

**A BRAVE VOICE**

Thank you *EW* and thank you mystery writer for the brave and eloquent piece titled “Married to Hate” (2/2). I am so thankful that a story such as this has come to light, as it illustrates the virus-like properties of identities based on hate and how the internet has opened up a new fertile ground for this incorrect thinking to reinforce itself.

The author was put in an incredibly discordant and painful situation, and the fact that she has risen above that morass and currently flourishes brings me tears of joy. The writing also made me think deeply about what it means to identify with a race or ethnicity in general, and the potential pitfalls of taking that identity and putting it at the forefront of one’s world-view.

Remember those bumper stickers that came out of Key West a few years back: “One Human Family.”

Scott Zarnegar  
Galena

**OBJECT LESSONS**

The article about finding out about white supremacists in your family (“Married to Hate,” 2/1) makes a few things clear:

1. You never know what’s truly in your sweetie’s heart for at least the first 12 years of marriage. Stress will bring out character, or a lack of thereof.

2. If you don’t think you’re being propagandized and profiled with every curious click on the internet, you’re nuts.

3. Finding condoms in a married man’s wallet is a big deal breaker. Lol.

The age of innocence is over, folks.

Annie Kayner  
Eugene

**YES, IT’S POLITICAL**

County residents showed up at the Jan. 30 County Commissioner’s meeting to express our outrage at the lengthy wait for a work session we had requested at the Jan. 9 meeting. The work session to discuss the commissioners’ referral of the Freedom from Aerial Herbicide Spray Ban to the November ballot had been scheduled for May 23, after the May primary election — a four-month wait!

Chair Bozievich lost his composure, saying he was likely to pull the work session altogether because, to him, the spray ban proponents were using the primary election as a political ploy.

Of course, it’s political! Don’t 15,000 citizens who signed the petition, demonstrating that aerial spraying of toxic chemicals is an important issue to them, have a right to know where the commissioners stand on this matter before we vote in May?

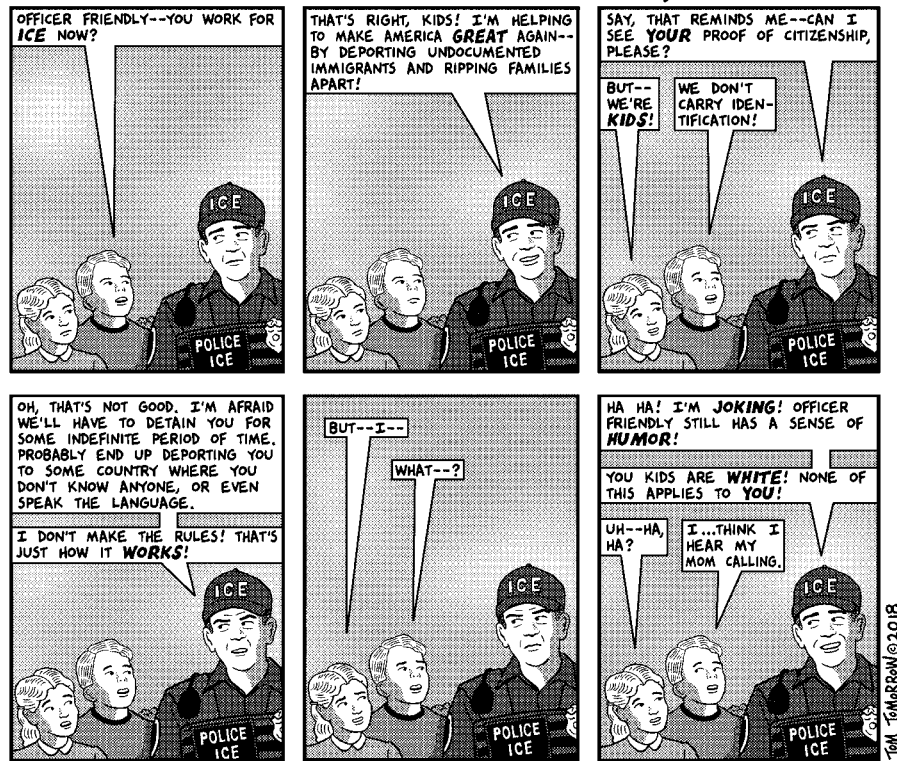
Commissioner Williams also stated spray ban proponents were making the spray ban political. The spray ban is a health issue, but of course it’s political! Corporate timber interests have invaded our government structures and have legalized protections to the harmful practice of herbicide spraying in our forests, impacting the health, safety and welfare of area residents and the environment.

Yes, of course it’s political.

Michelle Holman  
Deadwood

**THIS MODERN WORLD**

by TOM TOMORROW



**PICTURE OF DISATISFACTION**

Thank you for your excellent profile of the legislative accomplishments of our female-led Oregon Legislature in the 2017 session (“Dancing Backward and In Heels,” 2/1). It was, as you note, a “shining hour for progressives” as well as an extraordinarily effective and productive legislative session.

I was surprised, however, given the headline and the focus of the article, to see the accompanying photo of Senator James Manning, rather than one of either Rep. Julie Fahey or Rep. Nancy Nathanson, Lane County’s only two female legislators. Two out of eight, I might add.

I was especially dismayed because the Reproductive Health Equity act was one of the signature accomplishments of this session (which Fahey was instrumental in crafting and carried to the floor) and the Ways and Means committee (co-chaired by Nathanson) will be so crucial to continued progressive success in 2018.

While I respect Senator Manning and am sure he is doing great work in Salem, I found it extremely unfortunate that the *Weekly* chose to feature neither of our two local female legislators but instead highlighted a man, even when the article was ostensibly about female leadership.

Please do better next time, *EW*.

Laura Illig  
Eugene

*Editor’s Note: We try to ensure women and people of color are represented in our pages. The story, which covered women’s accomplishments as well as the increased representation of people of color, was accompanied by three photos of female legislators as well as Sen. Manning and interviewed both Reps. Fahey and Nathanson.*

**SAVE OUR OPEN SPACES**

I’m glad Ken Kesey Square is still there. I couldn’t comprehend why anyone would take it away. I feel the same about the green grassy geese fields along the Willamette, by the Frohnmayer Footbridge, which are slated for development by the University of Oregon. An article in *Eugene Weekly*’s Jan. 18 issue (“UO Planning to Expand Toward River”) admits controversy and a growing debate.

Why manicure everything? This peaceful riparian zone’s a food source and resting area for the wild geese, a place we can commune with them. I ride my bike the length of both sides of the river, and my favorite part is crossing the dirt path in the huge meadow surrounded by geese zooming in for a landing amongst their friends, honking joyful salutations.

This slice of heaven is now slated for synthetic turf fields lit by floodlights? No! A more park-like setting? More buildings? Please let it be! I saw an osprey in the trees swoop down to catch a fish. A bridge of stones adjoining island-like peninsulas appears and disappears in the flood and flux. Tree frogs croak on high. The last red leaves of the season beckon. I get my feet wet poking through the brush.

A good witch knows there’s potent magic in the green earth along the river; I’m asking you to leave it be.

Erica Snowlake  
Eugene

**BOUGHT AND SOLD**

Three county commissioner seats are open in this year’s election — those seats currently being held by Commissioners Jay Bozievich, Sid Leiken, and Gary Williams. These three incumbents have all accepted campaign donations from the timber and mining industries in Lane County.

Extractive industries have a lot to gain (or lose) when land use and other local laws and policies support (or undermine) their businesses. So they pay for good representation with campaign donations.

We the people have a lot to gain (or lose) too, but few people have the means to make donations comparable to private industry.

Let’s clear out the industry lackeys currently on the Lane County Board of Commissioners and fill these three open seats with new commissioners who serve the people, not their corporate masters.

Linda Kanter  
Deadwood

**THE GREAT TAKEOVER**

Whether a large New York-based conglomerate buys *The Register-Guard* or Phil Knight and other private donors in effect buy the University of Oregon through Oregon taxpayers’ sheer abdication, we need to grasp a broader issue: economic interests colonizing and steering all our institutions — even a longtime, family-owned, local daily newspaper.

Instead of op-ed pages, coffee houses, universities and other forums where a free exchange of ideas and opinions form, corporate and government imperatives control the direction in which our society goes. Means — money and power — become ends.

This market-is-god tendency has been intensifying over that past half-century or so. It’s not absolute. But it’s hard, I find, to deny.

The market economy and administrative state impose an ethos of instrumental rationality — knowledge for wealth and power — on journalistic, educational and other institutions.

Truth is not good in the deepest sense; rather, we have “fake news.” Values are not what are in fact valuable; rather, we have “alternative facts.” Reason is seen only in its means-end, instrumental sense, not in its practical or moral sense.

Being human and the natural environment have no intrinsic value, and what it means to be human or a citizen has no higher or shared purposes, only individual purposes.

In such a culture, is there any reason *The Register-Guard*, the UO and other institutions should continue to have loyalty and consensus from within, respect among citizens and freedom from tight corporate and state control? Will efficient management for externally imposed objectives be *The Register-Guard*’s rational role?

Sam Porter  
Eugene

**MEASURE FOR MEASURE**

It is my understanding that the Eugene City Council is considering adding an alternative auditor measure for the May ballot, to join the original measure which garnered 10,000 signatures (and to be transparent, including mine) and met all city requirements for the process. This was not an easy or quick process.

Now another group of citizens has bypassed the whole initiative process and convinced the City Council to put their own measure (dubbed auditor-lite) on the same ballot. Would it not be more open and democratic to allow the people to vote on the original, up or down, without adding competition?

The adding of this competing measure will not reassure or instill trust. If the people don’t like the current measure and vote for it, it won’t pass. That would then allow the council to present an alternative for a later vote, without allegations of favoritism or cronyism. Please re-consider this.

Susan Brenner  
Eugene

**DOG IN THE MANGER?**

Give them credit for a clever and potentially effective strategy. If you can keep people arguing over the detailed differences in the two performance auditor