

Saferide not sexist; anger toward "discrimination" misdirected

Looks like the old debate has been sparked up for a few reprise rounds. The question: should men be allowed to use Saferide? My answer: no.

The topic has been rekindled by comments made by two men interviewed in a recent article, "Some men believe Saferide discriminates," by Sian Barker (ODE, Mar. 10). Wayd Drake and Thomas Kouns said that because Saferide offers its services only to women that they, as incidental fee-paying men, are the victims of sexist discrimination.

If women want equality," Kouns said, "then men should have the same privileges as them." I say, if men want equality, then they should address why other men must attack women in the street.

There is neither the need nor the resources for men to be allowed in Saferide vehicles. If Saferide extended its services to men, its services to women would diminish. Because women alone on the streets are far more likely to be attacked than men alone on the streets, it's only reasonable to allocate available resources to them.

Many don't realize that if a



LIA SALICCIA

man feels unsafe to walk alone from campus at night, the Office of Public Safety would escort him safely to anywhere in an eight-block radius of campus. If it had the resources, the office probably would take people farther, said OPS dispatcher Pauline Conaway.

In Saferide's log of all the times that men have complained directly to Saferide drivers, it's easy to see a pattern of childish, misdirected anger among some who think that it's sexist not to let men ride. For example:

• "While driving ... several males asked for a ride and offered me money, after I told them the policy and they ... shouted over their shoulders, 'Sexist dyke.'"

• "At Agate Street crosswalk on campus, van hit w/water bal-

loon. Man ran off into dorms."

• "Young guy jumped out in front of the car, and we came very close to hitting him before he jumped back out of the way. He was laughing and obviously very pleased with himself."

• "While gassing up at the Chevron ... a Jeep Cherokee pulled in. One man got out and approached ... the van and asked for a ride back to campus. I replied that Saferide was only for women and started to drive away. He then took several steps after the van and began to yell, 'Saferide is sexist. You're a Nazi, you chauvinist, man-hating Nazi.'"

I agree with Saferide co-director Jen Reed that these men misdirect their anger toward drivers. Instead they should be turning their anger toward the men, who are the reason why Saferide exists. It is the men who abuse their power as men in order to rape women that needs their attention. Because although women can often protect themselves and each other from being raped, the only way to stop rape is if men stop raping.

Although the above incidents

may not have been life-threatening, we can't ever be sure what any of those men would have done to women if they were not safe inside of the Saferide cars. Nor can we be sure what they would have done to the women if they had been allowed in the vehicles.

It's sad that the actions of a minority of men can cause women to view every man as a potential rapist. But the truth is, every time a woman walks alone at night, she is making a conscious decision to take the risk of a sexual assault. If the perceived risk is less than the perceived inconvenience of not walking, she chooses to do it. Men walk alone at night all of the time and rarely give attack a thought.

To have some men say they are being discriminated against because there is not a service that carts them around is an insult to women. They don't have to be afraid when they are walking in front of a group of women at dusk. Not to say that men never fear attack, but I'd argue that the stolen wallet and possible beatings he fears do not equal the physical and mental terror of rape.

So men, I say this to you, and I wish to reach rather than offend you: Stop wasting your time whining that Saferide is sexist by not giving you a ride. Step back and take a look at the bigger picture.

Maybe then you'll get mad at the source — the mentality that allows men to rape, and makes women distrust you and cross the street when you approach her on the sidewalk at dusk.

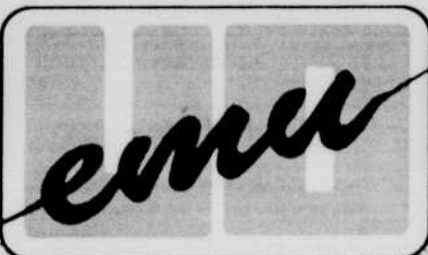
Maybe then you'll do something productive, like starting to discuss this debilitating mentality with other men, and get to the core of why men rape, and how to stop it. If you still think it's so unfair that your gender doesn't get a free ride service, maybe you'll try doing all of the work that Saferide has done and start one.

And if you still don't think it's fair, consider this: men have the power between their legs, whether or not they use it, to rape women. One out of four women will discover that painful fact in their lifetime.

Now tell me what's fair.

Lia Saliccia is a columnist for the Emerald.

THIS WEEK



MAR. 14-20

emu MEMORANDUM

To: All EMU Service Providers

From: Dusty Miller, Director, EMU

Re: Spring Break Hours of Operation

I have attached a copy of the EMU hours of operation for the upcoming Spring Break. Please note that we will be closed the first weekend preceding the break and the Saturday prior to the resumption of classes. The building will reopen with regular hours on Sunday, March 27, 1994. The EMU will operate on a reduced schedule during the week of March 21-25.

Specific services will be available March 21-25. They are as follows:

EMU Administrative Offices	8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
EMU Maintenance	8:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
Food Service: Fishbowl	9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Taco Time	10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.
Recreation Center	Noon - 11:00 p.m.
Craft Center (21 & 22 only)	10:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

Please review the schedule carefully and notify us at 6-3705 if your service needs special arrangements to operate during the time period of March 19-26, 1994.

If you need to be in the EMU when it is closed please be very careful, notify us of any special needs and stay only in the area you need to fulfill your tasks. Thank you.

- jewelry
- ceramics
- woodworking

- photography
- calligraphy
- weaving

- stained glass
- bike repair
- drawing

- painting
- and more.

registration begins March 16th.



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C30 CROSS BIKE

donated by Paul's Bike Shop, Eugene & Raleigh Bicycles
in EMU Child Care and Development Centers' March 4 Winter Raffle Drawing