

## EDITORIAL

### Gay Pride Week

I'd like to clarify some things about Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Pride Week in the hope of sparing us the usual torrent of hateful, defensive letters.

First, we celebrate Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Pride Week, but not a heterosexual pride week because American culture supports straights. Every time you go to a public place or see any aspect of mass media you see heterosexuality being exalted.

In contrast, most of us have been raised hearing that homosexuality and bisexuality are evil and shameful. That hateful lie has hurt us all.

Queers are at risk every time we don't lie about who we are. If you doubt how serious or widespread this is, get a copy of the report by the President's Task Force on Gay and Lesbian Concerns. It's available for free at Johnson Hall.

If you think Pride Week is somehow "flaunting" our sexuality, consider how outrageous public heterosexuality is. When was the last time you saw a TV show or movie without a straight couple in it? How about ads?

I couldn't count the number of straight couples I see on campus kissing and holding hands. Straights even announce their commitment in the newspaper.

Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual Pride Week is a time for queers to celebrate. It's our event, but straight people can celebrate with us and learn. If you choose to attend the events, do so to learn, not to argue and debate.

Trust me. We have heard more excuses for homophobia

than any individual could come up with.

Irene Hislop  
Journalism

### Campus tree-t

Foremost among the glories of the University campus are the hundreds and hundreds of different species of trees.

University archivist Keith Richard in his letter (*ODE*, April 5) discloses that the campus area was a treeless plain when the University first opened in 1876, except for the two Oregon white oaks immediately north of Villard Hall.

Deeper appreciation for the rich variety of trees on the campus, precise locations, and the botanical and common names were laid out with maps in "Trees of the Oregon Campus" by Kenneth W. Knapp, second edition, 1980.

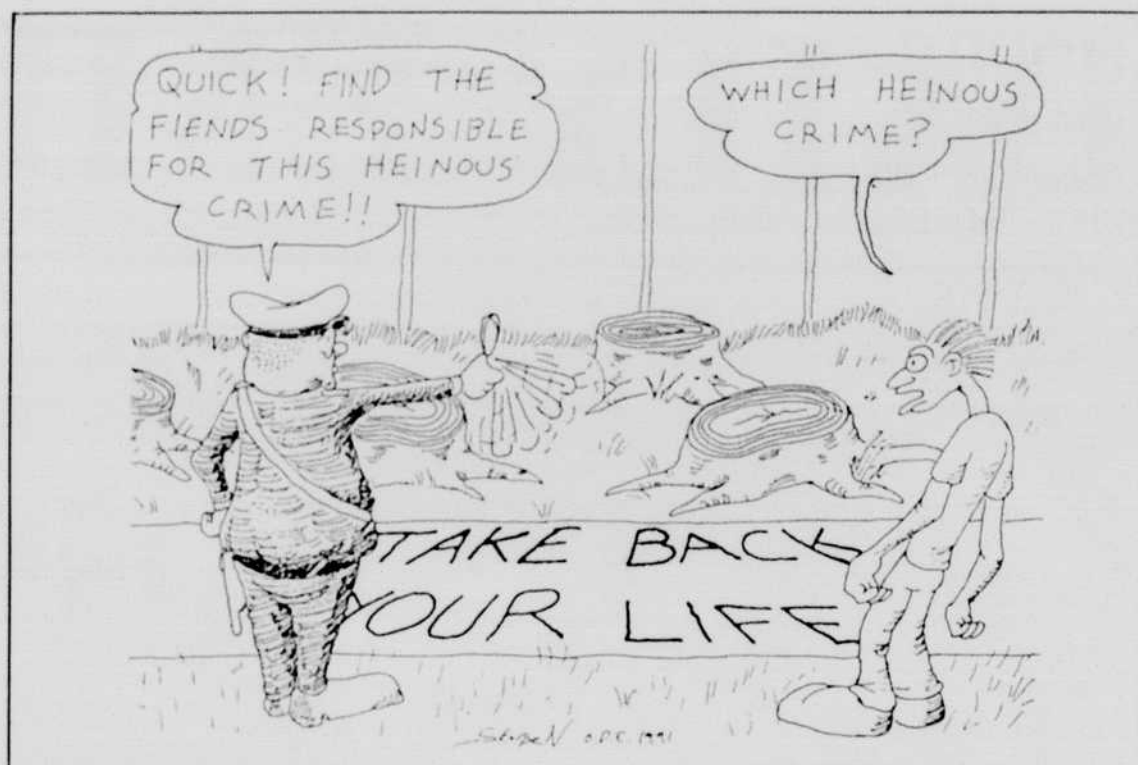
Appreciation of these trees could be greatly enhanced if vandal-proof, cement-anchored bronze plaques could be installed at each tree with the botanical and common name of the tree and names of the donor and the person in whose honor the tree was planted as well as the date of the planting.

The cost estimates per plaque come to about \$100. Priorities to handle the most significant trees first could be established. Contributions could be requested for financing and, after all, trees have always had a uniquely precious role in Oregon.

Charles O. Porter  
Eugene

### Bush country

We wish to respond to Gerry Rempel (*ODE*, Apr. 10) saying



that we disagree with his opinions about Bush.

It is time that Bush received credit for being a great president. Rempel's remarks typify the type of attitude maintained by many of the long-haired, peace loving, Birkenstock wearing liberals of Eugene.

It is easy to see that most liberals here are anti-Bush. He is our president, the leader of our great country. If you liberals lived in Russia you would probably be shot as conspirators against the government. You have the freedom to do anything you please because we have a strong leader in Bush and we live in perhaps the greatest nation in the world. How can you disagree?

Rempel seems to have a big

problem with Bush as our president. He states in his letter that "we consider it meddling in internal affairs to take out helicopter gunships wreaking genocidal havoc upon citizens," meaning that we should be helping the innocent Iraqi citizens in their struggle against Hussein.

Did Bush not clearly state that our purpose was simply to expel Iraq from Kuwait? Such "trivia" shows the people of America that our leader sticks

to his words.

We are tired of this unwritten rule on campus that Bush cannot be trusted or liked. If people would open their minds we could have an even more productive America.

We feel that Bush is perhaps one of the greatest presidents of all time and we are proud of him.

Jonathon Bernstein  
Jim Bridge  
Students

### LETTERS POLICY

The *Oregon Daily Emerald* will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. The *Emerald* reserves the right to edit any letter for length or style.

## FORUM

# Chemical dependency class propagates religion

By Kevin A. Hornbuckle

Students enrolled in Chemical Dependency (HDEV 410) are being deceived that it is an introduction to ethically acceptable methods of treating drug addiction. In truth, the class is a parade of counselors propagating a religious approach to addiction treatment.

The approach is called 12-stepism and was made famous by Alcoholics Anonymous. Twelve-stepism is founded on Protestant revivalism wherein one confesses one's sins to the public and avows penitence. The modern expression of this is the 12-step ritual of pronouncing to a group of addicts "My name is (so-and-so) and I'm an alcoholic."

The content of the class offends academic integrity not because it is religious, but because it is and the speakers try to say it's not. They do not admit its true character when questioned by observant students (or clients in the treatment centers) who observe what is indubitably obvious.

Most of the time the ideology is disguised in what is commonly called psychobabble — pervasive sounding buzz words usually riddled with touchy-feely verbiage implying the speaker knows what he is talking about.

According to 12-stepism's own literature, it has maintained from the start a policy of deception because early AA advocates knew "if we appear to be a new religious sect, we would certainly be in trouble — so we began to emphasize...that AA was a way of life that conflicted with no one's religious beliefs."

But faith and fact are always at odds and therefore the class is always offensive to students who are not religious and frequently offensive to students of religions other than Christianity. When Phil Zuckerman, who is Jewish, took the class he found that "There was a religious bent to it that put a lot of people off. For them to say that the person (who is addicted) is helpless is intrinsically unproductive."

Cross-cultural research shows that Jewish people are generally much less likely to become addicted to drugs.

because their families highly value and instill a sense of personal responsibility. Dan Kelsay of Serenity Lane told one class, "the thing that makes people addicted to drugs is the drug itself." This idea is based on personal irresponsibility (i.e., "The devil made me do it"), precisely what objective data show to play a causal role in drug addiction.

These two observations readily demonstrate 12-stepism's rejection of empirical observation — science itself — in favor of an approach that in many cases is anti-therapeutic. Drinkers who believe they are powerless fulfill the prophecy and tend to develop strong addictions.

Lacking one shred of objective support, the idea of personal powerlessness is preached simply because self responsibility is inimical to the utmost deterministic notion that there is a deity that causes all things and events including addiction. Thus AA's seminal "Big Book" exhorts readers to "Remember... we deal with alcohol — cunning, baffling, powerful. Without help it is too much for us. But there is One who has all power — that One is God. May you find him now!"

Walt Byrd, M.D., who works for the state and Serenity Lane told the class last quarter that a symptom of alcoholism is agnosticism. Another Serenity Lane employee put it directly: "If you're atheist or agnostic then that is part of your denial of your alcoholism." Famed AA founder Bill Wilson wrote "God" causes alcoholism in disbelievers as a means of punishment.

In faith-based systems reason must be cast to the wind. Since evidence is no longer the bottom line, drug abuse counselors must devise perfidious ways to sell the faith of 12-stepism lest some critical student says, "Wait a minute. This just doesn't make sense."

So the lecturers say the most curious things. To wit: Last quarter, Harvey Bond, a counselor at Lane Community College who describes himself as a recovering addict, sought to illustrate the unwillingness of state legislators to fund addiction prevention programs by explaining that, "Legislators don't want to talk about spirituality and that's a real problem. They get

uncomfortable when you say that word." You know the First Amendment is in trouble when someone says the separation of church and state should be ignored for the people's own good. By the way, Bond currently faces felony drug charges for allegedly tampering with drug records and possessing a controlled substance. As one might guess, he's pleading powerlessness.

Last quarter when students rightly told the SHARP counselor that the 12 steps are religious, he responded by saying, "I kind of think of something outside myself as God." Then he tried to explain that turning one's life and will over to "God" as step three requires is not an act of religion. Similar tactics are used on clients who must be mentally loosened up before unleashing the evangelism that fills 12-step literature.

My requests to address the class on a rational approach to addiction treatment was rebuffed with groundless excuses. The true believers of 12-stepism present themselves as concerned individuals out to help drug addicts. But if you question the faith, as I unabashedly do, they have no problem violating the basic tenets of academic integrity or even the U.S. Constitution to protect their sacred cow.

I'm referring here to people with drug convictions being required by the courts to go to AA meetings with their ritual opening and closing prayers and "Higher Power" in between. In cases where individuals have legally contested such sentencing on civil rights grounds, the courts have found the 12-step defense of "spiritual, not religious" to be meaningless.

In order to preserve academic integrity, the chemical dependency class lecturers should be made to cease their proselytizations of "God, Higher Power," and "spiritually." Or the University should move the class to the department of religious studies.

These notions have no place in a course purporting a foundation in the behavioral sciences. The quackery of faith healing was exposed long ago.

Kevin Hornbuckle is the founder of the Oregon Institute for Rational Recovery.