

'If it doesn't work, blame it on the aide'

It's hard to get good help these days, isn't it? Just ask George Bush. After two years of bitter haggling, he finally got a civil rights bill he could live with. But then along comes C. Boyden Gray, and things aren't so clear anymore.

Gray, who is the White House counsel, routinely authors "interpretations" of congressionally passed legislation. Or in other words, he gives the semi-official policy of how the executive branch views the bill, and what steps it will take to enforce such laws.

Gray's statements aren't legally binding, but they do set the tone for how Bush and Co. deal with the legislation. Last Wednesday, Gray circulated his draft policy on the new civil rights bill and interpreted that it would end racial preferences and quotas in federal government hiring practices.

Not a law, just something to make you go hmm...

The Democrats, who temporarily sided with Bush to pass the legislation, were apoplectic. They considered the move treasonous and said Bush was trying to gut the 1965 affirmative action regulations.

The next day, Bush backpedaled, claiming Gray acted on his own and without White House knowledge or approval. Bush assured Democrats he didn't view the civil rights bill that way.

He may be right. Gray is well-known for having a more stringent attitude than Bush toward affirmative action — if such a thing is possible. It is not completely out of the question that the whole controversy is just one slightly rabid aide overstepping his authority.

However, the timing and the suggestion Bush knew nothing about it are a little suspect. Bush is not known as a loose-rein president. His aides do not act on their own without his prior knowledge, except for Sununu, who does pretty much whatever he wants. Bush runs a tight ship, and it is unlikely he would be completely clueless to Gray's plan.

In addition, it is quite possible Bush was using Gray's draft policy as a "trial balloon" as some critics are suggesting. It makes for a simple way to test public perception. Attach the policy to the bill and watch the reaction. If no fuss is made, Bush wins a political victory without having to take on Congress. If the result is too sharp (as in this case), blame the aide and forget about it for now. No harm, no foul.

And Bush comes out unscathed.

Even after Thursday's signing ceremony, controversy remained. Bush endorsed an interpretation of the new law, which gives broad legal boundaries under which employers could cite "business necessity" to discriminate against minorities when hiring. What this "business necessity" means is unclear, but giving wide discretion to the clause defeats what the new civil rights bill is supposed to be about.

Perceptions of Bush vary, but nobody can accuse him of not being a canny politician. A no-loss trial balloon has the taint of Bush mentality.

There can be no doubt Bush will eventually try to "fillet" the affirmative action legislation. Now, it merely remains to be seen where and when the opportunity will come.



LETTERS

DeFazio

Do you ever wonder if you can affect our seemingly inaccessible world of politics? Over the past month, University students and LCC OSPIRG chapters sent nearly 3,000 postcards to U.S. Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.), urging him to support House Resolution 3429, the Clean Water Amendments Act. These postcards were signed by active students exercising their right to be heard in Congress.

This resolution will come up to vote in the House sometime this session. If passed, these amendments will strengthen the Clean Water Act by imposing mandatory minimum fines on polluters, and expanding the public's right to know about toxic releases in our waterways.

Last week, DeFazio announced his endorsement of this resolution, attributing his support in part to grassroots action from his constituents. We'd like to thank all those who took the time to fill out a postcard in support of clean water.

On Nov. 26, DeFazio's staff director Betsy Boyd will be on campus to speak and answer questions on the toxics issue from the congressional perspective. The informal meeting will be held in the EMU Fir Room from 12:30 to 1:30 p.m. We hope students and faculty will take advantage of this valuable opportunity to exchange thoughts and learn about this growing environmental issue.

Mary Beth Kurilo
Toxics Coordinator
OSPIRG
Scott Madden
Grassroots Coordinator
OSPIRG

Not the fact...

Jo Sonja Watson, I am truly disappointed in you. You have caused me to lose all my faith in your abilities to perform your duties with honesty and integrity. It is not the fact that you broke the law; it's what you stole and your irresponsible handling of the incident.

You should apologize for what you have done. You should feel very ashamed of your "little mistake." You hold an important role and are paid a monthly stipend for doing so. Your student body deserves better from you.

I, too, am a student having to make ends meet, but I have a

baby who has needs as well. I never miss nor neglect our financial obligations.

This crime you committed is in the past. What's done is done. The question is your integrity. You owe your fellow students an apology or a resignation!

Anne Harper
Psychology

A joke?

When I read Bryan Westly's "In Defense" letter (ODE, Nov. 18), I honestly hoped it was a joke. Whether it is a joke or not, I feel compelled to respond.

Westly stated that "there is no place to put them (gays, lesbians and bisexuals)." I disagree because bisexuals and homosexuals are just as "real" as any heterosexual man or woman.

One's sexual preference has no bearing on where one should sleep nor how well one can perform an assigned task. My own bisexuality does not affect my abilities here at the University or in my place of work. I am a dean's list student and a diligent worker. One's sexuality does not determine what talents one possesses.

As for grouping hetero, homo and bisexuals together, well, this occurs in many other housing settings. I live in a dormitory on a floor in which I am the only known "non-straight" person. I do not go on sexual rampages, attempting to seduce my fellow floor residents.

Most heterosexuals do not do this, so why is it assumed the rest of the population will? Homosexuality and bisexuality do not equal promiscuity.

Finally, Westly, having genders separated in the greek system or in dormitories does not ensure when rape will occur. My rape and subsequent attempted rape occurred on a female floor of my dormitory. I fail to see the point of this argument in your letter if you want sexual orientation segregation. My rapist was a heterosexual man, not a homo or bisexual person.

One final question. Why do you care when we non-heterosexuals are having sex? Just curious.

Lisa Dessen
Romance Languages

Challenge

In response to Bryan Westly's letter (ODE, Nov. 18).

On this campus, diversity is not celebrated and rape is not combatted by providing separate housing facilities for women and men. Many women and men cohabitate quite successfully in co-ops, apartments, etc., and are comfortable with the idea of living in one another's company as competent, respectful individuals.

Rape is a violent act, not a sexual act. Rapists are not excused no matter where they resided in proximity to the victim. Don't patronize women by pretending that separate housing ensures them safety from or solves the problem of rape. The way to ensure against rape is for men to realize it's a man's issue and for them to take responsibility for their actions instead of casting the responsibility elsewhere, i.e. partitioning the sexes. Only respect ensures against rape.

Just as one must challenge the mentality of the perpetrator with rape, so must one with homophobia. Lesbians and gays are everywhere (surprise — even in the military), always have been and always will be. Challenge homophobic mentality, not lesbians and gays.

Amy Neel
Student

Integrity?

The University student government has a problem. The problem is an elected official who steals from the student bookstore. This official steals from us and then turns around and claims to represent student interests. I, for one, do not choose to be represented by an official who steals.

Does the fact this official holds an office say something about the moral and ethical standards of the student government? It certainly says the University elects officials who lack certain ethical standards that most of us find inherent to a position of responsibility. Condoning behavior like this is just as wrong as committing the act itself. I demand new representation. You should too.

Matthew Cook
Student

Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. BOX 3159, EUGENE, OREGON 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

The Emerald is private property. The unlawful removal or use of papers is prosecutable by law.

Managing Editor	Editor in Chief	News Editor	Chris Bounoff
Editorial Editor	Pat Msiach	Editorial Editor	Don Peters
Graphics Editor	Cathie Daniels	Sports Editor	Jake Berg
Entertainment Editor	Jeff Paslay	Night Editor	Chris Bounoff
	Layne Lakelish		

Associate Editors
Community: Rene DeCair; **Student Government Activities:** Daralyn Trappe
Higher Education/Administration: Carrie Dennett

Reporters: Tammy Batay, David Charbonneau, Dennis Fitzgerald, Jayson Jacoby, Gerrit Koepfing, Kirsten Lucas, Lisa Milligan, Hope Neelson, Colleen Pohlig

Copy Editors: Christopher Chew, Dan Eisler, Karen Engels, Fred Hagen, Paul Halvorson, Lisa Milligan, Shelliza Mitha, Kathy Sherlock, Kathy Sweeney

Photographers: Sean Poston, Andre Raman

Advertising: Jean Bradley, Scott Dana, Leslie Fiat, Britain Kilburn, Tom Leech, Lisa Ng, Randon Riley, Catherine Royce, Mary Sanderson, Tara Surratt, Vicki Tobin, Sharon Vaz

Classified: Peggy McGinn, **Manager:** Kevin Austerloman, Alan Curtis, Sheila Lorenzo

Business: Kathy Carbone, Supervisor Judy Connolly
Production: Ingrid White, Production Coordinator Jennifer Archer, Sarah Clark, Jim Finch, Corrie Frier, Kristine Granger, Jennifer Huey, Jim Mason, Dee McCobb, Stacy Mitchell, Mist Morn, Jennifer Roland, Jennifer Smith, Anne Stephenson, Jennifer Viale, Todd Williams

General Manager: Judy Riadi

Advertising Director: Bryan R. Coppadge **Production Manager:** Michele Ross

Newsroom: 346-5511 **Display Advertising:** 346-3712

Business Office: 346-5512 **Classified Advertising:** 346-4343