

Magazine removal spells censorship

To remove or not to remove; that is the question. The University Bookstore held a meeting Thursday night to address an issue raised by a certain few magazines on its shelves: namely *Playboy* and *Penthouse*. Since this fall, the campus group Men Against Rape has lead a letter-writing campaign to have the magazines removed from the bookstore on the basis that they propagate violence against women. Jim Williams, bookstore general manager, has adopted the stance of non-removal, saying to do so would be censorship.

He's right. Though the magazines admittedly do offend a group of the population, that's no reason to take them off the shelves.

For one thing, a certain few should not decide what the masses read; or view, or hear for that matter. Remember the First Amendment? Freedom of the press? To limit the availability of certain magazines or any other form of expression because a number of people disagree with it is dangerous.

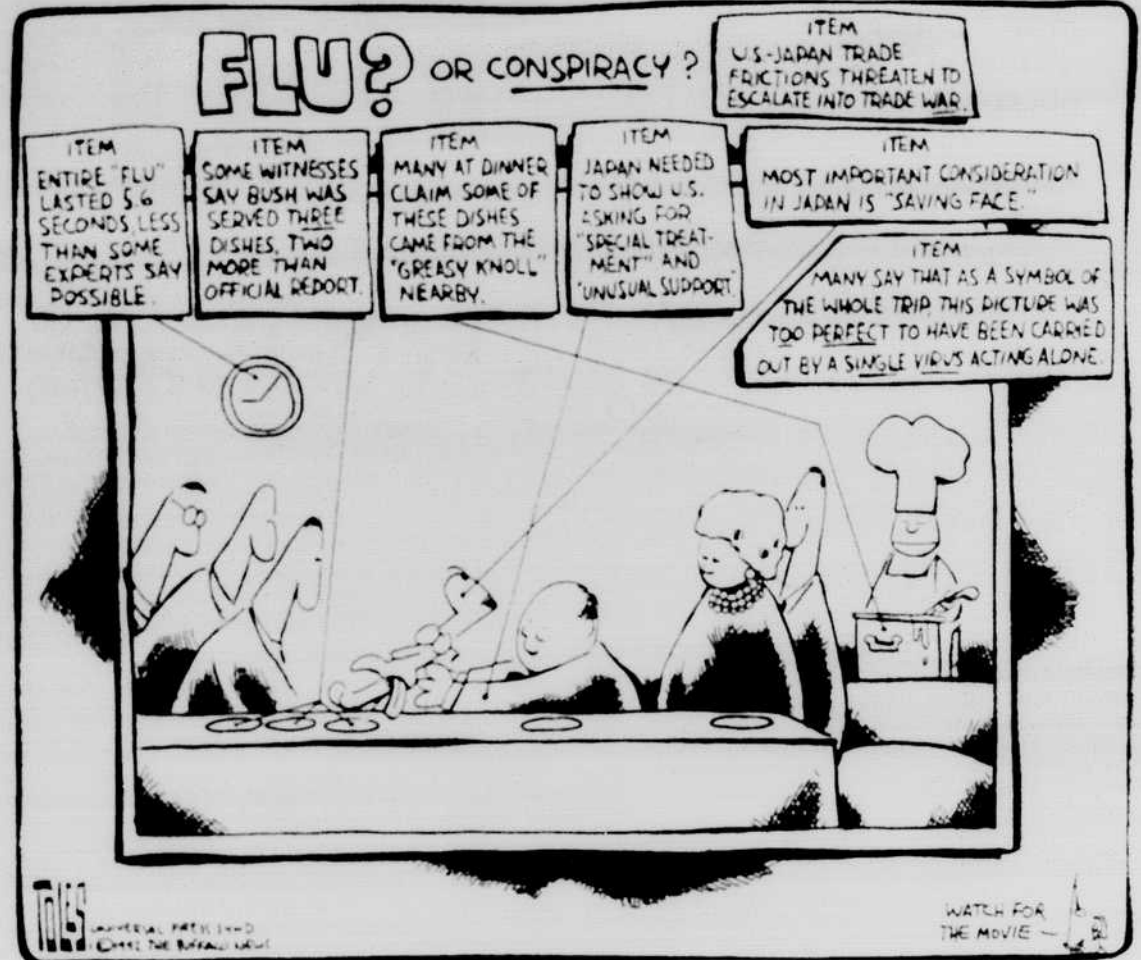
Granted, those wanting the magazines off the shelves have good intentions — to address the violence against and oppression of women in this society — but their method is wrong. Censorship is dangerous and that's what it would be in this case.

There has been no study done that absolutely links pornography with violence against women. Instead of working to take the magazines out of the public's reach, these folks should take a deeper sociological look at the root cause(s) of the problems with women in this society. Pornography is only a symptom.

The people wanting the magazines gone are quick to make the connection between these types of magazines and violence against women. They need to be careful in doing so. Should we follow suit, the Bible would be banned as well; people like gays and lesbians can no doubt attest to persecution they've suffered due to people's often unenlightened interpretation of its words.

It boils down to censorship, and that's scary. If it's allowed now, where will it stop? No publication will ever please everyone; this must be taken into account. The magazines should stay.

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OPINION

'Don't you know that's bad for you?'



THE FINE PRINT

BY DON PETERS

I'm a smoker.

I admit it. Freely. Without duress. And I've read all the literature listing what cigarettes will do to me, so I know the dangers.

I just have one thing to say: Get off my back.

Unless you've lived in a cave for the past five years, you know smoking has been linked to everything but leprosy. The evils of secondhand smoke have been exhaustively detailed.

Believe me, I know.

I decided to write this column at 12:20 p.m. Thursday, when in dire need of a cigarette (read: nicotine fix), I went out for a quiet smoke on the balcony beneath the *Emerald* offices.

It was raining. Hard. But the grim, determined person that I am, I stuck it out, having my smoke and thinking evil thoughts about the people who forced me outside to have a cigarette.

Don't get me wrong. I try to accept people's rights not to have cigarette smoke around them. I am considerate to the point of standing outside in sub-zero weather, bundled up like Nanook of the North, just so I can pound a Marlboro.

This isn't a gripe or complaint. I view it as part of the game; kind of like the anguish and heartbreak associated with being a California Angels fan. Par for the course.

But why does everybody have to detail to me — at length — that smoking is bad?

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Why does everybody have to detail to me — at length — that smoking is bad? Smokers in this great land of ours now enjoy a social status somewhere below that of necrophiliacs. Lefty can knock off the corner liquor store and steal from widows, but as long as he doesn't smoke, he's a "good dude."

somewhere below that of necrophiliacs. Lefty can knock off the corner liquor store and steal from widows, but as long as he doesn't smoke, he's a "good dude."

Just the other day, I was waiting on the corner for a bus, having a cigarette. A woman walked up to me — I have no idea who she was — promptly grimaced at my Marlboro and said, "Don't you know smoking is bad for you?"

"Yeah," I replied. "So are annoying strangers."

A guy can eat 30 cheesebur-

gers a day, weigh more than a small, third world country, drive 95 on the freeway without a seat belt and drink enough to float the *Missouri*, but if he sees me light one up, he instantly becomes the Surgeon General.

"Don't you know that's bad for you?" he'll say between mouthfuls of a Ding Dong.

All non-smokers apparently feel we smokers have never taken a look at the warnings on cigarette packs.

The little love note from the Surgeon General used to be so cute. "These are hazardous to your health," it declared. And it never changed.

But then ol' C. Everett Koop came along, and evidently decided the old warning was just too blasé. He declared open war on the tobacco industry and the warnings began to change pretty much week to week.

Now I'm waiting for the one that says if I smoke, my hair will fall out and my fingernails will turn green. I'll probably frame that one.

So smokers, stick in your toes. Accept no further encroachment. Smoking is dumb, but the Constitution guarantees us the sacred right to act like idiots.

Now if you'll excuse me, I'm going to go have a cigarette.

Don Peters is an Emerald editorial editor.

COMMENTARY POLICY

The *Oregon Daily Emerald* welcomes commentaries from the public concerning topics of interest to the University community.

Commentaries should be between 750 and 1,000 words, legible and signed, and the identification of the writer must be verified upon submission. The *Emerald* reserves the right to edit for grammar, style and length if necessary.

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