

Revisioning America

Why is our civilization based on inequity?

There are days when I wish I could write citations for violations of the Turtle Island United Code of Justice. The basic violation is acting as if you are not connected to All Your Relations, in the indigenous sense of the word "relations." Ignorance of the law is no excuse, any more than it would be under American jurisprudence. It does require that you act as if you have some sense, at least a sense of history before 1492, 1776, 1859 or of late, Sept. 11, 2001.

After attending a series of events over the last few months, starting with a Sesquicentennial Observance at the library and ending with a UO Conference on Racial Formation, the DisOrient Film Festival and the Pacifica Forum, I've come to revision America beyond a form of settler colonialism (a term from the UO conference). Jared Diamond (*Guns, Germs, and Steel*) notwithstanding, it's not your homeland until you've lived there for at least 100 generations, until the very soil itself gives you its voice, in the form of your language. For example, Hawaiian He ali'i ka aina, he kauwa ke kanaka: Land is chief, people are its humble servants.

Settlers, much like squatters, come into your homeland and claim it for their own, deeming you too lazy or primitive to possess it — not seeing that the forestlands of Virginia were kept free of underbrush by natives; not seeing that the grass field burning of the Kalapuya kept down the grasshoppers, provided fertilizer for the camas and generally kept the balance in the valley.

But beyond sustainable ecological coexistence, there exist sets of racial grammar and etiquette, rules of discourse and behavior which serve to further understanding or confusion and at worst genocide and oppression. The settlers weren't interested in coexistence as guests on the homelands of the indigenous. Here and elsewhere, the indigenous were in the way of the progress of Western Civilization. The role of the indigenous is to disappear. The role of yellow, black and brown is to serve while the white man bears his burden of civilizing the rest of us. Thus speaks the Supreme Court in interpreting the Constitution over the years.

Elsewhere conservation refugees — people who have lived on the land for millennia — are moved out of their ancestral lands so the newly created parks can be enjoyed by eco-tourists on safari. When they attempt to hunt as they always have, they are deemed "poachers." Of course oil companies who pollute are not poachers but bearers of progress and prosperity.

So it's not just the racial discourse but also the doing. Whether you believe (as I do not) in ZOG, Western Civilization is a social form based on inequity. Like junkies need their fixes, we depend on a system which replicates not only a form of racial superiority but human supremacy rather than interdependency with the rest of our relations. Which of Earth's children shall remain unfed; which should pass away? Which remain? Why not all?

Mark Harris is an instructor and substance abuse prevention coordinator at LCC.



THIS MODERN WORLD

BY TOM TOMORROW



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

OUR SO-CALLED LEADERS

EWEB, Eugene/Springfield and UO hierarchy (the whole state of Oregon for that matter) strike me as very similar to companies like GM or Chrysler run by a bunch of drunk CEOs flying around in private jets stating they will reform and become more competitive and "greener."

EWEB, Eugene, Springfield and UO bureaucrats sell the citizens of Lane County the perception "we" have become greener by bulldozing 50 acres of wetlands for a EWEB palace to be heated with fossil fuels (a few token solar panels will be added), building the most expensive college basketball arena in U.S. history to be heated with fossil fuels (no token solar panels), selling so-called "renewable energy" by burning clear-cut forests, spending hundreds of millions of taxpayer dollars on widening freeways and highways to "reduce" global warming gases, building \$2 million-plus bicycle bridges to malls and building new big box stores on top of farmland and wetlands.

I think toxic waste is good for you, too. It helps build stronger bones and increases one's life expectancy. I take my dose every day by breathing Eugene/Springfield's "clean air" and drinking unfiltered water flowing by the nearest PVC pipe plant or glue factory or pulp mill or mall parking lot.

After 18 years of struggles to create a greener and healthier Eugene/Springfield, it seems that our efforts have been so futile because impacts to our air, water and land have only gotten substantially worse, thanks to our so-called leaders.

Shannon Wilson

Co-director of Ecosystem Advocates
and chair of Many Rivers Group

GIVE US OUR DAILY O!

I'm a big fan of "The Big O!" As President Frohnmayer says, "We're proud of our brand!" And why not? The university is performing an important public service by constantly reminding the Eugene-Springfield community of the health benefits of daily orgasm. That's what I always think of when I see The Big O or hear that phrase — and I'm not alone, not

that there's anything wrong with being alone when you're enjoying your daily Big O. However you do it, wherever and with whomever (consenting adults only, please), The Big O, unlike football, will increase the flow of oxytocin and oxygen to your brain, filling you with greater love and intelligence.

Thanks, President Frohnmayer, for the good vibrations.

Ellen Singer
Eugene

PAINFUL CHOICES

Oregon law forces difficult and painful choices in these most difficult of times. Balancing the budget puts legislators and the governor "between a rock and a hard place." They're forced to find what cuts will do the least harm.

Let's urge them to minimize the cuts and harm to our public schools. They should ask everyone to pay their fair share. We can't think of a better investment for Oregon and Lane County.

Public schools are a critical economic driver. The jobs of the future require an educated work force. We can't attract new business without them. Some Oregon corporations pay as little as \$10 per year in income tax — the same amount since the Great Depression. Less than a movie and soda. It is in their interest to start paying their fair share. Oregon has the largest elementary class sizes in the nation with one of the shortest school years. Better educated kids make better choices out of school; after-school programs keep many at-risk kids out of trouble.

The numbers speak for themselves — our expensive, overcrowded jails are filled with high school dropouts. Eighty percent of Oregon inmates are high school dropouts. Those who have the most to lose — those making more than \$250,000 — should pay their fair share.

We know legislators' choices are difficult. Our public schools are a good investment. For everyone.

Leslie Weinstein
Tatiana Weinstein, 4J student
Eugene