

THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

## Airport security is not just black and white

Over the winter break, I made my way back to Missouri for Christmas, marking the first and only time I have flown since Sept. 11. I encountered many new experiences as I traveled through four different cities, due to increased security at the nation's airports—including the random selection of individuals for searches as they boarded.

I took planes in Portland, Salt Lake City, St. Louis and Phoenix, and each time three people were chosen to step out of line for inspection before boarding. This meant I witnessed 12 individuals asked to consent to a search, and out of that dozen, only four were white.

Whether it was a Hispanic family or a person of Asian descent, the vast majority of those I witnessed searched were people of a different race and/or nationality than myself, a white American. It even became a game that I would play as I waited in line to take my seat on the airplane.

I would look over all those who were sharing my flight and decide who the airline's security personnel would grab for a search. My eyes would scan the throngs of people, first selecting those

who were not white, then judging them by their appearance. I gave special credence to the likelihood of a search of any who seemed to have a Middle Eastern appearance, and I am ashamed to admit that I was hardly wrong.

I watched in Salt Lake City as a middle-aged African-American male and his daughter were "randomly" selected out of the crowd and then pulled aside to have their carry-on luggage rummaged through in front of all who waited in line. In St. Louis, an entire Hispanic family was pulled aside and searched, as was a man of Asian appearance (the only minority on the flight) in Phoenix.

While I was pleased to see the increased security at the airports, I was ashamed at the manner in which people were picked for the extra search. Finally, I began to try and catch the attention of the employees by acting slightly nervous or "shady," all to no avail at getting stopped before I boarded. My little experiment says two things: One, my acting was perhaps fair, to say the least. But more importantly, a white

individual waiting in line for a seat on an airplane could more than likely breeze by the last security checkpoint, more so than a person of color.

The more I have thought of my experience over the holidays, the more I believe the majority of white people in the United States feel that their race is perfect and therefore not a threat to national security. The case of the Taliban fighter and white American, John Walker, reiterates my point. I think the reason our nation wants to punish, in the most severe manner allowed by law, this "traitor" is because he causes a good number of Americans to feel uncomfortable about their race.

After all, Walker is as white as a frozen turkey and benefited from an upper-middle-class background, yet he ended up fighting for a terrorist regime. His actions raise questions that most people in this country choose not to answer, or even acknowledge: Walker

causes us to feel insecure about our race, because it forces us to not only blame a certain race or nationality, but our American way of life.

How easy it is for us American's to blame those who "look" like they are

Having to take an aisle seat over the one by the window is perhaps better than being forced to live in an area surrounded by fences, and it appeared to me that most of those who were racially profiled by airline employees were more than happy to be searched. But considering they were in a nation that forced an entire race to feed its infant economy by picking its cotton and feeding its mouths, I guess they knew it could be much worse.

The point is people of color shouldn't be expected to accept this. I was one who thought racism died with the 1960s, but what I saw over the holidays embarrassed me. The United States might not openly shackle and beat a race of people anymore. Now we just do it more covertly, so our own consciences can tell us that our nation is truly free for all people.

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Nick Barron  
Business Manager

Keepin' it real.

## Take a risk: Don't submit, fight the system

There is a myth that surrounds the United States, that it is a great land of opportunity for everybody. It is claimed that anyone who works hard will "succeed," which of course means that

because it is the extreme exception, not the rule. The reality is that the rich are the children of the rich, and their children shall be rich. The poor are the children of the poor, and their children will be poor.



Jesse Gurzynski  
Staff Writer

Be Human

they will accumulate a lot of money and property. That is a lie.

The poor, it is said, are poor because either they choose to be poor or they are lazy. The wealthy are wealthy because they are more "upright" or harder working, or more intelligent. If this were true, then capitalistic social Darwinism would certainly be justified; but it is not true.

Granted, there are a few real cases of the "rags to riches" myth. It is a myth

education and may have to drop out of school to support his or her family, as have people I've known. If poor kids make it through high school without developing a major drug habit, their opportunities for economic advancement are quite poor. As for the drug habit, it's an easy thing to develop when one is surrounded by drugs all of life and there is no foreseeable way out of poverty.

When Ralph Nader was explain-

ing his candidacy for president, he outlined many points that illustrate the inequities in the United States. For example, adjusted for inflation, most workers make less now and minimum wage is lower than in 1979. And workers are working more hours now. Corporate welfare (do corporations need our tax dollars?) is growing while consumer debt is at an all-time high (over \$6 trillion) and personal bankruptcy is at an all-time high as well. Said Nader, "Personal assets are so low that Bill Gates' net worth is equal to that of the net assets of the poorest 120 million Americans combined."

"The top 1 percent of the wealthiest people have more financial wealth than the bottom 90 percent of Americans combined, the worst inequality among large western nations."

And everyone has equal opportunity? CEO pay is skyrocketing while the worker's pay has stagnated, and still people say that those who work hard will succeed. Workers are getting poorer, despite taking second jobs and

working overtime.

I'm going to ask you to remember something. Do you remember about a year and a half ago when the so-called news media was boasting of an oh-so-strong economy, and how great everyone was doing? I'll bet that you can remember people at that time that you knew taking a second job, or getting laid off, or unable to pay rent, filing for bankruptcy, or going into debt. It wasn't us who were doing fine, it was the rich; and the rich are still doing fine, while our schools and libraries and public works get their budgets cut.

Don't blind yourself with patriotism. Don't call the United States the "land of opportunity" as you yourself are screwed out of all chances for economic security. We are not even allowed to be self-reliant: we can't afford rent on land, can't afford seeds to start a garden, aren't allowed to live anyplace that does not cost money (except

prison).

We are expected to work our entire lives away so that we can retire after we've been worn into the ground, but how many retirement-age workers are out there without any money to stop working? Screw the lies about opportunity and screw wasting the prime of life (and the rest of it as well) in a stupid job.

We are left with two choices in life: we can take a risk and stop cooperating with the system, working hard to survive but at least living somewhat; or we can take the easy route, getting a job and signing our life away. The second option is a no-brainer because the system is set up to let most people at least barely get by as long as they play by the rules and don't think. I'll take the first option.

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## Letters to the editor...

### FTE corrections

Frank,  
Thanks for the article on enrollment (*The Clackamas Print*, 2/20/02). We are really booming and it's good to get the word out.

I would like to make some corrections, however. Fall term 2001 FTE (Fall Term Enrollment) was up to 14.1% over Fall 2000, not the 14.7% you quoted. The 14.7% figure is in relation to our year-to-date FTE, which is the sum of summer, fall and winter. Annual FTE in 2000-2001 was only 2.1% greater than 1999-2000 FTE, not in the 14.1% you quoted. It seems you were confused over the various time periods available. That's understandable, it can be confusing.

"FTE is what the college uses to track how much money is taking in from tuition every year," is an incorrect statement. FTE is the measure by which the college is funded from the

state. FTE can be classified as reimbursable or non-reimbursable. The state will pay us only for FTE generated from approved instructional activities. Generally, our reimbursable FTE is about 98% of the total FTE we produce. FTE has nothing to do with tuition.

Melissa Banks  
Research Coordinator

### The Print is great!

Dear *Clackamas Print*,  
I just wanted to say how much I enjoy your columns and how well you follow up on and cover diverse and important topics—I greatly appreciate it.

I would also like to say how glad I am that you have Marvin Baker as your guest columnist. I think this column adds a wonderful humorous spark to *The Clackamas Print*, thank you for all your efforts and

hard work.  
Also, a big thanks to the grounds, building maintenance and cafeteria crews who work very hard as well.

Sincerely,  
Rebecca Neal

### Thank you, Allison

Hi Allison,  
This is just a note to thank you for your extremely well written article about the Covell/Winfield presentation in the 2-20-02 Print. It was interesting, informative, and as far as I could tell, contained zero factual errors or typos.

Well done!  
Ray Conklin  
CCC Automotive Department  
Chairman

### Respect skating!

Why are you making fun of a sport that many worldwide enjoy?

"No. I mean, grown men prance across the ice wearing glittery outfits. To me, that is as embarrassing as it gets." Actors do the same thing in a sense when they are playing a certain character. Figure skaters are amazing. I for one can not do the things they do, can you?

Anyway, I was just wondering why you had to make light/fun of figure skating and the events that have happened?  
Jessica McFall  
Sent via e-mail

### Rights for smokers

Salena-  
I found your article in *The Print* to be quite interesting. As a smoker, I have a few opinions. First off, when is enough enough? Smokers are no longer allowed to smoke when having

a cup of coffee in public restaurants. We have been either put out in the cold or into a small room with no ventilation. I work at Fred Meyer, and we are lucky enough to have a smoking room. If the college decided to put up a few shelters around campus with a bench, that would be great. As it is though, with the new smoking policy (no smoking within 25 feet of an entrance), we are usually forced out into the weather. It was my choice to smoke, no one made me do it. I accept full responsibility for my actions. But, I think that it is a little excessive when we are forced to enjoy our habits out in the rain when all they have to do is build a small shelter like they have at bus stops. I don't think that is too much to ask.  
Austin Fields  
Sent via e-mail