

Voting system blues

Nicholas Delzell
The Clackamas Print

Politicians piss people off. Why do so many people back certain candidates, when an independent one can't vote in primary elections ... so what is the point of registering in a flawed and suppressed voting system?

Considering the scandals that followed recent presidential elections, people should be turned off to voting and the system as a whole.

First off, people get so worked up around voting season that it's hard for regular citizens, let alone politicians, to relate to others outside of their political party. Scandal will occur if people get worked up over any subject.

According to a Wikipedia.com article on voter suppression, "In the 2002 New Hampshire Senate election phone jamming schedule, Republican officials attempted to reduce the number of Democratic voters by paying professional telemarketers in Idaho to make repeated hang-up calls to block Democrats' ride-to-the-polls phone lines on Election Day."

The article went on to tell about some scandalous things Democrats have done as well.

"In 2006, five employees of the John Kerry campaign were convicted for slashing the tires

of 25 vans rented by the GOP to drive voters and poll watchers to the polls on the day of the 2004 general election."

If you take into account voter suppression, what is the point of voting at all? This article is not supposed to put down those who vote religiously; it is meant to inform people that voting and voter

suppression tactics included the institution of poll taxes and literacy tests, aimed at suppressing the votes of African Americans and working-class white voters. Mailbox smashing was also used in some districts. Measures in place in seven U.S. states ban released felons from voting; some allege that this is a tactic aimed at suppressing voter turnout. Occasionally, as in Florida in the 2000 presidential election, some non-felons are banned due to record-keeping errors and are not warned of their disqualification before they have the right to contest it.

"In the U.S. presidential election of 2004, Ohio officials allegedly miss-allocated voting machines to reduce Democratic turnout. With too few voting machines per registered voter, in areas heavily populated by African Americans who were Democratic, had to wait in line for hours. Republican districts received many more voting machines per capita."

With this information in mind, rethink the reasons to register to vote in our country. Rethink where a vote goes once it comes off the ballot. Think of the people who take your vote and have their own political agendas.

And mind yourself, because voter registration, and voting in general, is a flawed government system, set up by "the man" and for "the man," with intentions of only taking "the man's" advice



Photo illustration by Adam J. Manley Clackamas Print

registration is not what old school people may think.

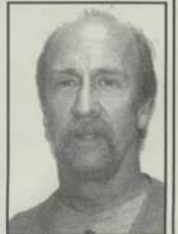
Votes are suppressed not only by political parties, but also by the government.

"In the US, voter suppression was used extensively in some Southern states until the Voting Rights Act of 1965 made most disenfranchisement and voting qualifications illegal. Traditional

Staff Poll:

What is your reaction to the Print's special edition, "Crisis in Leadership"?

"It's unfortunate that so many people are forming opinions without having all the information."



Loren Ford, Psychology Instructor



Robert Keeler, Social Science Instructor

"It had some rough edges."



Dave Andersen, Art Instructor



Robbie Robinson, Baseball Coach

"Informative, but it didn't have a lot of meat."



Jennifer Bown, Science Instructor

This week's poll compiled by Liz Travers and Elizabeth Hitz

Letters to the editor

Mach responds to 'Bias'

I would like to "out" myself as the instructor to whom Matt Olson refers in his article 'Biased instructors can be distracting, affect learning.' Mr. Olson mentions a writing course in which he read, "an explicit story about a homosexual encounter." The class was Writing 121, and the story, *The Toughest Indian in the World* by Sherman Alexie, was actually about a young Native American man attempting to come to terms with his cultural and perhaps his sexual identity. The central character in the story is a journalist from Spokane, Washington, who picks up a hitchhiker while on a drive to cover a story in Yakima. The hitchhiker is an Indian street fighter, off to conquer an old rival. The journalist views his fellow traveler as a warrior. At the end of the story, the two men share a hotel room, and yes, they have sex. During the class discussion, I encouraged the students to focus on the craft of the story, and to discuss the metaphorical aspect of the sexual encounter between the two men, rather than get caught up in a discussion about whether or not it's okay to be gay. That's not what the story was about.

I'm curious to know what Mr. Olson means when he accuses me of bias. He states that it was "obvious that the teacher was directing the arguments towards one standpoint." I'm wondering what, specifically, he believes my standpoint to be?

I have opinions, and although I don't attempt to openly tout them in class, neither do I hide them. As I tell my students at the beginning of each term, if we can't discuss ideas freely in the classroom, then we're in big trouble. If I have a bias, it's against intolerance of any person or group—whether it be Christians or homosexuals. I also assure students that dissenting opinions have no effect on their grades. Mr. Olson, in fact, received an A in my class.

W.B. Yeats said "Education is not filling a bucket, but lighting a fire." As an educator, especially one working in the humanities, intellectual pyromania is part of my job. Perhaps rather than fearing the discomfort of the academic experience, Mr. Olson should welcome and explore it.

Sincerely,
Sue Mach
English Instructor

Thoughts on Iraq War

I was surprised and grateful to *The Oregonian* for publishing the number of Iraqi deaths, and on the front page! (600,000 Iraqis died since 2003, study says.)

The general public almost always hears through the media only about the number of American deaths. Iraqis are human, too, a perception that is all too often ignored when there is war.

One of the tactics used by the military in all nations is to present the enemy as less than human in order to justify killing people. Soldiers who fought in Vietnam have told me about this technique first hand, as have my students at Clackamas Community College who are coming back to school after fighting in Iraq.

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To send a letter to the editor, e-mail it to chiefed@clackamas.edu, or drop it off at The Print office, Roger Rook 135.

Student Poll: Is college different than high school?



"It's different because it's scary, but it's fun."

Hillary Kelly

"I don't like how far the classes are."



Erik Brawner



"It's not that different besides the length of classes."

Stephanie Tombleson

"I'm going to school, there's a more freedom."



Devon Trigg



"It's a lot less social; people mostly keep to themselves."

Jared Hanley

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