

# Debates faced with problems

Sunday's debate may not have been head-to-head as Walter Mondale requested, but it was certainly worth watching. It gave the country a chance to see Mondale and Pres. Ronald Reagan speak spontaneously, without television cue cards.

The result showed Reagan fumbling for words and looking confused, while Mondale appeared in control of his facts and strong in his style. Yet, despite the debate's apparent success in providing more information about the candidates, there were some serious behind-the-scenes problems.

It is incredible that after receiving a list of 100 professional journalists, the candidates could not agree upon who should serve on the question panel. They ended up choosing only three journalists for the debate instead of four, which was the number suggested by debate organizers.

Barbara Walters correctly stated in an interview Sunday night that changes must be made in the debate format before the candidates come together again. The League of Women Voters, which is sponsoring the debates, expressed anger and frustration over the process that allowed Mondale and Reagan to be so picky about who would ask them questions.

While so far no changes in the debate format have been announced, it is clear that the League of Women Voters will try to change the rules that allowed the candidates to select the question panel.

Several possibilities exist. The league could make a random, lottery-like drawing from the existing list of 100 journalists. They also could form a new list and draw from that one. Such a new debate format could solve the problem of panel selection and perhaps give Americans a chance to see a more one-on-one debate style.

Format isn't the only problem with the debate process, however. Reagan's refusal to hold more than two debates counters efforts to educate voters. Had he agreed to the six debates that Mondale requested there would be more time to cover important issues. On Sunday, many domestic concerns — such as civil rights, labor, urban development and the environment — were barely mentioned.

Not only would six debates give more time to cover critical domestic and foreign policy issues, it also would give Americans a chance to see Reagan as he really is: confused and unsure of important facts.

## EMU lobby a good place for protests and debates

With the coming of the Nov. 6 elections, political tensions at the University are on the increase. Last Thursday when anti-war protesters staged a sit-in in front of the Marine recruiting desk in the EMU lobby, tensions came to a boiling point.

A Maranatha preacher, upset with the display of anti-militarism criticized those participating in the sit-in for being ignorant of the important role the armed services have played in protecting American freedoms. The protesters answered with their opinion of the Marines and soon a crowd gathered and shouting started.

Since then a number of people have criticized the anti-war protesters for obstructing the right of free speech on campus. The protesters did not, however, threaten anyone's right to free speech and certainly not that of the Marines, who were free to talk like everybody else in the lobby at the time. In fact the protesters may have actually encouraged free speech by bringing people with opposing views together in such a lively and spontaneous debate about American foreign policy.

What should never have happened, however, is the semi-obstruction of the Marine table. By placing themselves directly in front of the table the protesters were technically blocking student access to the Marines.

It is not a question of free speech, it is a question of courtesy and fairness. Since all students pay fees to the University, it is wrong for some students to try and prevent other students from going about their business.

When the anti-war protesters return today and tomorrow to the EMU lobby for another anti-military sit-in, let it be away from the Marine table. Instead, the focus should be on getting students with differing views to openly debate the issues at hand. This will be a challenge for everyone involved.



MR. DONOVAN IS TAKEN BY THE DREADED SLEAZE.

## letters

### Moral laws?

Some of your recent correspondents seem to be voting for the present administration out of moral outrage. Perhaps a word or two in favor of toleration would be in order.

It really isn't necessary, for example, to choose between the victim and the criminal. Let us do all we can for the former, but the more we can do for the latter in terms of encouraging his reintegration into society (like encouraging him to vote), may well be the more we do to ensure that there will not be future victims.

Likewise, when we insist that law enforcement agencies are themselves subject to the law, that the rights of the accused must be observed, we do not deny the law: we affirm it. America is not a country where anyone should be subject to a knock on the door in the night.

Finally, a related issue: When we refuse social services, economic, and educational opportunities to minorities, to the old, the ill, the unemployed, and the poor, we do not affirm the American dream; we deny it.

It is certainly possible to forget the community, to fracture and simplify one's view of society to the point where one might overlook the actions of this administration and vote out of a partially conceived self-interest. But the self-righteousness is really out of place.

Michael McGuire  
Eugene

### Go Mondale!

What a Match! The candidates finally had the chance to "put on the gloves." There were certainly no knock-outs, according to a senior aid in the Reagan camp. There were 12 or 14 Reagan supporters together in the same room and they all agreed that the president looked good.

They were all very pleased. I find that hard to believe. The candidates were congenial, Fritz was even pretty funny. The president fumbled around a bit but he's a real nice guy so we can allow him a little more slack. He also avoided the issues, but what the hell?

Barbara Walters sure confused the President when she almost passed up his rebuttal. He didn't seem to mind though and just mixed it in with his closing statement. Alas, he really didn't look very sharp.

Ronald Reagan is truly incapable of running this country. He's on a crusade. If we had a king I would support him for the job, but as a figurehead only. He's probably a very nice guy, just misdirected.

Maybe there were no knock-outs, I guess those Reagan folks must know more than me. But I'm convinced that if the American people become interested in and concerned with this election, then Walter Mondale and Geraldine Ferraro will win regardless of what the odds-makers have to say.

I urge the students of this university to watch the debates and get involved!

Randall Harbour  
Eugene

### Freedom issue

There they go again! On Oct. 4 a group of reactionaries established chaos in the main lobby of the EMU when they obstructed the rights of Marine recruiters to recruit students on the campus.

The kooks are at their old game of protesting against the military. There are some groups on campus who have some legitimate concerns about the military, but I hope they don't associate themselves with these extremists.

These zealots were trying to restrict the freedom of choice of students who believe in an alternate life style. It is hard to believe that people who supposedly believe strongly in minority rights and freedom of choice would then restrict the rights of others to choose the military.

Any liberal-minded person who believes strongly against the military would hold their nose but allow others their right to choose as they wish without interference. The University is a learning community where diverse thought exists. It is not a place to restrict the freedom of any group including the military.

It looks like these fanatics are trying to dictate according to their own beliefs what groups can and cannot exist on our campus. I feel that these actions are highly improper. It is an outrage that such a philosophy can fester and grow in a climate of free thought and learning.

Ron Munion  
Political Science

## oregon daily emerald

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published Monday through Friday except during exam week and vacations by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon, 97403.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices on the third floor of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

**General Staff**  
Advertising Director  
Production Manager  
Classified Advertising  
Controller

Ad Sales: David Wood, Marcia Leonard, Tim Clevenger, Laura Buckley, Roberta Oliver, Laurie Noble, Jennifer Fox.

Production: David Bryant, Sharla Cassidy, Kelly Cornyn, John Dorsey, Stormi Dykes, Julie Freeman, Kathy Gallagher, Dean Guernsey, Susan Hawkins, Kirk Hirota, Karin McKecher, Lauri Neely, Kelly Neff, Curt Penrod, Tamy Riggs, Michele Ross, Peg Solonika, Tim Swilling, Colleen Tremaine, Eileen Tremaine, Hank Trotter.

Editor  
Editorial Page Editor  
News Editor  
Managing Editor  
Photo Editor  
Sports Editor  
Sidelines Editor  
Entertainment Editor  
Assistant Entertainment Editor  
Night Editor

**Associate Editors**  
Administration  
Politics  
ASUO  
Student Activities  
Features

Reporters: Sean Axmakr, Shannon Kelly, Allan Lazo, Lori Stephens.  
**News and Editorial**  
Display Advertising and Business  
Classified Advertising  
Production  
Circulation

Michele Matassa  
Costas Christ  
Michael Kulaga  
Mike Sims  
Michael Clapp  
Brent De La Paz  
Sheila Landry  
Kim Carlson  
Mike Duncan  
Sheila Landry

Michael Doke  
Paul Ertelt  
Julie Shippen  
Jolayne Houtz  
Lori Steinhauer

686-5511  
686-3712  
686-4343  
686-4381  
686-5511