

Removal of sign was the best decision

The fate of the EMU sign has been decided. On Thursday, the EMU Board came to a unanimous decision that the sign should be removed as soon "as is physically possible." The Board voted to remove the EMU sign because of the sexist nature of the language it uses. For example, the sign, which is painted on the wall above the EMU main lobby, says in part that the University should be the "guardian of the noble in man's aspiration for the human society" and that it should be a "leader in the quest for the good life for all men."

Last year, when then ASUO Pres. Mary Hotchkiss requested that the sign be removed, a storm of controversy developed. On one side were those who felt that removing the sign was a form of censorship that could lead to the removal of other written works at the university considered to be sexist. Others argued, among other things, that the sexist language of the sign reinforced societal values that denigrated women.

In the case of the EMU sign, such sexism is certainly clear. The sign implies that the University should be the guardian of "man's" aspirations and a leader for the good life of all "men." Half of the student population, the half made up by women, are not a part of a statement that supposedly was written to represent the entire University community.

We support the EMU board in its decision. Any statement written to demonstrate the aspirations and goals of the University should represent the entire University community. Women must get the respect they deserve as part of this learning institution.

Current gun control laws make murder convenient

Americans are often told that one of this country's most precious freedoms is the right to bear arms. It is important, however, to question how this translates into everyday reality.

Currently, the right to bear arms includes almost everything from the right to carry a BB gun to the right to carry an Israeli-made Uzi submachine gun. You can buy both at almost any well-stocked sporting goods store. You can also find many other weapons, including the AR-15 and Mini-14 assault rifles used by Michael Evan Feher in his shooting spree on Monday at Autzen Stadium. The incident led to Feher's suicide, the murder of Olympic sprinter Chris Brathwaite, and the wounding of University wrestler Rick O'Shea.

As if that incident wasn't enough to make some people question gun control laws in this state, we now learn that another student was arrested on campus Wednesday with a concealed .45-caliber pistol. Police also found him to be the owner of a Mini-14 rifle, the same kind of gun used by Feher.

It is time for Americans to realize that not all kinds of freedom are productive or positive. Why should anyone over the age of 18 be free to go into a store and buy an Uzi submachine gun? Why should teflon-coated bullets be sold freely over the counter when their sole purpose is to penetrate a bullet-proof vest? Why should automatic rifles able to shoot enough bullets to kill 20 people in a matter of minutes be sold to anyone with the money, provided they don't have a criminal record?

Feher didn't have a criminal record, neither did James Huberty when he walked into a MacDonalds in San Ysidro, Calif. in July and gunned down 21 people. Freedom without responsibility can have a very high cost. Think about it.



"THAT'S JUST A HARMLESS LITTLE TAX REFORM SNAKE, HE'S NOT GONNA HURT YOU — C'MON, GET GOING."

letters

Artist's view

Realize that this letter is not a defense of a mistake perpetrated, but a matter of providing some ignored facts, taking responsibility for one's actions and a matter of personal integrity.

I am an artist, not a bigot, and I claim the freedom of artistic license in my choice of symbolism. The Emerald had the freedom to reject the cartoon which I drew to go with their editorial about rape on campus. Readers do have the freedom to interpret it as they see it; once again, that is beyond my control. There is no place for racism, so please don't project it into the intent of my work.

Symbolism has been totally excluded as a reason for my design. Black expresses the campus problem of darkness in a black and white medium of print. The woman was left blank, colorless, and featureless because rape can happen to anyone. These were placed in an abstract fashion to emphasize the symbolism.

I don't regret drawing the cartoon because I know that awareness of the dangers of rape is an honorable intention. I have no desire to control how the "picture worth 1000 words" can be alternatively interpreted. However, I do have regret for the social conditions in this country today that make many emotions raw concerning minority issues. When will we learn to be people first and then be proud of our individuality?

Barbara Bending
Eugene

Irresponsible

Enough is enough! Ever since the editorial cartoon "Organize for a Safe Campus" was printed, letters have appeared in the Emerald protesting it as racist and sexist. One letter even claims that "violence against black women is still not taken seriously." At best, this statement is a misconception of the truth, at worst, an intentional lie.

The cartoon was meant to draw attention to the recent incidents of rape on this campus and suggest common sense methods of avoiding such attacks. It is a sad but true reflection of our society that women and men should not walk alone in certain locales after dark. This editorial cartoon was worth a thousand words in conveying this message. Any other twisted symbolic interpretations are rubbish and do nothing to help educate the public about personal safety.

Did it ever occur to those who objected to this editorial cartoon that the "black hand" may have been intended as a symbol of darkness and evil? Did these vocal objectors ever consider that the man and two women walking together may have represented friends walking to class? Unity? Safety in numbers? Obviously not. Instead, these people chose to assume the worst; referring to the hand as a symbol that only black men rape white women, and that men should lead women. Absurd! It is precisely this kind of irresponsible, accusatory action which spawns racist and sexist attitudes. The press is very powerful and those who use it should be responsible enough to think through an issue before speaking about it.

Dave Edlund
Chemistry

Hacking away

Regardless of whether the "Black Handed Cartoon" was symbolism or racism, an oversensitive nerve has obviously been hit.

Shall we rally to remove Sir Walter Scott's "Ivanhoe" from our shelves because the "Black Knight" represents evil? Should we outlaw any history book that refers to the "Black Plague" of Europe? A more sensible course may be to acknowledge that the black-

evil, white-good symbolism (evolving from darkness-light) existed long before racial distinctions, and isn't something we can or need to change. But we can change the attitudes of people who need to be enlightened. (Can I use that word?)

Thoreau said "There are a thousand hacking at the branches of evil to every one that is striking at the root." I implore you to abandon the majority.

Bob Saltz
Eugene

Self-serving

In Monday's Emerald (Nov. 12), there appeared a commentary from David Sarju (director of the Black Student Union) and an editorial addressing last Friday's editorial cartoon. The cartoon pictured an ominous black hand attempting to grasp a woman in the night and showed two women walking with one man under a lighted area. The intent was to contrast the current fear of rape that shadows women here on campus with a depiction of how better lighting could improve the situation.

What concerned me about both writings was the misinterpretation of the cartoon and the diatribes that followed. Yes, the cartoon showed a hand that was black, but entirely black. The palm-side of the hand should be white if the artist wanted to depict a black man's hand. The use of dark figures has always been an effective means of illustrating evil, and rape is certainly that. Mr. Sarju was quick to agree on that point, and his criticism was specific to the cartoon. I would also agree that some modification would have been appropriate.

The editorial was self-serving and went overboard in its attempt to reconcile itself to the issue of racism, and for their admission of guilt in printing the cartoon. The issue of racism should be present in our minds, but better use of the editorial could have been directed to the grave problem of violence in our community.

This reaction is an example of not being able to focus on issues as they are. Should the cartoon have had a representative of each race and nationality? Obviously not, since the issue concerned the violence of rape

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