

Sexual harassment is very serious

Packwood intimidated women with his power and influence

by Daphne Hartt  
Sports Editor

As Senator Bob Packwood begins his fifth term in office, the Senate Select Committee on Ethics continues its investigation of the sexual harassment allegations toward him.

The Washington Post first published the story in a Nov. 22 issue. To recap what The Post reported, 10 women accused Packwood of sexually harassing them by either grabbing or kissing them.

Since the Nov. 22 story, five more women have come forward to speak about their experiences to the Oregon Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence. The Post reported that these incidents occurred between 1969 and 1990. Packwood was first elected to office in 1968.

When the sexual harassment charges came out just days after the 1992 election, Packwood seemed to disappear from the public eye. It wasn't until Dec. 10 that he came out of hiding.

My first thought was, "What a coward!" If he was truly innocent he obviously would not have to elude the public. And

although he did make a public apology, he did not exactly admit to or deny the incidents. Instead, as The Post reports, he apologized for any "wrong behavior", and made an attempt to save his own hide by discrediting the women who accused him.

In that same week, The Post released a story about his "drinking problem." Since then,

The Oregonian conducted an investigation on Packwood, by interviewing more than 80 friends, employees, family members and political associates. Packwood would not agree to an interview.

During the thorough investigation, it was found that Packwood is a binge drinker, sexual harasser and money-hungry politician who allegedly used former Senate staff members, such as Robin H. Shepherd and Michael K. Salsgiver, to fund raise during working hours.

According to The Or-

egonian, Georgie Packwood, his ex-wife, told reporters that he has needed help for a number of years now. Sure, he admitted into Hazelden, an alcohol treatment clinic, but only for an evaluation. He went in quick and came out even quicker; the senator was evaluated in a five-day time span.

I've heard many people defending Packwood throughout

in their minds. What Packwood did is a lot more serious than smoking marijuana 20 years ago like some politicians have been accused of. His victim's could have been destroyed or at least in jeopardy, had they come forward.

Packwood had so much power and influence that many of the women felt that no one would believe them. After all, they were

relationships with men, especially men with power, such as a boss. A woman could be intimidated by any authority figure, such as a cop or doctor, due to her lack of trust because of her past experience. Other women finally gain the strength to start standing up for themselves and become very assertive, as a result.

I admit Packwood has done a lot for women's issues during his terms, but everything I've learned since Nov. 22 has made me wish I would have voted for Les AuCoin and that I could kick Packwood out of office. Packwood is a man who needs counseling and treatment for his sexual and alcohol-related behavior. A man who has embarrassed himself at many political occasions by drinking himself into a stupor, grabbing and kissing female staff members in his office behind closed doors, or telling staff members to mail letters to Israel on government time to do government fund-raising, should not be an Oregon senator. I feel that he has abused his power just as other politicians have. Packwood is just one of the few that might not get away with it.

"...it was found that Packwood is a binge drinker, sexual harasser and money-hungry politician..."

this whole ordeal. Some people are saying that this is a scandal just to get him out of office. Others say, "Who cares about what he did years ago?" Well to those people, I ask: Have you ever heard the expression, "History repeats itself?"

I think that sexually harassing several women is quite serious, even if it was a long time ago. To the women, I bet the trauma it caused them is still fresh

only staff members and lobbyists.

Back in the '60s and '70s, women did not have the equality that they have today. We still have a long way to go, but there has been tremendous improvement. There was no Anita Hill back then to show that sexual harassment might actually exist in our society. Sexual harassment can affect a woman for years. It can greatly affect her self-esteem and hinder many future re-

Campus Views

How do you feel about Bob Packwood being sworn into the U.S. Senate?



Jim Jackson  
"No one who does something like that deserves to be in office."



David Benner  
"This ordeal is a definite regression for the political world."



Sean Dachtler  
"I feel that if this happened 20 years ago, there should be a lot more proof."



Kathy LeDoux  
"I feel that he was only reinstated by law, but I am not happy with it. I am sure that morally they wished to do otherwise."



Tonya Zwahlen  
"Just the whole fact that they let him back in office is aggravating."

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