

Indoor ban on smoking at Clackamas Community College: Pro-Con

## Indoor smoking should be banned at Clackamas

This afternoon, on the day of the Clackamas Community College's Smoking Forum, it is important that we examine that smoking issue as a whole.

I think we can all agree that the activity has little health benefits, if any. I think we all can agree that there needs to be some set policy to consistently follow at the college.

It would be a step in the right direction abolishing smoking indoors at Clackamas Community College. People in favor of smoking will tell you that it is a smoker's right to make the decision to smoke. What they blatantly fail to mention, and what is fact, is when someone decides to smoke in an indoor public place, they are also making that decision for the non-smoking population of that area.

That fact alone constitutes a powerful case for those attempting to ban smoking at Clackamas.

Smokers and non-smokers alike must travel through the two current smoking areas at Clackamas, there's no avoiding them regardless of any arguments, therefore, the above mentioned decision is already being made. It is at the least respectable that the decision be made in favor of health, more literally life, rather than privilege.

Smoking is a direct cause of, among other things, heart disease, emphysema and lung cancer. Anyone who has ever stood next to a hospital bed and watched some-

one he loved die of lung cancer can find nothing but pity for those in favor of smoking. It's not a pleasant situation.

Some smokers will say "I've been smoking for 10 years; why should I stop now?" The answer to that is because they have been smoking for 10 years. The higher that number of years is, the more of a reason there is to stop. Smokers can't outrun the risks forever.

There are those who say "I know it's bad for me, but I don't care." If attempted suicide is a crime, then the slow death of cigarette smoking should be as well.

Why pick on smoking rather than overeating or any of the other possible things one can do? Simply because there is no medical benefit to smoking, whatsoever. Those who make that claim are very foolish. When someone at in the refrigerator selecting their meal, how do they know what is underating, overeating, or eating just enough. It is nearly impossible to find the right amount of food for one to consume, for everyone's metabolism is different. It is, however very possible to regulate smoking indoors on campus.

Let me make one more thing crystal clear. I am not against anyone smoking. I am against people's smoke affecting those people who choose not to.

It's only too bad that tobacco companies are so large and powerful. With all the red tape and politics involved, smoking may never be banned in this country entirely. At Clackamas however we have the chance to eliminate smoking indoors on the campus.

### PRO

Christopher L. Curran

## Clackamas smoking ban would not solve problem

There was a time when smoking was acceptable behavior. In light of studies that show smoking is a leading cause of disease it has lost favor in the public eye. A plan to ban smoking on campus is a good example of the change in attitude toward smoking, but it fails to address the fact that smokers do have rights.

Christopher Curran's editorial makes a valid point by stating that smokers are deciding the issue for non-smokers, since it is impossible to prevent so-called "second hand" smoke. But smokers are not criminals, and they have a right to engage in their habit regardless of its hazardous effects on them. Curran likens smoking to slow suicide, and he feels that since suicide is illegal smoking should be too. But there are other habits that could lead to death. Obesity through overeating has been linked to heart disease; should it be banned too?

Curran would probably respond to the previous statement by saying that overeating doesn't affect those around the eater. But there are other acts in society that do affect those not involved. The earth's ozone layer is being depleted by a buildup of chemicals from industrial and automotive pollution. Depletion of the ozone layer will eventually lead to crop failure (and resultant famine), increased occurrence of skin cancer, and drastic weather changes. Most of us have no say in this matter, and steps should be taken to remedy the problem.

But it is hypocritical to ban smoking because of its effect on those "without a choice" when we let other, more dangerous forms of pollution continue.

The contention that non-smokers don't have a choice is grossly mistaken. Most smokers would understand if they were asked not to smoke and would act accordingly. And non-smokers can always avoid designated smoking areas. The real problem is that smoking areas on campus aren't strategically located. Care should be taken to designate smoking areas that won't allow for "leakage" of smoke into non-smoking areas. It is unfair to tell smokers that they must smoke outside in the rain and cold. Smokers may be ruining their bodies but they don't have to be treated like criminals. After all, the bodies they are polluting are their own. Banning smoking for the smokers' own good is just another example of one group trying to tell another what is good for them and depriving the latter group of their free will.

The best answer to the smoking issue is to create smoking lounges: closed rooms where smokers may exercise their rights without infringing the rights of non-smokers. Non-smokers could then choose to enter the smoking lounge at their own risk. The surgeon general's warning could even be posted on the door of the lounge.

It is likely that the smoking issue will be decided in favor of the non-smokers on campus with a ban on indoor smoking. If this occurs, it is a sad commentary on a society that has lost its ability to consider the rights of all of its citizens.

### CON

Jim Titus

## Letters to the Editor...

### Students at lecture should be ashamed

To the Editor,

I went to Dr. Karpov's lecture last Monday, excited and ready to listen to what is going on in Russia, but as the lecture went on, people in the audience were very rude. The whispers of conversations in the background and the interruption of many people scuffling with their bags and leaving throughout the lecture were very disrupting.

Someone as important as Dr. Karpov should be respected much more than the kind of respect that happens in the classroom. If these people didn't feel this lecture was important, then maybe those people should only attend things that interest them.

Another disappointment was the amount of time left for questions. I understand we could have been there all day with questions, but does only four of them do justice to the lecture?

I have talked with many students who went to the lecture and their reactions are much of the same. I think Clackamas students and staff should take a look at how

they act. We're here to learn and grow; not to take a step back into high school.

Kelly K.

### Rick Piller needs to leave the country

To the Editor,

Regarding *The Print* of Feb. 22: Is there some way to persuade Rick Piller to leave the country? I don't mean forever. If he were to stay away for, let's say 50 years, I wouldn't mind seeing him in print again. But 30 years wouldn't be enough. Yeah, 50 would be nice, dudes.

I really missed Tammy Swartzendruber's column this issue, though. Her delightful descriptions of macaroni and cheese parties under the leaden November skies never fail to bring a tear to my eye. Hey Tammy: talk to Rick for me, will you? Get him to see the light. I'm sure they need writers of his caliber in... Estonia?

Perry Lensen-Callas

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