

**DANGEROUS WORDS**

I'm deeply moved by the Rev. Gregory Flint's recent sermon reprinted in the *Weekly* (11/18). Thanks to Rev. Flint for his words of wisdom, and thanks to *EW* for making them available to its readers.

Lately, I've seen some bumper stickers asking us to pray for the safe return of our troops in Iraq and elsewhere. Wonderful. May they all return home to their loved ones soon and safe. But I haven't seen a single bumper sticker asking us to pray for the people our troops are being ordered to kill. The death of a loved one to senseless violence is an irreplaceable loss to any family, whether they be American or Iraqi.

The primary purpose of war propaganda is always to dehumanize the enemy, and to do it as often as possible. Both sides engage in horribly dehumanizing hate propaganda intended to justify even more horrific acts of violence. Jesus tried to teach us to break the cycle of violence.

Jesus' teaching of tolerance and social reform are as dangerous to the modern ruling elite as they were to the temple priests 2000 years ago. So his words have to be carefully modified or ignored to prevent them from being practiced too widely.

Lowell Rundle  
Eugene

**NOT SO SIMPLE**

Maria M. Berg's letter (11/4) takes Irwin Noparstak and Joan Bayliss to task for "ignoring history." Berg herself shows disrespect for the historical record, peppering her letter with historical inaccuracies

and attributing ungenerous positions to Noparstak and Bayliss, which are similarly at odds with their record of service in pursuit of justice locally and in the Middle East. The origins of Israel and the failure of a similar Palestinian state to emerge are more complicated than Berg suggests. Criticism of Israel is appropriate, but Berg gains little credibility by inflating Israel's offenses and ignoring the failures among Palestinian leaders, not to mention those of Arab nations which have too often abandoned the Palestinians.

Berg is wrong to suggest that Palestinians have only rocks and bombs at their disposal; they have diplomacy. Let's hope — and let's push — for a new engagement in the peace process in the post-Arafat world to achieve peace and justice in the Middle East. Historically, Israel has been prepared to share this land with a Palestinian state. Israel should again cooperate in efforts to create a viable Palestinian state. Will the new Palestinian leadership be willing and able to accept one?

Matthew Dennis  
Eugene

**UNJUST INSULT**

Shame on your music reviewer (12/2) for basically insulting the world-famous classic rock band Wishbone Ash that recently appeared and put on a wonderful concert in Eugene. It is obvious she is more interested in the regurgitated, formulaic, teenybopper, fake, talentless garbage that is promoted as music today, than listening to and witnessing true musi-



cians who are as popular today as they were over the past 30 years.

Shame on allowing a "journalist" (and I definitely use that term loosely) to write such a shallow and egotistical, self-serving article. Wishbone Ash has more relevance today in the music world than anything this writer probably knows about, and even calls music. Obviously she is the one needing the enema, and to allow her to basically insult the band without ever seeing or hearing them is a slap in the face.

Your paper ought to be ashamed and

embarrassed to allow such a frivolous commentary to be published and she should issue an apology to the band and its fans. She has a right to her opinion, and she obviously has one that has no insight or semblance of accuracy based on factual research. What a sorry state of affairs for a "writer" to print a column of drivel based on no knowledge whatsoever of what she is writing about. But hey, that fits the media in the U.S. today anyway!

Steve Koontz  
High Point N.C.

**Living OUT** BY SALLY SHEKLOW

**Sleepy Seekers**

In search of regime and sheet change



**D**espite setbacks in our federal government, Wifey and I continue right on progressing through middle age. Simultaneous hot flashes and night sweats keep us sleepless enough; now we find ourselves beset with odd sleeping habits that, like our commander in chief, don't make any sense.

Wifey's inexplicable need to sprawl on the diagonal conflicts with my penchant for stretching out like a free-falling skydiver. Then we compete for opposing fetal-curl room. The way we sleep, we're one of the few American families who are actually making ends meet.

Not that cuddling up in a double bed is all bad. When we have to, Sweetie and I can even manage in a twin for a night by simply employing the handy entwine-and-cling method. But how I long for the freedom to fully extend. I've outgrown small beds and I hate to retreat to the couch when I'm too middle-of-the-night cranky to work out a peace accord. Even without any political capital, I've got a clear mandate for a bigger bed.

We didn't change the presidential regime this time, but we can change our bed. It's a values-based decision. I value a good night's sleep. Until democracy is restored, I won't rest easy. But I would rest better in a comfy bed. Unlike the dismal prospect of four more years, I look forward to the end of our small-bed days. I'm plenty blue about the elections, but I'm optimistic that Wifey and I can actually achieve nocturnal comfort. I'm feeling hopeful and I intend to keep hope alive.

Being good lesbians, we're processing all the issues. We've shared our feelings about what changing bed size means to us, to our bank account, and to our chakras. We've considered that a bigger bed will narrow the aisle to the bathroom and increase the incidence of night stumbling. Bigger sheets will require re-choreographing our traditional sheet-folding dance. While we don't like the current bed, we're used to it. I can see why folks prefer the incumbent: Change is scary.

And bed diversity is overwhelming. There are so many choices — plush, ultra

plush, pillowtop, soft, firm, extra firm, ultra firm, flip-floppy and resolute. Size is important too. You've got your queen (not for actual size queens), king, and California king — soon to be known as The Schwarzenegger.

How will we know which mattress is right for us? Which will really support us over the long haul? Can we have them debate each other? Can we change beds in the middle of a war?

What about those high-end memory-foam beds? We won't even go there. The way things are with national defense, Bush will have

Homeland Security smoke out the Tempur-Pedics and extract intelligence on what private nighttime activities the memory foam actually remembers. They have their ways.

I worry that a Bush-appointed Supreme Court might not defend our inalienable mattress-sampling rights. Who will protect our freedom to simulate real-life bed-use in the sleep shop? Can we spoon? Bounce on all fours? Exactly how thoroughly can two big dykes test drive a Sealy before we're detained and hauled off to some mattress-violators' Guantánamo?

This is supposed to be the land of the free and the home of the brave. We're free to choose our own bed — even if our choice for president fell victim to "voting irregularities." We're brave to fall asleep at night while the terrorist alert needle quivers into code orange.

But who can buy a new bed when you can't even afford insurance? The special rights of spousal health coverage are reserved for heterosexually married people only. One man, one woman or else. We've still got a way to go before our equality mission is accomplished.

So, everybody, let's keep at it. Don't tune out and doze off. Four years from now we'd better elect a progressive, pro-choice, LGBTIQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans, Intersex, Queer)-friendly, anti-racist, environmentally sensitive, diversity-embracing, peace-promoting, education-funding, science-believing regime.

Then, we'll all sleep better.

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