

Discrimination not a valid argument

Oregon's quality of life is among the best in the nation. Relatively low crime, clean air and easy access to a variety of natural resources are a few of the reasons newcomers immigrate in droves to this state. Some move from out-of-state to attend one of the eight public universities and colleges in Oregon. All of the above are excellent reasons to move here, but those coming for an education in addition to the benefits of a sound environment and low crime should expect to pay the price. In this case, the increased cost of out-of-state tuition.

Three students, all single women with children, are planning to take the Oregon State System of Higher Education to court because they perceive the residency requirements in Oregon as discriminatory against single parents and nontraditional students. The argument is interesting, but the substance for it is simply not there.

The students have been denied in-state residency because the state system determined they moved here primarily to attend school.

Oregon residents pay one-third of the actual costs of their education, with the state paying the rest. Out-of-staters pay the full amount. The state system's reasoning is that Oregon should not subsidize education for out-of-staters who have not financially contributed to the state via taxes over the years.

The women claim they moved here so their children would grow up in a safe environment. By coincidence, they all hail from California, the state that passed Proposition 9 nearly 16 years ago. Proposition 9 is the equivalent of Oregon's 1990 Measure 5, which reduced property taxes going to schools. The effect of Proposition 9 was the virtual collapse of California's university system. They had nothing to lose to come to Oregon, but the money to help them is just not here.

The state system tightened residency rules in 1993 after it was determined that students were circumventing the requirements on a large scale and abuse was rampant. Now, it is very difficult for anyone to establish residency, whether they be married, single, gay, with children or childless.

By turning the residency requirements into a discrimination issue — something that the situation is definitely not — the students planning to challenge the rules are taking the focus off themselves and placing it on a nonexistent ghost.

Out-of-staters who moved to Oregon knew the rules and should have considered the consequences before relocating. If a subsidized education is what they wanted, they should have stayed in their home state. In the wake of Measure 5, Oregon is having a hard enough time helping its own get a college education. We can't afford to adopt anymore kids right now, no matter how much we would like to.

Attacking the residency requirements through the invisible specter of discrimination is a good strategy, and throwing in the plight of single moms is even better. Unfortunately, the proposition is doomed to failure.

It's hard to sympathize with people who knew the rules and now expect the system to change for their benefit.



COMMENTARY

Distortions ignore Palestinians

On Nov. 18, the Palestinian police fired on a group of stone-throwing supporters of the fundamentalist group Hamas, killing several. Unfortunately, this was all but inevitable, as the U.S. and Israeli governments have held Palestinian leader Yasir Arafat responsible for tracking down and handing over those who have committed terrorist acts against Israel, and have tied all hopes of future Palestinian self-determination to the success of the Palestinian police's crackdown on Hamas.

In the Nov. 21 issue of the *Emerald*, Phil Zuckerman falsely accuses Arafat of "slaughtering his own people." The rest of his commentary is filled with half-truths and other deceptions in order to distort the reality of the situation.

Zuckerman claims Arafat "has gunned down Palestinians," even though he issued no orders for the police to fire, had no knowledge of the tragedy until well after the fact, and has quickly taken steps to try to rectify the situation.

He claims that the world ignores the atrocities of dictators such as Saddam Hussein and Hafez al-Assad, while focusing solely on Israel.

Does he really think the United Nations stood by silently as Iraq occupied Kuwait, that the world's press never covered the plight of the Kurds or Assad's brutal crushing of Syrian funda-

mentalists in Hama? As in the case of Iraq, the opposite is true, if one is to compare the coverage of the Kurdish plight in Iraq to that of Turkey (a U.S. ally, who has fiercely suppressed Kurdish nationalism.)

Zuckerman also distorts the truth when he compares the Palestinian police with Israeli soldiers on occupation duty in the West Bank and Gaza.

The difference, which Zuckerman apparently fails to see, is that the Israeli military is in occupied Palestine illegally (according to international law) in order to suppress the national aspirations of the Palestinian people, whereas the Palestinian police are serving under terms of the agreement drawn up by the Israeli government and the PLO, and are under pressure from the Israeli government to contain those who oppose the agreement.

It is the Israeli government, which talks of peace, yet maintains a force of 1,500 soldiers in Gaza (in order to protect approximately 5,000 right-wing settlers who reside in almost 30 percent of the crowded strip that has been confiscated for the use of Jews only) on which Zuckerman should focus his anger.

A year after the peace agreement, the vast majority of Palestinians continue to live under occupation, or as refugees with no hope of returning to their homeland.

Those in refugee camps in

Lebanon are still bombed by the Israeli air force, and Israel has given Palestinians another slap in the face by negotiating the future of their Muslim and Christian shrines with King Hussein of Jordan. And Israel wonders why more Palestinians don't support the peace accord.

If anybody should be condemned for this tragedy, they are the governments of the US and Israel, who have for over a quarter of a century supported the continued confiscation of indigenous Palestinian land and waged a program of cultural genocide against Palestinians through the repressive occupation, which has included torture, imprisonment without trial, deportations and indiscriminate killing.

Furthermore, it is the duty of every world citizen to expose such brutality, (especially when it is financed through their tax dollars) whether the perpetrator of abuse is the government of El Salvador, Saudi Arabia, Iraq or Israel.

Zuckerman is correct when he condemns the policies of Arab dictators like Hussein and Assad, just as he is right when he criticizes the Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza. Unfortunately, distortions of reality only serve to continue the cycle of distrust, which perpetuates the killing and injustice.

Andy Harris is a senior International Studies major.

LETTERS

No Yuk Metz

I can't say I've been a particular fan of Chris Metz's writing in the past, but his last piece was truly disgusting. What kind of mind can moan about the fact that University students no longer bash each other's teeth in after a football match?

In my view it's bad enough that Oregonians call this in-state match-up a Civil War, but does it have to be followed with real violence? In Metz's view apparently it does.

Don't get me wrong, I'm not against school spirit.

One of the things I really like about American universities is the fact that they do form a real community of sorts (much more so than German universities, for example, do). But the only function he seems to be seeing in school pride is violence and destruction.

Celebrating a sports victory is a great thing, but beating up other people because of it is about as low as you can get.

"You've got to love it," Chris?

I think it's sick!

Finally, if you are so upset that so few people come to pep rallies and if you really think that books=studying=no fun, maybe the University just isn't the right place for your tremendous sports enthusiasm, which doesn't seem to hold a place for anything else.

Ever thought about how many season tickets even one year of tuition will buy you? Then you could really go wild. Give it a thought.

Jochen Petzold
English

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