

oregon daily emerald

Vol. 83, No. 39

Eugene, Oregon 97403

Wednesday, Oct. 28, 1981

Panelists discuss handgun control

By DANE CLAUSSEN
Of the Emerald

The explosive topic of handgun control brought together a state representative, a physician, a University law school professor and a law enforcement educator in a panel discussion Tuesday.

The panel, sponsored by the Oregon Student Public Interest Research Group and moderated by Steve Schneider, was held to mark National End Handgun Violence Week. The commemorative week was established by the National Coalition to Ban Handguns.

Panel members, speaking to an audience of more than 40, stressed that handgun control is more than a single issue.

"We have to look further into society," said Dr. Thomas Gerow, director of Sacred Heart Hospital emergency room.

"I'm very concerned that people tend to isolate the gun," said Ken Viegas, director of the law enforcement education program at the University's school of community service and public affairs.

Violent behavior is in the grain of American society, added Rep. Gretchen Kafoury, D-Port-

land. Switzerland is a country where most people own guns but do not have this country's problems with them, she explained.

Canada, a country similar to the United States, also does not have the problem of handgun abuse, said Kafoury.

Banning handguns would not eliminate violence from society. It would simply create a black market, Viegas said.

People have a "tremendous amount of fear," he went on to say. "In that environment, we have people wanting to arm themselves."

"We will have to do things incrementally as we understand how to take the right steps," Viegas said.

The society's image of the "good guys with guns killing the bad guys with guns is an absurd representation of society," said James O'Fallen of the University's law school.

Very little violence is the result of a rational decision made to better society, O'Fallen said.

Oregon's firearm statutes were written in 1925 and have been badly in need of change for at least 10 years, Kafoury said. She proposed legislation

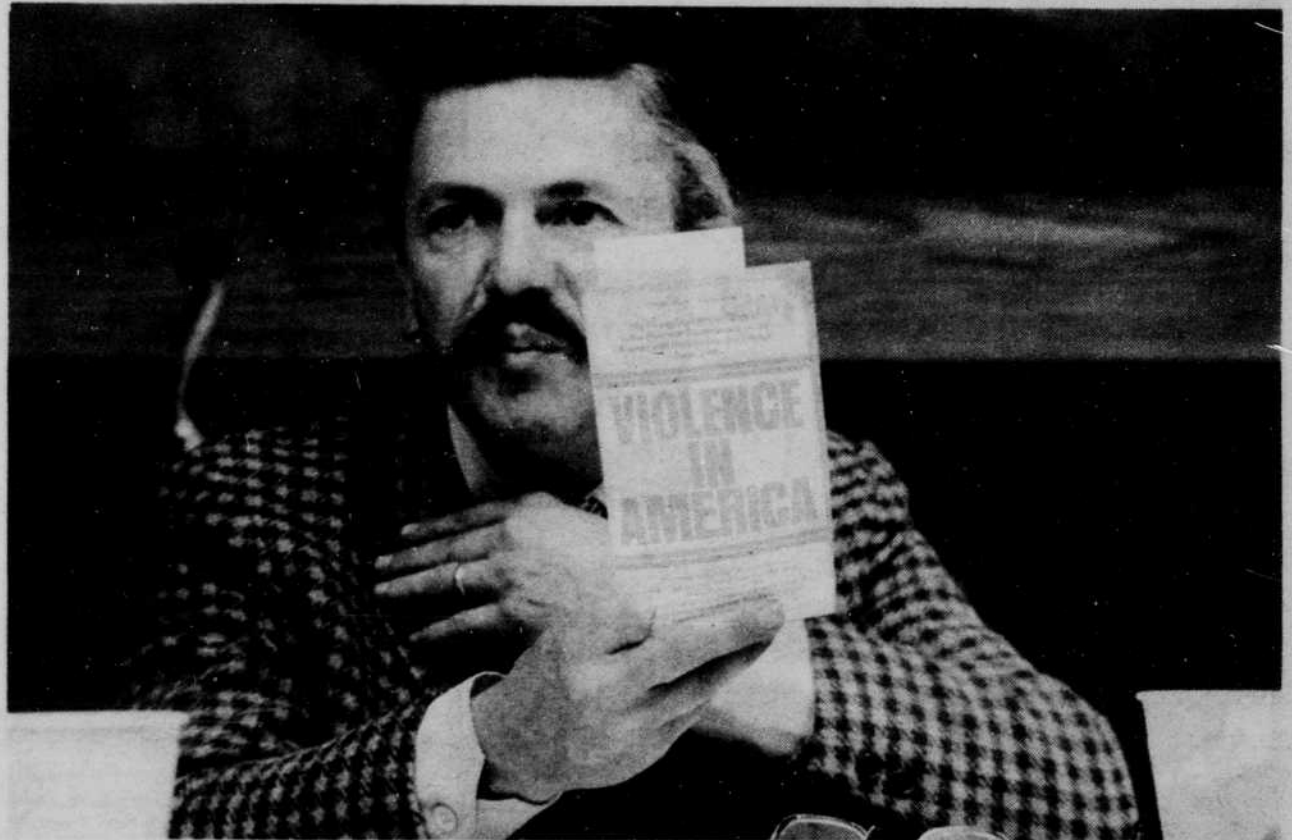


Photo by Mark Pynes

Ken Viegas, director of the law enforcement education program at the University's law school, said banning hand guns would create a black market.

dealing with concealed weapon permits during the 1977 and 1979 legislative sessions, and

on banning so-called Saturday Night Specials and automatic firearms during the 1981 session, she said.

Those bills did not fare well in the legislature because gun control is not "a rational subject" in the western states and because of the power of the National Rifle Association, which testified against the bills, she added.

Nationally, Congress approved a bill banning the importation of handguns after the assassinations of Sen. Robert Kennedy and civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr., in 1968, said Schneider. The effort now being made is to prohibit the importation of handgun parts, allowable through a loophole in the law, he added.

The number of crimes involving handguns is increasing dramatically, Schneider said.

The argument that citizens may carry firearms unconditionally under the provisions of the second amendment to the Constitution is faulty, said O'Fallen, who stressed he was not representing the law school's opinion.

When the amendment was ratified, he explained, all able-bodied men were required to serve in the state militia and provide their own guns.

"The Federal Government could not prohibit states from having and outfitting a militia" after the amendment was ratified, O'Fallen said. "Gun-owning was not granted as a personal right but as a right of the state vis-a-vis the Federal Government," he said.

It is fortunate Eugene has few of the handgun-related problems many larger cities have, Gerow said.

Flu shots — sniff — offered



Photo by Mark Pynes

A moment of discomfort at the Student Health Center for Elsie Essien may save a week's worth of agony. Vaccinations for students cost \$2.50, while those for faculty and staff cost \$3.50.

Influenza vaccinations for students, faculty and staff are available at the Student Health Center until the end of fall term.

The vaccinations, which cost \$2.50 per injection for students and \$3.50 per injection for faculty and staff, are especially advisable for people with a high risk of complications from lower respiratory tract infections, according to University Physician James Jackson.

The shots are "not terribly popular", partly because it's been several years since a serious flu outbreak, Jackson says, adding that more faculty and staff seem to desire the shots than students.

Unless students have other medical problems that could be compounded by influenza, a flu shot isn't necessary, Jackson says, although the vaccination is a good precaution against getting the flu and missing classes.

Anyone under 28 who has never been vaccinated will need two injections four weeks apart. Persons over 28 need only one injection, as does anyone vaccinated with the 1978-79, 1979-80 or 1980-81 vaccine.

Vaccinations will be given at the health center every Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 8 to 9 a.m. For more information, call the health center at 686-4441.

Copter at campus misses ill cargo

Pilots of an Air Force helicopter that buzzed the EMU before landing on Hayward Field Tuesday must have felt a little silly.

The helicopter, dispatched from the 304 Aerospace Rescue and Recovery Squadron in Portland, flew to Eugene to take a Sacred Heart patient with a broken leg to a Portland hospital for further treatment.

But when the helicopter landed at Hayward Field — the usual spot for large helicopters to land in Eugene — the pilots found no doctors and no patient.

The transfer was supposed to take place today.

The foul-up apparently happened at the helicopter's headquarters, said a representative of the Eugene Fire Department, which coordinates transportation of medical emergencies.

Less than three minutes after landing, the early bird's pilots learned of the mistake and returned to Portland. They'll return this afternoon.