

Student insurance should offer more

The ASUO group health insurance plan offered through The Prudential Co. once seemed like a great deal for all students, but rising premiums and falling benefits have made it less attractive.

The reasons for all this have been documented in depth ("Between The Rock and a hard place," *ODE*, Oct. 2), and the current deteriorating situation paints a downbeat picture for the future of the ASUO/Prudential plan.

It's easy to understand Prudential's need to increase the premiums. For the last two years in which Prudential has offered the plan, the company has lost money. Last year, it lost more than \$200,000.

You also have to credit Prudential for working with the Student Health Insurance Committee. When negotiations began to settle this year's plan, Prudential was asking for more than a 150 percent increase in premiums across the board. After working with SHIC, that increase was lessened to about a 50 percent hike for students with no dependents.

But students are students, and rate increases are rate increases. If this group plan is going to fly, the people purchasing the plan have to feel they're getting their money's worth.

It has been pointed out that the ASUO's group plan is not a good financial venture for Prudential, because the only students purchasing the plan are those who most need it and are therefore more likely to collect. Students able to secure another, better-paying agreement will certainly go elsewhere.

As the rates increase, the number of participants in the ASUO/Prudential group plan will decrease, and decreasing pool of participants will make the whole system less and less tenable.

The only way this system will work, if Prudential continues to raise the premium, is if the company can offer better services. There are two weaknesses to the ASUO/Prudential plan that have been roundly criticized: (1) Contrary to what is implied in the brochure, there are no refunds for students who wish to leave the plan, and (2) students are required to pay a lump sum for the insurance, and cannot pay in monthly installments.

Adding these two services would go a long way toward easing the concerns of foreign students, who are required to have health insurance to study here, and graduate teaching fellows, who are facing catastrophic financial crises. These two services would also help restore the damaged reputation of Prudential as a company willing to work with students. Without that reputation, students defecting to other, better plans will chip away at The Rock until the plan ceases to exist.

SKELLEY

NOT AGAIN...



Rape awareness week, right on target

Campus student groups are again expressing their concern, interest and involvement in social issues. This week the ASUO Women's Center is sponsoring a rape awareness week called "Creating a Rape Free Environment."

Although the title of the week may be more of an ideal than a reality, the effort these people are making is more than necessary. Rape is nothing new in our society and as we enter the 21st century, more information about rape is coming to the surface.

An increase in violent crimes against women may be part of the reason for a change in attitudes. In the past few years women have been arming themselves with handguns, getting trained in how to use them and carrying them on their person. Self-defense classes of all sorts have been on the rise and women are the major participants. There is even a free self-defense class called Self Defense for Women, which is offered on campus. Women are taking some serious action to protect themselves.

Since the early 1950s there has been a drastic change in women's roles in society. The stereotypical female role of mother, wife

and homemaker is no longer a reality for many women in America. Many women now see themselves as all of the above in addition to career women. As women have taken on more individual responsibility it is possible that men's roles have changed in the process. This may have caused men to harbor some aggression and resentment toward women and it seems that little effort has been made to help men adjust to the shift in roles.

We as a community need to address the differences caused by sexual role changes and there are groups in the area that are working to solve the problem of rape, such as the Rape Crisis Network, Womenspace and Men Against Rape. Community forums, counseling and events such as this week's "Creating a Rape Free Environment" make a great deal of difference in community awareness of rape.

The Women's Center is to be commended for creating and sponsoring such a valuable event. It has produced a schedule which includes such topics as sexual crimes and the judicial system, self defense, date rape and sexual assault.

Letters

Not thought out

I think you hit the nail on the head by titling Patricia Lambert's letter (*ODE*, Sept. 27) "Stereotype." Once again, the Greek system is the target of criticism that was obviously only half-way thought out.

I agree that the system of Rush used by sororities today is out-of-date and needs to be re-evaluated. I also believe that these women — who are our future leaders — deserve a more dignified introduction to the Greek system and what it can offer them.

However, I vehemently disagree with, and very much resent, the implication that because a woman is a sorority member, or because a woman chooses to dress a certain way, she is going to be the victim of rape.

Rape does not occur due to sexual desire, but rather it is an act of violence, and no one specific group of women is singled

out. I also feel strongly about the comment that the "sorority-girl" image is a staple of pornography. Is it our fault that this industry has perverted and exploited what we stand for? Unfortunately, it is very hard to break free of the misconceptions and stereotypes which have been imposed on society.

Yet anyone who really knows us realizes that we are by no means sorority girls. We are women who share the common bond of a sorority, and we are striving to meet the higher and broader demands of mature life — which includes battling unfair stereotypes.

Rachael Lester
Kappa Alpha Theta

No justification

I appreciated avowed "conservative" Mark Salvo's views (*ODE*, Sept. 28) regarding the

madness of assault rifle availability.

However, one statement Salvo made bothered me very much, and I can't let it pass. He said, no doubt with all good intention, that "nobody can justify any sort of domestic assault rifle use." The implication is that non-domestic (i.e. outside our national borders) assault rifle use may be justifiable. It is well past time to challenge that assumption.

Rambo's gory exploits notwithstanding, I think we owe it to ourselves to vividly imagine the effects of assault weapon projectiles on innocent human flesh, and realize that these occur with horrendous regularity around the globe.

Often, genuine and necessary liberation struggles are manipulated through lucrative weapons imports, into bottomless pits of self-destruction for those oppressed peoples. To them, certainly, the effects of these weapons are "domestic."

Weapons, like consciousness-enclaving drugs (to make a distinction), are simply tools of choice for a world-view rooted in the notion of the primacy of violence. There is another paradigm, another way to regard our roles and possibilities on Earth; a way that does not result in the use of weapons against flesh and psyche.

Students of life who wish to consider the alternative may wish to check out War Resisters League, 339 Lafayette St. NYC, NY 10012. It's one of the oldest and most effective pacifist organizations in the world.

Vip Short
Eugene

Sit down

I would like to encourage freshmen, and anyone else, to sit down and examine the kinds of groups they could be involved with this year. There

are many groups on campus which "gather people" in such a way as to allow for the building of friendships

I have found that it is not only important to make friends, but to evaluate the basis of friendships. So many friendships are based on "what can you do for me?" These do not last when a strong conflict of interest comes up.

Consider, in contrast, a true Christian. Such a person follows Christ's commands, such as "Love your neighbor as yourself," and "Love your enemies." Imagine what it would be like to sever a friendship with such a person! And what better place to meet these people than in a group meeting because of their common friendship with the author of Love. I found Campus Crusade for Christ to be one such group.

Bob Wiegel
Student