

heartening endorsements by *EW* spell the demise of the Bijou, cause the displacement of its workers, and bring a huge mega-national chain into downtown? I think so.

Why not be upfront and call this section "Slanted"?

*Jim Derby
Eugene*

INGRAINED BIGOTRY

Deb McGee's (8/2) positive attitude toward the gay community is commendable; however, I disagree that a strained and tortured interpretation of the Bible will bring about meaningful change. The Bible is extremely clear on the issue of homosexuality. Leviticus 20:13 tells us "If a man also lie with mankind, as he lieth with a woman, both of them have committed an abomination: they shall surely be put to death; their blood shall be upon them."

Jesus, not especially known for his straightforward speaking style, is in this case very direct on this issue when he declares during his Sermon on the Mount that not one letter of Old Testament law be removed so long as heaven and earth endure. This ugly, hateful bigotry is so ingrained in the Bible that not only is it manifest in Christianity, but in all of the Abrahamic religions of the world.

McGee is quite correct in pointing out that the American Psychiatric Association does not regard homosexuality as a mental illness. The American Anthropological Association's own conclusion on this matter states in part "a vast array of family types, including families built upon same-sex partnerships, can contribute to stable and humane societies." This conclusion is mirrored by other social science and family health organizations.

Nor do I see maliciousness towards homosexuals coming from the likes of humanists, philosophers and the non-religious. It is the Biblically based Judeo-Christian adherents who perpetrate intolerance and hostility toward the gay and lesbian community in this country.

*Robert Schumann
Eugene*

GENOME DENIER

I read Dave Crowley's letter to the editor (8/9), and I was a bit confused, so I read it again several times along with the previous letters regarding the immigration topic, along with Erin Rokita's article from June 28.

Mr. Crowley's reminds me of how creationists view human beings' place in the world. Both deny science, or at the very least use science only when it suits them. Mr. Crowley also reminds me of the global warming and Holocaust deniers. What sub-

category can we create for him? I know: human genome denier.

I also would like to respond to his whining at the end of his letter. "Why should we have to ..." Why should I have to breathe, drink water, eat food, to survive? Why should I have to need a male in order to reproduce? Why should I have to get up every morning and work so I can obtain most of the above to survive?

Addressing environmental degradation, I don't think *any* Latin American country is enforcing any kind of regulations on emissions, water and soil pollution. Dave Crowley doesn't want to address that at all. Here's some advice to Dave: Stop your whining and live life to the fullest! If we all did that, we might outlive all of our problems.

*Bettina Lorenzen
Portland*

INFLATE OUR HEADS

It all boils down to a person's head, and how he uses it. Our prior president had a problem, which we are all well aware of, with his little head telling his big head what to do. Our current president's problem, which has also affected his vice president, is a totally swollen head, which has caused him to believe that he is a supreme being and above the law. Now this problem is easily fixed by Congress, who

VIEWPOINT BY KYLIE BELACHAIKOVSKY

Punish the Deed

Not the breed

Atlanta Falcons quarterback Michael Vick and three others were charged July 17 with competitive dog-fighting, procuring and training pit bulls for fighting and conducting the enterprise across state lines. The full indictment is sickeningly graphic. Vick allegedly bred litters of dogs to be killers. Dogs that didn't "perform" to his liking were shot, drowned, hanged, beaten to death or electrocuted.

Of course, many people feel the expected sympathy for Vick's dogs — reportedly tortured, mutilated and cruelly executed. Yet for every person horrified by the barbaric nature of this crime, another considers it a cultural norm. How could fellow NFL player Clinton Portia casually defend Vick, saying, "I don't know if he was fighting dogs or not, but it's his property; it's his dogs. If that's what he wants to do, do it ... it can't be too bad of a crime" (WAVY-TV, Virginia).

Let's get real: Vick may get six years in the slammer. Working daily in animal welfare, I really care about the less tangible results of this indictment. How far will the shock waves reverberate? In light of Vick's popularity, will unorganized dog fighting amongst wannabe hoodlums increase? Will the pit bull become even more of a nasty status symbol and even less of a breathing, sentient being? Will my society see pit bulls as even more of an anomalous monster, so different from our other pet dogs? And ultimately, as thousands more pit bull dogs die in fighting rings and animal shelters, will my fellow dog lovers turn a blind eye because it is "just a pit bull"?

There is already an enormous population of homeless, cast-off pit bulls right here in Lane County. Currently being bred in enormous numbers, many of these dogs are carelessly kept and abandoned without a thought. The worst owners breed their dogs for a dirty profit, not caring about the cruel life in store for the puppies. Even more will buy a puppy but don't bother to train it. Their mishandled pit bulls end up in overcrowded shelters due to avoidable "behavior problems."

Some well-meaning folks love their friendly pit bulls but can't afford to have them neutered; they are distraught when they discover that the resulting puppies cannot find good homes. Look in today's newspaper and you will surely find one classified advertisement after another trying to unload pit bull puppies into a saturated market. If there aren't enough caring homes (and there are not), what happens to the rest? What kind of short, traumatic lives will they lead? How cruel, how painful, how terrifying will their deaths be?



And yet, I refuse to just shake my head sadly at the plight of Lane County's pit bulls. We are a community that professes to care; something *can* be done! Illegal activities are nearly impossible to eradicate, and dog fighting is no exception. But we can join together to radically reduce the huge number of "disposable" pit bulls being born every day. If you love pit bulls or if you hate pit bulls, you want the same thing: far fewer of them being carelessly born. As a community, we need to make no-cost spay/neuter service incentives available to all pit bull owners. As individuals, we need to examine in our own hearts whether we are contributing to pet overpopulation, or actively helping to eradicate it. Our culture needs to embrace *thoughtful care-taking* rather than *profitable exploitation*.

If you cannot afford to have your pets spayed or neutered, please seek assistance from Lane County Animal Services, Greenhill Humane Society or the city of Eugene. If you can, please consider making a donation to pay for the neuter of a fertile pit bull dog through Luv-a-Bull, the area's only dedicated pit bull rescue/education resource. Luv-a-Bull is desperately trying to eliminate the masses of abused and abandoned pit bulls in our community; please make this goal a reality with your support. Donations made to the nonprofit Luv-a-Bull can work immediately to halt the proliferation of unwanted pit bulls, and the insidious cruelty and exploitation from which they suffer.

To make donations to a local spay/neuter fund, please contact: Luv-a-Bull at 345-7511 or lieslw@rio.com or Lane County Animal Services at 682-3647 or www.lanecounty.org/animals or Greenhill Humane Society at 689-1503 or www.green-hill.org or City of Eugene Spay/Neuter Clinic at 682-3643.

Kylie Belachaikovsky has been active in the animal welfare community since moving to Eugene in 2001. She is currently an animal welfare officer for Lane County, and volunteers for numerous groups that promote affordable spay/neuter services.

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