

# EAST OREGONIAN

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## OUR VIEW

# What doesn't work for Portland doesn't get done

Northwest Umatilla County is a bustling place filled with farms and food processors, fast-growing cities and industrial development.

That growth requires labor, and lots of it. Hermiston and Boardman have more jobs than residents and housing stock, which means many Oregon laborers commute from across the Columbia River in Washington. That's not ideal but it's lawful — except when it comes to contractors and building specialists such as plumbers and electricians.

That's because Oregon and Washington do not have license reciprocity for a number of trades, plumbing and electrical being the most notable. That means a company fully licensed in Walla Walla or Tri-Cities would be unable to do the same work across the river or the road in Oregon. In places like Hermiston and Milton-Freewater, that means that big construction and development projects are often beset by a lack of qualified bids and delayed construction.

For example, retailer Ranch & Home has partly blamed their behind-schedule project on the difficulty of lining up contractors and subcontractors. And a stoplight project that would have helped traffic flow and safety in

Hermiston could not be finished this construction season because no one bid on the project.

Area legislators and economic development professionals thought this could be a problem the Legislature would love to take on — a legislative fix that would

**License reciprocity between Oregon and Washington would help Umatilla County, but don't count on the Legislature helping.**

promote growth and development in places that have been outpaced by the strident economic growth of Western Oregon. Reciprocity could not just benefit Umatilla County, but all along the Eastern Oregon line with Idaho, and the southern Oregon line with California and

Nevada, if legislators so choose.

But it didn't happen quickly, and it seems unlikely to happen at all.

Remember that the Portland metro area is, overall, a labor supplier to Washington, meaning that reciprocity there wouldn't have the same impact as in Eastern Oregon. It would, however, open Oregon labor unions to more competition, and we know how something that would negatively affect unions is handled in the Oregon legislature.

The chances of legislation is almost nil when it would greatly benefit much of non-metro Oregon but ever-so-slightly have a negative effect on Portland. That's a shame.

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

# Not all children have equal opportunities to succeed

The Eugene Register-Guard

A new report from the Annie E. Casey Foundation shows that children of color and children in immigrant families face significantly higher barriers to success than children from white, non-immigrant families.

About 57 percent of children from immigrant families in Oregon are living in low-income households, for example, while only 40 percent of those in non-immigrant households are.

Similarly, 63 percent of African-American children, 64 percent of Native American and 67 percent of Latino live in low-income households in Oregon (an income of less than \$49,000 per year for a family of four). Only 33 percent of white children do.

These findings and others in the report ([www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org)) have ramifications that go far beyond the children and their families.

In 1985, Grammy-award winner Whitney Houston sang "I believe the children are our future. Teach them well and let them lead the way." In a very real sense the children, including children of color and from immigrant families, are Oregon's future.

They will provide the goods and services, make the discoveries, pay the taxes and fund Social Security for those who came before them.

But many of them are being failed by education and other systems. Children in immigrant families are far less likely to be proficient in reading and math. Many have suffered trauma, including a half million nationally who were separated from their immigrant parents between 2008 and 2013 alone.

The vast majority of these young people — 88 percent — are U.S. citizens. Another 7 percent are legal permanent residents or have other legal

status. (Almost 80 percent of their parents are citizens or are otherwise here legally.)

Researchers at the Casey Foundation attribute barriers these children are facing to several factors, including a national history and past policies that have been racist in nature, the suspicion and hostility directed at immigrants

and people of color today, a failure to connect minority children and children from immigrant families with opportunities that are available, lack of resources for schools in low-income neighborhoods where many of these children live, and language and cultural barriers.

Failing to provide the tools to narrow the gap between these children and their more privileged peers will harm Oregon and the United States.

This will require a concerted effort at the national, state and local levels to deal with what has become a nationwide issue.

The Casey Foundation offers a variety of suggestions, all of which are worth consideration. These include developing programs and policies to improve opportunities for low-income workers; helping parents in immigrant families become fluent in English; connecting families to services such as child care, food and medical assistance; and making a concerted effort to enroll immigrant and minority students in early childhood education programs. Oregon also should look to other states to see what could be adapted for use here, including California's system to fund schools with large numbers of English-language learners.

The United States' greatest resource has been, and will continue to be, its people. Making sure that it embraces the needs of all, so that they can contribute to the best of their ability, is of critical importance.



## OTHER VIEWS

# How to engage a fanatic

I've had a series of experiences over the past two weeks that leave the impression that everybody on earth is having the same conversation: How do you engage with fanatics?

First, I was at a Washington Nationals game when a Trump supporter in the row in front of me unleashed a 10-minute profanity-strewn tirade at me, my wife and son.

Then I went to the University at North Carolina at Asheville and watched some students engage in a heartfelt discussion over whether extremists should be allowed to speak on campus.

Then I went to Madrid, where a number of Spaniards told me that the leaders of the Catalan independence movement were so radical there was no way to reason with them.

Then I went to London where I was with pro-Brexit and anti-Brexit activists trying to have a civil conversation with one another.

Over the course of these experiences I've been rehearsing all the reasons to think that it's useless to try to have a civil conversation with a zealot, that you've just got to exile them, or confront them with equal and opposite force.

For example, you can't have a civil conversation with people who are intent on destroying the rules that govern conversation itself. It's fruitless to engage with people who are impervious to facts. There are some ideas — like racism — that are so noxious they deserve no recognition in any decent community. There are some people who are so consumed by enmity that the only thing they deserve is contempt.

You're not going to change these people's minds anyway. If you give them an opening, you're just going to give them room to destroy the decent etiquette of society. Civility is not a suicide pact. As Benjamin DeMott put it in a famous 1996 essay for *The Nation*, "When you're in an argument with a thug, there are things much more important than civility."

And yet the more I think about it, the more I agree with the argument Yale Law professor Stephen L. Carter made in his 1998 book "Civility." The only way to confront fanaticism is with love, he said. Ask the fanatics genuine questions. Paraphrase what they say so they know they've been heard. Show some ultimate care for their destiny and soul even if you detest the words that come out of their mouths.

You engage fanaticism with love, first, for your own sake. If you succumb to the natural temptation to greet this anger with your own anger, you'll just spend your days consumed by bitterness and revenge. You'll be a worse person in all ways.

If, on the other hand, you fight your natural fight instinct, your natural tendency to use



DAVID BROOKS  
Comment

the rhetoric of silencing, and instead regard this person as one who is, in his twisted way, bringing you gifts, then you'll defeat a dark passion and replace it with a better passion. You'll teach the world something about you by the way you listen. You may even learn something; a person doesn't have to be right to teach you some of the ways you are wrong.

Second, you greet a fanatic with compassionate listening as a way to offer an unearned gift to the fanatic himself. These days, most fanatics are not Nietzschean supermen. They are lonely

and sad, their fanaticism emerging from wounded pride, a feeling of not being seen.

If you make these people feel heard, maybe in some small way you'll address the emotional bile that is at the root of their political posture.

A lot of the fanaticism in society is electron-thin.

People in jobs like mine get a lot of nasty emails, often written late at night after libations are flowing. But if we write back to our attackers appreciatively, and offer a way to save face, 90 percent of the time the next email is totally transformed. The brutal mask drops and the human being instantly emerges.

Finally, it's best to greet fanaticism with love for the sake of the country. As Carter points out, the best abolitionists restrained their natural hatred of slaveholders because they thought the reform of manners and the abolition of slavery were part of the same cause — to restore the dignity of every human being.

We all swim in a common pool. You can shut bigots and haters out of your dining room or your fantasy football league, but when it comes to national political life, there's nowhere else to go. We have to deal with each other.

Civility, Carter writes, "is the sum of the many sacrifices we are called to make for the sake of living together."

You don't have to like someone to love him. All you have to do is try to imitate Martin Luther King, who thrust his love into his enemies' hearts in a way that was aggressive, remorseless and destabilizing.

Now I confess I didn't respond to the Trump guy at the ballgame with all the noble sentiments I've put in this column. But I'm sure I'll have a chance to do better soon. Doing the right thing in these bitter times is hard, but the answer isn't that complicated.

David Brooks became a *New York Times* Op-Ed columnist in September 2003. He has been a senior editor at *The Weekly Standard*, a contributing editor at *Newsweek* and the *Atlantic Monthly*, and is currently a commentator on PBS.

## YOUR VIEWS

### Sonic weapons deployed in Cuba may be here, too

When I read the story about American diplomats being attacked with an invisible weapon in Cuba, I was overwhelmed.

In an Oct. 19 CBS news article, one man described an event that was extremely similar to the one I had. He describes laying on his bed and experiencing an overwhelming feeling while his arms and legs became numb. The event that I was a part of was a loud ringing in my head and an overwhelming powerful feeling of love and joy, while at the same time the fear of not understanding the event was terrifying.

I hadn't included it in the book I had written three years earlier, because it was so incredible. I didn't think anyone would believe it and I wanted my readers to know that the words in the book were the truth.

As I read how tourist Chris Allen had been unable to find anyone who could explain the event he was a part of, I thought about how every health care provider I had spoken to in the last ten years had told me that I was either

delusional or schizophrenic. Allen has been to some of the finest doctors in the country and no one can explain this. Every time I have tried to talk to a health care provider I have been accused of being mentally ill.

The CBS news article quotes: "Cases like Allen's illustrate the essential paradox of the Havana mystery: if you can't say what the attacks are, how can you say what they're not?" This is the dilemma I have faced in my quest to prove that this technology exists and that people have experienced it.

One would have to believe that since the documented attacks have been perpetrated on American intelligence personnel, they are an electronic behavior modification weapon that is being used to cause change.

All I know is that I have seen the best and the worst of what this technology can do and what it has done to my family. If we can't talk about it with a straight face, innocent people are going to be hurt. When we can realize this technology exists, we can begin to see its potential to make the world a better place.

Chuck Baker  
Pendleton

## LETTERS POLICY

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