

History repeats itself in ASUO symposium

To include or not to include, that is the question. Beginning today the ASUO sponsors its week-long Winter Symposium entitled "Responding to Racism."

For some reason, however, symposium organizers have failed to include any international student organizations in the activity.

In a press release to publicize the symposium, ASUO Events Coordinator Christi Billecci said: "This week includes a variety of events that are meant to enhance cultural awareness while educating students about racism."

But by ignoring international students, the ASUO has decided to be exclusive and segregate one section of the campus population from the other.

By choosing to be exclusive, the ASUO is making a statement that international students are immune to discrimination and are not affected by racism.

Wrong.

Racism is an issue international students deal with as much as U.S. students of color. It is an issue that has been the topic of two of the Foreign Students Organization discussion sessions.

It also perpetuates the stereotype that international students do not give a hoot about what goes on around them.

Wrong again.

Last year when ASUO President Karen Gaffney and Vice President Steve Hoyt campaigned for office, they did not forget to seek an endorsement from the FSO.

Yet according to FSO Director May Sagbakken, no ASUO representative has even set a foot in the FSO office to acknowledge its presence.

A haunting note from the past: Two years ago organizers of the Women's Symposium, sponsored by ASUO, failed to involve women of color.

A coalition of women of color then boycotted the symposium, forcing its eventual cancellation.

Is this a case of history repeating itself?

The ASUO should have learned from past mistakes and included international students in its Winter Symposium.

Bennett should do better with disability access

The Downtown Athletic Club is under expansion to add two additional racquetball courts and a second gym. But far more important facilities have been left out of the blueprints.

Apparently, the expansion of the club, currently under way, does not include access for the disabled.

Susan Sygall, a member of the club who uses a wheelchair, and who has participated in the club's aerobics, swimming and ski conditioning programs for the past year, said she is "horrified and immensely disappointed" that the club owners have ignored the needs of the disabled in the new plans.

We're horrified and disappointed too.

Not only are we surprised the plans give no consideration to the disabled, but considering the owner of the building, and his attitude, we are even more horrified and disappointed.

Eugene City Councilman Rob Bennett, and his wife Norma, own the building. As a councilman, Bennett should be more in tune with his constituency than what just recently was demonstrated.

This is not just a minor oversight.

Fortunately, city officials have told Bennett that he must install a ramp or lift to make the addition accessible to the disabled before he will be granted an occupancy permit.

Rather than appeal Eugene Building Official Larry Reed's decision concerning an occupancy permit, Bennett has decided to postpone the opening of the new area.

And, Bennett claims his "technical people are researching" the disabled access issue and "just aren't through with it yet."

At this point Bennett would be better off including an access for the disabled.

This would bode well not only for the disabled who participate in club activities — but for Bennett's position as a city councilman as well.

Letters Policy

The Emerald will attempt to print all letters containing comments on topics of interest to the University community. Comments must be factually accurate and refrain from personal attacks on the character of others.



Letters

In prayer

Ouch! Ouch! After reading your provocative piece I felt hurt, then anger, then a strong desire to respond in kind and equally discredit your side. I would point out the brutality that goes back to the 1920's, the intransigency in the face of numerous opportunities, the justified fear of the Israelis in light of the internecine warfare between Sunni and Shiite Muslims or against Christians, and the most recent barbarity between rival Shiites of Amal and Hezbollah factions, which took more lives in one week than months of the Intifadah. Only later in prayer it occurred to me ... this man may really care ... and if he does, I must share my deepest soul's truth in a spirit of true dialogue, namely: 1) This kind of vitriolic attack only sets in motion an endless cycle of charge and counter-charge. It hardens resistance on the other side and results in alienation, suspicion, hatred, fear and escalating violent thoughts or actions. This serves no one, least of all the Palestinians. 2) There will be no end to the present intolerable situation until and unless the Palestinians have self-determination and the Israelis guaranteed security.

I invite you, yeah challenge you, Fahad, and all on this campus who really care, to join together in action supporting a negotiated settlement guaranteeing self-determination, freedom, peace and security for both peoples. We're self-deluding if we claim any individual, nation, or religion has a monopoly on truth, rightness, liberty, and human dignity. Pursue peace, not war!

Rabbi Hanan Sills
Hillel Counselor

Dishonor

The Forum column on Feb. 6 must not go without answer. Those on both sides of the Middle Eastern conflict have taken inappropriate action on occasion. But to compare isolated acts of inexcusable violence in the context of a struggle for survival with the systematic attempt by the Nazis to eliminate whole ethnic groups is ludicrous.

CROSS.

Such a comparison dishonors the memories of the more than six million Jews who were victims of this atrocity, as well as the memories of millions of others considered unsuitable by the "master race."

It is clear to any but the most unreasonable observer that it is not the intent of Israel to eliminate the Palestinian people. Their actions are clearly not consistent with any such program.

Many reasonable people on both sides of this conflict have recognized the need to move into a situation of constructive dialogue if peace is to be achieved. This objective will be brought closer when articles that merely serve to inflame hatred and deceive the unwary stop appearing.

Paul E. Compton
Graduate Teaching Fellow
Psychology

Bobby Green

In response to the appointment of Bobby Green to the Ward 6 city council position, I say it's about time!

It's about time that minorities had a voice in a city where bigotry and hate crimes are on the rise. It's about time that the city council responds to the needs of its constituency. As a gay student and a native Eugenean, I have lobbied and voted and demonstrated and pushed as hard as I could for somebody who can truly represent me. When the city council announced its decision, I finally felt that we had something to hope for.

I know that Councilman Green will have a wide variety of issues to tend to. I know that minority issues are not his only focus. But that is exactly what the minority community expects out of its representatives — to apply the minority perspectives to any given issues, whether it has an overall effect on us or not. This has been a vital yet missing element on the city council for too many years.

We all owe some thanks to Councilwoman Emily Schue for her energetic work on this issue. And especially to Councilman Green — good luck, and

always know that you have supporters.

Tim Hughes
Philosophy

I am

I am appalled and disturbed.

John Shenon
Student

I care

In response to Richard Gold's letter on Feb. 13: "I care."

Leigh Corkum
Senior

Animal care

I am so pleased to hear about the change in policy regulating animal care during research here at the University (ODE, Feb. 16).

I am in support of the ethical treatments of animals. There is no reason why a kitten should have its eyes sewn shut and then dropped in a pail of water just to see what it would do. I do think that there is reason to experiment on animals if it is to find a cure or any other type of improvement for society.

I am sorry to hear that the University adhered to its own policy concerning animal experimentation. It's about time their policy reads verbatim to the U.S. Public Health Service Policy on Humane Care and Use of Laboratory Animals.

Pamela Schmerer
Theatre Arts

Wall?

Help! Do you know of a brick wall facing Northwest that is already in need of a sandblasting? We're shooting cover art for an album ("Against the Wall: Songs of Recovery") that calls for graffiti on brick, but we won't trash a wall without permission! Dimensions are 3' x 6' max. Call 343-0203.

Lea Jones
Graduate
Special Ed