

Free speech that disgusts or offends anyone, which is not libel or slander, should be countered only with more free speech instead of with punishment or censorship.

Thomas Kraemer
Corvallis

TAINTED POT

Wow, the big news is “tainted marijuana.” I wonder if the oregano I just bought is tainted?

Wise up, suckers, grow your own!
David Feinstein
Marcola

NOT IGNORED

Trump supporters complained in this election about how they have been “left behind” and “ignored.” They said their jobs are gone and they felt betrayed by a rigged system. This is what baffles me: Trump’s average supporters are predominantly white. They were the people who worked in the manufacturing industry before automation and global trade deals crept in and replaced them. Automation and trade deals are only going to increase. So, for Trump to promise them manufacturing jobs again is a bald face fantasy/lie.

My question is, “Why exactly are you feeling left behind?” First, being white gives you innate privilege in the job market that people of color don’t have. Second, every state offers financial aid to help with education expenses. All one has to do is apply then take the initiative to re-educate yourself.

There are also grants, work study, internships and scholarships that are there for those that take the time to compete for them. There is also SSI for the truly disabled and Medicaid for the low-income people who need health care. Not to mention welfare and food stamps. And there are people who will help you obtain any of these things.

So, I don’t see the validity of the excuse that you are being ignored or left behind. Many of us have lost our jobs. We were faced with change and I know, personally, when I had to retrain myself in my 40s after my trade was replaced by a computer, I took advantage of all the educational offerings and ended up with a master’s degree with less than \$6,500 in school loans to pay back. It wasn’t hard. What was the alternative? Waiting for a politician to “make America great again?” Ha!

This is a rough world and you have to

hustle and live within your means to make it. If the government is offering a hand, take it, but don’t complain that you are being ignored or left behind. You aren’t.

Annie Kayner
Eugene

GLOATING LEERS

I wonder if a bar or coffeeshop would designate a corner, or an hour, for those of us who are terrified of what is coming after the Trump election. Maybe offer a “sad, miserable, wishing there were some way I could stay away from the news as he guts gay rights, women’s reproductive rights and stacked the Supreme Court” hour. You know, like happy hour, but the opposite. Trump hour ... for non-Trumpies.

The next four years will be lonely making for many in our community, and sharing a beer or coffee with others could help ... away from the gloating leers of the far right.

Hugh Massengill
Eugene

TRY FOR CHANGE

Upon seeing the results of this year’s election, there were many people with different reactions. Simply put, some were

happy and some were not. In the overall view, neither options for presidency were very appealing. I heard many people say in conversation, “It’s just choosing the lesser of two evils.”

Neither Clinton nor Donald are evil people, but I do believe that they are the result of the system they work in. Politics, in this nation, is considered a corrupt sport. Trust in those that we elect is something that has not existed strongly among the people for a long time. There is a clear split between people due to a lack of understanding and consideration of different points of view.

Regardless of whether you are someone who voted for Trump or Clinton, I think this election has presented a problem, and the way to fix it, to move forward, is to become the change that we want to see. I want to see a government that I can trust, people who are honest within it, and a more optimistic attitude towards government affairs.

How do you start making this change? By trying. So I will try, and I encourage others to do the same.

Brooke Moriarty
Eugene

VIEWPOINT

BY STAN TAYLOR

Soil not Oil

OUR PATH TO PEACE

It may seem strange to suggest that the path to peace is to roll up our sleeves and get our hands dirty regenerating the soil in our gardens and around the world. But this is more than a metaphor suggesting that building peace is like growing a healthy garden.

The wars we fight, the deplorable state of public health and the surpassing of planetary limits leading to climate change can all be traced back to how we grow our food and view the earth as a resource base to be turned into commodities for consumption.

We all understand that wars are fought to control resources, particularly the fossil fuels of oil and natural gas. Our industry and our food production are dependent on control of these resources. Our current chemical industrial agricultural system has its roots in World War II.

The companies, which produce pesticides and fertilizers today, first produced these chemicals for warfare in the form of biological weapons for concentration camps and bombs. Industrial agriculture’s application of these poisons as nitrogen-based fertilizers and pesticides depletes the soil and requires huge amounts of water. This reduces the carbon-capturing capacity of the soil at the same time that it emits huge amounts of carbon. Climate change is exacerbated, leading to droughts and other weather disruptions, leading to climate refugees, resulting in conflicts in places like Syria. The war on the earth imbedded in our industrial food system leads to violence between people.

If we are honest, we have to admit that our economic and political systems are failing. The election of Donald Trump as president and the near-successful campaign of Bernie Sanders are not just a reflection of bipartisan deadlock in Washington, D.C. They are an indication that an economic system that allocates all wealth to the top one tenth of one percent while trashing the planet is no longer viable.

The modern industrial era that started in the 1700s with the extraction of coal, rooted in a philosophy of humans as separate from nature, is reaching its limits. This system can no longer meet people’s needs. With climate change and fossil

fuel peaks, it is pushing across planetary limits as well.

A new way of being that sees humans as part of the network of life must emerge from the margins. Central to that system is a way forward rooted in agroecology. Here in the Willamette Valley, with organic farming, farmers markets CSAs and permacultural neighborhoods, we get a glimpse of what is possible. These farms and neighborhoods produce food using horticultural polycropping methods.

Many varieties of food are produced on the same land resulting in higher food output per acre than the monocrops of industrial agriculture. This builds the soil, making it nutrient rich, making the food better for people’s health. The healthy soil holds water so that there are fewer droughts. It extracts and stores carbon from the atmosphere offering our best hope for addressing climate change.

These agro-ecological methods leave food production in the hands of the farmer and gardeners and out of corporate control. This makes earth democracy possible, where, according to Shiva, the “organizing principle is to help strengthen the webs of life and all externalities are beneficial.”

Vandana Shiva is a leader in this earth democracy, peace movement. She is the founder of Navdanya, a network of seed keepers and organic producers in India. She is the director of The Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Natural Resource Policy. She is a world-renowned environmental thinker, activist, physicist, feminist, philosopher of science and author. In 1993 she was the recipient of the Right Livelihood Award, commonly known as the “Alternative Nobel Prize.”

The Lane Peace Center is proud to bring Vandana Shiva to Eugene on Monday, Nov. 21. She will speak at the Lane Community College main campus Performing Arts Theater, Building 6. Her talk, entitled “Soil Not Oil,” is from 6 to 7:30 pm, with doors opening at 5 pm. The event is free and open to the public. For more information go to lanecc.edu/peacecenter or facebook.com/events/947065952066268.

Stan Taylor is the chair of the Lane Peace Center at Lane Community College. He teaches classes in Peace & Conflict, Environmental Politics, and Civil Rights and Liberties.