Commentary

OREGON DAILY EMERALD

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In my opinion

Bush's second-term curse

In the world of baseball, superstition seems to be falling by the wayside. In the last two seasons, supposedly cursed teams have swept the World Series. Last season, the Boston Red Sox rose above the Curse of the Bambino. This year, the Chicago White Sox rose above the Curse of the Black Sox.

With famous curses dropping like flies, the Chicago Cubs' faithful are hoping they can rise above their supposed curse in order to claim victory in next year's Fall Classic. Don't hold your breath.

Those who want to see another curse demolished in the coming year should look not to baseball, but to politics.

At this nation's founding, George Washington established a tradition that no one would ever serve more than two terms as President of the United States. Ever since Franklin D. Roosevelt broke Washington's tradition by winning four terms, every president who has won a second term has suffered immense setbacks.

The second term is supposedly the term when a president can do the most good. Because the president will never have to run for office again, he can focus on advancing his agenda instead of positioning himself for a re-election campaign. Moreover, he doesn't need to raise funds for his own campaign, which frees him up to fund raise for his political allies.

With the increased favor of his allies and no future electoral concerns, a second-term president should theoretically be a lean, mean politicking machine. In practice, though, second-term presidents have been



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plagued by scandal, missed opportunities and botched initiatives for the last half century. It's called the Second-Term Curse - and it has struck again.

Though his re-election campaign made him the first man to win a presidential election with a majority of the popular vote in 16 years, President George Bush's reserve of political capital seems to be overdrawn.

He has proposed a hurricane relief plan that members of both parties have called into question. He followed up one of the smoothest Supreme Court confirmations in recent memory with the totally botched nomination of Harriet Miers to fill the court's vacancy. Just last week, the vice president's chief of staff resigned in the face of indictments for making false statements and obstruction of justice. Meanwhile, the president's deputy chief of staff remains under investigation for similar allegations.

In all this hullabaloo, the president's domestic agenda, which started off so strongly, has ground to a screeching halt. His approval rating is plummeting. And though his aides insist that he's not the kind of president to care about what the pollsters are saying, there are a lot of Congressmen who had been planning to ride Bush's coattails to victory in '06. If Bush can't push his agenda through Congress before the midterm elections next year, he will have to hope the Republicans can maintain control of Congress or risk losing forever the chance to implement his agenda.

But all hope is not lost. Just as the Fenway Faithful continued to root for their Red Sox year after frustrating year, I am not fair-weather fan. As a Bush Believer, I am rooting for our president to pull out of this slump, knock the ball out of the park and get his administration back on track.

This president is tough, innovative and knows how to surround himself with good people. This president's opponents will have to keep their champagne on ice for a little while longer - they haven't derailed the Bush presidency yet.

President Reagan dealt with his second-term slump by replacing several key members of his team. I don't think that's how this president will handle it, though. President Bush, though he surrounds himself with seasoned Washington players, seems to revel in defying conventional wisdom. This can sometimes be his weakness (e.g. the Harriet Miers nomination), or it can be one of his biggest strengths.

This next year is going to be an interesting year for politics, no matter the team you're rooting for. And who knows ... we might just see the Second-Term Curse lifted.

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■ Editorial

New court nominee leaves much to be desired

On Monday, President Bush announced his new nominee for the U.S. Supreme Court.

Surprise! It's another white male. Samuel Alito, who has served 15 years on a New Jersey Circuit Court, is a staunchly conservative judge. Although this fact is sure to please Bush's constituents, the rest of the nation ought to be less than thrilled with the Alito nomination.

Said to have a philosophy similar to that of Scalia, Alito is not in favor of a strict line between church and state. He once upheld the right of a fundamentalist Christian group to display propaganda in a public school.

Regarding abortion, it is thus far known that Alito voted in favor of a spousal notification provision, which would have required women to inform their husband before receiving an abortion. In 2000, Alito wrote a judicial opinion criticizing fellow judges for overreacting to a New Jersey law prohibiting late-term abortions because it lacked a mother's health exception.

As if Alito didn't seem conservative enough, it has also been reported that Alito once asserted that the federal government has no right to curb the sale of automatic machine guns.

In a previous editorial we criticized President Bush for providing a nominee (Harriet Miers) with no history of voting records to evaluate. Alito, on the other hand, certainly has a paper trail. It is apparent from Alito's past that this judge has a right-wing stance on many issues. Can he write balanced and objective decisions? We hope the Senate won't confirm him so we don't have to find out.



New printer gives ODE a fresh look

You may have noticed a change in the look of the paper when you picked up a copy this morning. Perhaps the text appeared sharper, or the color photographs seemed more vibrant.

We hope you noticed a difference. After more than 40 years of printing our paper on the same press, we took a technological step forward today and switched to a different printer. The Emera is now printed in Albany using a high-tech process involving ultraviolet light.

We are excited about this change because it will allow us to showcase the excellent work of our photographers and graphic designers. Unlike the oil-based inks typically used by newspapers, UV ink resists smudging because its chemical components are bonded by exposure to intense ultraviolet light during printing. Pictures printed with this technology appear to sit on top of the page and can look much shinier and sharper.

UV ink is also more ecologically friendly than traditional ink.

Starting Wednesday, be on the lookout for another change: We are moving our Commentary section from Page 2 to Page 4 to better utilize our

new press setup. These changes are part of our ongoing efforts to bring you the best possible newspaper. Enjoy.

editor@dailyemerald.com

■ Guest commentary

ASUO shouldn't infringe on liberty

With my extended experience in college, I have come to realize that the most illustrious term in a school year is fall. A backbone to this argument is the presence of football games. I'm the type to wait in extremely long lines and even camp in the cold for tickets. All this is only a small price to pay for the merriment of tailgating and jolly inebriation that I can exude on this day of communal "festivus." In Oct. 24's Emerald I read an article expressing president Dave Frohnmayer's concerns about "unclassy fan behavior." In case anyone did not read this article ("Senate may discipline unacceptable fan conduct," ODE Oct. 24), allow me to sum up its more alarming points.

The Student Senate sees the following as possibilities to stop or deter unruly Duck fans: more police enforcement, increased searches at the gates and revoking of incidental fee privileges, which to offenders could mean a seasonal ban on home games. Pause to ponder what this means to your potential freedom and liberty.

If indeed there is a problem with fan behavior, I do not believe that punishing citizens, like children, sends the right message. Much like desperate parents battling a rebellious adolescent, the Senate seems over-eager to flex its muscle in this matter. Someone much wiser than me once said "a good government is one that is known but not felt." Mr. Brown (a Senator who advocated strong action) and others, please realize that the best way to show your political strength is to show compassion for the people you represent and instate civil limitations only as a last resort. Attempt to show good faith in the people you stand for. There are a considerable amount of ways to go about securing an enjoyable atmosphere at sporting events without taking away civil liberties. One non-invasive idea is a public notice such as this one, asking for cooperation and moderation by students at events.

Another possibility could be to have announcements on the loudspeaker and Jumbo-tron to promote good fan behavior and community spirit. A proactive approach could involve allowing coach Bellotti to speak or have a recorded message of such behavior issues addressed before the game. Most of the fans would respect such an authority, and heed issues that may have been forgotten because of their implicit nature. Before moving to policies that could misallocate funds, cause lawsuits and cast a general dark cloud over Autzen, I would attempt a try at building community spirit and bringing people together rather than apart.

Of course my solutions could be a reflection of this town's arguably over-the-top "let's all hold hands and sing" view, but I believe it is worth giving these possibilities a chance before moving to more personally infringing policies.

Rich Hildreth is a University student.

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Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged, and should be sent to letters@dailyemerald.com or submitted at the Oregon Daily Emerald office, EMU Suite 300. Electronic submissions are preferred. Letters are limited to 250 words, and guest commentaries to 550 words. Authors are limited to one submission per calendar month. Submissions should include phone number and address for verification. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style. Guest submissions are published at the discretion of the Emerald.