

Make the University private

We can no longer afford to have so many public higher-education institutions in the state of Oregon. The schools we have now are underfunded and not as good as they could be. Facilities are in dire need of renovation, and the prestige of Oregon's universities is waning. Student tuition levels have become a form of taxation without representation.

What we should do is enter one of our institutions into the care of someone we trust to treat it well and who will likely do a better job of developing it than the state. In other words, we should responsibly seek privatization.

Of the three public universities in Oregon, I believe the University represents the best candidate for sale. Portlanders need a public institution to support their superior numbers, and Oregon State University is an A&M Oregon could not really do without.

Besides, Oregon State and Portland State are easily identified as being state institutions and reflecting of Oregon's long-standing state/metro tradition.

With the privatization of the University, the state's public higher education system would reap much financial relief. The rivalry that exists between the University and OSU would begin to reflect that of Stanford and Berkeley, and any gains in educational quality and prestige at the University would unquestionably motivate OSU administrative expendables to scurry to match them. Eugene could join company with place names such as New Haven, Evanston and Syracuse.

Moreover, the University would likely enjoy an inflow of needed monies for renovations, endowments of professorships and restoration of presently-cut student services.

Ken Leese
Hillsboro

Fishy definition

I am responding to Martin Fisher's use of the word "schizophrenic" in his column "Sorry, but I'm not a Euro-American" (ODE, Jan. 26).

Along with the majority of the public, Fisher seems to think being schizophrenic means having a "split personality." In fact, schizophrenia is a thought disorder and has nothing to do with split personality. (A split personality is technically called dissociative disorder and is very uncommon).

Notice the prejudice we carry against schizophrenia in the very way we refer to the afflicted. "He's a schizophrenic," we say. We do not refer to someone with cancer and say, "He's a cancer." And yet, like cancer, schizophrenia is a biological disorder.

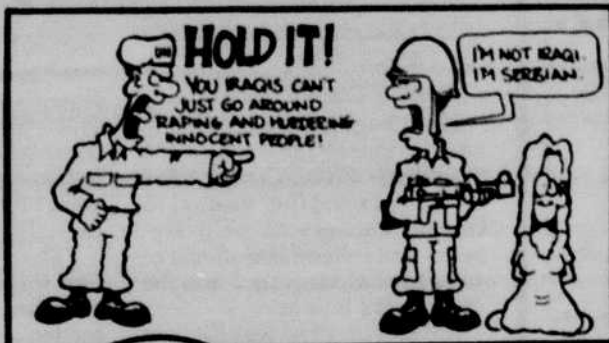
The public also fears violence from the mentally ill, yet schizophrenia sufferers are less violent, statistically, than the general public.

A few more facts about mental illnesses in general: One in four families have a mentally ill family member. One percent of the U.S. population suffers from schizophrenia, and six percent suffer from clinical or manic depression. More hospital beds are occupied by the mentally ill than those suffering from cancer, heart disease and lung disease combined.

The stereotypes we hold influence both the way we feel and eventually the policies we make. Correcting stereotypes is thus crucial to establishing a society more compassionate toward those who suffer from mental illnesses.

My younger sister has schizophrenia. A group has formed in Eugene to support siblings of the mentally ill. For more information about such support groups, call the Alliance for the Mentally Ill at 343-7688.

Michael Schut
Graduate Student
Environmental Studies



Urination breakdown

After setting my books down in my statistics lab (fourth floor of Deady Hall), I felt an urge to urinate. So I left the classroom looking for a restroom. I immediately encountered a bathroom, but it was a women's restroom.

I walked down to the third and second floors, only to find more women's bathrooms. Then I walked down to the first floor and found a co-ed bathroom, but that too was being monopolized by women. Desperately, I ran outside looking for a large bush when I saw a group of elementary school kids approaching. So I ran over to Allen Hall.

Second floor — no men's bathroom. Just women's (again). Third floor — alas, I found a men's bathroom. After I was done, I jogged back up to my class. By the time I got back, I was late and exhausted.

I have serious problems contemplating the existence of so many women's bathrooms and the absence of men's bathrooms. This dilemma raises serious questions: Do women really need to use the bathroom 50 times as bad as men? Do they really need to go 50 times a day? How much do they drink? Is this why Oregon is in a drought?

More importantly, who was the mastermind who created this architectural inconvenience?

I don't want to sound too sexist, and I hate to complain, but I can't stop thinking about the person, policy or transvestite that made a building without men's bathrooms.

Adam Bratland
Biology

Choose the potential path

I fail to see Eric Bergreen's logic ("Quality over quantity," ODE, Jan. 29) that a tissue mass instantly becomes human (or is "realized" as a human) when it is "able to survive outside the womb and take on the world."

A full-term newborn cannot survive on its own and certainly is not ready to take on the world. That infant is a potential adult who will be able, someday, to take care of itself. I know plenty of "adults" who still can't take care of themselves.

He is putting much less value on potentials. Well we are all potentials, and at least we have the freedom to choose whatever our potential will lead to. All of the

potentials whose life was exterminated never had the choice to grow up to an age where they could choose their own path of their potential.

It is my belief that the "quality" of one's life is more important than the convenience of others. It is very selfish and vain for people to think they can decide the quality of life someone else will have.

We vote and protest for fundamental rights when none of us even had the right to be born.

Allen James
Eugene

Dehumanization of children

I was appalled after reading Eric Bergreen's "Quality over quantity" letter (ODE, Jan. 29) and the lack of respect he gives to human life.

When a sperm and egg join, they start to grow and develop into a new person. Even in the earliest stages of development, growth into a human being is specified by the genetic code. His re-labeling an unborn child as "a potential to become a person" dehumanizes the child.

Dehumanization has been used for years in wars to make killing the enemy easier. If you see your enemy as a monster and a threat to humanity, then killing your enemy is not only encouraged but glorified.

In Bergreen's case, his enemy would be described as a blob of cells without a life of its own. If this blob is lifeless, then aborting it is not killing it. His dehumanization of a child in this way works well. He doesn't believe that a life is being terminated by abortion. But the worst thing I can think of about his dehumanization is that it's targeted at a life that can't fight back.

Dave Taylor
Biology

Potential needs humanization

In his letter "Quality over quantity" (ODE, Jan. 29), Eric Bergreen says he doesn't consider the human embryo "... to be a human being," but it merely possesses "the potential to become a person." This is a fairly common view today, but I have rarely heard a biologist express it.

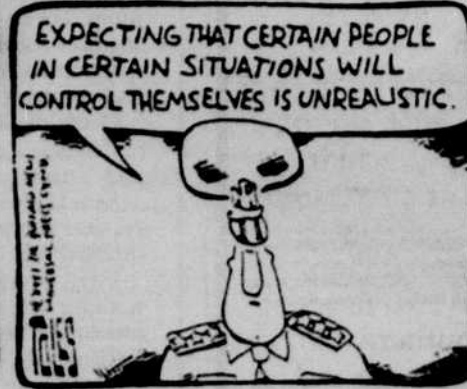
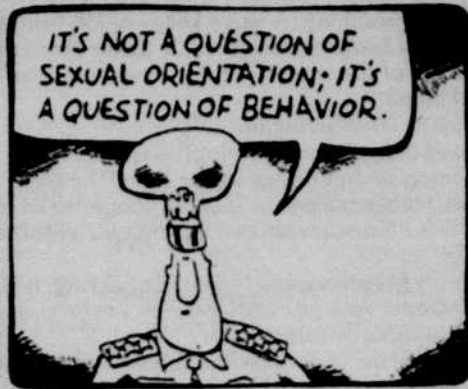
Former Surgeon General C. Everett Koop once observed: "Biologists uniformly take the position that life begins at conception. There is no logical reason why the pro-abortionist should try to arrive at a different definition when he is talking about people." Has Bergreen discovered fundamental new evidence that re-defines biological science?

Perhaps the reason Bergreen believes there are so few facts relevant to this topic is because he has chosen to deny many of them. I believe his letter reveals more about his personal commitment to defending the practice of abortion than it does about the body of knowledge that science has collected concerning life.

Humans possess the dubious capability of ignoring or altering those aspects of reality they find threatening or too restrictive. Instead of changing reality, however, we end up deceiving ourselves and separating ourselves from what is true and right.

The growing child that Bergreen dehumanizes and dismisses as a mere "potential" is nevertheless alive and human. The continuum of human existence begins at conception and continues through various stages of development and maturity, each of which is normal and necessary. This is biological reality. Moral reality tells us that destroying innocent human life is wrong.

William Moore
History/English



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