

Letters

Education

Upgrading teacher standards is fine (ODE, Feb. 24). Who does not support such a concept? Legislators regularly pay lip service to these ideas. However, all too often their idea of "upgrading teacher standards" takes the form of degrading those of us who are becoming teachers.

I do not have a tremendous amount of respect for legislative committees or their advisory groups. Perhaps it is only appropriate that they have none for me.

There is one lesson we, in education, have learned that they have not. We know that improvement is best achieved through positive reinforcement and the creation of self-esteem. The committee and advisory group have instead chosen to emphasize the negative and attempted to ruin our self-esteem.

Contrary to what they have said, there are a considerable number of qualified and intelligent people entering the teaching profession. However, they have told us that we are from the "lower" academic ranks, ill prepared and entering a glutted job market.

We hear the voices in the state capitol. We also hear other voices. They are the voices of children searching for someone willing to find the good in them. These are the voices we listen to; and they are infinitely more important than what we hear from Salem.

Those of us entering teaching are dedicated to making education better by emphasizing the positive. Unfortunately, the

same can not be said for the various committees, groups and departments who affect policy concerning education.

Jeff Leonhardt
Student senator, education

When in doubt

To take the Bible on faith is much easier than Hiawatha's cynicism. The Bible is hardly the product of political expediency. The church didn't create scripture, but rather recognized the books that were inspired from their inception. Geisler and Nix note that Philo, Alexandrian Jewish philosopher (20 B.C. — 40 A.D.), quoted the old testament prolifically but never quoted from the Apocrypha as inspired.

Jesus and the New Testament writers never quoted the Apocrypha. Unger notes that apocryphal literature was excluded because "they abound in historical and geographical inaccuracies and anachronisms."

Unlike Shakespeare's existing texts, where there are lacunae (gaps) which were left to conjectural emendation, over 25,000 early manuscripts of the New Testament exist, so that nothing has to be guessed. The principle "when in doubt, throw the book out," is safer than allowing charlatans to desecrate scripture.

Nag Hammadi? Surely a Gnostic "Pitdown" hoax. The Dead Scrolls, found in 1947 and written in 125 B.C., confirm the authenticity of today's Old Testament and even foretell of Christ the Messiah!

The logical conclusion based on evidence is that if one rejects the Bible as being reliable, then, if he is consistent and uses the same tests, he must throw out all classical literature and disregard their historical testimony. No one, not even Hiawatha, could live under such doubt. The problem with sceptics, then, is not intellectual but moral.

Brandon Shepard



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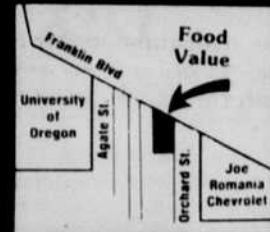
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