

# Packwood may finally be forced to answer to the public



LIA SALCICCIA

Bob Packwood may finally get it. After a turn of events it looks like our infamous Senator will finally have his day of reckoning. Let's hope so, after all the talk, talk, talk without any serious answers that's been blowing around for a year since Packwood's dirty linen was aired.

The turning point occurred Friday. After his peers in the Senate almost unanimously voted against his right to privacy for the subpoena of his private diaries, Packwood finally realized that the allies he thought he could count on all along weren't there for him.

Seeing an advantage in going after Packwood for not only

charges of sexual misconduct, but the criminal misconduct that his diaries imply, the wolfish boys on the hill abandoned their usual stance of protecting a fellow stud and decided to rip every shred of dignity and pretense from Packwood's carcass that their teeth and claws could collect.

They backed him into such a tight corner that Packwood agreed to resign because he knew he was cornered and he had no excuses left to snarl. The right to privacy excuse was wearing thin, and the semi-confessions of wrongdoing that he howled to the Ethics Committee and the press didn't throw anyone off his track.

So at the time when Capitol Hill was "flooded" with rumors of Packwood's resignation, right when we thought it was curtains for this drama without any resolution of the plot, the Justice Department stepped in with another subpoena for the diaries.

And now the judicial branch has a perfect chance to live up to the concept of justice. Although many, I suspect, would like to see

him get the hell out of office now, last weekend's turn of events will possibly orchestrate two things that are vital in working through the issues that plague this nation.

First of all, if Packwood goes to trial to answer to charges leveled against him by the public, the press and his peers, it will hopefully set a precedent for the boys on the Hill that has not previously been adhered to. It's called accountability. By dredging up all the unthinkable misrepresentations of Oregon constituents from his tell-all journals, and by making him answer to the charges, the Justice Department will tell the world that American politicians can no longer hide from the public. They can't just resign and have some other corrupt politician pardon them — they have got to defend themselves just like the rest of us.

The law says that Congressmen and women are not accountable for crimes in the same way the rest of us are. They have to answer only to their own Ethics Committee that, until now, has had a history of protecting and

overlooking corruption. But now not only does the Ethics Committee want Packwood's head on a platter, so does the Justice Department, which says that if Packwood is guilty of criminal activity, it's its business, too. And if Bob Packwood finally realizes that his lechery and harassment are not just something he's got to explain to his buddies in the Legislative Branch, but also to the Judicial Branch and, most importantly, to the United States citizens and to the Oregon constituents who put him into office, all will not be for naught.

Another key precedent that his trial would set is one that I cannot stress enough. It will send the strong message to sexual harassers everywhere and the piggish employers who condone them that you can't get away with unwanted sexual behavior anymore. The Clarence Thomas confirmation hearings may have opened some eyes to the issue, but watching a bunch of stodgy old men attack Anita Hill's allegations that she was indeed wronged by Thomas isn't many

women's idea of justice.

By making an example out of this public figure, government has a chance to send a message to working women that it cares about their welfare. Working women, for once, could have the chance to be taken seriously in their right to a harassment-free environment and would not have to put up with the sexual intimidation that was previously considered a given in their lives.

If Packwood is held accountable for and made to answer to the crimes of which he is accused, the American public just may regain a little faith in a system that says you can cover up any crime with a smile and an expensive suit. Women would rest a little easier knowing that piggish politicians, no matter how important they are, will be asked to oink in a smaller trough.

Most importantly, people like him may not get so much encouragement to stay that way. If he doesn't get it now, he never will.

Lia Salciccia is a reporter for the Emerald.

## LETTERS

### Great musician

On Friday, Nov. 12, Music Professor Edward Kammerer died from complications of leukemia at age 54.

On Saturday, Nov. 13, an extensive article by Kimber Williams, including a picture of professor Kammerer, was published in the *Register-Guard*. The article began: "Eugene mourns loss of gifted University of Oregon teacher and musician."

On Sunday, Nov. 14, friends gathered at Beall Hall on the University campus to pay tribute to this fine and talented man. He was acclaimed by fellow University professors and

deans as well as University musicians, members of the Eugene Symphony and Orchestra and jazz colleagues.

On Monday, Nov. 15, I vainly searched the *Oregon Daily Emerald* for the acknowledgement of the passing of this worthy University musician and teacher. I did the same thing on Tuesday, then Wednesday, Thursday and Friday. Not one word.

I am appalled at the total lack of dignity this former award-winning University paper is displaying. Where is the loyalty to a University teacher and alumnus (BA in music education and MA in music) who was important enough to be bestowed with the title of musician laureate of

the state of Oregon by a former governor, a University musician who was commissioned to compose a piano solo that was placed in a time capsule in a cornerstone of Villard Hall and a man who shared his music "with great abandon and unbounding generosity with thousands and thousands of people"?

In today's (Nov. 19) *Register-Guard*, it was announced that the University's music school has established a scholarship to aid students in jazz studies in memory of Edward Kammerer. I am sure the lucky recipients of this scholarship will have the good taste to carry on the memory of such an outstanding University musician. It seems a real

shame that the *Emerald* could not even acknowledge the loss of such a gifted teacher, mentor and alumnus.

Nancy Nelson  
Eugene

### Applause

Lia Salciccia's opinion column (*ODE*, Nov. 18) was brave, eloquent and moving.

I teach a seminar called Women and the Law. The day before the *Emerald* published the mug shots of the three African-American men accused of sexual assault, the only African-American in this seminar had made me and the rest of the class confront how differently American soci-

ety through law and the media treats black and white men accused of sex crimes. Her point was reaffirmed with a vengeance when the photos appeared on the *Emerald's* front page the next day.

Ms. Salciccia's examination of the *Emerald's* guilt and innocence along with her own was one of the best discussions of racism by a white person that I've ever read. Racism in America is omnipresent and very complicated. Ms. Salciccia understands this. Responding to her challenge to the rest of the University community to talk to each other about racism is our only hope for meaningful change.

Caroline Forell  
Associate Professor

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