

so, as we use the environment for most of our economic growth (more people consuming more resources). We depend upon many plants and animals, water, oil, clean air and many other resources — all coming from the environment — to grow our economy.

Unfortunately for us, there are limits to how much we can take from the environment, and how much we can pollute it. We are already stressing some of those limits, yet continue to support growth as if there's no end to it.

There is no end to our wants and desires though! If we continue to take more and more from the environment, we will take too much and pollute too much to continue our growth. We are quickly heading in that direction and when we reach that point, it will be bad for us. It's already bad for many other species, as human growth is causing their extinction rate to rapidly increase. Economic growth is unsustainable, and we are already reaching limits to more growth. While some people benefit from growth, most suffer. Like cancer, it seems we don't know when to stop. Doesn't it make more sense to not take it all now, and seek a long-term plan that works for the environment and the human race? Never-ending economic growth is not the long-term plan, despite what those who benefit the most from it tell us.

Patrick Bronson  
Eugene

**FAITH VS. FACTS**

It's obvious that the Republicans have the Democrats beat when it comes to the present government in D.C. Simplicity is the key. Republicanism today is a faith- and trust-based philosophy. There is and was faith that a 135,000 man army can invade, subdue and control a country of only 45 million or so Muslims. Faith that tax cuts, primarily affecting the wealthiest, though putting the country into a sea of red ink for only 10 to 50 years, would be taken care of eventually, somehow. Trust in the new judicial system, basically run by one man, who promises to do what's best for the party, and who cannot be swerved from this goal by some 200-year-old document.

The Democrats, on the other hand, are saddled with all those gray-area philosophies and questions of morality that only a later day Solomon or Lincoln could answer. What good are facts in the face of overwhelming ideology, based on a sure sense of what is right and wrong for the other guy? The greater good for the majority is a nice thought, but sometimes your friends just have to come first.

So, which are you going to choose? A philosophy based on faith and trust, or one based on questions, verifiable facts and foresight? The answer is simple, isn't it?

John DeLeau  
Springfield

**THE LITERATE SKINNER**

I use our new library frequently and I always notice the statue of Eugene Skinner. I think about how he must have worked hard and suffered many physical and emotional pains but, of what I have read, he wasn't alone in his suffering — his wife was there also. I'd like to see a statue of Mrs. Skinner sitting next to Mr. Skinner — sitting by her man. I also read that Mr. Skinner was illiterate and his faithful wife read poetry to him by candlelight sometimes. I know that she

would have loved our new library. What an even more powerful sculpture that would be.

Sorry, but all I can offer is my suggestion — my pocketbook wouldn't cover the cost.

Duke Cantrelle  
Eugene

**LOWER THE FLAGS**

It occurs to me as I see the flags at half-mast for a dead former president, it would be appropriate during wartime for those same flags to fly continually at half mast.

Michelle Holman  
Deadwood

**ENSHRINING REAGAN**

While working in Silicon Valley during the 1980s, I listened to a nightly talk show on KGO Radio, hosted by a wonderful man named Ray Taliaferro (we had both attended a Dr. King speech in 1964: He was the music director, I was 8). For the entire span of the Reagan years, Ray fielded calls by Reagan worshipers, who would attack Ray for speaking ill of their idol. But Ray always won the debates simply by asking callers to "name one thing Reagan has done; one accomplishment." No one could ever successfully provide an answer.

It is interesting that Reagan is credited with ending the Cold War merely by being in the White House at the time and spending our money wastefully. The Cold War was ended by grassroots people like us, who followed people like Carl Sagan and Vladimir Posner behind the president's back to hook up satellite TV systems so regular Americans could talk with regular Soviets (Sagan's "Space Bridge" project).

Enshrining Reagan is a neocon ploy, perfect for hiding the daily atrocities of Cheney's White House Gestapo, and the fact that Bush and Cheney have retained defense counsel for leaking the identity of CIA operative Valerie Plame, among other crimes.

Brian Bogart  
Eugene

**MEANINGLESS LABEL**

In his letter "Being Gay is a Choice" (6/10), Steve Twede tells a story of a friend who "elected to leave" the gay lifestyle after "many years." First, would he please define the buzz phrase "gay lifestyle?"

There may be a perception that this must include things like unsafe sex with multiple partners, but in reality "gay lifestyle" is about as meaningless as "straight lifestyle."

As for the issue of choice, people like Mr. Twede seem to think homosexuality is simply a behavior, but as with heterosexuality, there's a variable drive behind it. People can be somewhat flexible in their sexuality, but most have a preference that is curiously magnetic, and hardly a choice.

The fact that a percentage of gays (or perhaps bisexuals if they can truly switch) at least *try* to be "straight" doesn't change this. Some gay people who are hammered with negativity might try to bury those feelings, but with how much success and at what cost to their mental health if they fail? And how many *heteros* have been successful at repressing *their* sexuality? But then, gays are nothing like pure and natural straight folk like Mr. Twede, right?

Ryan L Newburg  
Eugene

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