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OUR VIEW

Agriculture means opportunity for young people

In the U.S., about 21 million jobs are involved in agriculture, food and related industries. That's more than 1 out of every 10 jobs in the nation.

For today's young people, that means opportunity, and lots of it. Jobs are readily available in every corner of the field — not just in the fields. It could involve cutting-edge research seeking a cure for a nettlesome animal or plant disease. Or it could involve running the family farm or ranch. Or it could involve repairing and maintaining the equipment on which farmers rely.

Just as important are the support jobs in areas such as the sales, law and finance.

Those many job categories require widely varied backgrounds, experience, training and education.

The options are nearly limitless.

The toughest question any high school graduate faces is this: What's next? Often that question leads down the path toward attendance at a four-year college or university. Others choose to start their academic career at a community college before transferring to a four-year school. Still others go to vocational school, take part in apprenticeship programs or dive directly into the job market, learning as they earn.

All of the options have their pluses and minuses.

For example, four-year universities offer a lot of opportunities, but they come with a price tag. About two-thirds of all students borrow money for college, according to Credit.org, a nonprofit that provides financial counseling. A recent study found that the average student loan debt is more than \$35,000.

Unless a student can attract a significant amount of scholarships and grant help, the jump to a college degree will be accompanied by a hefty student loan balance. Those loans will be a drag on any young person as he or she sets out on

their own, even though the lifetime earning potential far outweighs the cost.

However, other educational and training options offer lucrative career opportunities without overly burdensome financial baggage. Last week we reported on some of the jobs available at the Port of Morrow, both in and out of the agriculture sphere. The computers and equipment are the heartbeat of these operations.

In the same way, working on tractors, combines and other heavy-duty equipment requires state-of-the-art skills and knowledge, ranging from "turning wrenches" to electronics and computers. When a piece of equipment worth several hundred thousand dollars goes down, only a well-trained technician can get

it back on the job.

Many community colleges offer programs affiliated with manufacturers and dealers or similar programs that allow students to gain the knowledge and experience they need to walk out the door and into a well-paying job involved in agriculture. Blue Mountain Community College has made it a focus in recent years, and the recently opened Facility for Agricultural Resource Management — conveniently FARM — shows a long-term commitment.

The college knows what we do well in Eastern Oregon, and is laying a path for future job-seekers.

It's easy for young people to "freeze up" when it comes to considering careers. In agriculture, there are many options that open doors to well-paying jobs. Not all of them require a four-year college degree.

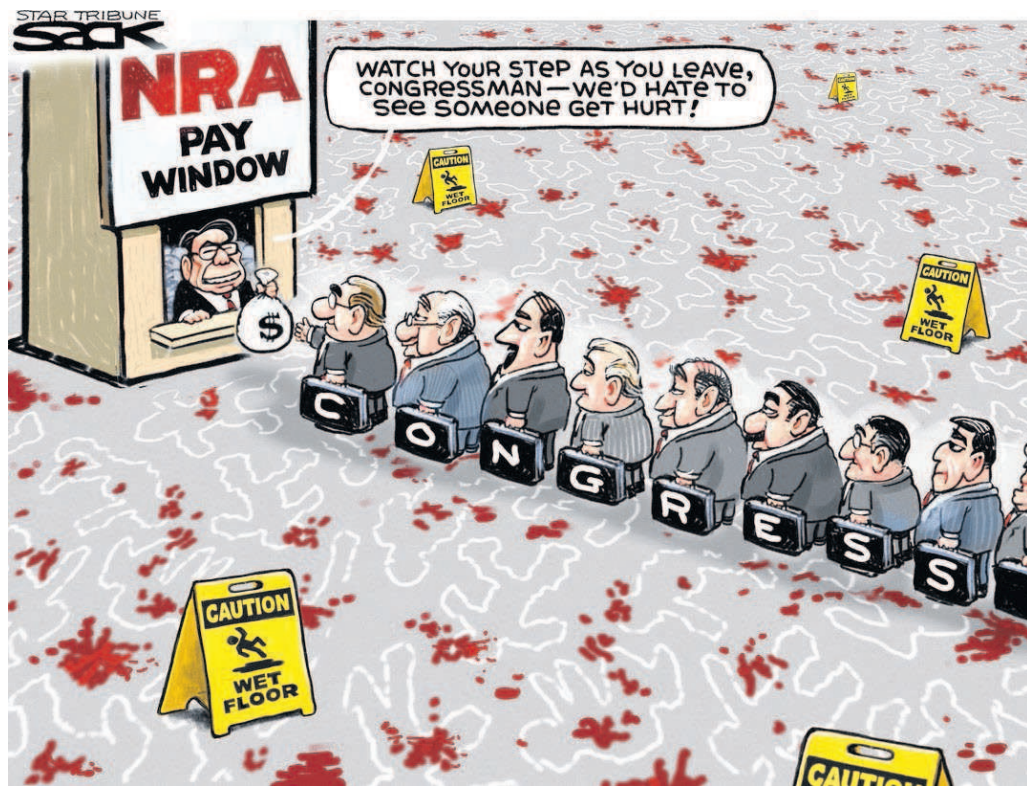
If a student's interests lead to college, good. But a fulfilling career does not necessarily require a college degree. The right training can guarantee that.

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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.

Be heard!

Comment online at www.eastoregonian.com



OTHER VIEWS

The pigs of liberalism

If you are surprised by the news that Harvey Weinstein of Miramax fame, a man well-known for profane tirades and physical altercations and scrounging M&Ms off movie theater floors, is also the sort of charmer who loafs around semineude while asking subordinates for "back" massages, then you can be surprised by just about anything: the sun rising in the east, the fact that movie stars employ plastic surgeons, the news that "The Artist" didn't actually deserve to win Best Picture.

Weinstein's response to this paper's impressive investigatory work was to issue a statement promising to spend even more lavishly on liberal causes. Like a knight promising a crusade against the Saracens as penance for raping and pillaging at home, the mogul's assumption seemed to be that the right political commitment can cover over piggishness and vice.

Does it? Probably not; at the very least, he faces an extended period of exile. But Weinstein is older now and not as influential as in his heyday. The whole "forgive me, I'm a liberal" thing won't protect him now, but it was part of his carapace for decades, during which time everyone who mattered clamored for his friendship and fundraising prowess despite all the stories there to hear.

Maybe his overdue exposure shows that the world has changed, and progressive industries are finally feminist enough to put their old goats out to pasture.

But it might just show that a certain kind of powerful liberal creep only gets his comeuppance when he's weakened or old or in the grave. The awfulness of Ted Kennedy, at Chappaquiddick and after hours in D.C., can be acknowledged only now that he's no longer a liberal lion in the Senate. The possibility that Bill Clinton might be not just an adulterer but also a rapist can be entertained now that he's no longer protecting abortion from the White House. The sins of Woody Allen ... well, I'm sure Hollywood will start ostracizing him any day now.

Last Sunday, I wrote a harsh obituary for Hugh Hefner, which noted that he represented a certain style of liberalism — progressive and yet chauvinist, liberationist and exploitative — that perdures in our society to this day. Some readers were skeptical: Didn't Hef's feminist critics win the fight for liberalism, while his Playboy philosophy became something of a joke?

The answer is yes, at the level of ideological commitment — but not so much in practice. In the real life of liberalism, Hefnerism endures as the effective philosophy of many liberal men, for whom sexual individualism justifies using women because hey, we're all cool consenting adults here, and caddishness blurs into predation when power differentials permit. Meanwhile, feminism

struggles to find norms that check this kind of behavior, swinging between a facile sex-positivity and illiberal attempts to police the hookup scene.

Here it would be nice to say that cultural conservatism offers an alternative, one that welcomes female advancement while retaining useful ideas about sexual difference and restraint. I might have argued as much once. But in the age of Donald Trump and Bill O'Reilly, "pro-life" hypocrites in Congress and the "alt-right" online cesspool, the right is its own sort of cautionary tale.

So I'll say something more modest: If liberals want to restrain the ogres in their midst, a few conservative ideas might be helpful.

First: Some modest limits on how men and women interact professionally are useful checks on predation. Many liberals were horrified by the revelation that for a time Mike Pence avoided one-on-one meetings with women not his wife. But one can find the Pence rules too sweeping and still recognize that life is easier for women if their male bosses don't feel entitled to see them anywhere, anytime. It would not usher in the Republic of Gilead if it were understood that inviting your female subordinate to your hotel room, Weinstein-style, crosses a line in a way that a restaurant lunch does not.

Second: Consent alone is not a sufficient guide to ethics. Caddishness and predation can be a continuum. If you cheat on your wife, you may be more likely to harass subordinates. Promiscuity can encourage predatory entitlement. Older rules of moral restraint were broader for a reason. If your culture's code is libertine, don't be surprised that worse things than libertinism flourish.

Third: You can't ignore moral character when you make decisions about whom to vote for or work with or support. This was something conservatives used to argue in the Clinton years; under Trump, many have conveniently forgotten it. But it remains true. Yes, sometimes you have to work with a bad person or vote for a bad person or hold a fundraiser with a bad person for the greater good. But not nearly as often as you think.

The truth is that while not everyone knew exactly how Harvey Weinstein treated women, everyone knew what kind of man he was. The women he harassed didn't have the power to restrain him, but plenty of powerful people did.

They didn't use it. They should have. But Hollywood and human nature being what they are, they will have plenty of opportunities to do better.

Ross Douthat joined *The New York Times* as an Op-Ed columnist in April 2009. Previously, he was a senior editor at *The Atlantic*.

YOUR VIEWS

Wolf toll will soon expand to hunting economy

Not unlike the traffic from former eclipse seekers, Heppner's thoroughfare saw a parade of hunter regalia pass during deer season opening. Expensive recreation vehicles outfitted with generators and pulling four wheelers seemed to be the norm. Evidently, modern hunters can no longer survive in just a tent. It is a "back to nature" vacation and regardless whether persons actually hunt or not it is an outing enjoyed by many.

The spin-off is that though these modern hunters are self-contained, they subsidize the local economy with the purchase of fuel, groceries and supplies. The same scene is repeated in other Eastern Oregon communities during both deer and elk seasons.

Now let's talk about when that boost to the local economy will dry up. Likewise, the game commission will no longer be able to sell lots of tags to help fund their budget. How so? It is simply because wolf huggers prefer wolves to other wildlife. Wolves are prolific, often raising more than one litter a year. They have no known predators. Ignore the rancher's plight of the loss of cows or sheep; some with genetics that has been bred into them for years. Wolf lovers seem to think domestic animals are expendable. In their absence young elk calves or fawns are an easy take for tasty

wolf fare. The harassment of mature game animals, just like in livestock, increases infertility, consequently fewer offspring means that numbers will continue to decline.

So much for the balance of nature. And so much for an editor's comment that "wolves are just part of Oregon's woods!"

Adding to a sorry situation is the amount of taxpayer dollars spent through the Fish and Wildlife Game Commission on wolf management. Wildlife biologists who spend days tracking, tagging or engaging in wolf studies earn hefty salaries, up to \$100,000. What a waste of resources and all because a few individuals thought it was a good idea to introduce wolves in areas that never had wolves in the first place. Too bad they didn't place these creatures in New York City's Central Park so city dwellers could enjoy the view.

Merlyn Robinson
Heppner

Forefathers knew exactly what they were doing

The *East Oregonian* editorial of Oct. 5, 2017, once again advanced the worn out anti-Second Amendment argument that the framers of our Constitution lacked the "foresight" and were "ill equipped to handle the technology and culture" of the present world. Even the *EO* editors had to admit why our forefathers in their wisdom

established the Second Amendment: "But with each technological advance, there has always been someone — government or otherwise — who has found devious uses."

Hitler used gun control and gun confiscation to murder tens of millions of innocent. In like manner Stalin, Mao Tse Tung, Kim Jong Un and countless evil dictators have disarmed the populace to perpetrate unthinkable evil upon the world. Technology and culture may change but the essential nature of man does not. Evil was evil in the beginning and evil has never changed and never will.

When a disarmed populace fears their government, history is replete with instances of governments that "have found devious uses" of evil to institute tyranny, dictatorships and mass murders of innocent. When the government fears the people because they are armed, we will have liberty and freedom. That will never change no matter what technology or culture advances.

The framers of the constitution fully

understood this principle. Thomas Jefferson coined it well: "What country can preserve its liberties if their rulers are not warned from time to time that their people preserve the spirit of resistance? Let them take arms." James Madison, the father of the Constitution, wrote, "[The Constitution] preserves the advantage of being armed which the Americans possess over the people of almost every other nation." George Mason wrote, "To disarm the people — that was the best and most effectual way to enslave them."

Madmen murder innocents. The use their hands, knives, guns, cars, bombs, poison and lies. You can not outlaw everything that kills, but we can restore our Godly Christian heritage to re-establish our moral compass. When we removed the Bible, prayer, Ten Commandments, and our Christian heritage from our American way of life, evil produced its offspring: murder, madness and misinformation.

Stuart Dick
Irrigon

LETTERS POLICY

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