

Comparable worth an important goal

It is called comparable worth and it is defined as having the same pay for jobs where knowledge, effort, responsibility and working conditions are equal. In a society such as ours, which claims to uphold the principles of "equality and justice for all," the concept of equal pay for equal work should be readily accepted. But it is not. The chairman of President Ronald Reagan's civil-rights commission calls the idea "loony." Other critics have labeled it a violation of free market principles.

In Oregon, the issue of comparable worth is picking up. In a joint hearing before the House and Senate labor committees on Monday, a state-appointed task force presented the findings of a year-long study to determine if pay inequities existed between men and women employed by the state. After evaluating 32,000 state jobs, the task force found gender-based pay inequities in entry level and support positions. Women earned 32 percent less in these classifications than men. It is now up to the Legislature to decide whether the state should devise a system that would require an even relationship between pay and the way the job is evaluated. Gov. Vic Atiyeh has included \$25 million in his proposed 1985-87 budget to start such a program.

Critics of comparable worth have argued that the "free market" should decide what a job is worth. But the "free market" has consistently segregated women into low salary jobs, regardless of their experience and education. This is reflected in the findings of the task force, which reported that no pay inequities were found at high-level state jobs because these jobs are nearly devoid of females, therefore no comparisons could be made.

The key issue is whether there should be equal pay for equal work. While most people agree with this in principle, in practice large gaps in the pay scales of men and women still exist for jobs that require the same knowledge and skills. Comparable worth guidelines are quite clear and they must be followed if women are to be given equal rights in the work place.

The 'moaning death' gets put to use in El Salvador

American GIs called it "Puff the Magic Dragon"; the Vietnamese called it "the moaning death." To the U.S. Air Force, it is nothing more than an "airborne fire support platform." The name really doesn't matter. What does matter is that in January, President Ronald Reagan escalated the potential for mass killing in El Salvador by supplying that nation's Air Force with two deadly gunships. The weapons are capable of hovering over a target for hours at a time, putting bullets in every square foot of the soil below.

The gunships are equipped with night-vision that operates by detecting heat sources on the ground, but it is unable to distinguish between guerrillas, civilians or livestock. Since much of the fighting in El Salvador occurs in highly populated areas, the potential for mass slaughter is greatly increased. Reagan assured protesting human rights groups that use of the aircraft would be tightly controlled. But within weeks of receiving these new war gifts, the Salvadoran Air Force used them both, breaking an agreement between Congress and the Reagan Administration that only one would be used until their impact on civilian populations could be determined. This breach of agreement apparently hasn't troubled Reagan very much. He has already requested an additional \$72 million in military aid to El Salvador, above and beyond the \$120 million already approved for 1985.



"YOUNG MAN, I HOPE THAT EXTRA TWO CENTS WILL ENSURE THE SWIFTER COMPLETION OF YOUR APPOINTED ROUND."

letters

Harsh reality

To Vince Adams (ODE, Feb. 22), the guy who's "kinda tired of all this 'women' crap":

Why don't you try explaining to that 6-year-old girl you referred to in your letter why our society lets such violent attacks against women exist, instead of just wishing that it wasn't there so that you won't feel "uncomfortable"? Why don't you explain to her that not only will men leer at her when she grows up in the same way they leer at other women in that Playboy of yours, but that something called child pornography already caters to the sexual fantasies (and perhaps realities) of men who would like to have sex with her right now at age 6!

Let her know what sort of "crap," as you put it, is in store for her. Let her know that she may be walking to the store one day and some "kinda guy who thinks women are beautiful" might kidnap, rape, and then strangle her just because it gets him off! I really hope you were pushed too far by the display showing just one of the ways in which our "free" society uses media to perpetuate the repression of women.

Ask one of these women that you open doors for and send roses to what it's like to have a man come on to her in a dominating sexually aggressive way. Maybe then you will understand why the Women's Referral and Resource Service would strike such a radical blow for equality.

Tom Pettitt
French/Sociology

Prejudice

Prejudice is in-born and bone-deep
Begot with the father's seed
Or lodged in Adam's rib
An original sin shared by all
Be it against race or sex
Or both

As practiced in our School of Law.
But the law of the nation
Demands indiscrimination and declares

Equal opportunity of employment
Especially in "enlightened" areas
Such as

The System of Higher Education.
Women in high places
Be they on the bench or in administration

Fail to see a pattern of their elevation
Through their tunnel vision
And feel the need to disclaim discrimination

To insure their position where man remains to master.
They proffer "sweeping victory" to their controller
In the unreal world where the torchbearer of Liberty

Is carved in stone and
Not of woman born.

Angela Jung
East Asian Languages

What purpose

Once again the Women's Referral and Resource Service has gotten off their broomsticks to further discredit their own organization in an antagonistic presentation of pornography, anti-male. The wonderful letters and photographs were creative and original, especially the paste-together of a 6-foot erection placed into a woman's mouth. The prints show women tied up, but who tied them up, women or men?

Pornography is a problem,

but what on earth was the WRRS trying to prove? Where did they get the photographs and letters from? Why did they only present one side of the Debusk episode? Is the WRRS purpose to antagonize, insult, and exert effort towards women and pornography, or is their purpose to share positive aspects of their organization and provide referral service and social support for women? Why don't they show positive achievements and aspects of their organization, or maybe they don't have any.

Paul Rimov
Health Education

Domination

Laura Romano and her henchmen — excuse me, henchpersons — need to soften their attacks a bit and stop holding each and every male responsible for a discrimination problem that is far from rampant. Not every man in this world is out to dominate every woman, regardless of what Ms. Romano seems to believe.

In my eighteen years, I've seen many females dominate males, perhaps as often as I've seen males dominate females. Ms. Romano and Company should make a few concessions in their quixotic quest to rid this world of the "womanizing, sex-starved male community" and wake up to the fact that domination and discrimination are indeed two-way streets.

Ms. Romano can continue in her crusade, but needs to realize that without the contribution of one particular male, there would never have been any Laura Romano. Then again, if that were the case, maybe we'd all be better off.

Bill Kelter
Eugene

Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing fair comment on topics of interest to the University community.

Letters to the editor must be limited to 250 words, typed, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is turned in. The Emerald reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style. Letters to the editor should be turned into the Emerald office, Suite 300, EMU.

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