

**TONY'S CUSHY JOB?**

The slur on Tony Corcoran in last week's letters column (Bill Smee, 10/16) is unwarranted and, charitably, comes from a lack of information. Tony will be one of three members of the Employment Appeals Board (EAB) after he is confirmed by the Senate. The EAB is not a sinecure or a "cushy" position.

There are two kinds of boards and agencies in Oregon. One sort has volunteer members who set policy and hold public hearings. They are not paid. They set policy to be carried out by the paid staff, who are on the job full-time accomplishing the work of the agency.

The other kind of commissioners are themselves paid staff. They work full-time and are paid for full-time work. The EAB is this kind of agency. The EAB receives approximately 3,000 appeals of unemployment hearings in a year. The board reviews the transcripts and files and writes decisions which can then be appealed to the Oregon Court of Appeals. The job is legal, technical, and demanding. Transcripts can run from as little as 30 to as many as several hundred pages. Each transcript must be reviewed for adequacy of the facts to support the conclusions, and a decision reached whether to affirm, reverse or remand the decision on appeal. The files include exhibits and other documents.

Parties submit or attempt to offer additional exhibits and arguments after hearing. Most parties do not have attorneys. Their in-expert letters and pleas must be read especially carefully to determine what legal arguments they raise. The EAB then reviews the

hearing decision for the adequacy of the reasoning, and itself writes a Board decision.

Each of the 3,000 appellants and the thousands of parties on the other side of these matters expects and deserves a prompt and correct decision in each case.

I could go on, but my point should be clear. Tony is not in line for a "cushy" job with big pay and little work. He will work as hard as a member of the EAB as he ever has in the Legislature, a union organizer, or any other job he has held. He will take a seat that is supposed to be for a friend of the worker, and workers need someone like him in that position.

Gretchen Miller  
Eugene

**PATERNALISTIC 'TUDE**

Ben Fogelson knows "what women are good for," or more precisely, what's good for them ("Oregon's Daughters" commentary, 10/8). By referring to the women who appear in the "Oh Girls" calendar as "young daughter" and "little darling" he dismisses them as helpless victims of male voyeurism. He further implies that these women are, or should be, ashamed of their appearance in the calendar (by hiding their involvement from their fathers). The article is a classic of female disempowerment, written by a man who knows how a woman should behave.

Despite his rationalizations, it is clear that Mr. Fogelson displays the typical puritanical, paternalistic attitude towards women that is so prevalent in our society.

Erik Wright  
Eugene

**TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN** BY SHANNON WHEELER



**POOR SPORTS**

If the defensive, insulting and demeaning letters of David Jensen and Mark Zacchino (10/9) were representative of the support for *EW* having an Oregon football insert, that would be reason enough to terminate the insert.

Their personal attacks aside, these two writers incorrectly assert that Oregon football

brings in "gobs of money" to the university that "helps fund the arts and academics that the UO is known for." In fact, until about two years ago, the arts and academics provided a \$2 million subsidy to the athletics programs which generate not one nickel for the financially starved arts and academics.

David Wade  
Eugene

**viewpoint** BY KAUKAB JHUMBRA SMITH

**Longing for Chaos**

Stop sign, schlop sign – I miss my crazy Pakistani traffic.

I failed my driving test today. After the examiner walked away, I immediately handed the car keys to my husband and told him to drive to the nearest IHOP. This needed a pancake antidote.

See, I'm not a bad driver. I didn't fail because I'm unsafe on the road. In my eyes, I failed because I'm *too* safe. I thought the test had been going pretty well, actually. And then, I stopped when I shouldn't have before a left turn, because I was afraid I'd get in the path of an oncoming SUV. What I didn't know was that some schmuck was speeding behind me and had to slam on his brakes to avoid hitting me. (Didn't you see my left turn signal, you jerk?) He honked, I noticed the SUV had a stop sign and wouldn't have hit me if I'd just turned, and so, reassured, I turned left. I was stationary for perhaps five seconds.

That was five seconds too many, apparently, and got me an automatic failure. This brings me to a sore point. There are too many stop signs in this country.

Let me go further. There are too many *rules* on the road in this country. In Pakistan, where I come from, you go forth on the road armed with common sense, the ability to read traffic signals and little else. Your safety lies in your ability to see oncoming maniacs and stop before they intercept your path. (See why I waited for that SUV?) You learn to navigate in between colorful hand-decorated buses and lumbering donkey carts and wobbly bicyclists, and learn the art of the slow crawl on busy streets where at any given time there are 10 pedestrians crossing in front of you.

There are the insolent young men who deliberately saunter in your path, the protective father who hustles his sleepy school-uniformed child forward. There's the young couple riding pillion on a motorcycle beside you, the woman's shawl trailing behind her and making you slow down and pray it doesn't catch in the wheel. There are the potholes in the street you learn to avoid, and the speed bumps whose heights vary from mountain to molehill street to street. You learn to judge each situation for itself – do I stop, slow down or keep going?

If you want to make a U-turn, you look to make sure no one's going to get hurt and make a U-turn. If you want to turn left, you look around you and turn left without any of this "turn lane" business. And here we come to another sore point about this driving in America thing.

The art of the slow crawl in Pakistan.



What is a turn lane except a blatant waste of asphalt? I don't get it. There's an entire strip of road lying *vacant* in the off chance that someone will want to turn left. Why can't you just drive on that and turn left when you want?

I guess in Pakistan we can't afford to waste money on empty strips of road. Every inch must be used – even the pavement. Come to think of it, we can't even afford pavements.

The only thing I enjoy about driving here is the freeway, but that's taken me some time to get used to. I remember the first time I drove on the freeway from Eugene up to Washington. Holy cow. The fastest I've ever driven in Pakistan is 60 km an hour. There is no room to drive any faster, living in the middle of Karachi, a sprawling metropolis of 12 million people and lots and lots of cars.

But here, now, I'm expected to do 60 *miles* an hour, and even then there are people behind me blinking their lights. But at least there are no stop signs or left turn lanes on the freeway. The freeway doesn't try to *control* you with endless rules but leaves much up to your driving judgment. On our frequent weekend road trips, my husband and I cruise down an endless stretch of highway listening to Sherlock Holmes radio plays from the 1940s.

This morning, I got a bad feeling the minute I saw I had a female driving examiner. I've always gotten along better with men. This woman, lean, blond and tough, was a little like sugar-coated steel. See, that's attractive in a man. In a woman, it's just bitchy.

At the end of the test, the examiner tried to make me feel better by saying it had taken her three tries to get her license. Yes, but she was also 19 at the time. I'm seven years older than that and I've survived chaotic Pakistani traffic and I should know better, no?

She gave me an overly bright, sympathetic smile and walked away.

Sigh. Oh, for a stick shift. Right-hand drive. Waiting while a shrill, tinsel-bright bus cuts me off at a traffic signal. That is home. That is driving. Not this oh-look-stop-sign-left-lane-one-way shit. I miss my crazy Pakistani traffic.

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