

Sports, religion connection fouls outat University

Guest commentary

As a lawyer who defends individual constitutional rights, and as an individual concerned about my own freedoms of religion and expression, I read with interest the article entitled "Pastors provide outlets for athletes' faith" (ODE, March 14), describing the close relationship between two local churches and the Duck men's football and basketball teams.

Coach Mike Bellotti "holds two separate chapel services for Christian and Catholic athletes before

every game." A Christian pastor "runs pre-game chapel services for the basketball team players" and rides along on the bus to away games. According to a previous article ("God's squad?" ODE, March 12), every basketball game is preceded by and ends with a team prayer session.

Did the sports editor and author of the article ask the coaches or their team's pastors why they think it is appropriate for an athletic program at a public university to sponsor religious programs? Were they asked to comment on whether the

prayer sessions and Christian counseling described in the articles are consistent with the rule, announced by the U.S. Supreme Court just three years ago in Santa Fe Independent School District v. Doe, that permitting even student-led, student-initiated prayer at athletic events violates the Establishment Clause of the First Amendment? Or with the constitutional requirement that public institutions refrain from sanctioning official prayers?

In deciding numerous, politically sensitive cases regarding the relationship between public educational

institutions and religious observance, the court has recognized that "school sponsorship of a religious message is impermissible because it sends the ancillary message to members of the audience who are nonadherents 'that they are outsiders, not full members of the political community, and an accompanying message to adherents that they are insiders, favored members of the political community.'"

The athletes involved certainly have the right to their individual religious beliefs, and if religious devotion makes them perform better ath-

letically, more power to their formula for success. The University's imprimatur on such observance is troubling, however. While exclusion of those outside the faith is certainly not the intent of the coaches involved, one has to wonder: What message does this state university, sports-religion connection send to non-Christian members of the athletic squads involved, potential recruits for those squads, and the spectators and fans who support and cheer for them?

Mark Weintraub lives in Eugene.

Oregon should follow rural war attitude

Guest commentary

Greetings from small-town Missouri, where we don't fruitlessly protest the war, but we support the troops who give us our freedom. We Missourians always have, and I strongly suspect we always will.

I am pleased to see Eugene was the place of a troop support rally, but am disappointed, while not surprised, that Portland was the scene of an anti-war protest. I don't care that people protest; that is our right as Americans, but I can not see why people waste their time protesting a war they cannot stop.

I spent a little more than a year in Oregon, and after a while in your beautiful state, I realized I had to get out. I came thinking I would find a state of open-minded acceptance but what I found was narrow-minded ignorance.

For the most part, the consensus of Oregonians I came in contact with illustrated their obliviousness to true America and the way this great nation works. I ask for any Oregonian who thinks the country feels the way they

do to hop on a plane and visit small-town U.S.A.

Take a trip to a state that falls between the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans, where there are no illusionary college students and faculty members. By doing so, Oregonians might capture the true essence of America, the spirit that has led us this far.

I'm sure you lofty university students believe you are smarter than the red-necks and inbreds you will find in these rural locations, but perhaps that small-town ignorance is why we are here today. I mean, you couldn't be too smart to storm the beaches of Normandy, with German bullets slamming into your fellow soldiers' heads.

But then again, thousands did take that beach, and thousands of small-town men and women continue to fight for our freedom today. America was built by the farmer and the factory worker, not the ideological college student.

I know there are Oregonians, as evidenced by the troop support rally, who realize the purpose of our being in Iraq.

I am not naive enough to believe we should believe everything our govern-

ment tells us, and I am actually quite cynical. But there comes a time when you have to choose between what is beneficial to society and what is not.

Anti-war protests, at this point, do nothing to raise the bar for which our society should be measured. This is not 1969, and we are not in Vietnam.

Just over a year ago we witnessed an attack on America like we had never seen before, and that forced me to realize we here in the states are no longer immune to hatred and bigotry. Forget the reasons why we are hated - I can do nothing about the past and neither can you.

You say we should not let fear fuel a thirst for blood, but I say enough is enough. When do you protesters believe America is justified in going to war? Would we have ever fought World War II if thousands had not died at Pearl Harbor?

Pacifism breeds death, death for a nation and a people. I, for one, enjoy my life, and am proud to support those who are willing to die so that I may keep it.

Nick Barron is from Missouri.

Letter to the editor

Melton, Morales to improve housing contracts

I'm writing this letter in support of Maddy Melton and Eddy Morales, who are running for ASUO Executive. I believe they are the most qualified candidates for this position because of their prior experience in the ASUO office.

One of the issues they will work on next year is to create fair University Housing contracts. Currently, when students sign a housing contract, they are unable to get out of the contract unless they pay \$9 per day or have someone buy out their contract.

Often students enter the University unsure of their living options. Sometimes students decide that living in a greek chapter house may be a better option for them, but were uncomfortable with temporary housing.

Aside from greek chapter houses, students may feel that the residents in their hall are not welcoming to their personal beliefs and identities.

While Maddy and Eddy believe the responsibilities of contracts are important, they also feel the University should foster a positive learning environment. When students are unhappy in their living situation, studies are compromised.

Maddy and Eddy have a solution: a three-week grace period during which students can decide if the residence halls are the best option for them.

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University Health Center

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WHAT

Four-hour American Heart Association CPR Certification class following the Heart Saver protocol. It is designed to teach lay rescuers to recognize and treat life-threatening emergencies including cardiac arrest and choking for infants, children and adults. Participants will receive a CPR certification card, which provides two years certification, upon successful completion of the course.

WHEN

Mondays: April 14, April 28, or May 12 at 5:00-9:00p.m.

HOW

Students may register by calling the University Health Center at 346-2770. Space will be limited to the first 8 UO students. Minimum class size is 5.

WHERE

Cafeteria on the second floor of the UO Health Center.

WHO

Class taught by nursing staff from the UO Health Center.

COST

\$30, which can be charged to UO account or paid in cash. Registered students must cancel 24 hours in advance of class for full refund.



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