

THE NEXT WALL TO FALL

King holiday needs ASUO involvement

It seems every year the Dr. Martin Luther King Celebration grows larger, with more groups taking part in the festivities.

Unfortunately, involvement from campus groups and the ASUO has not kept pace. This seems out of sync with a campus that is constantly celebrating an awareness week for some noble cause.

While we are struggling to create awareness of human and global conditions, it is crucial to remember the efforts of those who initiated the fight.

True leaders are hard to find these days. We live in a world of distractions designed to fill our time and our minds. With the exception of money, there is little incentive for people to step into leadership roles. Recognition is rare for people who reach beyond their own lives to try to create positive social change.

Dr. King's life is a beautiful example of servitude to humankind. It is distressing that more of the "socially conscious" student groups on campus do not find the King Celebration worth investing their time and money.

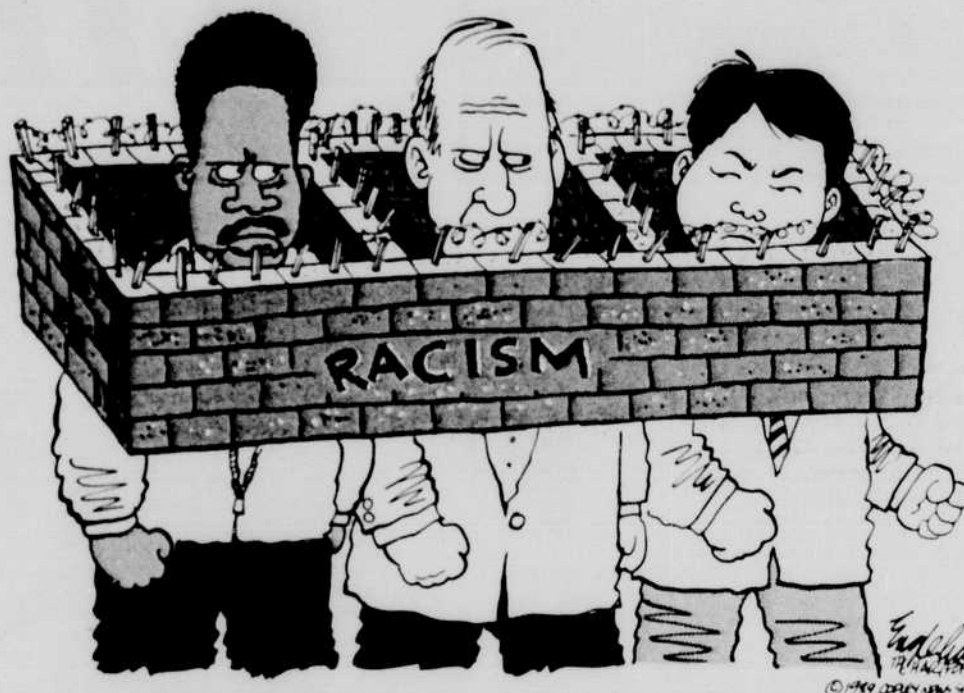
Both the Black Student Union and the campus YMCA are sponsoring events during the celebration, which is commendable, to be sure. But unfortunately, they are the only University groups sponsoring events on the celebration calendar.

On the other hand, the Associated Students of Lane Community College are sponsoring many events on the celebration calendar. This year marks the third year of the "Dream Lives" celebration at the Hult Center. The event, sponsored primarily by the ASLCC, is free to the public and has practically filled the Hult every year. Keynote speakers have included Ralph Abernathy, and Martin Luther King III. Yolanda King will be speaking tonight. This event and others are sponsored by the ASLCC, which has a much smaller budget than the ASUO.

Eugene and Springfield have developed extensive tributes to Dr. King. People from all parts of the community are involved in honoring his memory: high school students, churches, temples, etc. Why then is the University so uninvolved?

We are an important part of this community — economically, socially and politically. It is therefore important that we take part in community events such as this one.

Inside the EMU lobby is a famous quote from Dr. King. Perhaps the ASUO should consider the importance of this holiday to the students, and in the future pay him the respect he deserves, instead of just lip service.



Students should receive King holiday

While today's birthday of Martin Luther King Jr. goes unmarked by the ASUO (see above editorial), so will it be just another day of classes for University students.

University administrators will have the day off and University offices will be closed, of course, as always happens on each of the 10 federally recognized holidays. Students get only six of those 10 days off (New Year's Day, Memorial Day, Independence Day, Labor Day, Thanksgiving and Christmas), mostly because time taken off to celebrate outdated holidays such as Columbus Day, President's Day or Veterans' Day is disruptive to precious classroom time in short academic quarters.

We recognize this, and so we'll continue — grumblingly — to attend classes on those days while the rest of the nation takes time out. But the advent of Martin Luther King Jr. Day is one that should, quite literally, give us pause.

Dr. King was, and still is, a figure of enormous inspiration and importance to a great many students and people on this cam-

pus. If there is any modern figure who deserves a day of remembrance, it is surely that great man.

King is more than some explorer with a dubious claim of being the first to discover America. The rest of the nation is coming to a halt to honor him — even the hyperactive New York Stock Exchange is planning a moment of silence. Shouldn't we do the same?

In future years, we admonish the University to give students their King's Birthday holiday. Because King speaks to this generation of students far more than the struggles of 1920s labor movements or postwar celebrations, it is our belief that any King holiday would become more than the three-day party weekends Labor Day and Memorial Day have become.

A King's Day without classes would allow the ASUO and students greater room to participate in events such as the city's King Celebration. The time spent participating in that event, and in following King's dream of racial equality, would be as useful to students as any spent in the classroom.

Letters

Nonpersons

Imagine with me, if you will, that we are living in the last century. The Supreme Court has just declared that blacks cannot be considered "persons" for legal purposes.

You argue that this is wrong — blacks are people, not animals. Proponents of slavery condemn you as a meddler: "No one is forcing you to own slaves. What I do on my land, with my property, is my business."

Let's move forward now, to the beginning of this century. A neighbor has been severely beaten by her husband. You summon the police. The court upholds his "right" to maintain order in his home. Outsiders have no business interfering in the private affairs of this family.

Sound familiar?

Shouldn't you have been satisfied simply not to own slaves yourself? Or not to beat up your own wife? Shouldn't you have left others to make their own choices, without seeking to "impose your personal morality on them?"

The answers are obvious.

The fact that these practices are legal and socially accepted does not matter; human beings were mistreated and denied protection and justice. It would have been wrong not to defend them.

The term "pro-choice" implies that a legitimate choice is there to be made. This simply is not so. Choosing to abort living children is no more a moral option than was owning slaves or beating women.

We do not get to choose whether abortion is moral; only whether we will respond to this issue (and these young lives) with integrity and compassion.

William Moore
Staff, music

Not thankful

Careful reading of *The Register-Guard's* Thanksgiving Day editorial page describing President Lincoln's proclamation establishing Thanksgiving as a national holiday (1863) leaves one less than thankful for its promotion of irrational theist concepts.

Then existing "Reasons of State" rather than personal the-

ist conviction dictated Abraham Lincoln's invocation of an inexistent "God," using religious stratagem to bind the wounds of a Civil War while providing balm the South could and did use to assuage its guilty conscience in defeat.

To suggest otherwise is to believe Lincoln, a lawyer and master of rhetoric, failed to understand that the Bible clearly, unequivocally condoned slavery.

Southerners (like the Boers of South Africa) turned to Leviticus 25:44-46 in The English Bible — King James Version to find psychological justification from "God" for enslaving humans — from whence the "Bible Belt." Readers must examine the Bible used between 1611-1875 to gain that clear understanding:

"Moreover of the children of the strangers that do sojourn among you, of them shall ye buy, and of their families that are with you, which they begat in your land; and they shall be your possession. And ye shall take them as an inheritance for your children after you, to inherit them for a possession, they shall be your bond-men

forever. Both thy bond-men, and thy bond-maids, which thou shalt have, shall be of the heathen that are round about you; of them shall ye buy bond-men and bond-maids." (The English Bible — King James Version; Leviticus 25:44-46).

Modern Bible revisions make it difficult or impossible to establish the many contradictions and inconsistencies of the "inerrant Bible" that led many of our Founding Fathers to reject the anthropomorphic "God" of scripture.

Bert Tryba
Eugene

On sucking

Lately I have noticed a disturbing trend, not only among the contributors to this column, but among my own friends and acquaintances as well. It has to do with the increasingly popular expression, "You suck."

I have always found the origins of words fascinating. I have discovered that many common expressions are holdovers from old racist or other

bigoted phrases. I know that many people who still use such expressions are only doing so out of ignorance, not bigotry. But it is important that you know how uncomfortable (and unsafe) you make others feel when you use such language.

Now what do you suppose the origins are of the phrase, "You suck"? Could it be something like this: "You suck (and are therefore a disgusting faggot)."

Whether you intend it that way or not, many gay people out there do not like the implications of this language.

You see, many of us *do* suck (literally), and we think that sucking is a good and fine thing. Furthermore, there are plenty of non-gay people who suck, and I'll bet you don't devalue them, do you?

I would maintain that using the verb "to suck" is a negative context, is probably homophobic, and certainly offensive to many. If you care about human rights at all, please try to jettison this bit of bigotry from your vocabulary.

Tim Hughes
Student