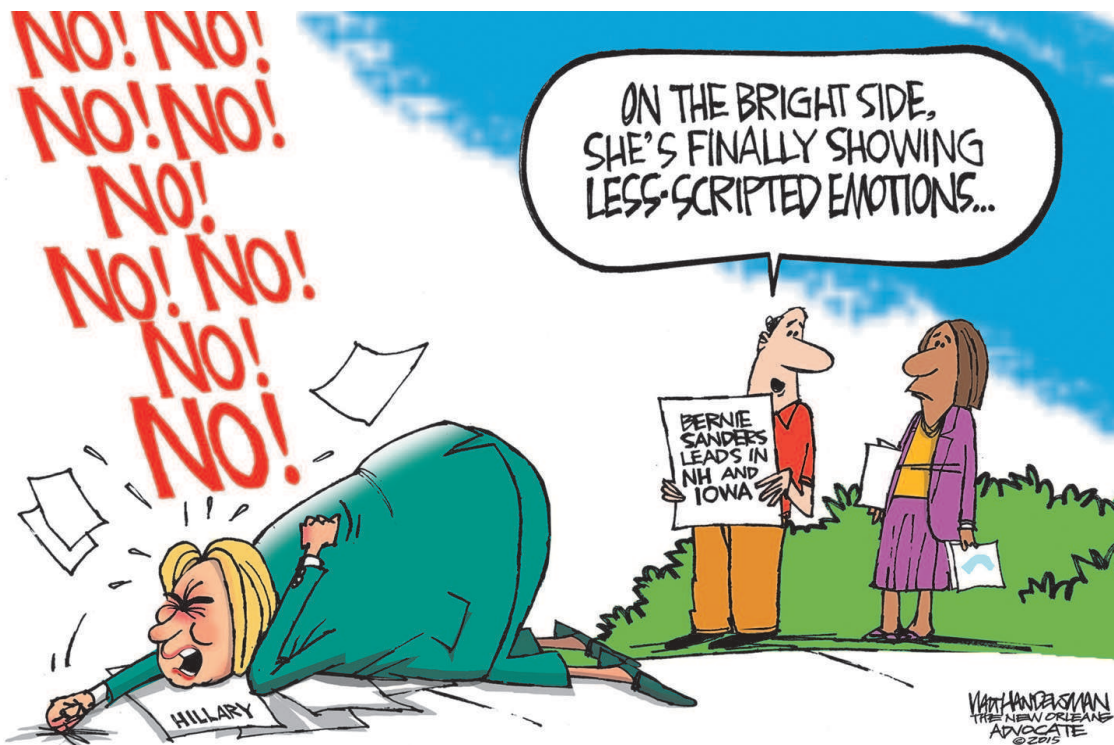


O P I N I O N



Letters to the Editor...

The Nugget welcomes contributions from its readers, which must include the writer's name, address and phone number. Letters to the Editor is an open forum for the community and contains unsolicited opinions not necessarily shared by the Editor. The Nugget reserves the right to edit, omit, respond or ask for a response to letters submitted to the Editor. Letters should be no longer than 300 words. Unpublished items are not acknowledged or returned. The deadline for all letters is noon Monday.

To the Editor:

I am writing this to *The Nugget* on behalf of VFW Post 8138.

It has come to my attention that many citizens of Sisters are very upset by a statement at a recent SPRD meeting during which Mr. Chuck Humphreys stated that local veterans groups, including VFW Post 8138, support the so-called Sisters to Black Butte Trail.

I will be perfectly clear. VFW Post 8138 is an "apolitical group." We assist veterans. To the 50 or so people who called and left messages on my home phone while I was away regarding their disapproval of VFW's "alleged support" of the trail, we are not authorizing, nor have we been authorized by National Headquarters in Washington, D.C. to have any official position regarding the Sisters to Black Butte Trail.

I would ask Mr. Humphreys to retract his SPRD verbal statement, in writing, to *The Nugget*. I would ask Mr. Humphreys to refrain from making statements concerning VFW

without submitting these requests in writing to the local Post at VFW Post 8138, PO Box 682, Sisters, Oregon, 97759.

Bill Antila
Commander
VFW Post 8138

♦ ♦ ♦

To the Editor:

First let me thank K. Campbell for sending me the complete statistics she got from ODOT.

Just for accuracy's sake I will list them here: Accidents 2004-2014 at the intersection break down as follows: fatalities — 0; Severe injury — 4 (this was the serious accidents quoted, and she apologized for miscounting); moderate injury — 5; minor injury — 6; and property damage only — 10, for a total of 25 accidents at the intersection.

This is a dangerous intersection! Again I plead the case to use the traffic control

See **LETTERS** on page 16

Sisters Weather Forecast

Courtesy of the National Weather Service, Pendleton, Oregon

Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday	Monday
Showers 56/40	Chance showers 60/35	Mostly sunny 70/40	Mostly sunny 75/44	Mostly sunny 76/43	Mostly sunny 66/na

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Robert B. Reich

American Voices

An economy depends fundamentally on public morality — shared standards about what sorts of activities are impermissible because they so fundamentally violate trust that they threaten to undermine the social fabric.

At a time when many Republican presidential candidates and state legislators are furiously focusing on private morality — contraception, abortion, gay marriage and what people do in their bedrooms — America is experiencing a far more significant crisis in public morality.

CEOs of large corporations now earn 300 times the wages of average workers. Insider trading is endemic on Wall Street, where hedge-fund and private-equity moguls are taking home hundreds of millions.

A handful of extraordinarily wealthy people are investing unprecedented sums in the upcoming election, seeking to rig the economy for their benefit even more than it's already rigged.

Yet the wages of average working people continue to languish as jobs are offshored or offloaded onto "independent contractors."

All this is in sharp contrast to the first three decades after World War II.

Then, the typical CEO earned no more than 40 times what the typical worker earned, and Wall Street was boring. Then, the wealthy didn't try to control elections. And in that era, the wages of most Americans rose.

Profitable firms didn't lay off their workers. They didn't replace full-time employees with independent contractors, or bust unions. They gave their workers a significant share of the gains.

Consumers, workers, and the community were considered stakeholders of almost equal entitlement.

We invested in education and highways and social services. We financed all of this with our taxes.

We had a shared sense of public morality because we knew we were all in it together. We had been through a Great Depression and a war, and we understood our interdependence.

But over time, we forgot. The change began when Wall Street convinced the Reagan administration and subsequent administrations to

repeal regulations put in place after the crash of 1929 to prevent a repeat of the excesses that had led to the Great Depression. This, in turn, moved the American economy from stakeholder capitalism to shareholder capitalism, whose sole objective is to maximize shareholder returns.

Shareholder capitalism ushered in an era of excess.

In the 1990s it brought a speculative binge culminating in the bursting of the dotcom bubble. At the urging of Wall Street, Bill Clinton repealed the Glass-Steagall Act, which had separated investment from commercial banking.

In 2001 and 2002 it produced Enron and the corporate looting scandals.

The Street's gambling in derivatives and risky mortgages resulted in the crash of 2008, and a massive taxpayer-financed bailout.

The Dodd-Frank Act attempted to rein in the Street, but Wall Street lobbyists have done everything possible to eviscerate Dodd-Frank.

The final blow to public morality came when a majority of the Supreme Court decided that corporations and wealthy individuals have a right under the First Amendment to spend whatever they wish on elections.

Public morality can't be legislated, but it can be encouraged.

Glass-Steagall must be resurrected. Big banks have to be broken up.

CEO pay must be bridled. Pay in excess of \$1 million shouldn't be deductible from corporate income taxes. Corporations with high ratios of executive pay to typical worker pay should face higher tax rates than those with lower ratios.

People earning tens if not hundreds of millions of dollars a year should pay the same 70 percent tax rate top earners paid before 1981.

And we must get big money out of politics — reversing those Supreme Court rulings, providing public financing of elections and getting full disclosure of the sources of all campaign contributions.

None of this is possible without a broadly based citizen movement to rescue our democracy, take back our economy and restore a minimal standard of public morality.

Opinions expressed in this column are solely those of the writer and are not necessarily shared by the Editor or The Nugget Newspaper.