

Senator allegations no surprise to us

You know, we knew about Packwood, too. We did. *The Oregonian* and *Willamette Week* weren't the only newspapers to hear about Packwood's alleged sexual harassment. We've known about it for years — ever since it started happening.

Every year we wonder whether we should do a story on Packwood's rumored indiscretions. But every year we sort of forget about it. Next time, we say. The story will still be there.

In fact, we have a feature photo of Packwood molesting The Duck. We just never published it. We decided the picture was a little too graphic for our readers. Trust us, a topless Packwood is not a pretty sight.

Packwood even kissed one of our editors. And boy, he didn't like it one bit.

And guess what? *The Washington Post* contacted us about the Packwood story because it knew we were sitting on valuable information. So we told the editors everything they needed to know, but then we decided it wasn't worth our time to do a story ourselves. We were more interested in following the lead of *The Oregonian* and *The Register-Guard* in printing revealing photos of the president-elect's cat.

We couldn't even get that right, however, because our photographers were too busy following Packwood around to local porno shops, where he was loading up on "instructional" videos — at least that's what his expense account said.

And then there was the time Packwood came up to our offices and ranted about how cute Michelle Pfeiffer is. We have it on video.

Well, actually, we don't really have it on video. To be honest, we made up all the information listed above. But already we put more work in this story than *The Oregonian* did, and we didn't even break a sweat.

In Tuesday's edition, *The Oregonian* admitted a sloppy job of reporting for not investigating the allegations against Packwood. According to the story, Packwood rumors had "circulated widely for years." The paper reported that one of its female reporters even had Packwood give her an unwanted kiss.

But after a meeting between political reporters and editors, the paper decided not to pursue the allegations — despite solid leads and several months to go before the election.

The Tuesday story was reprehensible by itself. Rather than accept direct blame for failing its readers, the paper's editors said several times that they made the best decisions they could based on the circumstances. The paper's concern was being scooped, not committing bad journalistic practices. There's only one way to respond. Baloney!

A newspaper has a responsibility to investigate stories in the public interest. This was clearly one of those stories, as it questioned Packwood's character, his sensitivity and his commitment to women's issues. But the Oregon media blew it. They could have toppled a major-league hypocrite, but they didn't. In the end, the only people who didn't know about Packwood's alleged harassment in time were the public and the *Emerald*.



LETTERS

Day madness

I would like to respond to Christopher Lancefield's letter expressing his outrage at the University's failure to observe Veteran's Day (*ODE*, Nov. 24).

To illustrate his point, he contrasts the University's observance of Martin Luther King's birthday to its non-observance of Veteran's Day. I have no problem with his discontent at the University's non-recognition of Veteran's Day, but why does he feel it necessary to compare it with observance of MLK Day?

It's as if he is expressing astonishment that MLK Day is observed and Veteran's Day is not. Recently, a newly formed law student group called the Foundation for the Advancement of Conservative Thought published an article expressing the same discontent and using the same analogy.

Frankly, I, along with other African-American students, am sick of students such as Lancefield and organizations such as FACT surreptitiously implying it is outrageous we observe MLK Day and not Veteran's Day.

It is a not so subtle form of racism under the guise of patriotism. The University also observes Memorial Day, but I guess Lancefield feels this holiday is more deserving of recognition.

Monica Hardy
Law

Close house

Because of the confusion among some observers of the (Nov. 23) protest at the Phi Kappa Psi house, I will explain my participation.

Niki Rauch wants this house closed for perpetrating an atmosphere of sexual assault. I support Rauch's fight by my presence at demonstrations. The cause of this protest was to encourage the closure of the Phi Kappa Psi house.

I reject the criticisms of the observers. If they condemn our methods, they need to personally act on their convictions rather than lounge in apathetic non-activism. We were not a

lynch mob; there were no lynchings, no broken windows, no assaults. I will not tolerate violence against women in any form or in any setting. I need not hear where more rapes occur; this is not a study in relative frequency, this is opposition to every assault.

I support the greek system under the condition that it fulfills the social responsibilities that are placed upon it because of its powerful position. One of these responsibilities is absolutely prohibiting any sort of gender-based assault or harassment. When this responsibility is not met, my support switches to stopping this system. The message I want to send by closing the Phi Kappa Psi house is that fraternity existence is a privilege, not a right. I support Greeks Against Rape because it believes in internal change, but there are also times for outside intervention — such as house closure. Rape is wrong, even when it's "only" a few times.

Heidi Bowman
Comparative Literature

No options

In Tuesday's (Dec. 1) *Emerald*, the editorial stated, "A taxpayer who has lived in Oregon for many years deserves access to an affordable education. An out-of-state student who wishes to take advantage of state funding does not have the same right to taxpayer support."

As a native Seattle resident, my first choice was the University of Washington. But in my major, Washington has one of the top-10 departments in the nation, and I was not accepted.

Thus, I was faced with the following choices: go to Washington State University, Central Washington, etc., and get a mediocre education; go to an expensive private school; or pay steep out-of-state tuition in another state.

As "a taxpayer who has lived in Washington for many years," don't I also "deserve access to an affordable education"? True, I have not paid taxes in Oregon, but I'm not getting credit for the many years I've paid taxes to support Washington schools.

Thus, the people in my situation get screwed by the whole

state residency system. I don't know what the solution is (maybe move the funding to the federal level), but the current system is not right.

Eric Sieverling
Computer Science

Think Greek

With this letter we would like to express our objections and deepest concern regarding the content of a speech titled "Current Ethnic Conflict in Yugoslavia — Geographical Perspective," given by Professor Ronald Wixman on Nov. 16 at the University.

This man, hidden behind the title "expert," presented his opinions about the situation in former Yugoslavia. We are not able to evaluate everything Wixman said. What we do know is he intentionally abused the truth concerning the actions and positions of our country, Greece, with regard to our relationship with a newly formed country that has not been recognized by the United Nations, United States, European Community, etc.

Wixman deliberately misled his audience on this particular subject. Furthermore, the style and content of the lecture strongly implied only one part of the country is responsible for everything happening during the war in Bosnia-Herzegovina. At the end, there was no time left for people to rebut his speech.

It was extremely disappointing for a man endorsed by the University to deny the possibility of a dialogue and thus reject the very essence of democracy, as it was born and developed in our country.

His whole attitude makes us wonder: Is this the way this man is teaching — by presenting his opinions as facts, by not offering the opportunity for dialogue, by offending countries, their history and their tradition? Is this what the University presents? Is this the kind of education we're seeking?

We think not.
Stas Stavrianeas
University Hellenic Club

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