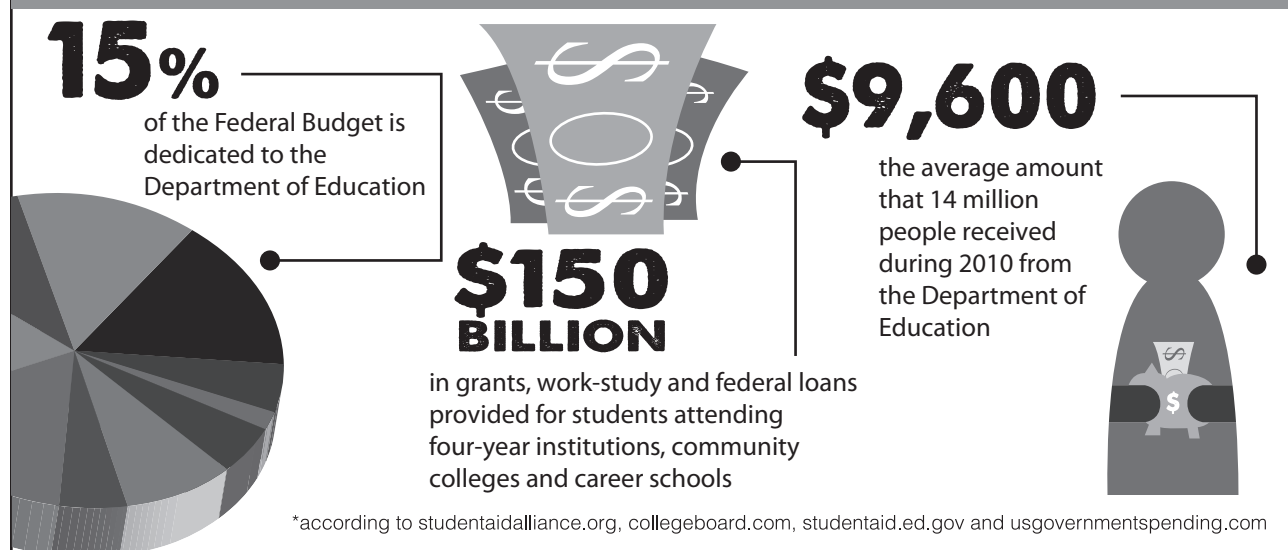


WHERE IS THE MONEY?



Liberal ideas don't equal a hidden agenda



Lauren Kellett

Hitting theaters this March is Hollywood's version of Dr. Suess' eco-friendly tale "The Lorax." Let me be the first to say I couldn't be angrier. Obviously, President Barack Obama and his team of sneaky liberals are at it again, forcing their radical left-sided views upon American families, trying to make us feel bad about global warming and clearly demonizing the richest 1 percent of America. If I had to guess, I'd say those hippies behind Occupy Wall Street are responsible. What has America come to?

Before you start ripping this page in half, I should tell you these are not my beliefs. They belong to Lou Dobbs from Fox News and a collection of conservatives throughout the country. Lou Dobbs said "The Lorax" is indoctrinating America's children into the liberal agenda of Occupy Wall Street and Obama. I guess teaching kids about respecting the environment is a new evil. Not to mention the book was written more than 50 years ago, long before Obama's green energy policy.

Unfortunately, this is not the first time liberals have been accused of a hidden agenda. For years, liberal America has been regarded as a modern type of evil by the conservative right wing. Even when these liberal ideas — like respecting the environment — are aiming for a greater good, some conservatives automatically assume the worst with a closed mind.

Dobbs has lashed out against many popular children's movies during the past few years. His views regarding "The Secret Life of Arrietty" — based on the novel "The Borrowers" — are that it "promotes the redistribution of wealth, pitting the makers against the takers and echoing Obama's message that everyone should pay their fair share." We certainly wouldn't want to teach children about sharing.

Fox News strikes again with its hatred for the adorable comedy "The Muppets." The new film promotes communist ideas, pointing to the movie's villain, Tex Richman, an oil baron who attempts to control the Muppets' studio, said Eric Bolling of Fox's "Follow the Money." News flash, Fox News — every children's movie has a villain, this one just happens to be an oil corporation. It wouldn't be any different if Tex Richman was a park owner trying to destroy their studio to build a new playground — he still would be the bad guy for going against the Muppets.

Too bad liberals don't stop at film. The 118-E Emmy-winning television show "Sesame Street" receives brutal critique in conservative political commentator Ben Shapiro's new book, "Primitime Propaganda," where the children's show is accused of being too liberal because "It was created primarily for black children and Spanish-speaking children. It was not made for the sophisticated middle class." A show programmed for all races and ethnicities to enjoy? Oh, the horror.

Lastly, leftists infiltrated one final media form gaining more and more popularity every day — video games. Certain games like "Sim City" make players build environmentally friendly towns or face a fine, are tools of the "green police," said radio host T.J. McCormack in a Fox News interview. When asked if these games are better for children to play than games about war and violence, he said, "Well, these green games are boring!" If conservatives would rather see kids playing games where murdering is the objective instead of building green cities, I think they are the corrupt ones.

It is clear the right-sided party has a knack for taking something that doesn't necessarily have to be a one-sided view and turning it into just that. Protecting our environment, everyone paying their fair share and treating all ethnicities as equal should not be one-sided issues. They should be a common goal for all.

Lauren Kellett is a freshman communication major from Florissant, Mo.

Department of Education funds benefit students



Lacy Murphy

Many Truman State students have gone through the public school system. We all remember receiving the school provided books in terrible condition and returning them even worse. Sometimes books and classroom sources such as maps and math and science equipment would be so out of date, they were almost worthless to use as learning tools. Chairs and desks would be covered in gum and the etches of bored students from the past. Maybe it was just my school, but it never seemed like there was enough money to go around.

As college students, our issues are different yet still stem from the same problem: money. For two-thirds of full-time college students, federal loans help pay tuition — a resource we can't afford to lose.

The average debt of a college graduate has increased 6 percent from 2009 with students owing upward of \$24,000 upon graduation, according to an Oct. 2010 CNNMoney article. Republican presidential candidate Ron Paul claims the federal loans program, which is funded by the Department of Education, is a massive failure. If elected, not

only would Paul transition away from government-backed student aid, he would cut the Department of Education entirely, according to ronpaul.com. The elimination of the Department of Education is something the U.S. is not ready for, and while it might help reduce our national debt, it would be at the sacrifice of necessary funding needed for many college students.

While I agree students' mounting debt matched with the struggle to find a job post-graduation is a colossal problem, eliminating the program doesn't eliminate the problem. When someone undergoes heart surgery, they don't simply remove the heart. It must be repaired or replaced by another heart that functions better. With the Department of Education acting as the heart of public education in America, completely removing the department would be catastrophic.

Paul has brought the Department of Education under the microscope of scrutiny saying, "The Department of Education has given us No Child Left Behind, massive unfunded mandates, indoctrination and in some cases, forced medication of our children with psychotropic drugs. We should get rid of all of that and get those choices back in the hands of the people," according to ronpaul.com.

I support Paul's proposal to return the decision-making power to students or parents of students who actually are going through the public school system. During the last 12 years, we have almost doubled how much we spend for education, according to usgovernmentspending.com. However, during the last 25 years, there has been a decline of

approval ratings with a trend showing American's view of the public school system souring, according to an Aug. 2010 Gallup Poll. So, something more needs to be done, and eliminating the department isn't it.

There has never been an excess of educational funding, and how can there be when only 15 percent of the federal budget is spent on education? The real struggle with education stems from funding. If you don't give proper funding to a department, it cannot effectively do its jobs. We shouldn't be angry with the Department of Education. Instead, we should look to the leaders who decide where our tax money goes.

Simply throwing money at a problem won't fix it. The system is broken and out of date — this is where our leaders come in to represent the wants and needs of Americans. With such an obvious disapproval about the way our tax dollars are spent, congress and political organizations need to make bigger steps toward a better quality educational system.

If the student loan program were taken away, how does Ron Paul expect students to pay for college? "Anybody who's ambitious enough will get to go to college," Paul said during CNN's "State of the Union." You would think a man who grew up during the depression and managed to put himself through a top private medical school would understand the financial woes that plague college students throughout America.

Lacy Murphy is a sophomore French major from Springfield, Mo.

What comes to mind when you hear the word 'liberal?'

"I think of well-rounded ... coming from different aspects."

Emily Wolter
junior



"I think of my school and a liberal art education."

Karen Hancock
sophomore



"I think of Democratic [Party] thinking and people who are more open to change."

Emily Jacob
freshman



"I think of easy-going and patient."

Miles Taylor
freshman



AROUND THE QUAD

Pollution lawsuits aim to protect farmers' well-being



Connor Stangler

Local Senator Brian Munzlinger recently proposed a daring new approach to environmental pollution control: limiting accountability actually increases it. In this case, however, less certainly is not more.

Munzlinger is sponsoring Senate bill 490, legislation that would restrict a citizen's ability to "enjoin, abate or recover damages for a private nuisance based upon an air emission or water or solid waste discharge . . . where the emission . . . was expressly authorized by . . . a statute or regulation." In other words, if a company legally is polluting,

then an individual cannot file a lawsuit against them, meaning the accountability ends there. Such legislation, if passed, simultaneously would restrict our right to bring suit against wrongdoers and severely endanger the environment.

Munzlinger claims by reducing the risk of lawsuits, companies, such as the enormous Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations, will have more of an incentive to abide by the already established permits that dictate how they might legally pollute. Before Northeast Missouri residents support Munzlinger's advocacy, he needs to explain how limiting accountability actually increases the chance that companies will abide by legal restraints. His reasoning, it seems, is backward.

These CAFOs are huge confinement centers that raise large numbers of livestock within one facility. Although the consolidation of livestock industries "reduce the overall environmental impact of livestock and poultry production," the sheer size of the facilities leads to increased risk of manure and odor pollution, according to the Missouri Department of Natural Resources.

Rather than putting a legal barrier between businesses and the citizens affected by pollution, Munzlinger is trying to remove it, apparently to protect corporations from frivolous lawsuits. Such lawsuits are not frivolous when they protect the well-being of an adjacent farmer's land. Rather, they are necessary to check the industrial effects of powerful corporate farmers.

The bill limits the legal extent of the problem, but not the physical. Words can narrow our definition of pollution in the court room, but they cannot contain the spread of sewage down a stream. Our local Senator might claim a permit is enough and there is no need for a right to prosecute, but he cannot foresee the extent to which permitted pollution can damage the environment. Even if he admits that, he still lacks a justification for the removal of rights.

A citizen's right to file a lawsuit does not end where the law says it does — it extends to what might be necessary and right. Although a loose permit might declare a company environmentally responsible, the actual effects of their pollution might tell a different story.

Citizens must retain the right to blow the whistle, to declare hurtful what legally might still be healthful. Their ability to step beyond the scope of the law enables them to speak to what they see as dangerous. If the bill becomes law, it will restrict the individual's right to adequately defend their property from external and uncontrollable factors. The noxious fumes coming from a livestock facility might not fall within the range of the permit, but according to this bill, the innocent property owner subjected to its effects will be powerless to protect his land legally.

Pollution notoriously is hard to limit. It sometimes is an unavoidable byproduct of certain industries and is, when it escapes containment, unpredictable. The nature of the problem is justification alone for broad access to the court room. In light of its perverse and unforeseeable consequences, why restrict the means to stop it? Munzlinger sees it as an incentive — I see it as a crisis.

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