinton) was still in office. As vociferous as they are in their doom and gloom outcry against Bush, they will soon have to rethink their strategy on the economy - apparently their most potent point of contention with Bush. All their rhetoric is being categorically unraveled because the economy keeps getting better.

The economy for the past year has been seeing significant upward shifts. There's record home ownership, low inflation, high productivity, and rising factory orders. The stock market has seen significant gains since last year. Unemployment rates have gone down, and they keep going down. First-time unemployment benefit claims have been falling off since September. The GDP growth last quarter was at an annualized 5 percent - well beyond expectations. All of this indicates a robust growth in economy with things poised to only get much better.

On the Iraq issue, Dean and Kucinich were and still are outspokenly against the Iraq engagement. Lieberman, Gephardt, Edwards, and Kerry voted to authorize war on Iraq. Clark has a history of inconsistencies on Iraq, and as Lieberman points out, Clark cannot "reach a conclusion and stick to it". Even though some of the candidates did vote to authorize war, they have incessantly attacked the Commander in Chief since day one in order to pander to the anti-war/anti-Bush leftist whackos (who represent the core constituents of the Democratic Party).

Regardless, close to 70 percent of the American public supported the war on Iraq and said it was the right thing to do. The war itself was conducted amaz-

ingly well. Infrastructure damage and civilian casualties in Iraq were kept to a minimum due to the unprecedented precision warfare tactics employed by the Pentagon. After and during the war there was no lack of food, no health disasters, or any refugee problems in the area. Iraq is back to three-quarters of its 2002 oil production levels. Terrorist activities against U.S. forces are on the decline thanks to the tough stance of the Administration towards Syria and other bordering states. In perspective, the situation in Iraq is still



going quite well considering the magnitude and scope of such an operation.

The criticism of the Bush Administration for not seeking UN help in reconstruction efforts has proved futile of late, since the U.N. Security Council last month approved a U.S. drafted resolution to help reconstruct Iraq. All 15 Security Council members - including Syria - voted in favor of the measure to authorize a multinational force under U.S. command and call for troop contributions from other countries. The measure also seeks pledges from the 191 United Nations member states. Lack of support from the U.N. was touted as a Bush failure, but now the Bush Administration has overwhelmingly received that support. What

can the candidates complain about now?

In the coming months of increasing campaigning efforts by the Democratic contenders, all of the commotion on Iraq and the economy will continue to be more and more meaningless. Issues like the economy and the stabilization of Iraq are matters that have an element of time associated with them, and therefore they will have to run their course for satisfactory conclusions. Whining and criticizing during the course of its run is merely political rhetoric.

Sadly for these candidates, evidence of the affirming results of the Bush policies on the economy and Iraq are becoming apparent of late. This poses a huge problem for the presidential hopefuls since all the rhetoric they have been spewing for the last few months is being systematically debunked. Also, they are finding it harder to reinvent suitable rhetoric to criticize Bush with; that's precisely the reason why the candidates seem to waffle on so many of these issues, with Wes Clark being the most egregious of the lot. When the general elections come around next year, the nominated candidate better have some substantive policies to distinguish himself from the president - or he will have to be content with the votes from the "Bush is evil" crowd alone.

As of today, no candidate truly stands out in the Democratic Primaries, and their criticisms of the President are becoming vacuous and irrelevant. And as time goes by, these factors will make not only their individual campaigns but also their party's campaign against the incumbent largely ineffectual. g



## PRO &amp; CON

## Gun

## Pro

Sean Coker

There is the old adage that ‘gun’s don’t kill people, people kill people’. Although this offers a rather glib assessment of the situation, it is correct in that personal responsibility and freewill are not negated simply because of the accessibility and ease with which one can obtain and use a gun. Maybe the larger problem is that guns make killing so easy that people do not think of the consequences of their actions, since murder is only a squeeze away. Long ago, when murder meant bludgeoning someone to death, there was more time to reflect on one’s actions.

Guns are not inherently evil; it is only when such weapons are paired with someone of ill intent that problems arise. Teflon tipped bullets, belt fed submachine guns, assault rifles, exploding tip bullets, or one-hundred-round banana clips are just some of the few firearm accessories that have no real, practical application other than when used in the theater of war. But even these weapons are not themselves mischievous. With the 1994 Assault Weapons Ban reaching its sunset clause in less than a year, Americans need to debate the need for assault weapons. It seems far-fetched to think that assault weapons are going to secure our safety from some foreign threat. The numerousness of weapons currently circulated in the U.S. ensures that no country will ever try to attack the United States, since they would surely encounter house-to-house guerrilla warfare. It is naïve to think that assault weapons are the right and responsibility of Americans and that somehow they will protect us from “threats that can strike us anytime and anyplace,” as a 1997 report by the Police Foundation seems to suggest. Nor is it feasible to keep large capacity magazines legal just in case someone “finds him/herself facing multiple attackers,” as proponents espouse.

According to the Police Foundation report, “There are approximately 44 million gun owners in the United States... .25 percent of all adults, and 40 percent of American households, own at least one firearm. These owners possess 192 million firearms.” All Americans are entitled, under the sanctity of our Constitution, the right to bear arms. But that does not mean that everyone should be entitled to carry guns whose only utilitarian application is warfare. The distinction is not always obvious, but a line can be drawn between rifles used for hunting and those used to spray bullets. *g*



At its very core, the gun is a perilous tool. After all, it doesn’t serve any



Mateusz

purpose other than to kill or destroy. What possible positive uses could such a brutal device have? In the minds of many gun control advocates, firearms have an innately damaging effect on society. Without access to guns, they argue, humans would not be as prone to settle disputes with violence. Wrathful children would not spray bullets at their classmates and teachers, gangs would not injure innocent bystanders while executing drive-by shootings, and murderous crimes would practically vanish.

But this theory overlooks an important fact – guns exist, and they will never disappear. Restricting legal access to guns, much like restricting legal access to drugs, accomplishes only one thing: a dangerous commodity is surrendered to the discretion of the black market. The belief that legal constraints somehow suppress the economic reality of supply and demand is misguided, if not delusional. During the Prohibition era, the government banned the sale and consumption of alcohol. Instead of leading to a sober, booze-free utopia, alcohol prohibition supplied vicious mobsters with a new avenue of making profits. Denying business owners the right to sell handguns or assault weapons does the exact same thing.

Criminals have an astounding lack of respect for the law. Ordinary people, however, do not share this renegade attitude. Law-abiding citizens comply with waiting periods, limitations on certain types of firearms, and every other well-meaning gun control measure put into effect. But robbers, rapists, and gang members have other ways of obtaining forbidden weaponry, and their esteem for societal responsibility is much lower. The legal control of firearms only applies to those of us who chose to accept it. Meanwhile, those who care nothing for the law – the ones we want to keep guns away from in the first place – are almost completely unaffected.

Perhaps this is why a recent federal study, conducted by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, indicates that gun control measures have had no verifiable effect upon violent crime. According to an Oregonian article published earlier this month, the CDC report on “the nation’s gun control laws ... found no proof they reduce firearm violence.”

The Second Amendment clearly states: “the right of the people to keep and bear arms shall not be infringed.” Nonetheless, some forms of gun control are necessary. Middle-school students shouldn’t be able to carry revolvers in their backpacks, nor should the criminally insane be permitted to purchase high-powered machine guns. Even the most upstanding citizens must never be allowed to conduct target practice in the park blocks. The law must encompass both common sense as well as constitutional rights. But it isn’t the government’s job to protect the average citizen from himself. *g*

# BOOKS & ARTS

## Biocosm

REVIEWED BY MATEUSZ PERKOWSKI

Human life seems completely trivial. No matter what we do, no matter how much civilization develops, our entire existence is little more than an insignificant blip in the geological history of the earth. Our planet is just a small sphere of compressed cosmic matter, circling around a star similar to billions of other stars in the Milky Way galaxy. A galaxy that is not much unlike the billions of other galaxies in the universe. The only logical conclusion appears to be that our lives are just a futile by-product of that enormous burst of energy 15 billion years ago known as the Big Bang. Judging from the laws of entropy, even the universe itself is an immense waste of time, since the energy that makes up the cosmos is in a constant state of diffusion – the final effect being an endless expansion into a state of cold, lifeless desolation, or ‘heat death.’ This bleak vision of the universe leaves three options. Drink yourself into a stupor on a daily basis, blindly adhere to a prescribed religious formula, or look beyond the apparent pointlessness of existence for an ultimate meaning.

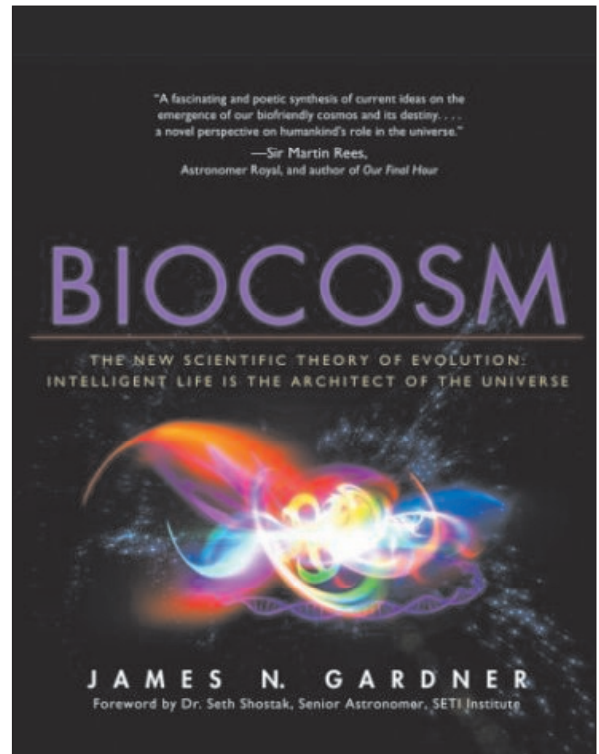
Relying on established theoretical principles as well as cutting-edge scientific thought, local author James N. Gardner’s book, *Biocosm*, cuts through the immeasurable nuances of modern science and attempts to answer the utmost human riddle: why do we exist? From Newton, Einstein and Darwin, to modern prodigies, such as Stephen Hawking, Gardner draws upon the most profound and challenging theories in physics, cosmology, and biology to come up with a remarkably philosophical assertion. The universe is not just a meaningless dispersion of matter and energy, and the emergence of intelligent organisms is not an irrelevant anomaly. In Gardner’s view, “the cosmos may be quintessentially a vast unfolding life.”

What makes *Biocosm* fascinating is that it doesn’t disintegrate into unfounded, quasi-spiritual prophesizing. Gardner’s point isn’t to provide the reader with a feel-good New Age explanation for the universe. Every element in the book

is supported with rational, scientific arguments, and the author makes it clear that his theory is ‘empirically falsifiable;’ in other words, it is a testable scientific hypothesis that may be proven wrong in the future. The purpose isn’t to advocate a new religion, or even to reject the ‘doom and gloom’ predictions of traditional science, but rather to allow for innovative possibilities. Instead of only looking at the miniscule intricacies of our present world, the different fields of science should strive to comprehend the fundamental problem of existence. On a superficial level, biologists, chemists, physicists, mathematicians, sociologists, and psychologists operate on completely different levels. At the very core, however, they are all studying one thing: the phenomena of an incomprehensibly complex universe. The atom, the human brain, and the galaxy are not unrelated systems – in fact, they are all physical manifestations of some unknown cosmic truth.

According to *Biocosm*, the human developments of society, science, and art could be natural steps in the progress of life upon earth, and the existence of life itself could be a natural consequence of planetary and galactic formations. It is as if the entire expanding universe were involved in a process of unified evolution. Gardner admits that this theory is viewed with skepticism among many scientists. “For the traditionalists, the deep mystery of the life-friendly qualities of the cosmos is a scientifically irrelevant and intellectually dangerous distraction – or at the very most, an indication that we have not searched hard enough or long enough to uncover the final mathematical secrets of the universe.”

Even so, the evidence of an evolving universe is hard to ignore. The exact speed of galactic expansion, the pre-



cise strength of gravitational and anti-gravitational pull, and the sophisticated chemical processes necessary to create carbon-based life are all factors that exist in perfect synchronicity with each other. If any of these forces were faster or slower, stronger or weaker, or slightly less systematic, intelligent life could not have surfaced. The fact that stars and galaxies exist is already a highly improbable occurrence, let alone the materialization of conscious living beings. Statistically, the odds are stacked against us. Nonetheless, life exists, and appears to be steadily reaching higher forms of awareness. How can this be a coincidence?

Gardner doesn’t think it is. He believes that “the laws of the universe have engineered their own comprehension.” Essentially, the entirety of the cosmos is an emanation of one, all-encompassing mind. In the words of Nobel Laureate biochemist Christian De Duve, “Conscious thought belongs to the cosmological picture, not as some freak epiphenomenon peculiar to our own biosphere, but as a fundamental manifestation of matter. Thought is generated and supported by life, which is itself generated and supported by the rest of the cosmos.”

It is difficult to accept the notion that biological and physical laws have a common underlying theme. After all, the gravitational concentration of matter seems

to have little to do with natural selection. How could the formation of the solar system be parallel to the development of mammals with functioning respiratory systems? But if one looks at the guiding principles of the universe, it is obvious that nature has a tendency to organize itself. Electrons orbit around the protons and neutrons of an atom, planets circle around the stars, and the activity of every cell revolves around the genetic tyranny of the nucleus. Everything seems to be a minute part within a greater mechanism. Complexity theorist

John Holland states that, "We are everywhere confronted with emergence in complex adaptive systems – ant colonies, networks of neurons, the immune system, the Internet, and the global economy, to name a few – where the behavior of the whole is much more complex than the behavior of the parts." Under this premise, the incredible evolution of species upon this planet is just a methodical continuation of the universe's constant self-organization.

If evolution began not with the first microscopic organism in the primordial soup of the earth, but at the very commencement of the universe, then all of existence must have a final motive. According to Biocosm, conscious thought is a crucial step in cosmic evolution, but it is not its ultimate outcome. Assuming that everything is drawing toward some purpose, Gardner explores the various potential prospects of a goal-oriented cosmos. Virtually every single possibility investigated in the book sounds like metaphysical philosophy. Perhaps one of the most outlandish – and intriguing – theories presented in Biocosm is Barrow and Tippler's idea of the Omega Point. The theory basically envisions the end of the universe as an orgasm of cosmic proportions. Instead of a finishing with a whimper, the conclusion of existence will be a momentous victory of life. Tippler

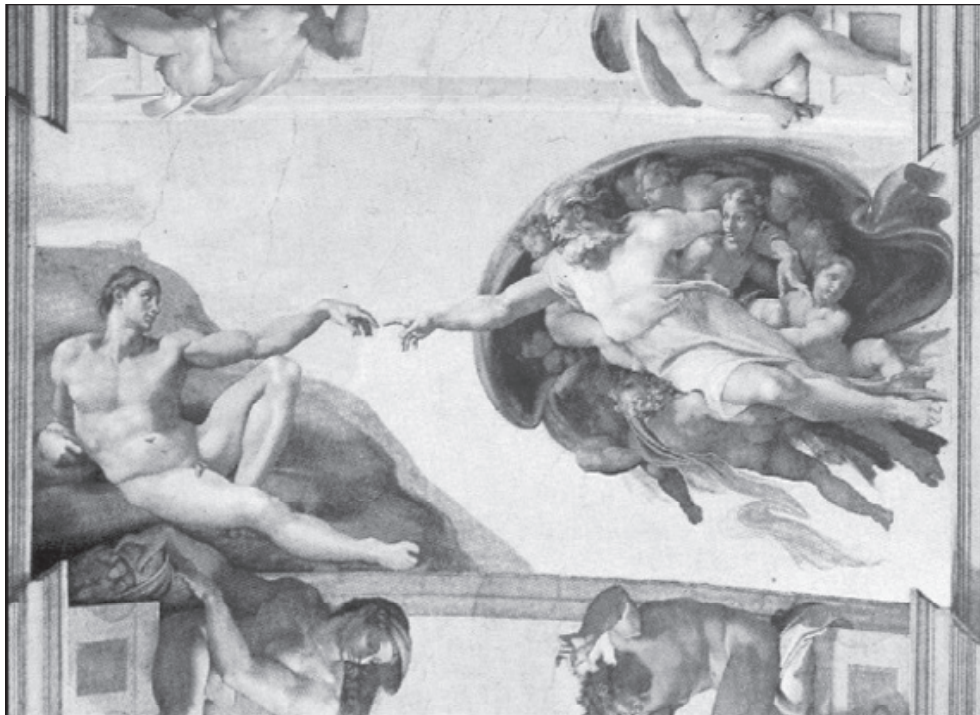
states that, "At the instance the Omega Point is reached, life will have gained control of all matter and forces not only in a single universe, but in all universes whose existence is logically possible ... including all bits of knowledge which it is possible to know. And this is the end."

Gardner's own theory, the Selfish Biocosm, is equally unimaginable – the universe has given birth to itself. One of the theoretical possibilities of Einstein's theory of relativity is the existence of a closed timelike curve (CTC), which

termination: life is what you make of it.

To the average reader, Biocosm will seem technical. To the average scientist, it will seem too unsubstantiated. There is no perfect audience for this book. Perhaps that is why Gardner is so courageous. Rather than trying to appease anyone, he determinedly presents the reader with a new perspective on life and the future of science. The most refreshing part is that he acknowledges that he could be wrong. Gardner admits that his theories may be dismissed as "rampant specula-

tion bordering on science fiction." However, most every other cutting-edge hypothesis has been similarly disparaged. Strong disapproval within the scientific community "had been the first reaction to such previously radical ideas as continental drift and the bacterial origin of mito-



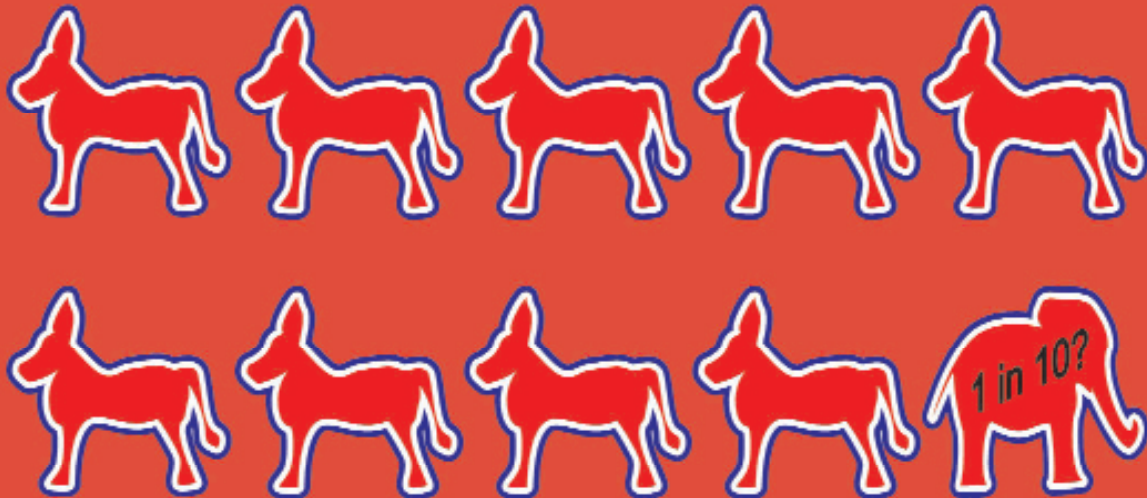
forces the "space-time continuum into a looping configuration that allows future events to influence the past." Life is a necessary process that the cosmos utilizes to understand itself, thereby "assuring its own replication." From the perspective of the Selfish Biocosm, "earthly life and human intelligence are not the grand climax of creation but rather miniscule operants in a surpassingly complex process that our particular universe employs in order to get itself grown to maturity and then reproduced."

The philosophical implication of this theory is that we live because we must – the only consequence of our struggle upon this earth is the fact that we exist. This does not make the universe any less incomprehensible. Whether or he intended it or not, Gardner's idea of a self-creating universe reinforces self-de-

chondria." The concepts proposed by Gardner may eventually be proved false. Nonetheless, Biocosm forces us to understand that no matter how much humans are able to rationally grasp the mechanics of the universe, the fundamental mystery of existence will seem that much more awesome and terrifying. *g*



# How Many Conservative Teachers Do You Know?



**PSU strongly supports diversity based on race, ethnicity, gender, age and sexual orientation but...**

## Why No Diversity of Thought?

# Is socialism good in theory?

Not if you value liberty. **BY SHELDON RICHMAN**

**S**ocialism has been mortally discredited on economic grounds, thanks to Ludwig von Mises, F. A. Hayek, and history. But for many people it has not been discredited on moral grounds. You can tell this by how often people say that while socialism doesn't work in practice, it is good in theory.

Strange notion—that a theory which doesn't work in the world can somehow still be good. Where else is it to be judged? One would think that a theory whose consistent realization requires gulags and secret police would be morally disqualified even if it “worked.”

I guess the people who say socialism is good in theory really mean they regret that it doesn't work without the attendant unpleasantness. Why should that be regrettable? The typical answer is that in socialist theory people are not acquisitive or self-regarding; they are more concerned about others. The regret about socialism turns out to be a regret about human nature.

Leaving aside the facts that the taint on self-interest is assumed not established and that one prospers under capitalism by competitively attending to others, is this a valid statement about socialism? Originally socialism promised a superabundance of goods—so much of everything that no one would have to do without anything. Sharing would be unnecessary because scarcity would be abolished. Wasn't that an appeal to acquisitiveness, even gluttony? To be sure, socialism's miserable record has compelled its advocates lately to discover the “age of limits,” but that is only to make a virtue of neces-

sity.

Socialism of course did promise to reconstruct humanity, but the message was always mixed. It promised to subordinate the individual to society while liberating him to be fully himself—free of the necessity to make a living. Leon

is that the theory held out hope for an end to material inequality. As intellectual historian Ralph Raico reminds us, it didn't exactly do that. Marx promised only “to each according to his needs.” He never said we all have the same needs. Besides, it is capitalism not

socialism that has achieved essential material equality. (See Donald Boudreaux, “Equality and Capitalism,” September 2002.)

The ugliness of socialist theory now comes into focus. Under individualist and capitalist theory (and practice) each person is free to determine his own needs and, through the division of labor and voluntary exchange, to produce what's

required to satisfy them. (As the old Spanish proverb puts it, “Take what you want and pay for it.”) Under socialist theory the individual's needs are determined and satisfied collectively. Dissent and venturing out on one's own are not options. As Trotsky acknowledged, everyone is an employee and tenant of the collective—that is, the state.

It's a mystery why anyone would find that theory beautiful or regret that it

**Sheldon Richman is the editor of *Ideas on Liberty*, in which this article was first published.**

doesn't work in practice g



Trotsky wrote that “Communist man . . . will become immeasurably stronger, wiser and subtler; his body will become more harmonized, his movements more rhythmic, his voice more musical. The forms of life will become dynamically dramatic. The average human type will rise to the heights of an Aristotle, a Goethe, or a Marx.” But the nice Bolshevik also said, “In a country where the sole employer is the State, opposition means death by slow starvation. The old principle: who does not work shall not eat, has been replaced by a new one: who does not obey shall not eat.”

Was the new Socialist Man to be a self-centered achiever or group-centered worker bee? It was never clear how both could be accomplished.

Maybe all that people mean when they lament socialism's impracticability

# Prohibition Lite

*Continued from page 7*

Association estimates that over 1,100 cases of liquor are illegally imported into the state every day.

## A Toast to Privatization

Privatization is possible. Oregon made steps toward more efficient alcohol regulation by turning over malt and wine testing to a private lab in 1964. Previously, Oregon State University had conducted that work. Let's (belatedly) continue this trend.

Instead of wasteful and arbitrary attempts at control, the state should contract its underage drinking program to a private public relations firm. Whereas the OLCC is unaccountable, the PR agency could demonstrate statistics-based improvement in levels of underage drinking (this can be achieved through police and hospital records, anonymous surveys, etc.)

There would be a quantitative basis for dispersion of funds, tax breaks, or other incentives.

Rather than creating massive bureaucracy--vehicles, offices, paperwork--the Commission should leave policing to the experts. In fact, before Oregon formed the OLCC, liquor-related enforcement was within the purview of State Police and local law officers. An estimated 50 police officers could be added to Oregon by dropping OLCC's role in enforcement.

Let's follow the lead of Mississippi, Iowa, West Virginia, Michigan, Wyoming, Alabama, and Washington, all of whom have converted to private or semi-private retail stores, or are on their way to privatization. (In five of these seven states, the percentage of crashes involving 15-20 year olds in which alco-

hol was a factor is lower than the national average, according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration.) Private operations give store employees equity in their business; they have an enticement to implement better store hours, locations, prices, and customer service. Moreover, the state would have no need to directly collect tax revenue or to receive, warehouse (at a cost of \$5 million per year), and ship liquor.

If you're an Oregonian who enjoys alcohol products or even if you don't, but still pay taxes, do yourself a favor. Should you see a petition to privatize liquor control in Oregon, sign it.

*g*

# Elite Liberals Attack

*Continued from page 10*

has the highest rated cable news show, three bestselling books and a nationally syndicated radio show. Sean Hannity has risen from obscurity to being a star to Fox News Channel's Hannity and Colmes and winning contracts across the country to syndicate his radio show. The liberal media is scared that their ideological reign over the news may be losing ground and the people they are

losing it to be not right-wing extremists. They are scared that liberal talk shows fail in a mainstream environment and only succeed in fringe environment like many college campuses and networks like NPR. They are scared because it looks like they are on the losing side of an elite media battle. No longer will mainstream media consumers tolerate liberal ideological biases and base their

arguments on emotion as opposed to logic and fact. Unless, of course, they are marked with a big red stamp reading SATIRE. *g*

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Preferably While Laughing Maniacally

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# POLICE STATE?



Shortly after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attack, Congress and President Bush enacted the USA Patriot Act. James Bovard states the Act undermines our civil liberties and its expanded government powers would not have prevented the attack, nor will they do much to thwart other terrorist attacks.

## TERRORISM, TYRANNY & the USA PATRIOT ACT

**Terrorism & Tyranny  
with James Bovard**

**Friday, November 14**

**6:00PM Cramer Hall  
Room 71**

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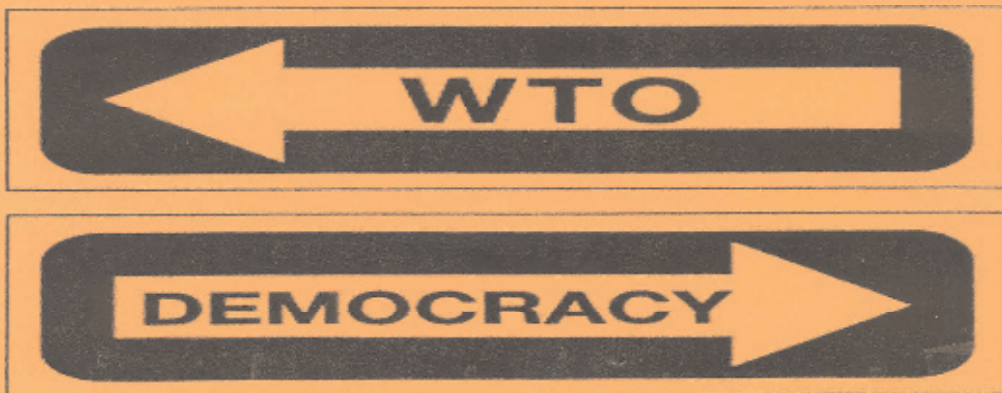
## SATIRE

## The jig is up. The Spectator exposed by

### COORS BEER & THE SPECTATOR: WHERE DOES OUR \$20,000 IN STUDENT FEES GO?

The Spectator, our campus right-wing screed, according to a recent Spectator letter to editor, is in part (largely?) funded by Coors Beer. Coors Beer has been the target, in the past, of anti-racist, anti-sexist, and pro-union boycotts by AFL-CIO, etc. Coors TV commercials feature white male privilege, with women as targets of opportunity and 'minorities' as invisible.

In addition, when the Spectator started at PSU two years ago, it began as an SOC-funded group, at \$400 per year. It now has graduated to be an SFC-funded group, at about \$20,000 per year in our student fees. OSPIRG was defunded of about \$100,000 last year from SFC money (indeed, Spectator trumpeted the necessity of defunding OSPIRG in its pages). As the Republican-splattered 'Speculator' as one progressive student senator has dubbed this right-wing paper (he was subsequently attacked in the pages of the Spectator, of course) has polluted our campus, it has attacked, in one issue, MEChA, a Chicano student group, as being an alleged 'hate' group. If anything, the 'hate' group on campus is the Rush Limbaugh/Fox News-modelled Spectator itself.



To help Coors fund the Spectator without the help of \$20,000 in our student fee monies, PSU Green Party meets Mondays at 5:30pm in Smith 225.



*\*The staff of the Spectator found this flyer posted on campus. We found it so amusing that we thought we would help that darling little Green Party distribute it.*