

Don't forget parents in efficiency quest

When the administration decided to make the University more "efficient," two by-products of all that talk were higher tuition and lower budgets for student services. Thus, the fallout of this plan will affect those that can't pay or who might take too much in the way of student services.

Single parents at the University fall into such a troubling spot.

All the recent efforts of the University to market this school have been focused on undergraduates — particularly those who have no familial strings attached and few needs that the University would need to attend to. This marketing strategy clearly abandons the credo of education for all.

According to officials at the EMU's Child Care and Development Center, single mothers get the lion's share of ASUO child care subsidy. Yet, CCDC can't estimate how many such single mothers — or fathers, as the case may be — there are on campus because the University doesn't include "parental status" on its surveys.

There are estimates of every minority on campus, including gays and women. But the minority of "single parent" is not included in those estimates. This makes it more difficult for student government to fight for services that assist single student parents. How can they? They don't know how many there are to fight for.

There are no special services to help single parents enter the University, like special advising or limited, temporary day care before the start of each term to help single parents register for classes, fill out financial aid applications or even go through a University library tour. The University's line — a familiar one in the wake of Measure 5 — is that there is no cash available.

And there is no money available for other things single parents need, says the University, such as children's tables at the library that would allow kids to color while their parents search a database or browse through a book. Nor does there seem to be any money to support the Family Center and help them stay in a larger room in the EMU in order to better serve parents.

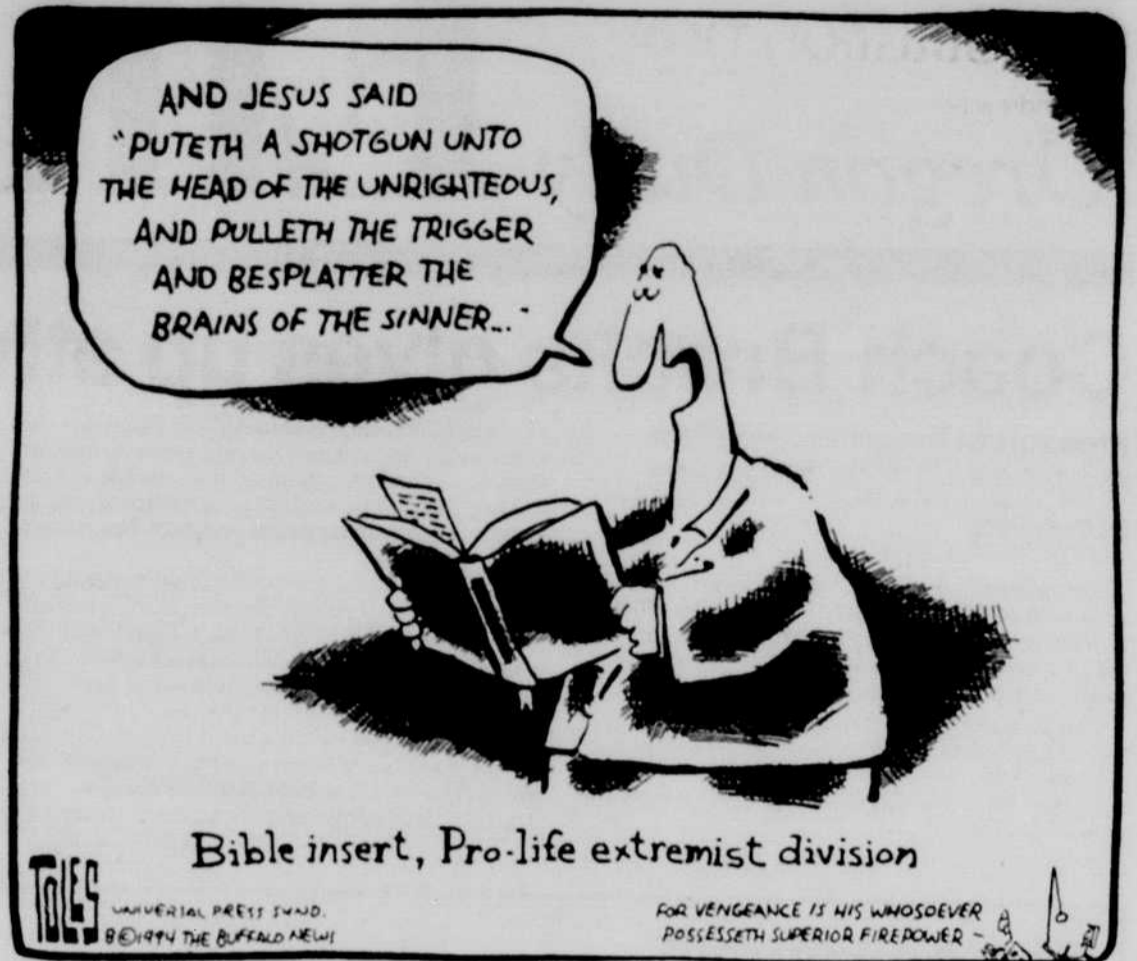
Look at the way that the University deals with Amazon — taking a demolish-or-sell attitude while constructing overpriced student apartments just a few blocks away. The University isn't even helping out single parents on the housing front.

The message our school seems to be saying is that if you're a single parent, look to the student organizations for help. Since student organizations have their budgets tweaked to the max, the message sadly becomes, "Don't come to the University of Oregon."

In a climate where administrators have to market the University as being open to all and a good deal for a great education — which for the most part, it is — forgetting this population of student parents only worsens its overall appearance.

The University must make good on the promises it has already made. It must provide affordable, accessible education to all its students and not just those with the bucks or those it is required to serve by law. Single parents need extra services, and the University can't just set them aside.

If the University can't provide for all those it's already attracted, it won't provide for those it's currently attracting.



Bible insert, Pro-life extremist division

OPINION

Senate needs to get real on sex



Gayle Forman

The 10th International Conference on AIDS opened on Sunday in Japan. Thousands of doctors and scientists from around the globe have come together to discuss the deadly epidemic that threatens the world.

So far, the news is not good. Researchers say that cures, vaccines and treatments are still miles away. The HIV virus continues to mutate and spread. In light of diminishing hopes of a quick cure, health officials can only offer strategies for prevention in the fight against AIDS. Those strategies focus — as they always have — on education and the promotion of safe sex.

Meanwhile, back in Washington, the Senate voted last week to cut federal funds to schools that encourage sexual activity. The Senate actually passed two separate proposals. The first proposed to cut federal aid to schools that promote sexual activity. Schools receive 15 percent of their budgets from federal aid. An amendment was later added to the proposal intending to blunt its effect. The new proposal, which was passed 99-0, would cut federal aid to schools that encouraged sexual activity, be it homosexual or heterosexual.

Encourage sexual activity? In elementary and secondary schools? I hadn't realized that such a provocative curriculum even existed.

It doesn't exist. The Senate is not referring to *The Joy of Sex* for the adolescent. Students are not receiving lessons from the *Kama Sutra*. Instead, they are learning early on about AIDS — a lesson that could be the most important

of their lives.

Bob Smith of New Hampshire, who, along with Jesse Helms, penned the original proposal, claims that school districts are buying books and other materials that are "so graphic and so disgusting that I can't display them here on the floor of the United States Senate."

The kind of offending books that are causing many a senator to blush are books that give students directions on the use of a condom. They tell students why they need to wear them, when they need to wear them, and how to wear them. All of this can be pretty tricky business for a first-timer, and the idea is if young people are going to have sex, better that they are informed and prepared.

But the Senate, as well as many Americans, believes that such education encourages young people to have sex. Instead of teaching them how to have safe sex, such a curriculum is telling kids to have sex.

AIDS education for students advocates abstinence first and foremost, yet educators — who seem to have more of a grip on reality than the Senate — also make allowances for the fact that young people will have sex. If they're gonna do it, at least let them be as safe as possible.

If senators think that not teaching kids about sex will prevent them from having it, they have been filibustering for too long. It is time that politicians get their heads out of the sand and take a deep breath of reality.

The numbers speak for themselves. More than 50 percent of young Americans have had sex by the time they are 15. That's 50 percent of kids, whether they have had sex education or not. Whether they have been told by their parents to abstain or not. Whether they have been told it's a sin or not. Whether they know anything about AIDS or not.

It is time to wake up and operate in reality. The world we now live in is a very different place than it was 40 years ago. No mat-

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ter how hard people try to dig their heels into the past, the world moves on. The 1950s are over and not coming back anytime soon. And in today's world, young people are going to learn about sex unless they grow up in a bubble.

We have a choice, though. They can learn about sex, straightforward and up-front in school, or they can learn about it from MTV. Because the reality is that they are going to learn about it, and there is a 50/50 chance that they are going to be learning through hands-on experience before they hit 15.

So somebody please clue these senators in. Today's kids are growing up faster. They are having sex sooner. Sex holds the same dangers for them as it does for all of us folk over 18. Sperm and eggs are not age discriminatory, nor is the HIV virus.

Politicians can and will close their eyes to reality and live in some self-invented fairy tale land. They can believe that if they don't see the dangers, they don't exist. They are wrong, and their ridiculous moral ideals are hurting America's young people.

The government is playing a paradoxical tug-of-war here. They are trying to stop the spread of a disease — a disease in which ignorance really can kill you. And at the same time they are promoting ignorance. What they are doing is not just reactionary and foolish, but it is also dangerous and morally reprehensible.

Gayle Forman will be a columnist for the Emerald in the fall.

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