

## Abortion gag repeal respects intelligence

Looks like women might just be allowed to grow up in this country after all. That's right, with rights to information and everything.

The House recently overturned the Bush administration's gag rule preventing family planning clinics from offering women abortion counseling. It now moves to the Senate.

Under the rule, doctors and clinic staffers got in Big Trouble if they even alluded to abortion as an option for pregnant women.

Previously protected against making what the administration labeled a "wrong decision," what ever will women do should they actually become privy to this long-denied information? Will they even be able to handle the decision process necessary to sort through the extra option without the medical profession's silence to guide them?

Whether one subscribes to the anti-abortion or abortion-rights side of the spectrum, denial of information regarding abortion is wrong, as would be the denial of any information about the variety of options available to pregnant women. It's not the administration's place to decide how a woman will handle her pregnancy. Instead, its place is to protect information accessibility rights while leaving the ultimate decision to the party(ies) involved.

The gag rule has been a total insult to women, and has affected doctors and their staff. In short, it slams supporters' version of the "right decision" down women's throats by locking up what medical professionals can and cannot say.

Women are able, and deserve the right, to make their own decisions regarding their pregnancy. Available information is necessary for that to take place — including abortion information.

Doctors and staffers deserve the freedom to counsel as they see fit. Gaggling them insults their intelligence.

The administration, however, still has a way to go. Though new guidelines issued last month would allow doctors at government clinics to talk to patients about the abortion option, clinic staffers, including nurses, would be forbidden to do the same. The most they could do is refer women elsewhere.

Once again, America's hypocritical system of human rights has been exposed for what it is. Restrictions on receiving information is not the key to life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It is the key to ignorance.

**It's not the administration's place to decide how a woman will handle her pregnancy. Instead, its place is to protect information accessibility.**



## OPINION

# ASUO Executive's car won't run



## THE FINE PRINT

BY JAKE BERG

**B**obby Lee and Karmen Fore's campaign for the ASUO Executive was a lot like a good-looking sports car.

The car had nice body lines, the paint was spotless, the speedometer went to 180 mph, and the name was top-of-the-line.

The car was beautiful, almost perfect. Unfortunately for Bobby and Karmen, you can't run a sports car with a lawnmower's engine.

Bobby and Karmen, though, now have the unenviable task of driving this John Deere RX7 after students (or at least the 13.1 percent who voted in the primary) gave them the keys. Lucky for them, this car can run for a few miles on rhetoric.

We've heard it all before — more diversity, fight tuition increases, blah, blah, blah. Their campaign stance was as much of a cliché as "the same old song and dance." As a matter of fact, it was just that.

Given, Bobby will probably do more than our invisible president, Jennifer Bills. He's got the experience and has been in the system long enough so that he might actually do something. From all indications, Bobby has the hunger to make some change.

It ain't that easy, kid.

Talking about it is one thing, but creating change is something else entirely. You need help to make change, and given the far from flattering voting turnout (last year's 15 percent was laughingly better), students at the University just don't care.

We all bitch and moan about how empty our pockets are after paying the tuition bill, but how many students are actually willing to do something about it?

Maybe about 7 percent — the number of students out of the total University population who voted for Lee/Fore. That's not very encouraging. Lee may be the driver of the ASUO team now, but he's behind the wheel of a car with no gas in the tank to fuel the engine.

More diversity? Agreed, the number of minorities at the University is discouraging, but

let's face it — as a whole, the state of Oregon is whiter than a loaf of Wonder Bread. It's difficult to take from something that is not there.

I wouldn't disagree with someone claiming that I am pessimistic. But I am also realistic. The box I marked on the ballot (yep, I voted) for the ASUO Executive belonged to the Chris Pharis/Donald Morgan ticket.

After all, would it have really been any different if Pharis and Morgan had been elected? Yes, in one sense. I was impressed enough with their campaign — which included everything from roller coasters to mustaches, not tuition and diversity — because of the simple fact that it was different.

Where Pharis/Morgan and Lee/Fore would not have been any different is in the impact that neither ticket would have made.

A note to two guys who would have made the ASUO look like the joke it is:

Dear Chris and Donald,

I really wanted to go to an underwater university, but the 2,292 students who voted were just too damn serious. They really believe that Bobby and Karmen are going to make a difference in this world.

Silly students.

Your biggest fan,  
Jake Berg

Probably the only reason that Pharis and Morgan lost was that the majority of the students who even would care to vote in the first place would be wooed by the same recycled crap that Bobby borrowed from last spring's Bills/Watson show.

I know what I'm talking about. I fell for it and voted for Bills and JoSonja Watson last year, and I almost fell again in the executive election two weeks ago. A year after seeing Bills and Watson's victorious faces grace the front page of this newspaper, I haven't seen a bit of change.

Bills knew what she was talk-

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ing about last year, too. She talked her way right into Suite 1. She told the students what they wanted to hear, and unless she pulls some magic out of her bag in these final weeks of her incumbency, that talk has most certainly failed to walk.

Which really brings in the question of just how relevant the ASUO is, anyway. Our student government is good for taking care of the little things that we never see, I'm sure, but I'm not as confident about the Lee/Fore campaign's promises. They're just big dreams for an organization with no power or authority.

Remember your high school student body officers? The only thing they ever did was put on dances and organize pep rallies. The ASUO is no different, except that it represents a greater number of students who are even more apathetic than most high school student bodies. In high school, students actually voted.

Bobby's plans may reach a higher level than Bills' if he can appeal to the students as well as he plays basketball (thanks to Chris and Donald for that lighthearted moment in the election), and then maybe I won't have to worry as much about the other bills next year. But I'm not holding out my hopes.

So to President Lee and Vice President Fore, I may sound like I'm dooming your newest jobs, but I really hope you can get that sports car to go.

*Jake Berg is sports editor of the Emerald.*

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