

# COMMENTARY

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## EDITORIAL

### Lane County direly needs more funds

Now that the month of May has rolled around once again, Oregonians can expect to see more petty criminals running just out of reach of the law's long arm.

Well, it used to be long, anyway.

These days, the budget tragedy in this state has reached such dire proportions that the Lane County District Attorney's office can't afford to charge suspected perpetrators of certain crimes.

In a \$270,000 money-saving effort, prosecutors will cease to pursue some 102 types of nonviolent misdemeanors in about 2,000 cases, including theft under \$750. In further cost-cutting measures, District Attorney Doug Harclerod said his office will also cease prosecution of about 1,000 drug felony cases and 650 nonviolent felony cases.

Included in the crimes that won't be prosecuted are prostitution, credit card fraud and physical harassment.

An unfortunate byproduct following years of gross mismanagement of taxpayer money on the part of local agencies? Perhaps, but the cuts are currently needed to meet 9 percent across-the-board cuts, which will compensate for a \$4.1 million shortfall in the county.

Oh, but never fear! The local police will still be arresting people. Those people just won't be charged with anything. As Harclerod conceded in a memo to courts and police, the reductions are "a blow to public safety in Lane County." We wholeheartedly agree and hope public officials can crunch some numbers and find a solution to the whole mess.

Meanwhile, upstate, prisoners at Oregon State Correctional Institution are having flat-screen televisions installed into their cells. A recent Associated Press story features Nicholas Krahmer, a prisoner who was convicted of assault with a knife, kicking back on his bunk and enjoying his \$300 flatscreen television.

Krahmer bought the television using money he earned computer drafting in the prison, where he made a few dollars per day. After what was sure to be many, many excruciating weeks of working for a hilariously low wage, Krahmer saved enough — and maintained a clear record — to buy the television for his cell.

Here's an idea: Use their money to pay for more convictions in Lane County! Given, the prisoners earned that money fair and square, but those are the breaks, as the saying goes.

Or, better yet, instead of Krahmer working in computer drafting at the prison, why not give him a go at prosecuting? Surely the man has had enough exposure to Court TV in his cell to understand at least the most basic tenants of trying a criminal, right?

## EDITORIAL POLICY

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to letters@dailyemerald.com. Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged. Letters are limited to 250 words and guest commentaries to 550 words. Authors are limited to one submission per calendar month. Submission must include phone number and address for verification. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style.

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## Only skin deep

I need a makeover.

I'm not talking about one of those pansy salon makeovers, with the manicure and the pedicure. I'm talking scalpels. I'm talking plastic surgery. I'm talking liposuction.

I need an extreme makeover.

My television box told me so. MTV told me "I Want a Famous Face." FOX told me to be "The Swan." And, of course, ABC told me to get that "Extreme Makeover."

America is obsessed with this new, twisted brand of reality television. "The Swan" is a ratings hit for FOX. It takes ugly women, makes them over extreme-style, and enters them into a beauty pageant in the final episode. This past week it was the network's third-highest-rated show, behind only "American Idol" and "24."

For America, these television shows offer the ultimate rags-to-riches tale. It's Cinderella in prime time. With scalpels.

The worst of the batch, by far, is "I Want a Famous Face." Thankfully, the show is no longer on the air. But when it was on, it was gnarly. Really gnarly. The show's subjects all wanted to resculpt their bodies so they could look like a pop singer or a hot actor. MTV claimed to be "documenting a phenomenon."

And document they did. Blood flew. Lines were drawn on various body parts. Boobs were lifted. It was horrendous. I couldn't look. It got to the point where if I

saw the show's logo, even if it was a commercial, I had to change it. Even C-SPAN would be better.

One of the famous subjects was Kate Winslet. "Jennette" from Florida wanted to look like the British actress, who isn't even hot, in my humble opinion. But that's a different story. Jennette got her tummy tucked and her boobs lifted.

"I would do the whole thing over in a heartbeat," Jennette told MTV.com after the show. "I can't even begin to tell you how worth it, the whole surgery, was."



Peter Hockaday  
 Today is Hockaday

Winslet, though, wouldn't do it over in a heartbeat after watching the show. She told the London Times she felt obligated to watch. Imagine watching somebody endure severe pain in order to have your tummy. Kate Winslet knows what that's all about.

"I just felt so powerless," Winslet told the

London paper. "I certainly don't have breasts like the ones she ended up with. Trust me. She had slabs of her stomach taken out. Liposuction! What the f--- is going on?"

Exactly. What is going on? Why would people torture themselves medieval-style just to look like Brad Pitt or Jennifer Lopez? Why would people endure surgery and weeks in the hospital to look a little better? What happened to inner beauty?

People say that "Extreme Makeover" is acceptable because the people on that show are Hunchback-of-Notre-Dame ugly. They're can't-go-outside ugly. Obviously, I'm beautiful, so I don't know about that kind of ugliness. That was a joke.

But in a perfect world, looks shouldn't matter. Heck, even Quasimodo gets the girl in the end. Sort of. So why can't people just be happy with where they are? So you're ugly. You don't look like Jennifer Aniston or Andy Roddick. So what? Get over it.

I guess I'm just idealistic. These makeover shows crush my ideals. So I'm going to go on "The Swan" and I'm going to beat the skirts off those girls. I think I would look good as any woman.

How about that for a makeover?

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

## LETTER TO THE EDITOR

### Editorial gave false impression of USSA trip

This letter is in response to a recent editorial ("Student Senate could be new reality TV show," ODE, April 14), which claimed that the United States Student Association's trip to Washington D.C. was a waste of money, and that the "chance of USSA students bringing meaningful, tangible benefits to the University (is) 1 percent." In this situation, the Editorial Board is simply wrong.

Firstly, this column gives a false impression to readers by failing to fully explain the

USSA's conference. This editorial makes it appear that Melton and the others were treated to a five-star vacation. Absolutely not. In reality, this seminar included workshops on becoming allies to different communities, and concrete promises were received from members of Congress for funding higher education. By giving readers an incomplete story, the Editorial Board showed its lack of support for alliances towards minority students, and are uninformed about the pledges of congressional representatives.

Furthermore, in this same editorial, the editors once more failed to properly analyze a delicate situation with the issue of ASUO Vice President Eddy Morales'

assertion of racial discrimination during a Senate meeting. According to this editorial, because Morales' claim was not necessarily agreed on by all Senate members, in the future he "should just keep his mouth shut." Although I am not a racial minority, I can only hope that all people would choose to voice an issue of possible discrimination, especially if related to my actions, instead of "keeping their mouths shut" in order to avoid disturbing a member of the ODE editorial board.

Ailee Slater  
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