



Willamette Freethinker



Volume 10, Number 12 — December 2003

A publication of Corvallis Secular Society

<http://css.peak.org>

Corvallis Secular Society (CSS) is a Humanist and Freethought society for all nontheists of good will.

CSS is affiliated with the American Humanist Association (AHA) and the Council for Secular Humanism (CSH).

From the Editor:

It's that time again. No, I'm not talking about the public religious displays of Christmas. I'm not even talking about renewal CSS memberships and Willamette Freethinker subscriptions! (Though by all means, if you haven't renewed yet, please do!)

Nope, it's the start of next year's election season! Already, the Democrats are forming a circular firing squad, where everybody tries to shoot the President but they all miss and shoot each other instead.

The Republicans, on the other hand, are set to "shock and awe" us by filling the airwaves with Ma and Pa, Apple Pie, "Mission Accomplished", bible-thumping, us-against-them horse manure until we're ready to vote the Fuhrer back into office in order to promote the security of the Fatherland — I mean, Homeland.

I'd like to talk about one topic that these fearmongers are sure to try and scare folks with — especially if Dean wins the Democratic nomination, which now seems likely.

"Gay marriage" is the perfect Republican straw man. They can't lose! "Left-wing extremists" (like myself, or most intelligent people with a conscience) are softly to moderately in favor of it. Right-wing loons, of course, will be shriekingly, overwhelmingly opposed to it. And virtually everyone else (i.e. the majority of the folks, in the middle) will squirm and be uncomfortable, and while they won't want to **discriminate**, they will nevertheless feel that their own Proper Christian Marriages will somehow be lessened if same-sex marriage is allowed. Mostly, they just won't want to talk about it, and will be annoyed at the folks they perceive as "bringing it up" — the Democrats.

Yes, the Republicans would love nothing better than to force the Democrats into the losing proposition of having to publically defend an unpopular issue such as this one... and yet... the liberal in me can't resist rising to the bait.

Gays and atheists are the two groups in America which are "most legal" to discriminate against. In many ways, gays have made much more progress than atheists have in fighting this. Gays have raised awareness of their issues to

(continued on page 5)

CSS Meetings and Events

*** Winter Solstice Potluck! ***

Remember to come an hour early and bring a dish to share with everyone! No God at the table means more for the rest of us — let's eat!

Calendar:

Saturday, Dec 20th 1:00-4:00 CSS potluck
Saturday, Jan 17th 2:00-4:00 CSS regular meeting
Saturday, Feb 21st 2:00-4:00 CSS regular meeting

Regular meeting time:

Third Saturday of each month, from 2:00-4:00 pm.

Regular meeting location:

Corl House (3975 NW Witham Hill Dr, Corvallis).



In this issue:

- From the President of CSS p.2
- Voice of an Angel p.3
- Letter to the *Gazette-Times* p.3
- Ten Commandments Judge Removed ! p.4
- Letters in the *Oregonian* p.6
- The Convergence of Two Legal Paths p.7
- The Great American Bagel Shop p.8

From the President:

Progress on *Linus Pauling Middle School*

On November 1, I sent an email message to Corvallis Secular Society members and friends about the new middle school now being constructed in Corvallis. I noted that the Corvallis School District was soliciting submissions for naming the new school, which is scheduled to open fall 2004. I suggested that members living in the Corvallis School District consider submitting naming suggestions to the district.

Jeanne Holmes, Assistant to the Superintendent, had previously emailed me about the naming, stating that nominations in these categories were being solicited: people of local, state, national or international significance (preferably those who are deceased or no longer active in their career); names descriptive of the school's geographic location; thematic names that reflect the community historically or culturally; and names that reference indigenous and characteristic flora and fauna.

Peggy and I submitted the name *Linus Pauling Middle School*. The nomination form requested a brief "Rationale for Name Suggestion." I wrote: "Linus Pauling was a world-renowned scientist and humanitarian: the only person in history to be awarded two unshared Nobel Prizes (Chemistry and Peace). Born in Oregon, Pauling is Oregon State University's most famous graduate. His achievements are an inspiring example for students today and in the future." Peggy mentioned Pauling's continued fondness for OSU throughout the rest of his life, mentioning that he donated his papers to OSU. (The Linus Pauling Institute <<http://lpi.oregonstate.edu/>> is located there.)

The Saturday, December 6, 2003, issue of the *Corvallis Gazette-Times* included a front-page article by Becky Waldrop, G-T reporter, on the naming. The headline was, "Pauling suggested for school name; Board to vote on official name at Jan. 5 meeting". I was floored! The article reported in part:

Now the Corvallis School District wants to name an entire school for him. Westland Middle School teacher Jared Cordon said Linus Pauling is a great name for the new middle school that will open next September. Before his death in 1994, Pauling had said that it was in middle school when his interest in science blossomed.

A school-naming selection committee considered almost 60 suggestions. Many people nominated Linus Pauling. The committee included school board member Bob Johnson, Westland Middle School Principal James Wickman, Cordon, district employee Cyndie Meyer, parent Kathee Kunke and student Sammy Keim. The committee narrowed the list to three finalists: Joseph Avery

Middle School; Linus Pauling Middle School; and Marys River Middle School

The committee wanted to recommend a name that reflected the character and culture of the school. Pauling is known for his academic work and efforts for peace. A majority of committee members preferred Linus Pauling Middle School, and felt that his name would set a tone for the new school, which is now being constructed at the site of the former Highland View Middle School.

Superintendent Jim Ford concurred and has recommended the name to the school board. The board will discuss the naming of the school at its meeting Monday and will vote on the name at a Jan. 5 meeting.

Several deceased people were nominated, such as former U.S. President John Adams, author Ken Kesey, Corvallis philanthropist Vina Moses, and former OSU football coach and athletic director Dee Andros. The explanation of Andros' nomination suggested that the school mascot could be the "Great Pumpkins." Cartoon characters Snoopy and Odie were nominated.

Readers of this column who favor the name *Linus Pauling Middle School* may wish to contact the Corvallis School District Board of Directors at:

schoolboard@corvallis.k12.or.us

to urge them to approve this name.

Pauling was probably the most important American scientist of the twentieth century; he made significant discoveries in chemistry, physics, biology, immunology, and medicine. While still in his twenties, he began to solve the mystery of the chemical bond. He later intuited the cause of sickle-cell anemia. Throughout the remainder of his long life, he continued to advance our knowledge of nature. Yet he also found time to campaign vigorously to stop nuclear testing.

In my view, no one with any connection to Corvallis has ever been a more inspiring example of the power of education to extend knowledge and improve human life than has **Linus Pauling**.

John Dearing
President of CSS

**"You make money promoting religion;
you only spend money promoting atheism."**

*C. W. Dalton, **The Right Brain and Religion***

Voice of an Angel

I have recently come to a conclusion: Human beings are out of new ideas. Everywhere around us we see the same things rehashed, reworked and rewritten all in the attempt for something “new”.

In fashion, we see the same trends being recycled. Right now the “in” thing is clothes and designs from the 70’s. Before that it was from the 60’s. As a child of the 80’s, I can’t wait until the next decade when those styles come back in style — on second thought, maybe I CAN! I’m not sure so I want to look at all the “Hairsprayed Big-Hair”!

We recently saw the movie *Gothika*. It was about a woman whose husband had committed murder and the ghost of the victim haunted the wife until she figured out the crime. Gee, we saw this same movie a couple years ago — it was called *What Lies Beneath*. Over and over again you see remakes and sequels. Not long ago they had *Halloween* part 10 (*Jason X*). Part 10?!

As I type this, I see on the TV they have a new Peter Pan movie coming out. Is this REALLY necessary? Doing a quick look on Internet Movie Data Base (www.imdb.com), I see there have already been at least 4 TV series and 9 previous movies all about Peter Pan — why not just call this “new” movie *Peter Pan X*?! Talk about lack of new ideas!

And now here we are gearing up for the new election season. I bet this trend is going to continue. We will once again see the politicians bring out the same rehashed ideas: Family Values, Abortion, School Prayer and our favorite saying “God Bless America”. How many times are we going to be subjected to that one?!

I think what this really tells us is most Americans like repetition. They don’t like to think about new concepts. They don’t want to discuss current events and how we can make things better — they are happy with the same old ideas. I guess that’s why I look forward so much to our monthly CSS meetings. At least I still have my Freethinking friends to offer me shelter from this mindless storm!

Now I just can’t wait until Wednesday when *Lord of the Rings* part 3 comes out! Hmm...

Angela Byers

CSS Treasurer & Webmaster



Letter to the Corvallis Gazette-Times

(Concerning John Dearing’s “Banishment”)

by CSS Member Gil Gaudia

I have recently become aware that you have “banned” a writer of letters to the editor for an oversight which was subsequently corrected and printed by your paper. Since his viewpoints are ones which are usually in contrast to those of your organization, it appears to me that you are more interested in censorship than you are in correcting some alleged misdeed. Claiming, as you did, that he “stole the words of another” is as ludicrous as accusing you of being illiterate because you misspelled “disingenuous” in your response to him. Both of these are mistakes and should be treated as such rather than the literary felony you choose to describe his as.

I believe, after reading your paper for many years, that you are so frantic in your disagreement with nonbelievers, agnostics, humanists, atheists and other free-thinkers that you would actually decide to ban a competent and ethical writer of opposing viewpoints in order to prevent the exposure of his ideas to your readership. This is censorship at its most dangerous level because as a monopoly of sorts you are exercising your power in this community in a manner that would have befitted the leaders of the most oppressive dictatorships in the world.

You remind me, in your childish fit of pique, of Jerry Seinfeld’s Soup Nazi who cried to those who displeased him—“no soup for you!” The difference is that you are not funny but obscenely fascistic. You should be ashamed to call yourselves members of a free and democratic press.

Gil Gaudia

“Believers are interested in fulfilling emotional and spiritual needs, not intellectual needs. In some cases one might as well try to use reason on a dog. For many people God is primarily a warm feeling. How can one argue with a warm feeling? Arguing with someone who places reason below faith and biblical authority is blowing against the wind.”

C. W. Dalton, *The Right Brain and Religion*

“With science unable to give us the answers, religion steps in and fills the gap of our ignorance with nonsense, fantasies and pretentious lies. Prophets and priests rush in where scientists fear to tread.”

C. W. Dalton, *The Right Brain and Religion*

Ten Commandments Judge Removed From Bench

by Kyle Wingfield, Associated Press, 11/13/03

MONTGOMERY, Ala. (AP) — Alabama Chief Justice Roy Moore was removed from office Thursday for refusing to obey a federal court order to move his Ten Commandments monument from the rotunda of the state courthouse.

The state Court of the Judiciary unanimously imposed the harshest penalty possible after a one-day trial in which Moore said his refusal was a moral and lawful acknowledgment of God. Prosecutors said Moore's defiance, left unchecked, would harm the judicial system.

Moore, a champion of religious conservatives, had been suspended since August but was allowed to collect his \$170,000 annual salary. He was halfway through his six-year term.

Speaking immediately after the decision, a defiant Moore told supporters he had only acknowledged God as is done in other official procedures and documents.

"I have absolutely no regrets. I have done what I was sworn to do," he said, drawing applause.

"It's about whether or not you can acknowledge God as a source of our law and our liberty. That's all I've done. I've been found guilty," he said.

Moore said he had consulted with his attorneys and with political and religious leaders and would make an announcement next week which he said "could alter the course of this country." He did not elaborate. He could appeal to the Alabama Supreme Court.

Under Thursday's decision, the governor will appoint someone to serve the rest of Moore's term, which expires in 2006.

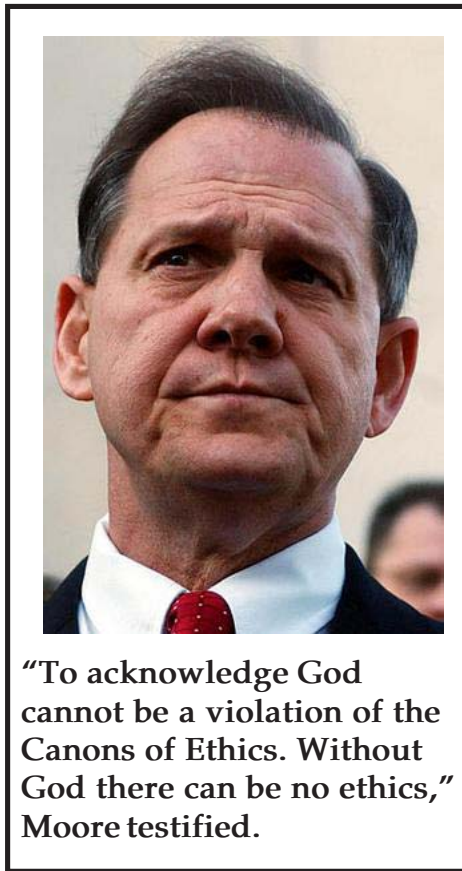
Presiding Judge William Thompson said the nine-member court had no choice in its decision after Moore willfully and publicly ignored the federal court order. "The chief justice placed himself above the law," Thompson said.

A federal judge had ruled the monument was an unconstitutional promotion of religion by the government. A federal appeals court upheld the ruling, and the U.S. Supreme Court refused to hear Moore's appeal. The monument eventually was rolled to a storage room on instructions from the eight associate justices.

The Judicial Inquiry Commission filed the complaint about Moore's defiance with the Court of the Judiciary, an ad hoc

panel of judges, lawyers and others appointed variously by judges, legal leaders and the governor and lieutenant governor.

On Thursday Moore said he had no animosity toward the court. But, he said, unless the states stand up, "public acknowledgment of God will be taken from us. In God we trust will be taken from our money and one nation under God from our pledge."



"To acknowledge God cannot be a violation of the Canons of Ethics. Without God there can be no ethics," Moore testified.

Greg Sealy, head of the Sitting at His Feet Fellowship in Montgomery, an inner-city mission, said it was the "darkest day" he has seen in America since he moved to the United States from Barbados 23 years ago.

"They stole my vote. The judiciary stole my vote. I voted for Roy Moore," he said.

The prosecutor, Attorney General Bill Pryor, on Wednesday termed Moore's defiance "utterly unrepentant behavior" that warranted removal from office.

The chief justice testified he was fulfilling his duties and promises to voters when he refused to follow the court order.

Moore, 56, testified that he followed his conscience and did nothing to violate judicial ethics.

"To acknowledge God cannot be a violation of the Canons of Ethics. Without God there can be no ethics," Moore testified.

He had also reiterated his stance that, given another chance to fulfill the court order, he again would refuse to do so.

When one panelist, Circuit Judge J. Scott Vowell of Birmingham, asked Moore what he would do with the monument if he were returned to office, the chief justice said he had not decided, but added: "I certainly wouldn't leave it in a closet, shrouded from the public."

In closing arguments, Assistant Attorney General John Gibbs said Moore's public refusal to obey a court order "undercuts the entire workings of the judicial system."

"What message does that send to the public, to other litigants? The message it sends is: If you don't like a court order, you don't have to follow it," he said.

It was as a circuit court judge in Gadsden in the 1990s that Moore became known as the "Ten Commandments Judge," after he was sued by the American Civil Liberties Union for

opening court sessions with prayer and for displaying a hand carved Ten Commandments display behind his bench.

He said Wednesday that when he ran for chief justice in 2000, his entire campaign was based on "restoring the moral foundation of law." He added that it took him eight months to personally design the monument, which he helped move into the judicial building in the middle of the night on July 31, 2001.

Jones asked Moore why he didn't just go ahead and move the monument as Thompson ordered.

"It would have violated my conscience, violated my oath of office and violated every rule of law I had sworn to uphold," Moore said.

From the Editor (cont. from page 1)

national levels, while even the word "atheist" is still so taboo, it is rarely used except as part of a hateful right-wing slur.

Yet there is *ONE* thing that atheists can do with impunity, that is forbidden to homosexuals throughout the country with few exceptions: get married.

This is wrong. Our society promotes, encourages and rewards marriage, associating it with "stability" and even "morality". We cannot demonize gays for lacking these qualities while denying them the same means we use to ATTAIN these qualities. Our culture can never be fair or just, while picking and choosing which adult love relationships to recognize...

On December 3, 2003, *New York Times* editorialist Nicholas D. Kristof made a very good comparison:

The bottom line is that same-sex love is a mystery far more subtle than just a matter of Biblical injunction — just as interracial love has turned out to be. A 1958 poll found that 96 percent of whites disapproved of marriages between blacks and whites (Deuteronomy 7:3 condemns interracial marriages). In 1959 a judge justified Virginia's ban on interracial marriage by declaring that "Almighty God . . . did not intend for the races to mix."

Someday, we will regard opposition to gay marriage as equally obtuse and old-fashioned.

No force is more divine than love, and if some people are encoded to love others of the same sex, how can that be unholy? To me, the blasphemy is not in those who want to share their lives with others of the same sex, but rather in anyone presumptuous enough to vilify that love.

Much of the controversy seems to revolve around the word "marriage". The state of Vermont (under Howard Dean's governorship) solved the problem by instigating the concept of "civil unions". Gays could have a "civil union" and derive all the benefits that straights did by means of "marriage". Many of the Democrats presidential hopefuls have signed on to this concept. Not MARRIAGE, but the equivalent.

In other words, "separate but equal". The same thing we tried when those darned Negroes started getting uppity and demanding equal rights with the rest of us...

This will never work. Not in the long run.

I've known for a long time, what the right answer to the issue of gay marriage must be. It's glaringly obvious.

Get the state out of the marriage business entirely! From now on, EVERYONE — gay, straight, or somewhere in between — gets a Civil Union Certificate. If you are ALSO "married" by a church, that's your business. But "marriage" should be (should ALWAYS have been) strictly a religious term.

Churches can impose whatever arbitrary "moral" standards they want on who they're willing to declare "married". But as far as our government is concerned, you're either "unioned" — or you're not.

This has many benefits:

- 1) It eliminates the "separate but equal" difficulties that will inevitably follow solutions like Vermont's. We won't have round after round of politicians and insurance companies trying to arrange for benefits that "only" apply to married vs. unioned couples.
- 2) It stops those evil gays from destroying the "sanctity" of marriage. No more gay marriage! Just gay — and straight — civil unions as recognized by our government, thus setting the churches free to define marriage however they see fit.

- 3) It further separates Church and State, with clear and distinct areas of control. Neither side dictates to the other.

Under this plan, a couple might be married but not unioned, unioned but not married, neither, or both. The government can only recognize and grant benefits to unions — but the "sanctity of marriage" is preserved and remains under the exclusive control of the church, which doesn't have to tangle with pesky discrimination laws.

It's perfect!

...But it's still a huge political risk, and as much as I want this to happen, the first, last and ONLY priority for the Democrats MUST be to get the Bush mafia out of office, by any means necessary. So as much as I hate to say it, serious discussion of THIS issue might just have to wait awhile...

Reed Byers
Editor, *Willamette Freethinker*

Letters in the Oregonian

Including one from CSS Member Ev Sherr, 11/23/03

<http://www.oregonlive.com/letters/oregonian/index.ssf?/base/editorial/1069419667167140.xml>

Freedom to not believe

11/23/03

I think Mary Pitman Kitch ("Erasing God at our peril," Nov. 16) is wrong to defend the use of "under God" in "The Pledge of Allegiance."

The education of children should be about exposing them to alternatives, teaching them to think and allowing them the freedom to make their own choices, and that includes the freedom to decide whether they can believe in a "God."

The religious right seems to think that education is about the indoctrination of children to believe the same things they believe.

This country was founded on the principle of religious freedom. We purport to be tolerant of Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, Jews and others. This should equally apply to agnostics and atheists.

DAVE JAMES Sublimity

God and democracy

I found myself halfway agreeing with Mary Pitman Kitch's argument in "Erasing God at our peril," that deleting "under God" from "The Pledge of Allegiance" "could spark a religious backlash."

But then I thought, what if someone suggested adding to the pledge so it read "under God and Jesus"? Some Christians might approve, but I suspect most Christians, and certainly all other faith groups, would be appalled.

It would marginalize non-Christians; it would be undemocratic and divisive. It would be wrong in the same way as denying women and blacks voting rights was wrong, and denying gays the right to a civil union is wrong.

In these cases, liberals, atheists and free-thinkers were, and are, for expanding human rights, and religious conservatives were, and are, for the status quo.

Leaving "under God" in the pledge is also wrong. It means that those who don't have god-beliefs are marginalized.

EVELYN SHERR Corvallis

Nation founded by rationalists

In her article, "Erasing God at our peril," Mary Pitman Kitch makes the unsubstantiated claim that "our very freedoms derive from religious ideals."

We should recall that in 1776, religion enforced dogma through the Holy Inquisition, and divinely anointed kings answered not to their subjects but only to God.

American political history tells us that the founders were deeply influenced by the ideas of Locke, Hobbes and Montesquieu. The chief appeal of these Enlightenment thinkers was their rationalism and their rejection of a divinely ordained government. They brought us political liberty and freedom of conscience through representative democracy and the separation of church and state.

The founders established a secular government that stood in stark contrast to what James Madison called the fruits of almost 15 centuries of Christianity: ignorance, servility, superstition, bigotry and persecution.

JOHN KOVASH West Linn

God references inappropriate

No one wants, nor assumes the ability, to erase God, nor are they trying to remove historic references to religion. What Michael Newdow's lawsuit does is require the removal of inappropriate references to God, which imply a state-sponsored religion, to help maintain this separation.

A cursory analysis of Mary Pitman Kitch's comments reveal the dishonest, alarmist, bait-and-switch arguments that characterize the "believers' " attempts to establish a state-sponsored religion, the most egregious of which is hiding behind an imaginary, righteous majority of "salt-of-the-earth" Americans. (Why not the other spices? What about paprika-of-the-earth Americans?)

Those of us who believe that reason should take center stage in the public square won't be intimidated by the threat of a religious backlash, and I hope, neither will the Supreme Court.

LAWRENCE L. ROBB West Linn

Where was writer in '54?

Too bad Mary Pitman Kitch wasn't at The Oregonian in 1954 to write an editorial titled "Inserting God at our peril."

She might have warned us of how "sadly polarizing" the addition of "under God" to our "Pledge of Allegiance" would be, how it would "deeply offend millions of Americans," and how it would "deface a historic monument of our faith" in the separation of church and state on which this nation was founded. Too bad.

BURL ROSS Lake Oswego

The Convergence of Two Legal Paths

by Ellen Goodman, *Boston Globe*, 11/20/2003

Now that we've arrived at the wedding, can we take a minute to describe how the laws walked us down this aisle? After all, the laws emerged from two different backgrounds and went down two separate paths. Then they came together before the justice of the peace, as groom and groom, bride and bride.

On Tuesday, the Massachusetts high court ruled that gay couples have the right to marry. In the same decision, the justices redefined both gay rights and marriage. And yet for all the hoorays and all the boos, the decision may be as evolutionary as it is historic.

Consider first the path of gay rights. For generations, the state labeled some lovers as criminals. When the last laws against sodomy finally fell this year, Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia dissented. He argued that if moral disapproval wasn't enough to make sodomy illegal, nothing was: "What justification could there possibly be for denying the benefits of marriage to homosexual couples?"

He was bitter — and right. The statutes that made homosexuals outlaws had to end before they could become in-laws.

Meanwhile, marriage was on its own winding path. Historically, a woman who entered the institution lost her legal identity at the altar. Until 20 years ago a husband was still exempt from rape charges in New York because a wife didn't have the right to say no.

In 1965, the state lost the power to control sex within marriage when the Supreme Court overturned a Connecticut ban on selling contraceptives to couples. In 1967, the state lost its power to define the race of the person you could marry when the court overruled the last laws banning interracial marriage. And gradually throughout the 1970s, the state turned over the right to decide why a marriage could end. A wave of no-fault divorce laws gave that decision to the people.

Each one of these changes — ending the subordination of wives, ending race restrictions, decoupling marriage from decisions about children, sex, and divorce — set off alarm bells. Marriage today is less about an institution and more about a relationship, less about the state, more about individuals.

The evolution of gay rights and marriage laws now merge into the definition of marriage written by the Massachusetts court: "We construe civil marriage to mean the voluntary union of two persons as spouses, to the exclusion of all others."

In an elegant decision, Chief Justice Margaret Marshall, who grew up fighting apartheid in her native South Africa, echoed the reasoning that permitted interracial marriages: "The right to marry means little if it does not include the right to marry the person of one's choice." Marshall wrote that "civil marriage anchors an ordered society by encouraging stable relationships over transient ones." But what's sexual orientation got to do with it? The decision carefully lists the reasons to ban gay marriage and finds them unreasonable.

Fertility? Why, the state allows people who aren't fertile, indeed people on their deathbeds, to marry. For the raising of children? Why, if anything, marriage would help gay couples with children, like many plaintiffs in this case. By the end, the only reason left to ban gay marriage was moral disapproval — or what's also known as prejudice. But the Massachusetts Constitution, ruled the court, "forbids the creation of second-class citizens."

This case doesn't end the argument any more than the decisions about interracial marriage or a wife's place

ended those debates. The state Legislature has 180 days but not much wiggle room to get its marriage laws in line. There is talk already of a state constitutional amendment. And if couples marry in Massachusetts and seek recognition elsewhere, the issue could go to the Supreme Court.

Gay marriage may indeed end up at the center of the culture war in the 2004 campaign. Or it may simply mark the moment in a long social change.

It's been a lengthy trip down the aisle. But a friend who applauded this decision added: "I don't think I would have said that five years ago." In the past year, *Bride's* magazine featured two brides. The love that "dared not speak its name" now announces it in the newspaper. If this is a wedge issue, it seems to mostly divide generations.

"The plaintiffs seek only to be married, not to undermine the institution of civil marriage," writes Justice Marshall. Marriage vows are not diminished but enlarged in a redefinition that seems both new and familiar: "Civil marriage is at once a deeply personal commitment to another human being and a highly public celebration of ideals of mutuality, companionship, intimacy, fidelity, and family."

In the end, this case may say less about the fragility of marriage than about its endurance.

In an elegant decision, Chief Justice Margaret Marshall, who grew up fighting apartheid in her native South Africa, echoed the reasoning that permitted interracial marriages: "The right to marry means little if it does not include the right to marry the person of one's choice."

The Great American Bagel Shop

by Reed Byers

Marriage is like a bagel. And the United States is like the bagel shop.

Now, "one male and one female", that's your classic onion bagel. It's traditional! It's the most popular bagel in the shop. In fact, it's the ONLY bagel in the shop! As Mr. Shrub, CEO of American Bagel Corp, likes to say, "Everyone loves onion bagels! Everyone BUYS onion bagels! Why would we sell anything else?"

Sure, once in awhile, some weirdo wanders in and asks for a blueberry bagel. "Blueberry?!?", splutters Mr. Shrub. "Why, that's a FRUITY bagel! We don't sell THAT kind in HERE!"

"But why not?", asks our intrepid customer.

At this, Mr. Shrub goes livid. "I'll have you know that I have something called FAMILY VALUES, and my family values say, onion bagels only. No exceptions! Why, if I started selling blueberry bagels today, tomorrow someone's gonna ask for POPPYSEED bagels, and the next day, who knows? Maybe something that isn't even a bagel at all! Besides, if we sold alternative bagel types here, it would undermine the sacred institution of eating onion bagels!"



"For thousands of years, people have been eating onion bagels, and throughout the entire history of American Bagel Corp, that's all we've sold. And everybody's been happy with it that way. EVERYBODY! Now you come along and try to mess with our sacred tradition! Why is that?"

Our customer is almost afraid to speak at this point. "Well, sir, you see, I just can't abide onion. Don't like it a bit. I've always been a bit more of a blueberry person myself, and, well, I don't see how that effects other people's enjoyment of onion bagels..."

"SILENCE!", screams Mr. Shrub, abandoning all pretense of reason. "There'll be none of your unAmerican, treasonous talk HERE! Little Johnny might turn on the TV and accidentally see people eating non-onion bagels before he could change the channel! A

good Christian family might go out to eat, and might find themselves sitting RIGHT NEXT to another couple eating non-onion bagels! If non-onion bagels become socially acceptable, it'll be anarchy!"

"Now go! Get out of here! In this shop, we know that bagel eaters are better people than non-bagel eaters, and when I say bagel, I mean ONION bagel!"

How to Subscribe:

If you enjoy reading this newsletter, and are concerned about the growing threat to the principle of Separation of Church and State in this country, then please consider joining Corvallis Secular Society, subscribing to this newsletter, or making a donation:

Newsletter subscription: \$18/year (\$1.50/month)

Full CSS membership: \$30/year (\$2.50/month)
(includes newsletter)

You can upgrade at any time from subscription to membership, by just sending in the difference in price.

Memberships and newsletter subscriptions are on a calendar-year basis (i.e. they always expire in December), and we prefer they not be renewed for more than one year at a time. People subscribing mid-year only need to pay for the remaining issues for that year. This is to keep our bookkeeping as simple as possible.

Thank you for supporting our efforts to promote atheism, humanism, and freethought in Oregon's Willamette Valley.

Contacting Us:

President

Use this address for comments or questions about CSS.

Please do NOT send payments here.

John S. Dearing
126 NW 21st St.
Corvallis, OR. 97330
(541) 754-2557

president@css.peak.org

Vice President / Editor

Use this address for newsletter submissions.

Reed H. Byers
3035 SE 24th Ave.
Albany, OR. 97322
(541) 924-9128
editor@css.peak.org

Treasurer / Webmaster

Use this address for membership and subscription payments, or for comments about the CSS web page.

Angela C. Byers
3035 SE 24th Ave.
Albany, OR 97322
(541) 924-9128
webmaster@css.peak.org

Disclaimer: This newsletter contains copyrighted material the use of which has not always been specifically authorized by the copyright owner. We are making such material available in our efforts to advance understanding of humanist, environmental, political, human rights, economic, democracy, scientific, and social justice issues, etc. We believe this constitutes a 'fair use' of any such copyrighted material as provided for in section 107 of the US Copyright Law. In accordance with Title 17 U.S.C. Section 107, the material in this newsletter is distributed without profit to those who have expressed a prior interest in receiving the included information for research and educational purposes. For more information go to: <http://www.law.cornell.edu/uscode/17/107.shtml> If you wish to use copyrighted material from this newsletter for purposes of your own that go beyond 'fair use', you must obtain permission from the copyright owner.