

## Acceptance for gays still slow in coming

Marge Schott, Fox Broadcasting and the OCA: politics, it seems, makes strange bedfellows — particularly concerning the emotionally charged politics surrounding gay rights.

In three wildly unrelated but coinciding events, Schott, Fox and the OCA have proved that the march toward acceptance for gays, lesbians and bisexuals is not without its obstacles — obstacles that come in many different forms.

The Oregon Citizens Alliance's five local anti-gay rights measures received a majority in each of their several localities during the primary election on Tuesday. Fifty percent or more of the voters in Cottage Grove, Veneta, Oakridge, Roseburg and Gresham elected to pass the OCA's measure — although in Gresham a 60 percent vote is required to amend the city charter, so the measure failed.

The Oregon Legislature passed legislation in 1993 which nullified the legal significance of any local measures relating to gay rights, so these measures are seen as largely symbolic — a stepping stone to another statewide measure, which the OCA hopes to put before voters in the fall.

In a far less ominous but still outrageous incident this week, Marge Schott, owner of baseball's Cincinnati Reds, chimed in with the kind of comment that would make OCA leaders smile. In a speech to the Ohio County Treasurers Association, Schott told the audience that she didn't want any of her players wearing earrings, because, in Schott's words, "only fruits wear earrings."

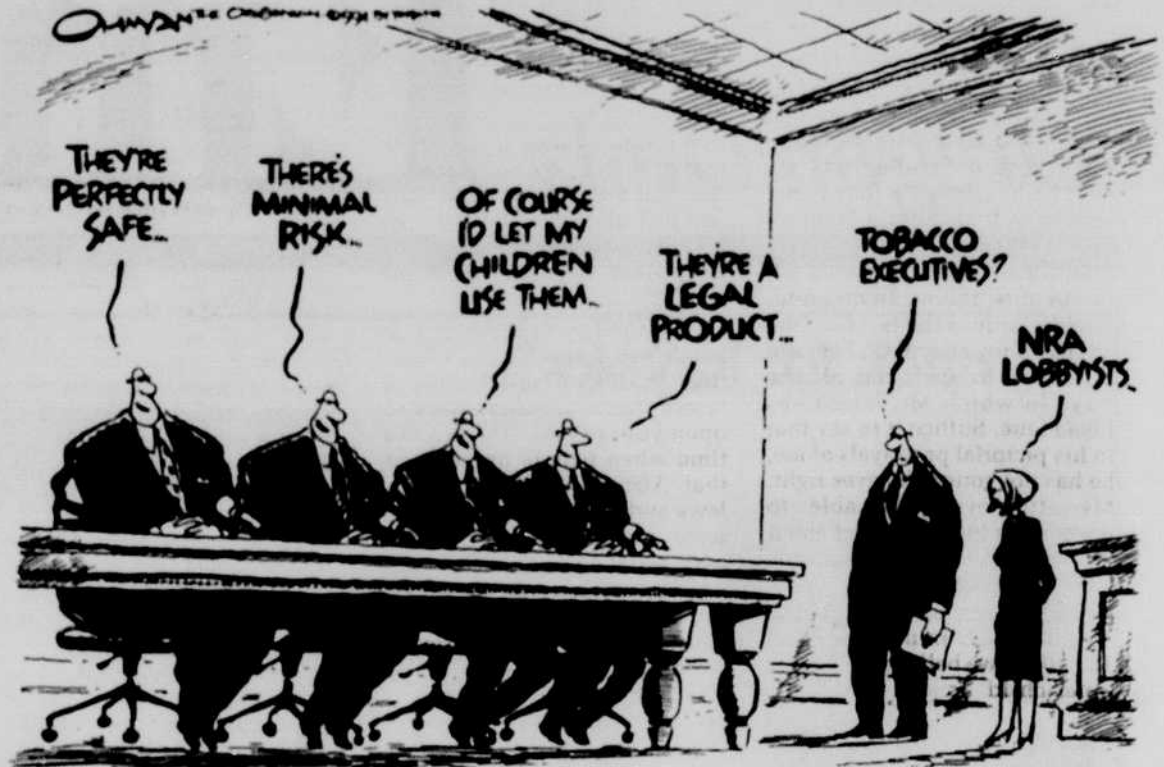
We'd expect that from Schott, the same nasty woman who was suspended by baseball officials in 1993 for using "racially and ethnically insensitive" language, focused primarily on blacks and Jews.

But from Fox Broadcasting, the network that has made a hobby of bucking popular opinion and taking a risk here and there?

The same network that brings us *In Living Color*, *The Simpsons* and *Married ... With Children* — the network for whom almost nothing is sacred — balked at the chance to show two men kissing on the season finale of *Melrose Place*, which aired on Wednesday. The production company left it up to Fox executives to decide whether to air the kiss; the executives got cold feet. Instead, the camera cut to a witness of the scandalous event, who looked on in surprise.

Far be it from viewers to expect *Melrose Place* to be on the cutting edge of social commentary — brainless tripe that it is — but since the show apparently has no qualms about gratuitous and tasteless heterosexual sex scenes, it seems strange that it should suddenly get shy.

All these incidents, transpiring in a single 24-hour period, just go to show — in variously serious degrees — how acceptance for gays, lesbians and bisexuals is not here now, nor on the immediate horizon. Whether it's a TV network, a loud-mouthed hag or the OCA, there's still a long way to go — and a lot of things are getting in the way.



## LETTERS

### Nixon's in Hell

I had just finished gagging over the mass media's sentimental historical revisionism prompted by Richard Nixon's death when I received a copy of your April 25 editorial in Tricky Dick's defense.

You criticized my statement that Nixon was a "sleazy crook." I wrote that in 1974 when I was the *Emerald's* editorial page editor. And it's just as true today, even though Nixon has gone to Hell and the *Emerald* editorial page has apparently been taken over by a brain-dead yuppie wanna-be.

I suppose the current editorial writer was unborn or in diapers when Nixon was ravaging American democracy, so may I remind you why, alive or dead, Nixon was one of the most despicable scumbags ever to disgrace the presidency.

Your editorial praises him for beginning the U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam. Anyone who was alive and conscious at the time would remember that Nixon and Henry Kissinger prolonged the war for years, resulting in the unnecessary deaths of thousands of Americans and tens of thousands of Vietnamese and Cambodians. They also bombed the holy crap out of Cambodia for face-saving political purposes, a massacre that should have put them on trial for war crimes.

Watergate wasn't some two-bit burglary or a minor sideshow in the Nixon presidency. It was a massive, evil and totalitarian conspiracy against democracy by those sworn to protect it.

All the simpering by amnesia-afflicted apologists won't change the fact that Nixon was a mass murderer, a phony and a lying crook. Those who forget are bound to vote for another Nixon.

Lee Siegel  
Salt Lake City, Utah

### Take back...

This year is the 15th anniversary of Take Back the Night. After talking to many people on campus, I have learned to my dismay that many people do not know what Take Back the Night is. Take Back the Night was created in 1978 during a feminist conference on pornography in San Francisco. During this conference, over 3,000 women marched through San Francisco's pornography district and consequently shut it down for one night.

One year later in 1979, over 5,000 women held Take Back the Night in Times Square in New York City. Imagine 5,000 women extending 20 blocks of the crime-ridden streets of New York, proclaiming to the world, "We will not accept being beaten, battered and raped — we will take back the night!"

Since then, Take Back the Night has become a tradition in cities and towns all across America. It is a time for women to gather together to show their power and to let their oppressors know that they will not sit passively by while a woman is beaten every three minutes and raped every five minutes. Take Back the Night is also a celebration — a celebration of our solidarity and progress.

Violence against women isn't simply a women's issue, however. Men must learn to understand their role in stopping the violence. While women march tonight at 8 p.m., starting at PLC, men will hold a speak-out (at the PLC as well), a place to talk openly and honestly about their thoughts and feelings on this subject. I hope you will take this opportunity to participate in Take Back the Night. The oppression and senseless beating of women affects all of us — so let's do what we can as responsible men and women to take back the night from those who still insist on overpowering and conquering.

Mandi Hood  
Students for Choice

### ...The Night

Violent acts against women occur every hour of every day in America. The threat of these crimes causes women to be afraid for their safety when simply walking down their own neighborhood streets. This fear should not be necessary. The fact that it exists, however, has led women across the country to make a statement about ending violence against women. This statement comes in the form of Take Back the Night. Started in 1978 in San Francisco, Take Back the Night

has given women the chance to band together and collectively say that they have the right to walk down the street at night without fearing for their safety. By taking part in the march, women are saying that violence against women is not OK — that it has to end.

If you believe that violence against women has to end, please come to this year's Take Back the Night, tonight at 8 p.m. at PLC. Before the march, inspiring live music will be performed. Speakers will also be present, talking about their personal experiences and about violence against women in America. While the women are marching, concerned men can take part in a speak-out sponsored by Men and Women Against Rape. This male speak-out gives men a chance to speak to one another and learn from each other as they share their personal experiences and feelings about violence against women. After the march, a female speak-out will also take place. If you believe that violence against women must stop, come to Take Back the Night and make a statement that speaks louder than words.

Jennifer Carter  
Pre-Journalism

### Mislead

The story regarding Gordon Johnson's victory in the Twilight Mile was very misleading. It trivialized Johnson's win, emphasizing his failure to meet the automatic national qualifying time by a mere second. The race was very exciting to watch because it was such a tactical and competitive race. Johnson may have played down his win to the media but it was actually a very big accomplishment. It was a win over some very talented post-collegiate who make a good living at this sport. It may not have been as fast as it could have been, but track is about more than just times, it's about competition. It is this type of competition that makes the sport exciting.

Jen Doyle  
Women's Track

## Oregon Daily Emerald

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