

Legalize peyote use of Native Americans

Native Americans have used peyote in religious rituals for centuries. There are no valid reasons why it should be illegal for them to continue to do so.

The main problem, as it has been in this country since the white man conquered it, is the law.

Riding a bastion of righteousness, a country was born that included in its basic creed the freedom of religion.

But freedom of religion apparently applies only to those who make the laws.

A couple of years ago two Native American men were employed in a government-sponsored counseling program. After admitting to using peyote in religious ceremonies, the men were fired.

The Oregon case went to the Supreme Court. The high court said it was up to individual states to decide the issue for themselves.

The use of peyote is currently illegal in Oregon under any circumstances. But 24 states allow the use of peyote by Native Americans under exemptions in state law. Oregon should follow suit.

The United States' two main legal drugs, alcohol and tobacco, kill more people combined each year than all illegal drugs combined.

Although 25,000 people die from drinking alcohol and driving each year, and another 200,000 die alcohol-related deaths from cirrhosis and other ailments, millions are careful about alcohol use.

Drugs can be used responsibly. Native Americans used peyote long before white people even knew what it was.

They use it safely. The newspapers aren't full of headlines of people dying from peyote overdoses.

The issue comes with ramifications. Other religious groups want to use drugs in ceremonies. Let corporate America jump on the bandwagon and we will hear slogans like "Peyote tastes good like a cactus-bud should."

The only solution is to exempt Native Americans from the current peyote laws. The government certainly has better things to do than harass Native Americans and their use of peyote.

Realistically, in a state that can't finance its own school system adequately, is Oregon ready to put law enforcement money into busting religious rituals?

Not much is sacred in the United States these days. Oregon should keep ancient Native American customs out of the rule books.



Frohnmayer should admit responsibility

The race for Oregon's governor has taken another turn toward ugly this week.

Republican Dave Frohnmayer fired his California based advertising agency and hired the Eugene firm of Cappelli, Miles, Wiltz and Kelly. Frohnmayer justified the switch by saying his television ads had been too negative. He said he wanted to turn the direction of the campaign toward a more positive tone.

This latest move by Frohnmayer to distance himself from the responsibility of the negative ads is inconsistent with positions he and his staff took earlier in the campaign.

When Frohnmayer's political opponent, Barbara Roberts was taking heat for the mistakes her office had made leading to the removal of ballot measures from the November ballot, Frohnmayer's camp claimed it was her responsibility because she was the person at the top.

Since the person at the top of any campaign should be the candidate, the responsibility for the negative tone of the ads should fall squarely on Frohnmayer's shoulders. Now, he apparently is changing the rules and it is all right to blame your subordinates.

Even when candidates claim to be doing something in order to position themselves on "higher ground" rather than slinging mud, they still cannot be trusted at face value.

Roberts has been closing the gap that Frohnmayer opened early in the campaign. In a poll released Oct. 4 by *The Oregonian* Roberts had pulled dead even with Frohnmayer. The most likely reason that the Republican candidate fired his ad agency is that he needed some new ideas and a new strategy.

Frohnmayer's claim that he fired the agency in order to add the missing element of integrity to his campaign is a political ploy playing on a public that has grown tired of mud-slinging politicians.

With this move, campaigning has reached a new all-time low. Now, rather than simply using selective editing of debate footage to smear the competition, Frohnmayer has resorted to hiding behind the mask of integrity to deceive Oregonians.

These latest moves by Frohnmayer work to show that Roberts has got him worried.

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LETTERS

Who decides

I would like to thank the three women who wrote the letter entitled "Autonomy," (*ODE* Oct. 8) for reminding me that U.S. citizens are not innocent until proven guilty.

A jury was not able to find Derek Horton guilty of sexual abuse. Who are you to decide the outcome of his case?

I thought those who are accused of committing a crime are given the right to a fair trial and that no one but the jury is allowed to proclaim their innocence or guilt.

However, after reading your letter I see just how ignorant I've been. Being accused of a crime automatically means you are guilty.

In reference to your party, I suppose women will be able to attend, drink and sleep with whomever they wish.

When they become sober, and if they regret their decision, they can say, "Well, I was drunk. He made me."

Men, on the other hand, have to worry because it is assumed men always take advantage of women and it could never possibly be the other way around. Innocent until proven guilty? What does that mean, anyway?

RoseMarie Beatty
Journalism

Psychology

I am responding to a quote made by Kristi Patterson in the (*ODE*, Sept. 27) article "Classes more crowded this year."

She stated all 400-level psychology classes were closed be-

fore registration. This is not true.

In pre-registration, each psychology class is allowed to fill up by 50 percent.

Therefore, during registration at least 50 percent of each psychology class is offered to students.

If students have questions, we psychology peer advisers encourage them to come to the psychology peer advising office at 141 Straub rather than making assumptions that could harm both students and the psychology department.

Kimie Dallas
Psychology

Letters Policy

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

Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.