

Bhajan stresses meditation, mental health

"I relate to him as someone who doesn't cater to our ego. He's our father, he points us in the right direction." This is how one Sikh described Yogi Bhajan.

Thursday night, Bhajan was "father" to about 200 people who paid between \$3 and \$4 to hear his lecture, "Meditation and Mental Health." According to one Sikh spokesperson at the door, "Even Yogi (the affectionate term the Sikhs use for Bhajan) pays to get in."

Bhajan talked about the incongruity of living in a country where the people are well-fed and wealthy but are still unhappy and miserable.

He mentioned statistics that say 82.6 per cent of American marriages are unhappy.

"Everyone gets married, but no one knows how to make a good marriage," he said.

Other social problems Bhajan discussed included runaway pregnancies, overfeeding of children and women's identity crises.

A big man at 6'2" and dressed in the white garb and turban of the Sikhs, Bhajan sat at center stage in 138 Gilbert and talked for 2½ hours. The audience, dotted with more white turbans, sat patiently, giggling and chuckling occasionally at Bhajan's remarks.

His comments included:

- "There's a prediction of an earthquake in California — Los Angeles will fall into the sea. Everyone's worried. I say fine. We have been eating fishes for a long time. Now they will have a chance to eat us."

- "Somebody asked me one day what I'd do if I went to Hell. I said, 'Teach Yoga.'

- "When a person comes to me and asks for help, I judge him by how impatient he is. The less is the patience, the more he is the patient."

Although many of his remarks were humorous, he said people used to know how to lead healthy sane lives but have discarded much of that knowledge.

To illustrate this point, he talked about the benefits of a cold shower for nervousness.

"If a person did nothing else but take a cold shower every day... it would cleanse the capillaries and regenerate the nervous system," he said. "We build beautiful showers in our homes with hot and cold running water, but we only open the hot water and do not use the cold water at all. The equilibrium of the mind and the blood that flows in the capillaries is equal to mental health. This is not new. Man knew this 5,000 years ago."

He explained how easy it is to cure sickness. Diagon radish for jaundice and elm solution for ear, nose and throat problems, were a couple of cures he described. Other health cures, he said, are found in things usually thrown away, such as beet greens for a bleeding ulcer or orange peels for constipation.

As a means to improving human relations, Bhajan emphasized the ability to forgive and to tolerate. "We have never trained ourselves to learn the law of forgiveness. Where forgiveness is, God is. Where forgiveness is, happiness is. Where forgiveness is, health is. It is an act of the brave to forgive somebody," he said.

He also stressed the importance of a meditative mind but was quick to define what he meant.

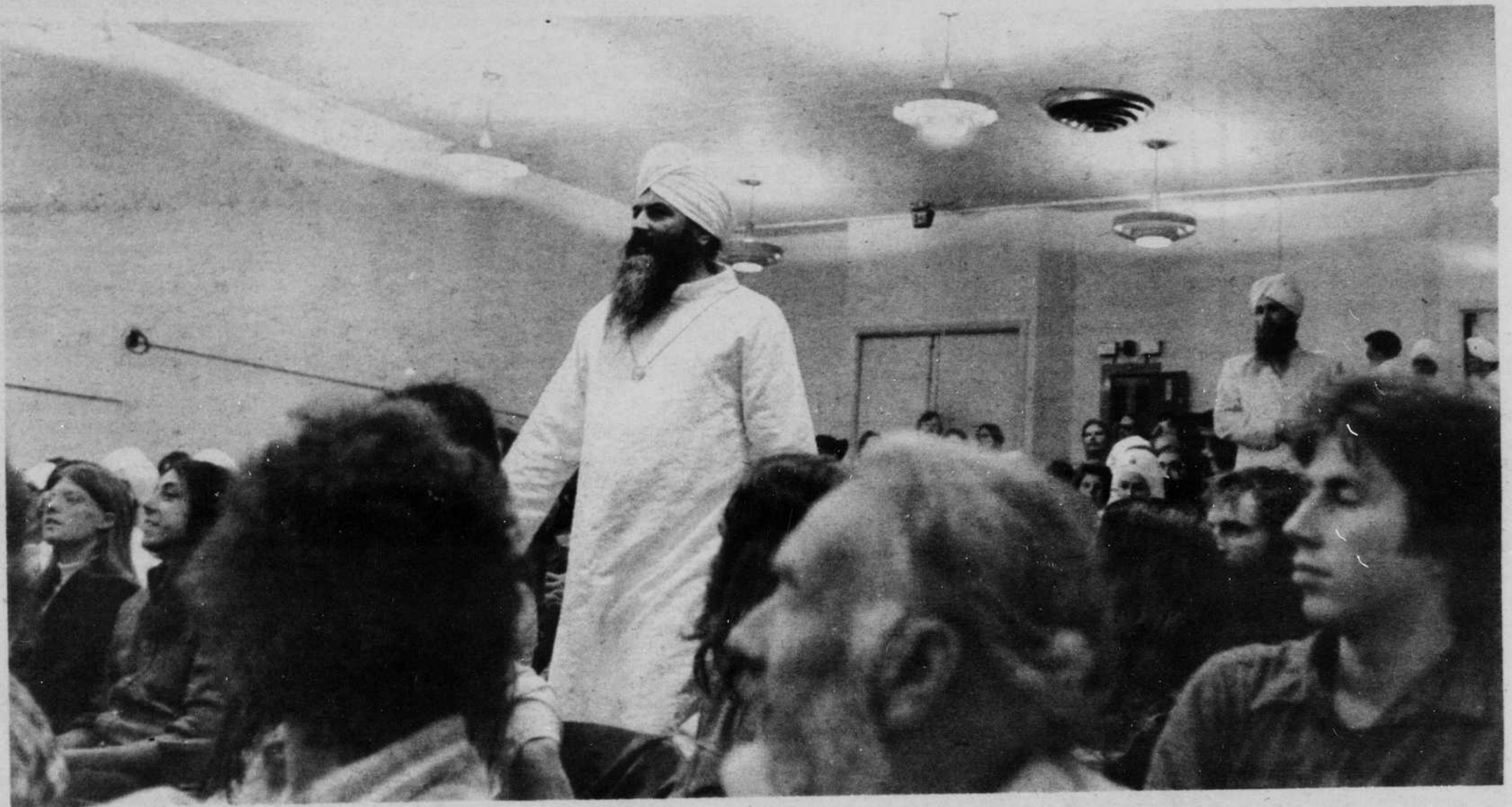
"Today people meditate," he said. "They close their eyes for 20 minutes and chant a mantra. That mantra has psychological power — you pay for it, you benefit. But is it meditation?"

"If you are acting aggressively or suppressing and do not lose your equilibrium, then you have the faculty of a meditative mind. A child was playing with a candle and burned himself while the mama was doing meditation. Is that meditation? Do not lose the equilibrium of yourself. If you have a meditative mind — whatever you are doing — you are in total awareness," he said.



Yogi Bhajan

Story and Photos by
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Opinion index succumbs to market pressures

The Oregon Research Institute's (ORI) statewide opinion index has fallen by the wayside, according to ORI administrative assistant Grattan Kerans.

The index listed Oregonians' opinions in areas such as political figures, public issues and public services. The project became defunct, said Kerans, because "it was too sophisticated."

The index started as an "in house" project to be used only by ORI. However, Kerans said the project was developed into a marketable project in order to fund it. Ironically, that development caused the downfall of the index, as it proved to have low marketability. "We're not market oriented," said Kerans. "We're not entrepreneurs."

Other ORI projects have had more success, however. Kerans believes one of the most exciting projects is the Tactual Hearing Project.

Two ORI researchers, Robert Rosov and John Hunt, have developed a device called a vocoder, which, when attached to the forearm or thigh, can translate sounds into patterned vibrations. Words can be felt by channeling them through the 23 channel vocoder. In this way, a deaf person can learn to hear and eventually speak.

Kerans said the vocoder can pattern inflections, tone, exclamation, questions, and even pitch.

Funding for the vocoder project is coming from a three-year grant given to the Institute for its bio-

medical research.

Another project ORI has begun is program evaluation.

ORI now contracts to evaluate federally funded programs in Oregon to see if they are meeting their expected goals. ORI currently runs evaluation programs to monitor the efficiency of the Oregon Law Enforcement Council and the Oregon Competency Based Education Program.

Kerans said ORI still has a strong commitment in the field of theoretical social psychology in the areas of human judgment and performance.

But Kerans also stressed that they are developing into many new fields of social research.