

Sexual harassment rule full of loopholes

The proposed rule prohibiting sexual harassment is a dangerous piece of very ambiguous rhetoric that does little to alleviate the practice or problem of sexual harassment at the University. Moreover, the way the proposed rule is worded almost ensures immunity from punishment for staff or faculty members accused of sexual harassment.

The preamble to the rule is a confusing morass that on the surface bears a semblance to condemnation of sexual harassment.

"Sexual harassment of students, faculty or staff," the rule reads, "by other members of the University community is unacceptable conduct and will not be tolerated." Terse and incisive rhetoric — certainly the rule deserves critical acknowledgement for understatement.

"The University has no desire to regulate the private lives of consenting adults..." The proposed rule is quite broad on this point. Whether intentional or not, the proposed rule has the affect of regulating private lives of students, faculty and staff.

Sexual harassment is defined as "any sexual advance, request for sexual favors and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature when:

"Submission to such conduct is made either explicitly or implicitly a term or condition of an individual's employment or academic experience; or

"Submission to or rejection of such conduct by an individual is used as a basis or condition for employment and/or academic decision affecting such individual; or

"Such conduct has the purpose or effect of substantially interfering with an individual's work and/or academic performance or creating and intimidating, hostile, or offensive working and/academic environment."

The proposed rule says that any individual who has done any of these things "has engaged in unacceptable behavior."

The matter of sexual harassment at the

University is serious. And yet, the language condemning such behavior is not.

The sanctions themselves are too ambiguous to be effective. Any person believing they have been subject to sexual harassment may file a formal complaint with the Director of Affirmative Action. If after an investigation and a hearing the faculty (or staff) member "found to have engaged in sexual harassment may be subject to a written reprimand to be included in personnel files... and/ to evaluations of less than fully satisfactory service."

This proposed sexual harassment rule seems to protect the faculty and staff members. What good does it actually do? There appear to be no real punitive measures in the rule. It does not have enough impact to dissuade anyone from committing sexual harassment as the redress and re-

tribution amounts to but a slap on the wrist.

The question of due process of law is raised by the proposed rule. An accused has the right to face their accuser. The confidentiality of the complainant in such an instance cannot then be guaranteed.

There exists the possibility of a retaliatory action by the offender which could jeopardize a student's academic career. The faculty offender, as a means of revenge for a complaint, might throw out a student's thesis or dissertation and destroy more than just their academic effort.

While addressing the very real problem of sexual harassment the proposed rule fails to clearly define that problem, fails to present an effective counter-measure, fails to guarantee a complainant's confidentiality, and fails to reach a fair and fitting punishment for the offender.



letters

Prison reform

Oregonians will soon vote on Bond Measure No. 3, a request for \$60 million for the expansion of existing jail and prison facilities to alleviate overcrowding. This figure is deceiving for it is exclusive of interest rates, operation costs and inflation.

Construction of new facilities requires 3 to 4 years. According to Robert Watson, Administrator of Corrections, this delay would increase the cost per (maximum security) cell from \$65,000 to \$161,700. Aside from the greater cost, any delay offers little to relieve overcrowding. Operating costs are the most expensive, with the initial cost of constructing a medium security facility being matched every 4 to 5 years. To Oregonians this would mean \$120 million over 10 years and \$960 million over 30 years. Oregon cannot afford these

enormous sums when there are daily accounts of budget cuts in education, community services and law enforcement.

Oregon incarcerates so many persons it ranks among the highest third of all states. Our nation detains over 550,000 people behind the walls of 6,980 correctional facilities. Few countries impose harsher sentences than the United States, and only South Africa and Russia imprison more people. Despite these disturbing facts people of Oregon, of our nation, do not feel safe; crime flourishes and so does the public's fear.

Voters of New York, Michigan and Rhode Island opposed similar bond measures forcing these states to explore more immediate and cost efficient solutions to the dilemma of overcrowding.

Lora Pierce
W. 23rd Eugene 97405

Religiosity

Through no intention of my own I have become somewhat of an expert from the inside point of view upon religions of many diverse descriptions. I have investigated both the Mormons and the Jehovah's Witnesses (the two most rapidly growing religious groups of their size). I have known people in such diverse groups as the Muslims, the Moonies, and the Maranatha people. What do these groups have in common? A fervent belief in God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth; and the apocalyptic certainty that their particular group had an infallible inside track to this God.

What is "the mystery of God" that should be fulfilled by his servants the prophets in the last days according to Revelation's 10th chapter in the Bible? Here

in this letter I will unfold it to you as I have been given it as one of the prophets.

Suppose you are asked to cross a one-foot wide, forty-foot long plank supported three feet above the ground. Surely you could do it. Now picture the plank five stories up, and that you have no expertise in this — the psychological barriers would be immense. But, if you could convince yourself that it were "really" just three feet up, even though this were false, the impossible becomes possible. Fools rush in where angels fear to tread, and with the help of "God," who can do all things, knows all things, is totally wise and good, etc., one goes onward.

How can a seeker, such as I, come to know the truth regarding God? Suppose you are with someone claiming contact with God (any deity will do) — Jesus, Pan, Allah, etc. ask — does this

deity know my thoughts? Invariably, yes. Ask this deity, then, what number I have in mind, and I will pick a hard to guess number between 1 up to 1,000. Invariably the supposed deity will be powerless to pass such a simple test.

But some will quote, "Thou shall not test God." I say if God cannot survive such a simple test of his (or her) powers, how can we place much confidence in him (or her)?

But I close by saying that I, too, believe in God. He is with me when I wake and gives me courage to rise and face the obstacles of each day's impossible tasks; he talks with me and chastens me and gives me moral and other advice. He is a figment of my imagination, but without Him I would be lost. May you have the good fortune to find Him, too.

The Prophet
Gimil Foster Khazad

staff

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Monday through Friday except during finals week and vacations by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co.

News 686-5511
Advertising/Business 686-3712
Classifieds 686-4343
Production 686-4381

Editor
Sally Hodgkinson
Managing Editor
Gabriel Boehmer
News Editor
Harry Esteve
Assistant News Editor
John Healy

Photo Editor
Bob Baker
Graphics Editor
Michael Schafbuch
Editorial Page Editor
Cort Fernald
Sports Editor
Steve Spatz

Associate Sports Editor
Jeff Dickerson
Entertainment Editor
"I" Meyer
Night Editor
Gabriel Boehmer

Associate Editors:

ASUO
Dane Claussen
Community
Marian Green
Departments and Schools
Debbie Howlett
Features
Sandy Johnstone
Higher Education
Ann Portal
Politics/Environment
Ron Hunt

General Staff:

Advertising Director
Darlene Gore
Classified Advertising
Sally Oljar
Production Manager
Ann Peterson
Controller
Jean Ownbey