

Contract with KUGN amounts to money, not politics

Guest commentary

I'll be honest: The University's contract with KUGN-AM is not something I'm particularly concerned about. Although the legality of breaking this contract is still being investigated, it's also up for renewal in June. The contract that really interests me is the one the University has — or at least claims to have — with its students and community. This contract is called the "Affirmation of Community Standards," and it's been signed by every faculty member, staff member and GTF, including University President Dave Frohnmayer himself. Because of the overtly bigoted and inflammatory remarks made on KUGN talk shows, the University's contract with the station would appear to expressly violate the Affirmation on Community Standards.

Frohnmayer has said that the University can't make contracts for political reasons, a cop-out answer that amounts to nothing more than being too scared to take a stand. But if a stance against bigotry and discrimination is political, then how can the Affirmation of Community Standards even exist? It is an inherently political document, and one that Frohnmayer has emphatically supported, so the "we can't be political" argument is clearly a tactic to avoid the real issues, and a pretty transparent one at that.

So, what are the real issues? I'm going to go out on a limb here and say this has something to do with money. KUGN pays the University a million dollars a year. I pay them a measly \$4,000. Oh, and my money doesn't go directly to the Athletic Department, either. KUGN's does. If you want to see where the real values of an organization lie, follow the money.

The University professes to have "standards of non-discrimination" and "standards" against bigotry, but the failure of the administration to stand up for its students begs to differ. I guess the University values its contract with KUGN — and the money it brings in — more than its alleged commitment to diversity or its students. It's clear which contract is more profitable, but which is more important?

Oh, and about censorship. Give me a freakin' break. Every time hate speech comes up, the bigots in question cry "First Amendment." That's ridiculous. In no way would the University be attempting to censor the views or opinions of KUGN's talk show hosts. We have neither the power to do so, nor would it serve the interests of anyone involved. Michael Savage and Michael Medved can say whatever they want. We just need to disassociate ourselves from viewpoints that clearly do not represent us or our University-endorsed community standards.

resent us or our University-endorsed community standards.

Finally — and let me be really clear on this one — the University's job is to represent its students and their interests. Not football. Not basketball. Students. And it's doing an exceptionally poor job of this. Because the administration isn't listening to us, because it's ignoring our concerns, and because it's essentially being paid off so a corporate-owned radio station in another city can spew hate in our name, which is very quickly ceasing to be ours.

We are supposed to be "the voice of the Ducks," but our voice is being systematically silenced.

Austin Shaw-Phillips is an undeclared sophomore.
Editor's note: This piece was submitted before KUGN's decision to stop carrying Michael Savage.

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keeps the tone day after day, he means it. The University should remember this when it decides whether to renew its contract with KUGN next year.

Gerry Rempel
 Eugene

Editor's note: This piece was submitted before KUGN's decision to stop carrying Michael Savage.

Victim's rights take precedence

A statement in "Student contends grievance that alleges threatening speech" (ODE, Dec. 6) left me absolutely appalled. It appears that our society's perception of constitutional rights have swung too far in favor of the indi-

vidual over those of the masses.

I'm surprised at how predictable it is to read about a student admittedly guilty of directing inflammatory comments and accused of threatening members of a social group historically discriminated against. With such statements as were quoted in the article ("That's a stark violation of my constitutional rights"), the subject is allowed to overshadow his own guilt with petty protestations about violations of his own rights.

Understandably, provisos were imbedded in the Constitution as safeguards against gross violations against individuals committed during the process of investigations and consequent legal proceedings. This is interesting in light of the possibility that the U.S. Supreme Court might overturn the Miranda ruling.

A confessed rapist was set free due to his attorney contesting a violation of his rights which may soon be deemed invalid; how iron-

ic. When do the rights of the victim overshadow the rights of the perpetrator?

Carla Reitan
 senior
 music/pre-medicine

Forgiveness may prove more successful than war

Please read this letter with the understanding that it was written from the heart, with love and sincere sympathy for those who have suffered profound losses. It is not intended to be religious or aggravating, disrespectful or unpatriotic.

Costs of not forgiving: The costs of not forgiving are immense. The anger and humiliation we feel appear to be eroding the values that make our country great. Our suspicion may destroy our privacy. Our fear may cause us to voluntarily trade our democracy for a dictatorship. Our insecurity may compromise our economic prosperity. Our lack of self-efficacy may cause us to blindly follow our biased

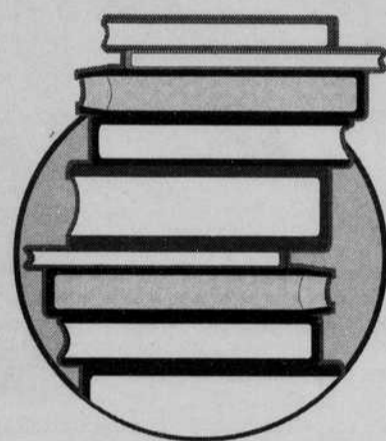
news sources. Our xenophobia may cause us to forgo justice. Our rage may bring us into an unnecessary war.

Benefits of forgiving: Fortunately, the benefits of forgiving are equally immense. If you, personally, will make this change of heart, you will feel a renewed sense of power, trust and optimism. This country can undermine terrorism with forgiveness. This is how we can win the generic war on terrorism. We can heal. We can overcome. We are a resilient people in a free country. Our power is not in our military defense; it is in our citizen's willingness to defend our nation's values of democracy, independence and justice.

Forgive now: It is time to forgive Sept. 11, 2001. We live in an accelerated world and we don't have the convenience of withholding our forgiveness. We can trade rage and indignation for peace and clarity.

Randolph Joslyn Sill
 Seattle

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