

EDITORIAL

More worthy topics than Clinton's fidelity

Did he or didn't he? That seems to be the only question the media is asking Bill Clinton these days. "What would you do as president?" has turned into "So how well did you know Gennifer Flowers?"

Clinton's alleged marital infidelity is not a new issue. While he was governor of Arkansas, it came up several times. But no positive, irrefutable proof was ever produced.

Now, with a hefty paycheck from the tabloid *Star*, Flowers has come forward and said she was Clinton's lover for 12 years — charges both Clinton and his wife Hillary have categorically denied.

Clinton's rival Democrats, though they would be loath to admit it, have to be breathing a sigh of relief over the allegations. Before the fidelity question turned up, Clinton appeared headed for an early coronation as the Democratic standard bearer. Gary Hart-Clinton comparisons are now all the rage.

In a post-Super Bowl interview, Bill and Hillary told *60 Minutes* that he never had an affair with Flowers. But when questioned further on general extramarital activity, Clinton tap-danced around the question with the finesse of an Arthur Murray graduate.

Hart's presidential bid foundered on the rocks of adultery. Clinton's may do the same. But should a candidate's marital record be a litmus test for election?

Obviously not.

Society has no place passing moral judgments on a person's married life. Adultery is not illegal, nor is it uncommon. If you feel Clinton had an affair, so be it. If you feel that would damage his abilities as president, don't vote for him. But please, let this thing die.

There are far more important topics to discuss. Rather than wondering if Clinton slept with somebody besides his wife, let's talk about the economy. Or poverty. Or the environment. Or any other worthy issue.

The media, with its usual shark-to-blood-scent mentality, has seized the Clinton debacle with both fists. It's frightening that a tabloid that usually runs stories on the extraterrestrial spawn of Hollywood heroes should have so much power over the national consciousness.

The past few presidential elections have taken on the look of a *Geraldo* episode. With so much at stake in '92, we cannot afford — as a nation — to waste our time debating morality.

Decide for yourself what you think about Clinton; then we can all get on with the rest of the program.

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LETTERS

Misrepresented

In an *Emerald* article on the proposed NCAA changes raising entrance requirements (*ODE*, Jan. 17), I was quoted as saying "this is another form of racism."

After a 20-minute interview with Sports Editor Jake Berg, I was quoted only once. This quote was taken out of context and misrepresented some of my strong views. With the media's track record regarding students of color, I'm not surprised.

The requirements are unfair considering the quality of education in some schools in this country. Inner-city schools are not always at an equilibrium with all public schools. Until this country evenly distributes educational funds, we are not truly receiving the same education.

SAT requirements are unfair in any stage of the college-entry process, because the SAT is socially and culturally biased and is not a true judge of someone's ability to perform in college.

I also told Berg officials need to concentrate more on the progress and graduation rates of our student-athletes once in college. The commitment to athletes does not end once they step off the playing field. In many cases, student-athletes are exploited and used to benefit the University's pocketbook.

Yes, I believe all the aforementioned is unjust and "another form of racism," contrary to the context in the *Emerald*. In no way do I believe black students-athletes are not capable of achieving such standards, but they must be given the same opportunities as everyone else.

It is unfortunate the media, due to "space limitations," must misrepresent my views. I believe in the success and betterment of black student-athletes and take offense to anyone suggesting otherwise.

Lisa Lawrence
Director
Black Student Union

Old puke

In response to Koalani Roberts' article on radical activism (*ODE*, Jan. 17): Her observations are relevant, and yet some

of the people she quoted were sounding the same old puke about activism we've heard for years.

If it weren't for all those radical activities of the early Earth Firsters, most of the "new" environmentally aware would have had no idea what was happening to our forests. How many times has our government acted for the good of the people without some kind of protest? Where would African-Americans be today if they hadn't opted for all that unsightly protesting?

There's nothing better for Hatfield, Packwood and their timber buddies than to have a quiet public using "normal" channels to implicate change. With all those protesters yelling and screaming, it's hard for the boys to get down to the business of liquidating our natural heritage.

As for the risk of livelihood and academic standing as a result of radical activism, that's a choice we all have to make. While we are all educated from an early age to be normal, proper and productive, we very rarely, if at all, are taught to think freely. Our normal options for free thought in this country can be summed up inside the parameters of a shopping mall.

Taking a stand involves risk, and risk involves freedom. I don't know of anyone who has, regardless of the crap they had to endure, regretted taking a stand on something they knew was right.

Steve Stanford
Political science

Oversimplified

Let me preface my comments by saying I believe strongly in the freedom of expression but not in freedoms that have the potential to cause physical harm.

Those who think pornography does not cause violence against women pick certain statistics that support their position, but neglect evidence that shows a link between pornography and violence against women.

Are we forgetting serial killer Bundy's last words? Are we open-minded enough to read the Meese Commission on Por-

nography, which cites numerous cases of evidence of the link between pornography and violence against women? Clearly, the evidence suggests pornography can lead to violence against women.

This is a complex issue, and it is an oversimplification to dismiss the notion that pornography harms women. Does evidence that fails to prove the association between violence against women and pornography translate in your mind as "pornography never harms women?"

The controversy is based in the societal pressure put on women to be sexual playthings for men. Surely, this pressure is harmful to women. Of course men will say pornography is OK because it doesn't violate the First Amendment. But aren't we above that? Why do men need pornography? To remind us that men have power over women?

Please, you win on that one. I am reminded of that every day of my life. Anyone who finds this a black and white issue is refusing to look at all of the evidence.

Alicia Ferrari
Journalism

Pianos away

Tucker Murdock, you beat me to it. My next letter was actually going to discuss the crazed bus driver problem that is so prevalent in our society today. With those bus drivers you can never tell if you're seeing the crazed look of death in their eyes or if they've just sat on a tack.

Another frightening problem that's growing to full scale is the falling piano problem. One can never tell which piano is safely secured to its cables from the fourth floor and which is not.

Oh, Tucker, it's a nasty, horrible world out there. You have to worry about bus drivers, pianos, muggers, the works! But you can rest easy tonight because you never have to worry about rape. I have to worry about bus drivers, pianos, muggers, the works, and rape, because I'm a woman.

Never trivialize rape, Tucker, it makes people mad. If all women had the luxury of worrying about rape like they worry about crazed bus drivers, life would be a hell of a lot simpler for everyone.

Lisa Harrell
Student

LETTERS POLICY

Letters to the editor must be limited to no more than 250 words, legible, signed and the identification of the writer must be verified when the letter is submitted.