

## Brand's veto shows board's real power

University President Myles Brand just passed up a key chance to put his money where his anti-discriminatory mouth is.

The EMU Board of Directors unanimously voted Wednesday to ban military recruiters from the building because of their noncompliance with University rules prohibiting sexual orientation discrimination.

At a press conference on Friday, Brand announced his veto of the decision, giving the OK for the recruiters to return.

The president has long supported equal opportunity at the University but his recent action clouds a good deal of hope he may have instilled.

One can understand the position he was in. Should he have upheld the board's decision, the University would have been the first college in the nation to enact a ban on military recruiters. Considering he'd just be saying no to the darling of our government and its patriotically indoctrinated people, Brand would no doubt catch some heat. That's a scary place to be.

One reason the president gave was that he wanted to protect the rights of those students wishing to meet with military recruiters. This appears consistent with his support for equal representation on campus until one takes a deeper look: By supporting student rights to access of military recruiters who are subject to discriminatory laws, the rights of "sexually alternative" students wanting equal chance for military entrance are crossed.



Myles Brand

The veto was no surprise — it was the safest alternative, especially considering Brand's belief that "universities should not be instruments for political transformation." Translation: When in doubt, go with the status quo.

Universities always have been and always will be the instruments of change. They are where new ideas and perspectives are formed and empowered — unless those that run the institutions don't support such innovative thinking.

Brand's dismissal of the student-faculty board's unanimous decision makes one wonder about his commitment to student involvement in the resolution of issues that affect them.

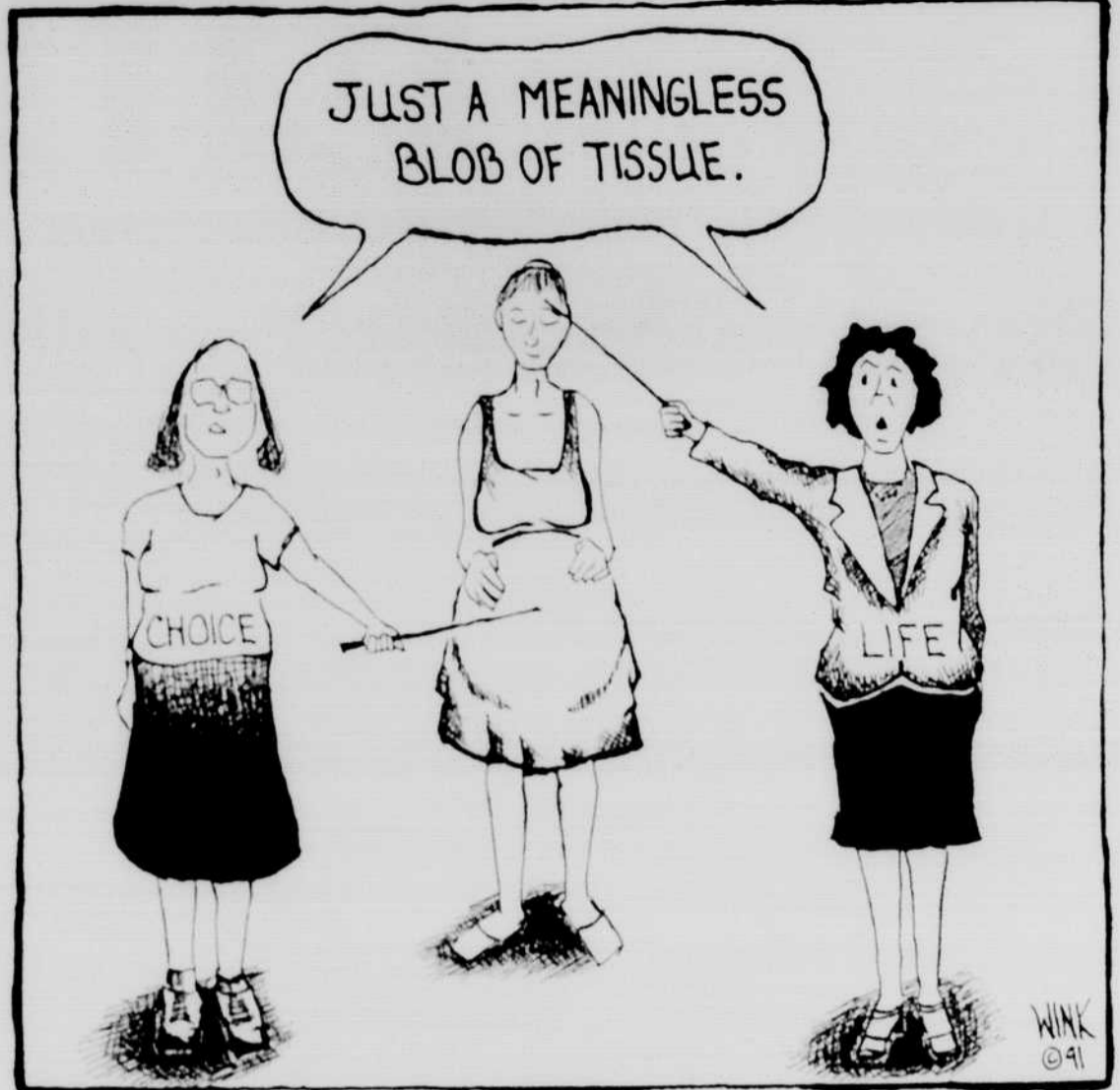
For a while, it appeared the president and board were on the same side regarding this issue. When push came to shove, however, the big guy won hands down — enough to make the board appear as nothing more than an administrative token and tool.

Unfortunately, when it came down to such a group wielding any sort power in this situation, Brand's veto showed just how much power they had: not much.

The board did a lot for this issue by bringing it to the state's attention. It used all its power to do so, testing the limits all the way, and it should be commended for that.

The students at this university need to be heard via representative groups like the EMU board. These groups act as vehicles for the collective student voice and need to be treated with respect — not a hand slap — by University administration.

It's by working together with mutual consideration that resolutions satisfactory to all sides can be found.



## LETTERS

### Missed mark

Your editorial (ODE, Oct. 14) about Attorney General Dave Frohnmayer's recent advice to the Oregon Government Ethics Commission missed the mark.

As Frohnmayer made very clear, he has the obligation, as the state of Oregon's chief counsel, to protect the Ethics Commission from the possibility of lawsuits for violation of civil rights of Stan Long and other State Action Insurance Fund Corporation executives. Such an outcome could result from the commission's continued action on complaints that the Department of Justice had indicated were without legal merit.

Your conclusion that Frohnmayer "jumped so quickly" to aid a personal friend is also unfounded. Frohnmayer also made it clear that his intervention occurred only after an investigation or the threat of one had lingered for over five months, in spite of the Department of Justice's early advice to the commission that there was no legal basis for the complaints.

The Ethics Commission is clearly vulnerable here for damaging personal and professional reputations and for damaging SAIF Corporation's ability to compete in the marketplace. They and the citizens of Oregon should be grateful for

the advice and counsel of the attorney general, who has an exemplary understanding of the constitutional issues raised by unfounded complaints designed to chill free speech.

Katherine Keene  
SAIF Executive Vice President  
for Internal Affairs

### Future mistakes

A response to the letters submitted by Brendan R. Briggs (ODE, Oct. 28) and Mike Kockeler (ODE, Oct. 29):

First of all Mr. Briggs, these "so-called" "revisionists" and "do-gooders" aren't condemning Columbus and his ignorance, they are objecting to the way he is represented in the history books.

Briggs, as a history major, you should be familiar with Columbus and his exploits. Unfortunately, you're not.

True, Columbus was looking for riches. However, because he did not find any, he took the next most "valuable commodity" — the native inhabitants — and enslaved them. And yes, Mr. Briggs, I'm sure you, out of your zealotry, would proceed to rape, maim and enslave the indigenous cultures as Columbus did. And you would certainly have every right to!

Kockeler, another history buff, claims the Europeans brought "diversity" to the Americas. Nice word choice,

especially during a time when "diversity" has a positive meaning. Heck, with your definition we have a reason (excuse!) for committing any atrocity to non-Anglo cultures, both past and future.

"Alleged" genocide? I suppose written documents by even Spaniards themselves (Bartolome de Las Casas, Alvar Nunez, Hernan Cortes and even Columbus) aren't proof enough.

Gentlemen, yes we must live in the present. We should forgive events of the past. But we should never forget, for the understanding of such events can help us from making similar mistakes in the future.

James McNicholas  
Journalism/Spanish

### Fear

Recently a friend defined homophobia to us as a fear of one's own sexuality. Obviously people who are comfortable with their own sexuality, whether they be heterosexual, bisexual, or homosexual, would have no fear of people sharing publicly their sexual orientation.

People who fear recruitment should spend more time carefully examining their own sexuality.

Amy Joslin  
Spender de Mille

