

'GIMPY' IS OFFENSIVE

I normally enjoy *EW*, including Rick Levin's movie reviews. However I was disappointed to read the use of the word "gimpy" in the movie review of *Gravity* Oct. 10. "Gimp" or "gimpy" is an offensive ableist slur and shouldn't be used unless it is being reclaimed by a person with a disability. People with disabilities have to deal with plenty of ableism, discrimination and abuse from society. They don't need to be insulted in this paper on top of it. Rick Levin and *EW* should hold themselves to a higher standard.

Ariel Howland
Springfield

STOLEN RIGHT TO VOTE

With the governor and Legislature's passage of Senate Bill 863, the citizens' right to vote was stolen by the state's concession to agricultural technology

corporations. I once thought that the ballot initiative and voting rights were sacrosanct. The state's party line is that local decisions (such as the Local Food System Ordinance of Lane County) regarding GMOs would create a "patchwork of regulation that could fluctuate with each election."

Instead, state officials propose their own patchwork: mapping locations of genetically engineered crops to help growers coordinate buffers, corridors and exclusion zones.

Somehow it seems ridiculous to think that all farmers will willingly submit to organizing each field, every crop rotation, land set-asides and every crop and crop system according to a plan that will supposedly "not fluctuate with each election."

On top of that incomprehensible state bureaucracy, we are expected to believe that GMO pollen and seed will not wander

with the wind, contaminating conventional and organic crops. (Tell that to Eastern Oregon farmers whose livelihoods were damaged by rogue GMO wheat.) Absurd. Give us back our right to vote.

Richard Gross
Deadwood

ROBBING THE DEAD

You research the exchange and find your income is too low for a subsidy. You check private insurance: not affordable. You check Oregon Health Plan: full care, no cost, but then you see the fine print. When the recipient dies, the Estate Unit in Salem will place a "claim" (lien) on your estate for 100 percent of the costs that accumulated for your care. If you owned property with a spouse or other persons they will have to make payments on your debt to avoid the "claim." If the deceased owned nothing then those left behind are

OK — unless it's a spouse who owns the property.

Medicaid is a good program for those who own nothing, people who are very sick and own little and people with children who don't own property. The federal government likes to reassure the state that they will pick up 90 percent of the cost of the expanded program in just a few years and the state will only have to pay 10 percent, but when the Medicaid recipient dies, the state comes after 100 percent. This is the only "choice" the health exchange offers people in a particular income group.

Herd people into Medicaid increases financial weakness of the families left behind when the recipient dies — despite the health care security for the recipient. It's clear that the health exchange needs some revision!

Gwen Heineman
Eugene

VIEWPOINT BY TOM GIESEN

Our Intransigence

IN THE FACE OF GLOBAL WARMING

Individualism is the antithesis of communalism and cooperation. It is a powerful idea, mostly a male notion, and it permeates our society. We are very likely the most individualistic society on the planet or in history. This essay is about the ways individualism works to prevent the mitigation of global warming.

Various explanations have been offered for the failure, in the U.S. and elsewhere, of efforts to mitigate global warming by reducing emissions. Despite campaigns by global warming deniers to question the science of global warming, that science is increasingly accepted today. Citizens tell pollsters that they wish to lower their consumption habits, which are related to our high levels of energy use. However, there is no credible broad-scale movement to enact legislation or enforce existing regulations to get serious reductions in energy use, and hence CO2 emissions, in the short term.

We are simply failing to act to significantly reduce emissions.

Andy Fisher, in an essay from *Ecopsychology: Science, Totems and the Technological Species*, briefly outlines our culture:

The dominant interpretation of human nature today is probably that of Homo Economicus. In this view, humans are individuals with limitless wants, nature is "scarce resources" to be exploited, rationality is the maximization of self-interest, and our moral responsibility is to consume.

That appears at first glance to be a harsh, poverty-stricken view of human possibility.

On the other hand, Apple just sold nine million new iPhone 5s in just three days, with many if not most of those just replacing an older iPhone which had a few less features. At the replacement price, that is \$6.3 billion worth sold in just three days.

Six billion dollars would buy a lot of lobbying for mitigation. Instead, a huge campaign is being waged

by the oil, coal and gas industries against the validity of the latest IPCC Assessment Report — a report which argues that cooperation, joint efforts and coordination are required for aggressive broad-scale mitigation — now!

But cooperation, joint efforts and coordination are not attributes of *Homo Economicus*. Being a "rugged individualist" is what is admired.

Humans, in our culture, are not seen as part of nature, but instead as superior to nature, dominant over nature. The purpose of nature is to be available to humans: Nature is our shopping mall, where we often take whatever we want and pay nothing.

This god-like view we have ignores and/or denies the obvious unity of all life-forms, a unity clearly visible through observations of evolutionary processes. Life is priceless.

Individualism breeds exceptionalism. Humans view ourselves as unique, unprecedented, invincible and hence exceptional: entitled to act as we please. Those delusions produce an orgy of self-indulgences: unjust wars, corrupt financial market manipulations, arrogance toward other nations, creating markets for trivial or worthless objects/devices, shopping as recreation, the denial of valid science and so on. Those are all part of a testosterone-fueled imperative to acquire and use more and more power and wealth — acquisitions gained at the expense of the non-renewable resources of the planet.

These delusions make it impossible to address global warming.

To address global warming means to stop using fossil fuels and accept the consequences: much lower energy availability; the end of growth; its replacement by contraction in economies, population and many other resources now taken for granted, e.g., easy transportation, food security, potable water, heating and cooling of residences, etc.

It is not, however, the diminution of the resources enumerated above that makes it seem impossible to address global warming. Adjusting to less seems very difficult but possible.

What is not possible, I suspect, is the loss of the myth of the invincibility of modern humans. Accepting the imperative to quit fossil fuels is experienced as similar to a self-castration/mutilation/lobotomy. Accepting global warming requires psychic adjustments that are foreign and unimaginable to us: Growth cannot stop and reverse itself — that's impossible; it can't and won't happen!

So, while we say we want to accept science and reduce consumption, there is no general and effective outcry for change. We are stuck in the same ward as the deluded, and they are carrying the day.

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GIESEN HIKES WITH HIS DAUGHTER ERIKA