

Framers of the Constitution had religion in mind

By Stephen Crawford

It never ceases to amaze me how certain people who pontificate about the Constitution to make a point are either completely ignorant of its contextual meaning or distort it in an attempt to make their point seem valid.

Not surprisingly, this is a recurring event in the *Emerald*, with the latest installment coming in the July 14 edition.

In the editorial titled "Religion, public policy should stay separate," the editorial writer takes up the view that when the Constitution was signed into law there was some sort of complete separation between the signers' religious value system and the laws themselves. This is clearly ludicrous.

This document and those that followed were based primarily upon biblical concepts, as well as the social contract theory of such philosophers such as John Locke and Jean Jacques Rousseau, both of whom were Christians. To attempt to distort the context of these documents is despicable at best and dangerous at worst.

The writer states that "The founding fathers, ever vigilant to the dangers of either religious domination or persecution based on religious belief worded the Constitution to prevent the very actions currently being propagated by certain fundamentalist Christian groups against the homosexual community."

Oh, really. Perhaps the writer did not realize that when the original 13 states ratified the Bill of Rights, sodomy was a criminal offense, or that until 1961 every state

in the union had laws prohibiting sodomy. In no way, shape or form was the Constitution or any other early human rights document meant to protect homosexual "rights" or any other "rights" considered to be opposed to Judeo-Christian values, including such things as prostitution, bestiality and incest, among others, that were considered to be abominations against the human body. Any attempt to read the Constitution outside of this context is a distortion of its true meaning.

The writer goes on to say that "When one group decides what is moral for the rest of society and decrees those personal beliefs into law, then majority tyranny becomes institutionalized. By taking those religious and moral values out of the realm of spirituality and inserting them into public policy through the conduit of initiative process, our society is condoning the establishment of theocratic law."

How insidious! Let me break down all those multi-syllabic words to show what the paragraph's real was: If the majority of the United States (or Oregon, for that matter) believes that something should be enacted into law on a moral or religious basis, it would be wrong to even allow such an initiative on the ballot.

Majority tyranny used to be called democracy. The presidency, I suppose, in the author's view, is a majority tyranny, because the majority of the people voted for him. Furthermore, there has never been a president who did not use moral convictions in his decision making process.

Former United States Supreme Court Justice Byron White seems to agree with

this view of law and morality as inseparable in his paper titled "Majority Opinion of the Supreme Court on Homosexual Relations," which was concerned with the *Bowers vs. Hardwick* case of 1986.

Justice White said, "Even if the conduct at issue here (consensual sodomy) is not a fundamental right, respondent asserts that there must be a rational basis for the law and that there is none in this case (*Stanley vs. Georgia*, 1969) other than the presumed belief of a majority of the electorate in Georgia that homosexual sodomy is immoral and unacceptable. This is said to be an inadequate rationale to support the law."

"The law, however, is constantly based on notions of morality, and if all laws representing essentially moral choices are to be invalidated under the Due Process Clause, the courts will be very empty indeed. Even the respondent makes no such claim, but insists that majority sentiments about the morality of homosexuality should be declared inadequate. We do not agree, and are unpersuaded...."

Justice White reaffirms what most people know: that laws against so-called "victimless crimes," such as sodomy and drug use, to laws against murder, pedophilia, incest and bigamy, etc., were enacted in context of their full moral and religious implications and that was how they were intended to be enforced.

As well, it is not surprising that the writer would liken homosexual rights cases to that of *Roe vs. Wade*. The author says that "Just as the Supreme Court removed the moral equation from legalized abor-

tion with *Roe vs. Wade* and instead placed emphasis on the sanctity of privacy and choice, citizens must likewise separate personal morality from the making of laws that discriminate against certain sections of society."

Contrary to the writer's sparkling adulation of this "piece" of legislation, *Roe vs. Wade* is generally considered by lawyers and law students to be one of the worst scams ever pulled on the American public that passes for a law.

Newsweek, with its pro-choice leanings, said of *Roe vs. Wade* that "With a wave of the judicial wand, abortion has become a constitutional right, without an accounting of why." *Roe vs. Wade* was enacted without a single U.S. citizen, other than the seven Supreme Court justices, voting on it. On the contrary, most every state opposed unrestricted abortions.

And this is the type of legislation that the writer holds up as an example. Instead of a system by which the people decide what is in their own best interests, with a system of checks and balances to make sure that no one's fundamental God-given rights are violated (make sure you read this sentence again to understand what I am saying), the writer would have a small minority decide what is in our best interests.

Had the editorialist studied his history, he would have known that this type of government was the reason we left England in the first place.

Stephen Crawford is a philosophy major at the University.

LETTERS

Narrow view

In response to Loretta's letter (*ODE*, July 7): I have to say I hope that there are few students on your campus that believe the OCA is truly for religious freedom.

The OCA and its like are in business to make money for their leaders. Pat Robertson and the 700 Club pulled in more than \$140 million and that is just in the reported figures, not the unreported ones that religious special

rights protect from public disclosure. A genuinely compassionate society, like the Salem witch trials and burnings, the Inquisition, the stoning of Quakers, the slaughter of Native Americans, and slavery, are all parts of the founding society.

If homosexuality was against the nature of the Laws of Nature it would not be found; yet, it is. Where is there anything about religion in the Laws of Nature? Once again OCA and its kin want you to believe that their narrow

version of God is the only one. They do not want you to be allowed to believe in Jehovah, Allah, Zeus, Gaia, the Great Spirit, Buddha or anything else which does not agree with them. Do not sign their petitions and tell them why.

James Dean Poyner
Eugene

Do it daily

Please discuss with your colleagues the merits of your pub-

lishing on Saturdays and Sundays, which might turn out to be a good idea, or striking "daily" from the name of your paper.

Whether it is called truth or accuracy, telling it like it is should always be a journalist's first concern.

"Daily" means every day. You don't publish every day and you never have. Why misuse your paper's name and pretend to be something you are not?

Nobody is fooled? Probably true, but irrelevant. Who gives a

damn? Besides me, that is? Your response is invited.

Charles O. Porter
Eugene

EDITOR'S NOTE: According to the American Heritage College Dictionary, third edition, the word "daily" may be applied to "A newspaper published every day or every weekday." The Webster's Third New International Unabridged defines the word similarly. Thank you for noticing, though.

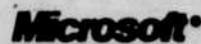
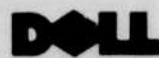
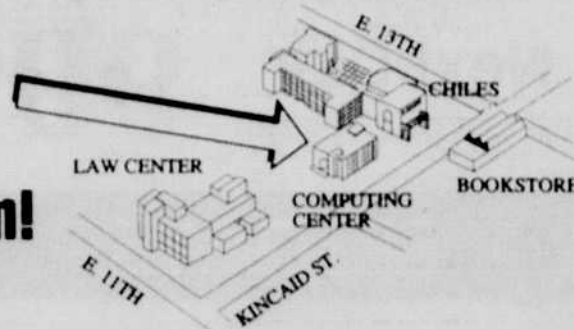
Q: We carry computers and we're on campus. Who are we?

Getting through college can be hard, but a good computer can make your life a lot easier. That's why we're here. We carry computers and software at special educational prices to match everyone's pocketbook, even yours.

But what good is a computer if you can't use it? That's why "support" is our middle name. We're here to support you. If you're stumped by your system or stymied by your spreadsheet, we can help. Dying for a computer, but don't know where to start? We'll help you make a choice that fits your needs.

Have a question? Come on in to room 202 of the Computing Center (across from Rennie's Landing), or give us a call at 346-4402. We've got a lot to show you, so come see us!

Hint: We are here Mon-Fri, 10am-3pm!



A: The Microcomputer Support Center, 202 Computing Center!