

Bush's anti-gay stance risky

The uproar over homosexual marriage has only increased in recent months. To address this controversy, President Bush has officially backed a constitutional amendment to ban such "immoral acts." While it should be encouraged to voice one's opinion, the action that opinion would have us take would destroy the very foundation upon which this country was built: The U.S. Constitution.

Before delving into the constitutional violations such a ban would make, it should be stipulated that the origin of homosexuality has no relevance in this legal matter. If two consenting adults would like to make their love for one another recognized by the state, the state would be violating certain liberties if it did not grant them that right.

The First Amendment: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion ..." In other words, and more commonly referred to as, it is the separation of church and state. It would be detrimental for the United States Congress to pass a law that uses religious grounds as its justification. The early settlers came to America with a vision of escaping religious persecution. Centuries later, groups of people are being denied rights by the United States with the rea-

soning of "immorality." For Congress to pass this ban using only religious rhetoric including "immoral," "sins," and "faith," would be to violate the first and most fundamental of all amendments.

The Fifth Amendment: "No person shall be ...deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law ..."

GUEST COMMENTARY

The key term here is "due process." For a state to put a law into effect, it must go through the proper measures and use legitimate legal methods. This line of the amendment was included to prevent states from making arbitrary laws. The problem as it stands is that a religious justification for passing a law is hardly due process.

The Ninth Amendment: "The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people." If "the people" consider marriage a right they have in their lives, it is then given the same protection any other stipulated right in the constitution would have.

Lastly, the 14th Amendment: "No state shall make or enforce any law

which shall abridge the privileges ...of citizens of the United States; Nor shall any state deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws." This amendment is a culmination of the three aforementioned. It gives not only equal rights to any citizen of the United States, but also the guarantee that no law shall be made infringing upon those rights. President Bush is openly negating an amendment that makes all Americans equal under the eyes of the government. Such action is blatantly unconstitutional.

It should be said there is nothing wrong with a private entity such as a church denying any religious ceremony for anyone. When it comes to the public sphere, however, the government cannot actively engage in unconstitutional acts. There is a difference between a religious and a civil marriage. The separation should be noted. If two consenting adults wish to be married under the eyes of the law — not God — let it be so.

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Box-dumpers show intellectual cowardice

During spring break, while fellow students were away partaking in drunken, boob-flashing revelry in such dystopic hellholes as Cancun, Mexico and Daytona Beach, Fla., unknown individuals decided they could have a more rockin' time by dumping boxes of the Oregon Commentator. This trashing of issues has not been the first time, and I fear it shall not be the last.

The Oregon Commentator has been on campus for 21 years, which is quite an achievement for an all-volunteer publication; yet nary a year goes by that our boxes go undumped. The intellectual cowards who have performed these acts over the years are setting a terrible precedent on this campus.

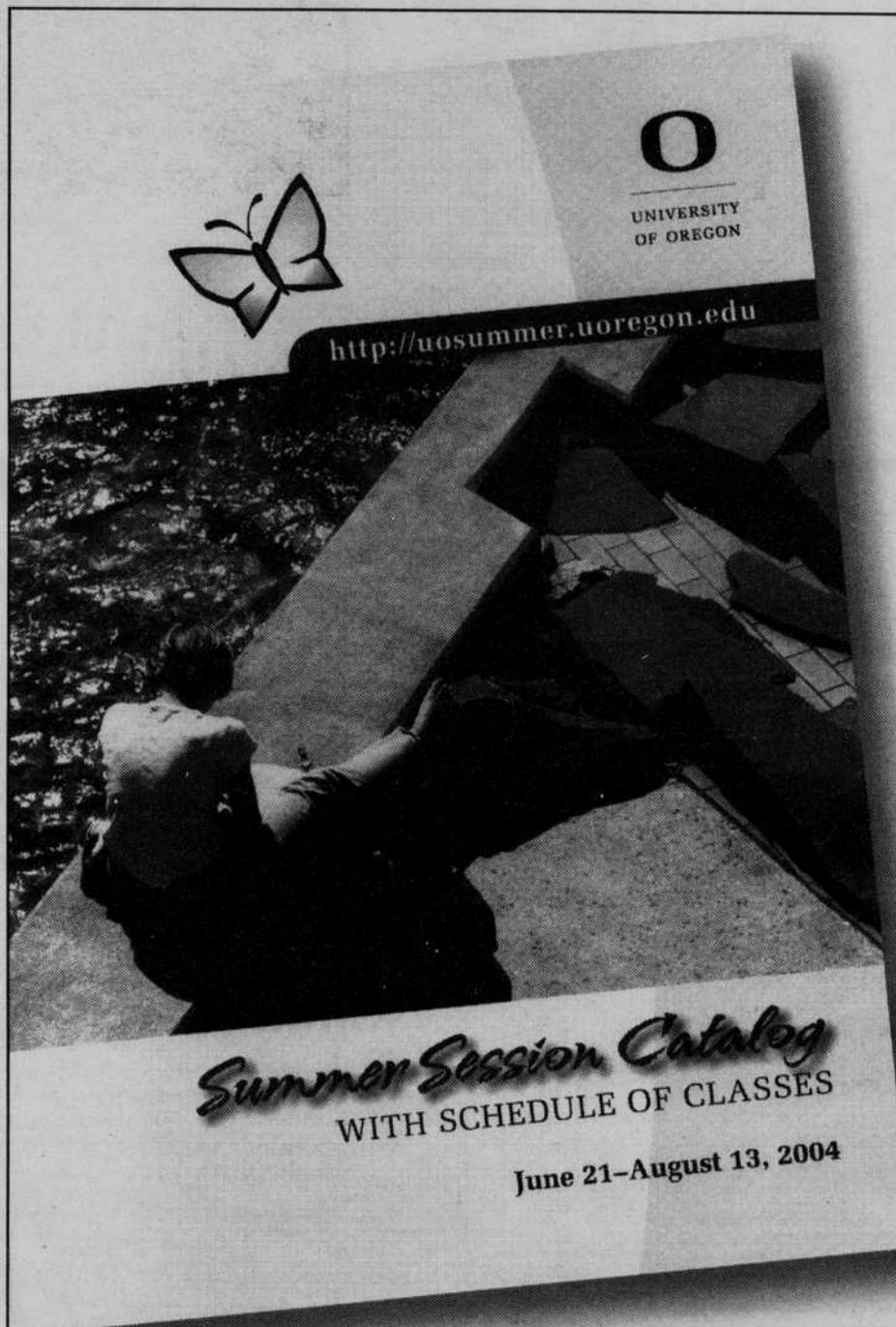
Yes, we are a conservative/libertarian publication on a predominantly liberal campus, but I assumed this was "The Marketplace of Ideas," a bastion of the Socratic dialectic. I was, it seems, mistaken. This recent case underscores a major problem facing this university: Discourse is discouraged in favor of banal acts of self-indulgent symbolism.

You may not agree with the Oregon Commentator's political views, or you may find our humor to be sophomoric (which should come as a compliment to our freshman staffers). But those are not reasons to interfere with the free dissemination of ideas. If you find yourself in disagreement, then try articulating your ideas instead of resorting to petty acts of vandalism. Box-dumping should not be tolerated, for it usurps the right of University students to read a publication funded by the incidental fee.

Tyler Graf
senior
journalism
Managing Editor,
Oregon Commentator

Today's crossword solution

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