

# COMMENTARY

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## Mr. Ashcroft's wild ride

Last Friday, two glass blowers pleaded guilty to federal charges arising out of Operation Pipe Dreams. You remember, that was the brilliant scheme from our own attorney general's office to round up peddlers of drug paraphernalia in a huge, nationwide raid back in February.

The two were arrested because they sold their glass pipes, which were clearly labeled for tobacco smoking or incense burning, to people on the Internet. According to the feds, the pipes actually had an illegal primary purpose — drug use — and hey, every schoolchild out there since Nancy Reagan's reign knows our government's stance on drug use.

I spent some time pondering this logic and have decided that Ashcroft and Co. really have some work to do. I propose they raid the following businesses:

- Albertson's (and other grocery stores)

Purely out of curiosity, I assure you, I checked behind their tobacco counter and discovered — naturally, to my shock and dismay — that they actually sell rolling papers at the grocery store. Now, it may be possible to roll your own tobacco cigarettes with them, but how many people actually do that?

No, I'm pretty sure those rolling papers are being sold for primarily nefarious deeds involving deep inhalation and breath-holding. Time to round up the supermarket execs and allow them to decide if they want to face a

possible three-year prison sentence or a \$250,000 fine or just plead guilty and hope to negotiate leniency.

- Peace Health (and other hospitals) along with Hiron's (and other pharmacies)

If we're going to curtail drug use, it only makes sense to take on a place whose primary purpose is to disseminate drugs, right? Think about it: Not only do they actually distribute controlled substances at these locations, but just any old person claiming to be a diabetic can stroll up and buy syringes.

And everyone knows that syringes and heroin users go hand-in-hand. I can't imagine how this situation has been allowed to go on this long. Come to think of it, I wonder if we could bust diabetics on possession of drug paraphernalia charges. That might tick off a few white-haired ladies and gents, but hey, don't they know there's a war on?

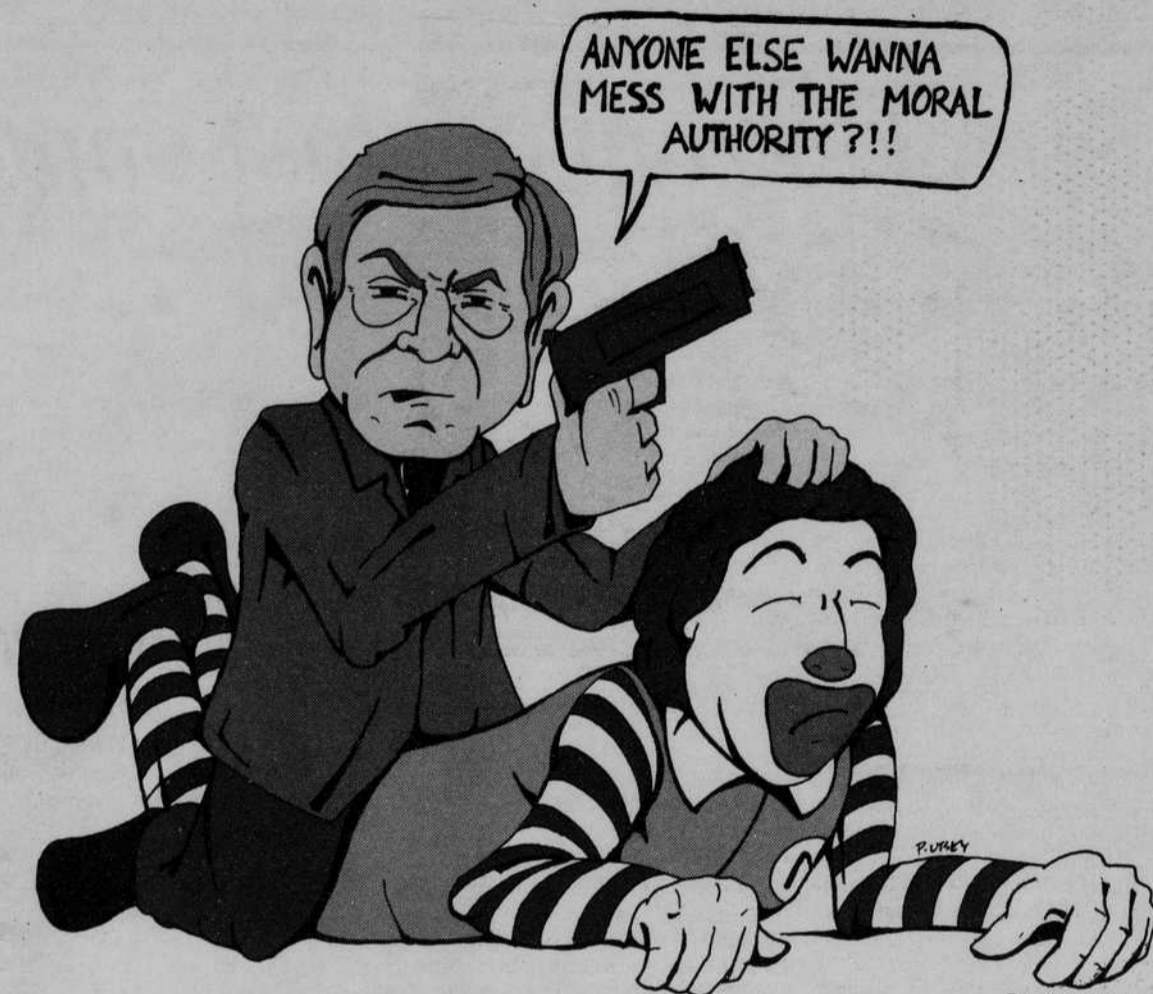
- Joe Romania's (and all the other the auto dealerships)

I thought some more about the theory behind the arrests, and I've decided that they really didn't go far enough in addressing the burden the irresponsible behavior of others places on society.

Think about this: It would be impossible to drink and drive if you have nothing to drive. Therefore, in an effort to head off drunken-driving fatalities, driving-under-the-influence-of-intoxicants arrests, and bad parallel parking jobs, it is obvious that Ashcroft and Co. need to shut down the source of DUI paraphernalia as well.

- McDonald's (and other fast food chains)

Let's look at the words of our own



Peter Utsey Emerald

Surgeon General Richard Carmona, "When you look at obesity, what I call the terror within, a threat that is every bit as real to America as the weapons of mass destruction, obesity as an epidemic is ... growing. If we don't do anything about it, we will have a morbidly obese, dysfunctional population that we cannot afford to care for because obesity leads to diabetes, cancer, hypertension, (and) other cardiovascular diseases."

If obesity is the terror within, I think it's time we treat it like our other War on Terror efforts. I want to see the Office of Homefront Waist-

line Reduction, with the requisite cabinet-level head and a multi-billion dollar annual budget.

We need to develop a plan to seek out and destroy purveyors of fast food, cookies, cheesecake and anything else that is likely to encourage us to exceed our daily caloric limit. I'm thinking Operation Thunder Thighs has a nice ring to it. I wonder if Ben and Jerry would cop a plea rather than face three years in the slammer?

As I sit here, I can think of at least a half-dozen other places that need a good raid — not to mention a lot of

folks who deserve to be fingerprinted, stripped and body-cavity-searched — in order to save our fellow countrymen from the results of their own folly.

So I say "Bravo!" to Ashcroft and Co., and all others who are striving to remove the burden of personal responsibility from our shoulders. I was getting tired of lugging all that weight around, weren't you?

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## Homophobia won't stop us from living out proud lives

### Guest commentary

After reading "Homosexual men should hide their disgusting acts" (ODE, May 9), I am just dying on the inside at the plight of the conservative folks on my campus. These people are truly an oppressed group. They have all the entitlement and privilege in the world to say things like, "I do not flat out hate the gay community, but I openly oppose them."

The conservative-identified person on campus must live a completely compromised life because they are missing out on all the hate I've experienced as a queer-identified person. What really gets me is that conservatives will never have the opportunity that I have had as a queer person to be the victim of a hate crime based on their sexu-

al orientation. Truly, if I were to name anyone as socially disadvantaged on campus, I would look no further than the conservative folks.

Before coming to Eugene, I went to high school in the South, and some of my best friends were these "conservatives." As an impressionable young person completely unable to separate my opinions and ideas from those around me, I was made to think a number of things about myself. I could never decide for myself as a woman as to whether or not I could carry a baby to term, and I was made to believe that I was morally indecent for being queer.

My insides are torn that there are now impressionable, fully cognizant adults on campus choking down the liberal agenda. I remember living in the South as a political minority and every day living the torment of having to think

through new opinions and opportunities to learn more about my political views by engaging in conversations with people who disagree with me.

I miss the days when I was surrounded by my conservative friends. I was always appreciative to have them judge my lifestyle and dictate to me how I should live and who I should be in love with. Luckily, I have found solace in the rantings of Vincent Martorano.

I, just as strongly as Martorano, long for the days that gays opted to be in the closet. As a queer person, all those times when I felt like killing myself for not loving the right person while I was wedged in my closet surely were some of the fondest days of my entire life. I am definitely super sad that I am OK with who I am and even more devastated that I couldn't conform to soci-

ety's model of who I should be.

Martorano needs to understand that he doesn't get to decide whether or not queer folks are OK. When he is finding himself drooling in "disgust" over "an absolutely disturbing display of queer boys enjoying each other," he should keep in mind that he is probably not the epitome of erotica when he's making out with his preferred gender.

He should also know that not a single one of my queer friends is going to be forced back into the closet by articles like his. He should expect that he has in fact stimulated us queer folks to take up more space and be more openly proud of who we are. Expect to see more of us.

Cathlene E. McGraw is a journalism major and a volunteer with the LGBTQA.

### Letters to the editor

#### Jews mustn't be seen as having one opinion

George Beres makes an excellent yet flawed point in his guest commentary ("Unthinking antagonism can hurt Jewish cause," ODE, May 16). Yes, the longtime American Jewish support of Israel has been claimed as the cause of many of the recent outbreaks of anti-Semitism, but it is the persistence of those like Beres who insist upon making over-generalizations (such as, all Jews blindly support Israel) that makes such a state necessary.

My own feelings toward Israel as an Amer-

ican Jew are complex; I find comfort in its existence, yet distaste at many of its actions. I feel compassion for the Palestinians, yet horror at the terror inflicted by a minority. I could not possibly hope to explain the complexity of my beliefs and the beliefs of many other Jews in a letter, much less a 20-page paper, but Beres has crystallized the reasons why we need a Jewish state.

While he claims enlightenment, Beres is willing to look beyond the varied ideologies, races, ethnicities and political beliefs of the American Jewish population and instead see us as a single monotone voice. To lump a complex population based solely on religious affiliation into a single ideology is just as dangerous as proclaiming

that all Muslims are terrorists, that all Americans are war-mongers, that all Germans are Holocaust deniers, that all Gypsies are thieves, or that all Jews are money-lending swindlers. You may believe in the Holocaust, Beres, but you sure haven't learned any of the lessons.

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#### Students for Choice looks for members

Under the United States Constitution, America citizens are awarded a plethora of inalienable rights. It is the mission of Students for Choice to maintain these rights for

women and their partners while educating the University on healthy lifestyles and safe sex practices.

This campus group is an active part of the University and community, sponsoring choice events, capitol lobbying opportunities and an open forum for members and guests. If you support responsible, healthy and informed sexual choices, please attend our meetings every Wednesday at 5 p.m. in the Century Room B. For more information, write [s4choice@gladstone.uoregon.edu](mailto:s4choice@gladstone.uoregon.edu).

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