

LETTERS

Spirit world

For thousands of years, perhaps, Native Americans have used peyote in their religious ceremonies.

Our Constitution protects these rights, and our treaties (which have almost never been honored by white people) affirm their rights as a sovereign nation to govern their own affairs. The anti-drug people speak truly of the dangers of substance abuse. However, we shouldn't permit court rulings to slaughter the Native American church.

The medicine man acts as an anchor for the peyote worshiper when they enter the spirit world. The worshiper never confuses the spirit world with the waking state.

This is where the casual user gets into trouble because he is actually dreaming. Nature has given us sleep as a safety feature to keep us from jumping out of windows and driving into brick walls. Everyone knows that when we dream we feel much better. Dreams offer us an opportunity to work things out that otherwise are impossible to work out in our waking state.

"Where have all the buffalo gone, my brothers? When I was cold you lent me your coat and my heart was warm again. When I was hungry and weak you gave me meat and your strength thundered through my veins."

And even now...I remember. My heart is glad.

George Szuatsek
Eugene

Lower posters

I want the University administrators that think they are loco (crazy) parents to know that I'm growing up real fast and don't need them to censor campus posters for me.

I also want them to know that I'm growing up scared and sti-



fled because they are working hard to create the McCarthy-type atmosphere I've heard about. The administrators want to harass and intimidate people who peacefully express an opinion that differs from the ones they impose on others, or that might show itself to differ if only the administrators were smart enough to know.

A student whose name has not been released has been bothered since January because maybe she was the one who posted some fliers that were not OK.

I spoke a few months ago to President Brand about the one problem I have with posters — some are placed too high for short people like me to see. He told me that even though he is the president, and one would think he'd have a lot of power, he really doesn't, and he probably can't do anything to make posters more accessible to short

people and people in wheelchairs.

It is strange the way his power grew when he saw an opportunity to suppress free expression. The fact that the administrators were able to come up with a charge against a student — "misusing property" — does not justify their outrageous behavior.

Furthermore, you don't empower the disadvantaged by expanding all your efforts reacting to their enemies.

Alice Berry
Eugene

Male-bashing

Now let me see, the Women's Center has one of the largest budgets among the student groups on campus. They are against equality legislation (HB 2544) and men's magazines, but not against women's or gay magazines.

If you don't condone homosexuality you are automatically labeled "homophobic", although they don't consider themselves heterophobic. They endorse magazines such as "Women's Press" which goes into detail describing how white heterosexual men should be put on "leashes", that all men sexually assault children, and that men are forcing women to be heterosexual by economic sanctions. They (unofficially) encourage their associates to destroy any material they don't like that may circulate around campus. Does this sound like "genderism"?

This seems to have a ring of anti-male activism. Please correct me if I'm wrong on the next point: This campus is made up of roughly half males. There aren't any services on campus aimed to assist men in any way. Yet we men are having our IFC money given to this

group that is politically active in attacking men.

Many of their services are extremely important but they have gone too far in what they do. If they cannot get back to the realm of providing needed services and away from forcing their PC fads and man-bashing, then their funding should be withheld until they can.

These bigoted, prejudicial and sexist type activities should not be funded by the college community regardless if they are women, men, or chipmunks.

Gary Darby
Eugene

Wondering

Recently, George Bush asked Fidel Castro for free elections and freedom in Cuba. I didn't know Bush cared about freedom, human rights, and justice. His actions don't follow his words.

For example, he is putting and keeping dictators in power such as Mubarak of Egypt, the king of Saudi Arabia, and Shikh of Kuwait. The best examples of his lack of care for human life are the killings of innocent Iraqi civilians who were asked by him to overthrow Saddam Hussein's regime and restoring the butcher of the Mideast (Saddam) to power. Also, supporting Saddam in eight years of war against Iran — letting him use all kinds of destructive weaponry such as chemical gas against his own people and Iranian troops.

its side selectively and according to its needs. How can Bush talk about a free society when he didn't allow the press to tell the truth to the American people about the massacre and crimes against humanity in Iraq?

I wonder how anyone can trust the former head of the C.I.A.?

Ali Keyhan-fard
International Student

FORUM

Religious recovery program appeals to many

By Michael Goldrick

Several months ago I received a phone call from a young man who expressed his concern about the importance of using Rational Emotive Therapy (RET) techniques in work-

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ing with alcoholic and other drug-addicted individuals. He expressed some concerns about the inadequacy of the language of the 12 Steps of Alcoholic Anonymous. I responded by telling him of my own considerable experience with, and appreciation for RET, and of my own search for new ways to obviate some of the problems with the "higher power" aspects of the anonymous programs, especially for those non-theists who initially suspect a hidden religious agenda.

I immediately invited him to meet with me at the Sacred Heart Adolescent Recovery Program (SHARP) facility so that I might learn what he had to offer in this regard. His initial re-

sponse surprised me. He said that he didn't think that I would want to talk with him and that he was astonished at the fact that we frequently employ RET techniques in treatment at SHARP.

In an effort to convince him that I was seriously interested in pursuing the conversation, I invited him to have lunch at SHARP and blocked out several hours on my calendar to allow ample time for the conversation.

At this meeting the young man appeared rigid, guarded, and very tense as he railed against the "religious" focus of the 12 Step anonymous programs. I shared with him my own experiences as a mental health worker in the early 1970s when, for a period of years, I refused to send my alcoholic clients to AA and NA meetings for many of the same reasons he was presenting to me.

I related to him an unfortunate incident when I referred a young Jewish client to one of these meetings, only to be told

by him the next day that the meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer. It was only six years later that I came to understand that the behavior was out of line according to the traditions of AA and should never have been allowed to happen. I had thrown out the baby with the bath water.

My personal friendship with an atheistic colleague (who, were I to judge by the way he treated others, I would consider to be one of the most "Christian" men I've ever met) convinced me to take another look at these programs and their utility for many, perhaps not all, men and women who were able to accept the powerlessness of their controlling their use of mind and mood-altering drugs, but who wanted no part of abandoning their personal responsibility for every other aspect of their lives.

I had hoped to receive from my visitor some information or therapeutic techniques for effectively dealing with chemically dependent individuals. Unfortunately, his approach to

the problem is quite narrow and rigid.

I had hoped that he would have heard me when I mentioned that recovery from chemical dependency is significantly more involved than discontinuing the use of the abused substance. Unless one lets go of "all-or-nothing"/black or white thinking, one will be forever bent on insisting that "my rationale is the only way." I believe that we all have lots of things to recover from, including our addiction to our own opinion.

I personally appreciate that AA and NA have helped more people, theists and non-theists alike, recover from alcohol and other psycho-active substance addiction than any other process in America. I have also met some rather unhealthy individuals who insist that it is *the only way*, just as I have met some who believe that RET is *the only way*. I also believe that this kind of thinking will drive a person to drink, so to speak.

I know too, that AA and NA have historically been far less

successful with adolescent alcoholics and addicts than with adults, which is why in treatment at SHARP we approach the complex problems of the substance abuse — the depression, the sexual and physical abuse issues — with a battery of psychological and psychiatric tools and approaches.

There are many ways to approach treatment of chemically dependent adolescents and adults because there are many personal preferences and beliefs among recovering individuals. At SHARP we try to meet the individual needs of each patient. Treatment techniques are derived from a variety of methodologies. Our success has come through integrating ideas and needs of widely varying groups and individuals. It is hoped that concerned members of the community will be willing to participate in this integration process to improve local services: participating in creating community rather than seeming bent on destruction.

Michael Goldrick is the director of the Sacred Heart Adolescent Recovery Program.

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