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**OUR VIEW**

**Cops and cameras**

For better or worse, cameras are all around us.

We use them to take photos of ourselves over and over again, and we use them to ruin concerts for everybody else. Sometimes, though, we use them to record dramatic, eye-opening events that change a nation.

That certainly was the case earlier this week when an eyewitness with a cellphone recorded the killing of an unarmed man in South Carolina who was shot in the back five times by police officer Michael Slager.

The initial narrative about the incident was one we've heard nearly every time an unarmed person is killed by police: the officer was involved with a struggle for a weapon, was in mortal danger and pulled the trigger to save a life, either their own or someone else's.

According to police reports, Officer Slager reported on his radio moments after the struggle: "Shots fired and the subject is down. He took my Taser."

But later, when the bystander video was released and the narrative proved false, it was chucked aside and Slager was immediately charged with murder. That's the silver lining in this awful story, if there is one: An officer who so clearly erred in judgment and unnecessarily took the life of another person may face justice. That he will ever be convicted of the crime, however, remains unclear.

There are other parts of the video that are difficult to watch. The victim — 50-year-old Walter Scott — with five bullets inside him and his life draining away, lies handcuffed and face down for minutes before officers and medics attempt CPR. By then it was too late, though it is unclear if — shot in the heart — he died immediately. Still, handcuffing a dead man is its own kind of shameful act.

The vast majority of police officers are remarkable human beings. They do a difficult job as best they can. We couldn't do it

ourselves and are forever grateful that others are willing to take on that responsibility. But that responsibility comes with great power, and in this case it is high-definition clear that the responsibility was used inappropriately.

The death of Walter Scott is a tragedy. That it was caught on film might help change police action forever.

That's partly because it is another in a string of high-profile uses of lethal force by police officers in Oklahoma, Cleveland, New York and Ferguson, Mo., — with two of those deaths captured on heart-wrenching video. And for all the work we do trying to choose just the right words to get people to think differently about an issue, there is nothing like graphic video to make people totally rethink everything.

The death of Walter Scott did that again.

Body cameras are coming to police officers. Hermiston officers are wearing them now, though there remains debate on whether all of that video is available to the public. If police can choose what to release and what not to release, the usefulness of cameras diminishes greatly. At the same time, protecting victims is of utmost importance and we understand the need for caution when releasing their identity to the public.

But the prevalence of recording devices will continue to increase.

Body cameras are already being replaced by eyeglass cameras. Officers across the country are testing that technology, and Google has released its own system to consumers.

A large percentage of our day and our interactions are recorded, whether it's during a traffic stop or going to the grocery for a gallon of milk. That's unsettling, for sure, but it is a little resettling to know that an officer who makes a fatal mistake will be faced with evidence of his deed.

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Unsigned editorials are the opinion of the East Oregonian editorial board of Publisher Kathryn Brown, Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, and Opinion Page Editor Tim Trainor. Other columns, letters and cartoons on this page express the opinions of the authors and not necessarily that of the East Oregonian.



**OTHER VIEWS**

**What's up with you?**

While U.S.-Iran relations are taking up all the oxygen in the room these days, and they're vitally important for the future of the Middle East, U.S.-China relations are vitally important for the world — and there's more going on there than meets the eye. The concept of "one country, two systems" was invented to describe the relationship between Hong Kong and mainland China. But here's the truth: the American and Chinese economies and futures today are now totally intertwined, so much so that they are the real "one country-two systems" to watch. And after recently being in China to attend the big Boao Forum on Hainan Island, and hearing President Xi Jinping speak, what is striking is how much each side in this relationship currently seems to be asking the other, "What's up with you?"

Both countries almost take for granted the ties that bind them today: the \$600 billion in annual bilateral trade; the 275,000 Chinese studying in America, and the 25,000 Americans studying in China; the fact that China is now America's largest agricultural market and the largest foreign holder of U.S. debt; and the fact that last year Chinese investment in the United States for the first time exceeded American investment in China.

But dig underneath and you find these two systems increasingly baffled by the other. Chinese officials still have not gotten over their profound shock at how the United States — a country they took as an economic model and the place where many of them learned capitalism — could have become so reckless as to trigger the 2008 global subprime mortgage meltdown, which started the trope in China that America is a superpower in decline.

Chinese officials were also baffled by an effort by President Barack Obama's team to resist China's establishment of an Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, by lobbying our biggest economic allies — South Korea, Australia, France, Germany, Italy and Britain — not to join. While the Treasury secretary, Jack Lew, kept stressing publicly, and responsibly, that the only American concern was that the bank operate by international standards, other Obama officials actively pressed U.S. allies to stay out. Except for Japan, they all snubbed Washington and joined the Chinese-led bank. The whole episode only empowered Beijing hard-liners who argue that the United States just wants to keep China down and can't really accommodate it as a stakeholder.

Americans, though, are asking of Xi: "What's up with you?" Xi's anti-corruption



**THOMAS FRIEDMAN**  
Comment

campaign is clearly aimed at stifling the biggest threat to any one-party system: losing its legitimacy because of rampant corruption. But he also seems to be taking out potential political rivals as well. Xi has taken more control over the military, economic and political levers of power in China than any leader since Mao. But to what end — to reform or to stay the same?

Xi is "amassing power to maintain the Communist Party's supremacy," argued

**(President) Xi has taken more control over the military, economic and political levers of power in China than any leader since Mao. But to what end — to reform or to stay the same?**

Willy Wo-Lap Lam, author of "Chinese Politics in the Era of Xi Jinping: Renaissance, Reform or Retrogression?" Xi "believes one reason behind the Soviet Union's collapse is that the party lost control of the army and the economy." But Xi seems to be more focused on how the Soviet Union collapsed than how America succeeded, and that is not good. His crackdown has not only been on corruption, which is freezing a lot of officials from making any big decisions, but on even the mildest forms of dissent. Foreign textbooks used by universities are being censored, and blogging and searching on China's main

Internet sites have never been more controlled. Don't even think about using Google there or reading Western newspapers online.

But, at the same time, Xi has begun a huge push for "innovation," for transforming China's economy from manufacturing and assembly to more knowledge-intensive work, so this one-child generation will be able to afford to take care of two retiring parents in a country with an inadequate social-safety net.

Alas, crackdowns don't tend to produce startups.

As Antoine van Agtmael, the investor who coined the term "emerging markets," said to me: China is making it harder to innovate in China precisely when rising labor costs in China and rising innovation in America are spurring more companies to build their next plant in the United States, not China. The combination of cheap energy in America and more flexible, open innovation — where universities and startups share brainpower with companies to spin off discoveries; where manufacturers use a new generation of robots and 3-D printers that allow more production to go local; and where new products integrate wirelessly connected sensors with new materials to become smarter, faster than ever — is making America, says van Agtmael, "the next great emerging market."

Thomas L. Friedman won the 2002 Pulitzer Prize for commentary, his third Pulitzer for The New York Times. He became the paper's foreign-affairs Op-Ed columnist in 1995.

**YOUR VIEWS**

**Hansell votes like a Portland liberal**

Why elect Republicans if they're going to vote this way?

- Voting for Oregon's Obamacare
- Voting to give illegals special Oregon drivers' licenses
- Voting for the multi-billion dollar boondoggle I-5 light rail bridge
- Voting to create a pathway for early release for sexual criminals
- Voting to put the government into the hotel business competing with private enterprise
- Then voting to not allow voters to approve the costs of building that boondoggle Portland hotel even though 73 percent of the voters want to vote on it.

A case in point is Senator Bill Hansell, 32 years on the government payroll.

Based on his voting, you'd think Senator Hansell is from Portland. You'd be wrong, as he's actually from Pendleton (Editor's note: Athena) one of the most bedrock conservative districts in the state.

How can he vote like a Portland

liberal then come home and convince his constituents that he's really one of them? How can he miss it so badly by voting in favor of illegal drivers licenses when 82 percent of the voters in his district voted to reject it?

Sooner or later, a true conservative will step forward, beat him in a primary and send Republicans like Hansell into retirement to collect their fat PERS pension at taxpayer expense.

Then the cycle begins again as the newly elected conservative heads to Salem. The only way to break this cycle is if, we the people, from the very beginning, hold elected officials accountable to their voting record.

**Some comics suggestions**

I would like to suggest something that I believe would upgrade the quality of your newspaper quite a lot. I love the comic strip "Rose is Rose" — it is

wonderful and often very uplifting, showing people interacting with one another in loving ways. This is an important aspect when looking at the quality of comics, in my opinion. I would like to suggest that you replace "Big Nate" or "Garfield" with "Rose is Rose." Also, I really think "Sally Forth" and "Doonesbury" are great and would be excellent additions to your comics line-up. A daily dose of "Rose is Rose" would really make my day!

Thank you for taking my suggestions under serious consideration.

**Loree McKenna**  
Pendleton

**Vote for BMCC matters more in low turnout elections**

Your vote does matter. Statistics will show that just over 30 percent of the registered voters will mail in their ballots for a May election. How important is that this time, failure to exercise your right and vote yes could mean that Umatilla and Morrow

County students going to BMCC are denied a chance to learn in a comfortable classroom.

Three projects are tied directly to local workforce training needs and we continue to roll the dice with respect to campus safety needs. Please join me in sending back that ballot. Don't pass up this opportunity to improve affordable higher education right here at home.

**Chris Brown**  
Heppner

**Great job, Grizzlies**

I was disappointed to see no mention of the Griswold High School (Helix) track and field participants in the article on the Dick Horyna Invitational in Stanfield this

past weekend (Page B2 April 14, East Oregonian). The Helix girls placed fourth overall, with 50 points, behind two first place finishes, one by Tegan Jackson in the discus and the other by Lucy Case in the 3000 meter run. Jackson placed fourth in the shotput as well. The girls also had two third place finishes by Bethany Newton and MaKenzie Mize, in the 800 meter and discus respectively.

The Helix boys finished with 26 points and 10th place. They had several top 6 finishes, with Braden Sprenger placing fourth in the 300 meter hurdles and third in the discus. We are proud of you, Grizzlies. Great job!

**Terry Case**  
Helix

**LETTERS POLICY**

The East Oregonian welcomes original letters of 400 words or less on public issues and public policies for publication in the newspaper and on our website. The newspaper reserves the right to withhold letters that address concerns about individual services and products or letters that infringe on the rights of private citizens. Submitted letters must be signed by the author and include the city of residence and a daytime phone number. The phone number will not be published. Unsigned letters will not be published. Send letters to Managing Editor Daniel Wattenburger, 211 S.E. Byers Ave. Pendleton, OR 97801 or email editor@eastoregonian.com.