

Editorial

From humor about condoms, AIDS...

It turns out that the Oregon Daily Emerald is not the only newspaper that occasionally fails to run "Bloom County." Readers of The Oregonian, Portland's daily, were dismayed when they noticed the popular strip was absent last March 21. That day's strip, reprinted at the right, was apparently excluded because of a reference to condoms.

Only two other papers in the country held Berke Breathed's Pulitzer Prize-winning comic strip because of its mention of condoms. The syndicate that releases "Bloom County," the Washington Post Writers Group, printed a warning about the controversial reference along with the copy sent to publications that subscribe to the strip.

Willamette Week, an opinion and entertainment paper in Portland, reported March 24 that Oregonian Editor Bill Hilliard made the decision to hold the strip because of an Oregonian decision not to publish condom ads on the basis that they might promote sexual promiscuity. Hilliard could not be reached by the Emerald for comment.

While any publication has the right to present and pursue an ideological agenda, the distribution of news and information remains the first responsibility of any reputable newspaper. This is especially true with the troubling threat of AIDS, where education is the best defense.

The Oregonian, as the major daily of both Portland and the state, should reconsider its policy, and it should have run "Bloom County" that day. Although the continuing saga of Steve Dallas and his animal friends didn't specifically educate on AIDS, it is important to remember that a sense of humor toward the disease may help people to overcome the fear of it.

...to humanitarian aid for the Contra rebels

President Reagan's recent saber-rattling in Honduras succeeded. The troops are back home safe from Central America, and U.S. tax dollars are about to leave. On Thursday, the U.S. Senate voted overwhelmingly to restore humanitarian aid to the Nicaraguan Contras, approving a \$47.9 million package the U.S. House of Representatives had passed earlier this week.

The bill includes money for food, clothing, communications equipment and medical supplies through Sept. 30, as well as additional monies for medical assistance for Nicaraguan children and the State Department's International Development fund. Amazingly, the total bill costs almost \$12 million more than the original White House request for aid that was rejected by the House on Feb. 3 because it included weapons for the Contras.

All three of Oregon's Democratic Representatives (Les AuCoin, Peter DeFazio, and Ron Wyden) and Sen. Mark Hatfield voted against the package, and they should be commended for their stand. Republican House members Bob and Denny Smith and Sen. Bob Packwood went along with other congressmen in reacting grudgingly to the ill-timed Nicaraguan excursion across the Honduran border and the subsequent U.S. deployment of troops.

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BLOOM COUNTY

by Berke Breathed

STEVE DALLAS HAD PASSED ON WITHOUT A WILL. A MEMBER OF HIS WAKE WAS THUS DISPATCHED TO FETCH HIS EARTHLY BOOTY.



A BOX OF TROJANS WAS ALSO FOUND AND, AFTER MUCH DEBATE, FINALLY IDENTIFIED AS POSSIBLY BEING MICRO-WAVE JELL-O MOLDS.



IT INCLUDED: LAW BOOKS, A FRAT PIN, LOOSE CHANGE AND A BOTTLE OF "OLD SPICE," WHICH PORTNOY ACCIDENTALLY DRANK, CAUSING HIM TO RUN AROUND THINKING HE WAS "AUNT BEA."



THE LATTER WERE FILLED WITH WATER AND DELIVERED AIRBORNE UNTO MRS. PAULA PEGWHISTLE'S PASSING PONTIAC... WHICH PRETTY WELL WRAPPED THINGS THE HECK UP FOR THE NIGHT.



Letters

Objectification

I find it fascinating that the "objectification of women" was posited recently in the ODE letters section (Continuum, March 11) via the obfuscation of ideas. Setting abstract conjecture in concrete by delineating a non-existent linear continuum is academically bankrupt. Please follow their reification more objectively:

1) We can see a linear continuum of sexually debased objectification.

Queries: Why is not good at one end of the "continuum," i.e. non-violence? Why is the "continuum" linear? Since both men and women objectify both female and male bodies, would not the continuum be a non-linear discontinuous function to account for psychological and physical gender differences between all those who discriminate, namely men and women?

Counterarguments: "Continuum" is an idea. Ideas exist in the rational mind assuming one or more exist. Thus, ideas cannot be seen. Behavior can be seen but is seldom measured objectively. Consider four typical behaviors which may occur daily in Eugene:

- a) a young woman paints her nails, face and lips before leaving for class;
- b) a young man mouses his hair, slips into \$85 sneakers and a tank top to pump iron before going to class;
- c) a young woman reads Cosmopolitan to learn what men (and other women) "really" want;
- d) one of many lonely men

(and women) slowly sips a beer in the back of Jiggles Tavern.

Now Kristina Petersen and Ann Ramsey (who wrote the letter, Continuum), you're the investigators. Your scope is pornography. Are any of these persons "objectifying" the human body (or spirit) to the demise of the human race? Or are you?

Russ Baldwin
Student

Life in Hell

What on earth gives you the idea (March 10 editorial: Proposed tax on sins a blessing to students) that man pays for his sins in heaven? Such ignorance on the part of the press is appalling!

Not to worry, however, there is a pleasant remedy: the University should make Professor Emmanuel Hatzantonis' class on Dante and His Times a required course for journalism majors. Then, o' wielder of the pen of presumed truth, you and your colleagues might keep things straight — your sheep grazing the flowered fields of Paradise and your goats tormented forever in the bleak landscape of Hell.

Ann Applegarth
Junior

Friday, April 1, 1988