



greg wasson

a quorum of one

It being Friday afternoon, Angus Duedaw unabashedly ordered up a pitcher and prepared to reflect on his first week as a member of the Senate floor staff. Loosening his tie, he conjured up images of his first morning . . .

The five-block stroll to work led Angus through the capitol mall. The immaculate lawns, blossoming trees and cascading fountains provides a picture-postcard setting for Oregon's legislative headquarters.

The front stairway and the inner lobby are lined with murals and quotations designed to guide the lawmakers as they debate weighty issues like the memorial congratulating OSU basketball coach Ralph Miller.

The first scene shows a pioneer family staring off into the horizon, obviously excited by the prospects of life in the lush wonderland. "Valiant men have thrust our frontiers to the setting sun," declare the accompanying words.

Stirring, thought Angus. But it seems wrong to

have the trio facing to the East. Guess that's just a picky detail, though.

The three revolving doors that form the front entrance empty into a domed lobby where echos abound. The Sunset Swing Chior, looking resplendent in their snappy pink outfits, mount the risers as Angus passes under the phrase that is to stay in his mind: "In the souls of it's citizens will be found the likeness of the state."

In other words, the government will only reflect the dominant traits of the governed. Given the military posture of their current leaders, the words form a damning indictment of the American people. Is it really hard to understand why Reagan was shot? As Angus begins to negotiate the stairway to the second floor, he notices a reporter coming toward him wearing a peace button and a stars-and-stripes tie. The combination seems incongruous and Angus can't resist commenting.

"It's quite simple," explains the journalist. "Warmongers don't have a corner on patriotism. One doesn't have to be anti-American to argue that we shouldn't slaughter people.

"But, don't expect any slack from the other side. It makes me angry when Right thinkers suggest I go to Russia. What the statement ignores is that I was born here as much as they were and I've got every right to try and steer the country my way."

Angus speeds away from the muttering reporter, left with just enough time to report on schedule. However, his best intentions flutter away as he passes a television report on the space shuttle's landing. As the gigantic glider touches down, Angus agrees with his neighbor that this proves once again that America is the best, that it is God's country.

As Angus enters the Senate chamber, he realizes that he had the same sense of self-fulfillment when a group of highly paid athletes from Southern California and the East Coast won the NBA title for the Trailblazers. Even though his only contribution was financial and all the decisions were made without his counsel, the event somehow increases his self-esteem.

YOURS

The great Gaske

On a rainy afternoon recently in a small room tucked away in Villard Hall, an announcement was made to a few individuals that brought a lump to each of their throats. That announcement was made by a man who will remain in our hearts always; that man is Paul Gaske, Director of Forensics at the University of Oregon. Paul has officially resigned for personal and career reasons.

We are shocked by this news. However, we are consoled by the fact that his decision was based on the inspiration that students in the U of O forensics program gave him. Three years ago, Paul Gaske came to this institution with an almost non-existent forensics program and built it up to the high standing it has today (nationally rated in the top 2 percent).

Although we are not among some of the more fortunate few to have been with Paul for three years, within one year we have come to love, respect, and learn a great deal from this man. Surely Oregon owes much to this man, much more than anyone can ever hope to repay. The department will be hard-pressed to refill his shoes, but the program and the speech squad will not die. We are now moved to strive more than ever to maintain what Paul has worked so hard to build. We will miss you, Paul, but all of us that know you will carry your spunk and spirit with us wherever we go. Good luck in San Diego!

Dawn Knudsen
Sophomore, telecommunications
Lew Evans
Junior, economics

Facts twisted

I accept the principle that any real newspaper must give its own independent version of the news it reports. I am sure that this was what your reporter was trying to do in the April 13 article on my course about the economics of discrimination.

However, readers of the Emerald (and especially those who know me) should be told that the reporter has turned most of the facts and my interpretation of them upside down in her report. The statistic "worth exploring" on which most of the article was based really shows that women workers earn a *smaller* propor-

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"MOST OF US IN THIS ROOM ARE JUST TYPICAL AMERICANS BRIMMING OVER WITH ENTHUSIASM ABOUT PRES. REAGAN'S TAX PLAN"

tion of men's earning today than they earned, not only in 1969 but even earlier.

As I then pointed out, this statistic is commonly used to argue that discrimination against women is greater than it was 10 or 20 or even 40 years ago. My point to the interviewer was that one needs to analyze such aggregate average data very carefully before one accepts the conclusions about increasing discrimination.

Discrimination can be an important explanation of inter-group differences in earnings but it is by no means the only such explanation. One could, for example, argue that the recent sharp increase in women's participation in the labor force has resulted in a *loss* (not a gain as

reported in the article) in both the average skill level and seniority of women workers.

Finally, I tried to point out that a more useful comparison could be made by looking at the earnings of women (or blacks) and those of white males by matching those being compared on characteristics affecting earnings other than sex or race. Some recent studies following this procedure do suggest a decline in discrimination. But it is a fact that earnings differentials by race or sex do exist. For policy decisions, however, it is very important that we know why they exist.

Robert Campbell
Professor of Economics

letters policy

Letters are limited to 250 words, and each must be signed and the author's field of study or faculty-staff status noted. Letters should be dated, and must include the author's address and phone number for verification. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length, style or content.