

Thursday, February 12, 2004

## EDITORIAL

# Bureaucracy must reduce waste before schools cut

In the swelling wake of Measure 30's sweeping failure, government agencies around the state are looking under couch cushions and mattresses for forgotten change and gearing up to make slash-spending plans.

From forensic science departments to kindergarten classrooms to food stamp offices, the budgetary blow is leaving a mark on agencies in every part of the state.

Particularly troubling to the Emerald Editorial Board is the fallout for the state's higher education: The failure of the embattled ballot measure is triggering some \$7.5 million in cutbacks on Oregon's college campuses, more than one percent of the statewide \$544 million worth of cuts. Taking into account scheduled cuts, in fact, the state will now support only 14 percent of the total University budget, University President Dave Frohnmayer said.

While this bodes poorly for medium-term affordability, not to mention the University's fiscal health, some of the details of where the \$7.5 million will come from, exactly, seem to still be up in the air. (Oregon Gov. Ted Kulongoski intends not to let Measure 30's failure contribute to tuition hikes this year, Frohnmayer said.)

The Oregon University System proposed cuts to the chancellor's office, which administrates OUS, during a Tuesday meeting. Notably, in preparation of the possibility of Measure 30's failure, the state Legislature had identified areas within the University system to be cut; the chancellor's office was not included in earlier rounds of these budget-cut proposals. Now, those proposals have been adjusted to include cuts to the chancellor's office.

The Emerald Editorial Board applauds this inquiry. When monetary meanness demands fiscal leanness, every department should look inward and eliminate waste accrued over years of swelling bureaucratic procedures, and the chancellor's office is no exception. Likewise, other parts of the system's bureaucracy should be cut before students feel the brunt of economic woes.

This is especially important among departments of all state agencies who aren't at the "business end" of their respective services.

State Board of Higher Education President Neil Goldschmidt agreed.

"Without (this budget cut adjustment), where we would be left is that the campuses would have to take all of this burden on themselves," he said.

While OUS didn't say as of Tuesday what cuts the University would be spared, thanks to this adjustment and others, the fiscal damage to the University in cuts has shrunk to just \$881,000, Frohnmayer reported yesterday.

And that's good news for everyone on this campus.

## EDITORIAL POLICY

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# War against love

**Q: What's behind two umbrellas facing the sea?**  
**A: Lovers.**

It is simple and yet profound. Understand its essence and you will understand the essence of love.

I first heard this riddle while studying Buddhism on the island nation of Sri Lanka. I found myself sympathizing with the two lovers from the riddle. It was impossible to find privacy on the island. Homes were built open, and if anything covered a window it was a thin transparent cloth.

One day my host mother walked up to me and said, "I love the way you write."

"The way I write?" I asked.

"Yes, in your diary. I read it when you aren't there."

She said it so nonchalantly; then and there I realized that privacy was not considered a right in Sri Lanka.

Religious fanatics have been trying to dismantle privacy rights for years in this country, with the help of the Republican party. They would like to see our right to privacy disappear because they claim it does not exist within the Constitution.

Actually, they're right. The phrase "right to privacy" does not appear in the Constitution; in fact, the word "privacy" is nowhere to be found. Our modern right to privacy was created in the 1965 case *Griswold v. Connecticut*, which established the right for married couples to use contraception.

I have argued in the past that we should have the right to privacy, whether it is in the Constitution or not. But I just couldn't believe that our Founding Fathers never considered privacy a basic right. It was a mystery. Then I read something that made sense of it all.

In 1776 when somebody said they needed privacy, they meant they had to use the bathroom—the privy. The chamber pots themselves were called privates. That's why



**David Jagernauth**  
 Critical mass

the word is absent from the Constitution. My guess is that our founding fathers considered the right to take a shit one of those "inalienable rights" that were "self-evident," like the right to eat and drink, which are also missing from the pages of the Constitution.

Privacy is not something that can be granted by the state, nor should it be taken away by that state. Privacy is as natural as the

sea. It is a fundamental human right, granted by the creator. So why are these right-wing religious fanatics so intent on dismantling privacy rights?

The riddle of the two umbrellas provides the answer.

It shows that privacy and love go hand-in-hand. The religious right's war against privacy is part and parcel of their puritanical war against love. They rile against privacy rights because they desire to create an America that offers no safe haven from their oppressive sexual mores.

It seems clear to me that they care more about the institution of marriage than they do about humans in love. They want to know what you are doing behind those two umbrellas so that they can judge it and stop it.

For the majority of Americans, including secular Republicans and libertarians, this is a horrific vision of the future. We cannot understand freedom and liberty without privacy. We say that what we do behind two umbrellas is only for the sea and us to know.

During Valentine's Day, while you're enjoying a romantic evening with your lover, imagine the terrible world they are trying to create. Imagine a world without umbrellas.

Contact the columnist at davidjagernauth@dailyemerald.com. His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

# Church, state can differ on marriage

There has been a large uproar as of late about the semantic debate over the word marriage. The word's origin is deeply rooted in religion and unfortunately used in government to help define a group of people for reasons of taxes,

benefits and recognition under law. No matter what laws are passed, no matter what the feelings of the populace, it is safe to say that many religious groups will not allow nontraditional marriages to take place in their houses of worship. An American law or constitutional amendment will not change the way the Pope runs his church.

The need for the word marriage to define a same-sex union is simply a reflection of a need for acceptance. If that is the goal, passing a law, state, federal or otherwise backing marital unions of same-sex couples will do nothing to change the attitudes and

acceptance people are aiming for. The problem is much deeper. It has to do with ideological differences. If you find that hard to believe, look at the civil rights movement. Even after the laws were passed, the issues of making people accept integration as 'the way it should be' was a longer and continuing battle. With the issue of marriage, we are not only changing our own constitution or law but also legally attempting to force religious organizations to accept a law contrary to their own teachings, and I would venture to say that is unfair.

The sad thing about this entire situation is the legal hair-splitting, which ends with people left on the out and people waiting to be recognized under law. If anything should be changed, get rid of the legal implications of what marriage constitutes and/or have marriage replaced with 'any sort of civil union'. This is progressive action and it is unfair to discriminate against civil unions. What the church recognizes is its own right; what the government recognizes for reasons

of benefit under law is their right. To continue as things are would be an unfair use of a religious belief to define a legal statute.

So until a time when this is worked out, you can only hope that more acceptance will occur and some day, maybe the religious groups will accept this too. But fighting over a word is silly. Make this debate legal and stop fighting over the word. Vermont and California have done this already by adding civil unions to its law and benefits.

It's a first step toward redefining the way people accept things. The passing of a law will never change the hearts and minds of a group with 2,000 years of history behind it, and they might just choose to keep their word as is; change like this takes time. But that does not mean progress still can't be achieved, it is just a matter of picking the right battles to fight.

Nathan von Colditz is a senior majoring in history.