

## Public TV worthy of federal funding

When Republicans took control of Congress, ideas for budget cuts bounced around Washington. Budget cutting in Washington may claim a victim familiar to many Americans: the Public Broadcasting Service.

PBS, locally broadcast through Oregon Public Broadcasting, provides Americans with programs such as *Nova* and *Masterpiece Theater*. Children know PBS better by such hits as *Sesame Street* and *Mister Roger's Neighborhood*.

It's a shame that PBS is being considered for cuts because public broadcasting is one of the few things that Washington is doing right. Funding that supports public broadcasting helps to bring Americans a number of educational and entertaining programs that can't readily be found elsewhere.

If the funding for PBS were cut, some programs could probably survive on commercial television. However, others would not succeed and would have to cease broadcasting.

Is it really the wish of the Congress to take this chance? Would *Sesame Street* be the same with commercial breaks?

A number of people have complained in the media that House Speaker Newt Gingrich is trying to kill Big Bird or Mister Rogers, two characters well known to children. Although the scare tactics may be juvenile, the threat remains. Public broadcasting is in trouble.

Some in Congress may argue that cutting PBS would save money. It probably would. However, the cut would be largely symbolic, with little monetary impact.

If PBS isn't on television one day, many Americans will get the impression that something, good or bad, is getting done in Washington. Compared to many other programs that Congress funds, public broadcasting is inexpensive.

If Congress wants to save money, it should look at other programs with bigger price tags, such as social security. Cutting PBS would be the easy way out of a difficult problem.

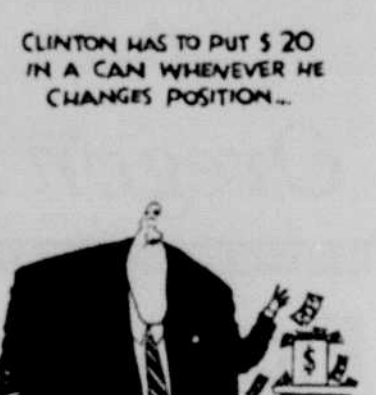
Congress must find another way to save money without sacrificing public broadcasting. Although some may argue that public broadcasting has some ideological bias, it must be conceded that PBS is a valuable educational tool. Two generations of Americans have learned about everything from the alphabet to nuclear physics from PBS.

Even though other educational and current events programming exists commercially on television today, it is neither the quality nor the quantity of that found on public broadcasting today.

Public broadcasting must be spared the brunt of budget cuts in Congress. Too many people depend on the excellent programming that the service provides for the cut to be worthwhile.

*Opinion*

HOW TO PAY FOR THE MIDDLE-CLASS TAX CUT...



### OPINION

## Appearance attracts attention



ANNE MOSER-KORNFELD

The Associated Press reported that 18-year-olds entering college are less involved in politics than any previous generation. Very few students really care about government decisions, even those directly affecting education.

Appearances mean more to us now than anything else at this time in our lives.

If anyone thinks for one moment that the student body spends all its time studying and pays little attention to fashion, go to Knight Library and check the shelves, like call number GT 525. We love fluff. With fashion books, the good ones get checked out as soon as they're through processing.

When John Kitzhaber wore faded, 501 button-fly jeans, cowboy boots and a Jerry Garcia print tie to his gubernatorial inauguration, *The Oregonian* suggested that he is a man totally secure with himself.

We are all a story of what we did or did not wear when we left home in the morning. People dress to advertise. We wear what we wear to evoke responses from other people.

The theatrical world of fashion proves this clearly with the amazing sales of the Wonderbra and the response to Robert Altman's recent film *Ready to Wear* (originally titled *Pret-a-Porter*).

Oscar Wilde wrote that only shallow people do not judge by appearances. So let's get on with it then and talk about the Wonderbra.

Wonderbra is a hoot.

A former NASA scientist, Dr. Lawrence Kuznetz currently of Singapore, will begin manufacturing and retailing a jiggle-proof version of Wonderbra in

March for about \$40. Victoria's Secret could barely keep the bras in stock during the holiday season after it came out with its own version, Miracle Bra, for \$19.

But can we talk about fabric quality and the human rights violations of the mostly "Made in China" clothing sold at the Lerner-Limited-Victoria's Secret-Express-Lane Bryant conglomerate? Just remember, Wonderbra is what's in, not cheap imitations.

Dress serves as visual metaphor and communicates subtleties in our personalities. Most of this is implicit. Each of us knows how certain colors, material and accessories make us feel when we wear them.

Fashion goes in cycles. This year softer fabrics like satin, velvet or floral prints will be big. Reflecting light and moving away from neutral colors headline the spring collections. But what do I know, was I in Paris?

No, but Julie Hatfield of *The Boston Globe* was, and she wrote in a Jan. 9 column that Altman got *Ready to Wear* right. The fun of *Ready to Wear*, playing at the Bijou and Movies 12, is entirely superficial and to suggest otherwise misses the point altogether. Go see it for the soundtrack. Salt-N-Pepa's "Here We Come" and Ini Kamoze's "Here Comes the Hotstepper," that's where the fun is.

Stay for the credits. The list of designers, houses and apparel needed to dress the models...incredible. Miramax went so far as publish a soft-cover, behind-the-scenes scrapbook for \$19.95 and took even more digs at the raunchy world of fashion.

Still, everyone knows that clothes mean something and that we communicate to one another through dress. To suggest otherwise is a lie.

Antifashion and counterculture-insult-drag belong to fashion as much as designer wear sets down trends. Clothing frames what we see when we see one another. Our clothes say things about our corporeal

selves.

I love large survey classes. Sit in the back of the hall and when the lecture gets boring, check it out — there's always the fashion show.

Fashion fixates on youth, eroticism and thin builds. The most deadly sin in fashion is to grow old.

Retirement communities are home to populations of senior citizens wearing clothes suggestive of the last time they did any real shopping or the last time they circulated in a fashion-conscious setting. The same can be said for the attire worn by many tenured professors at the University. Their income surely justifies a new sweater or a pair of slacks.

These were the best of times...and we know that by the shoes or jackets someone feels especially partial to wearing on a daily basis.

Back to the books; Bo Didley wrote "You Can't Judge a Book by Looking at Its Cover". He was talking about books, *not people*.

People care about what we wear, and fashion can be a total fix. Calculated errors, like beard stubble or wrinkled shirts, absorb college male fashions. The waif look is history, but pink is the color of the season, say it isn't so.

Life for the most part is frivolous, but it's always worth a look. Taking things too seriously negates the fact that we're constantly living in the future and change is around us everywhere. With Wonderbra, we can be sure to be uplifted. With fashion, well, she who laughs, lasts.

By the way, the grad student who has checked out *On Fashion* (1994) can expect a recall notice — I hate grad students' right to horde material for months on end and their right to keep the best books locked up in little rooms on the third floor, out of general circulation.

P.S. Red lipstick is still hot.

Anne Moser-Kornfeld is a columnist for the Emerald.

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