

Banning television in jail positive move

Television has finished serving its time in prison.

Officials have decided to pull the plug on television in the Yakima County Jail (Wash.) With limited exceptions, such as those for educational or religious purposes, inmates won't be allowed to sit and watch the tube all day.

The insightful move will help inmates. Rather than play the role of babysitter for the length of the prisoner's term, corrections officials will now be able to encourage inmates to do something positive. Whether it's reading a book or learning a skill, prisoners will now be educated rather than be allowed to vegetate.

Yakima County is one of a number of jails that has taken the move to get rid of the television. Across the country, jails are telling prisoners to entertain, or preferably, educate themselves. Tax dollars shouldn't be spent to give inmates something to stare at for the duration of their punishment.

Instead, prisons are often following the will of the people in requiring prisoners to do something useful with their time. Oregon voters passed an initiative in November to require Oregon inmates to work.

However, many might not realize that what's good for prisoners is also good for society.

The action by Yakima County officials may have repercussions outside of correctional institutions. It might get others to question their use of television.

While college students may not have time to watch as much television as others, it is commonly believed that most people, from young children to older adults, watch a lot of television. A good number of them watch too much.

Television itself is not bad. The medium, used by millions in America every day, can be an informative and educational tool for many. Television can help deliver information in a way that no other medium can. But that doesn't mean it should consume people.

The key to television is how it is used. Instead of routinely sitting in front of the television for several hours every day, setting a time limit or picking certain programs to watch would be smarter options. Smart usage of television requires thought on the part of the viewer.

While television can be an enjoyable release from the pressures of everyday life, there are other ways to relax than staring at the tube for the evening. Rediscover the library and read a good book. Volunteer in the community and make a difference in someone's life.

While the phrase "kill your TV" might not become a buzzword in prison, in the case of one jail in Washington, the move to take television out of the daily life of inmates is a move to be applauded. If society would follow the lead of Yakima County, the nation would be a better place.



LETTERS

OSPIRG good

OSPIRG. What exactly is an OSPIRG? A bird? No, I think that was osprey. Student activism has always been important to me. As a transfer student, I was more than surprised at the enthusiasm of students at U of O about social issues. When I walked into the OSPIRG office — to sound quite trite — I had found a niche. I was in the midst of a strong core group of people who care about getting things done. We sit down, communicate, share ideas to facilitate change and activate the consciousness of students and communities. Educate, inform, activate. However, this is just one person's point of view. I could tell you about all the great things they've accomplished: the bottle bill, recycling law, toy safety, banking survey, consumer hotline, renters' rights, making Oregon green.

OSPIRG — it's important when we're trying to save a planet.

Theresa Jenkins
Eugene

Convincing

Late Tuesday evening, my husband brought home a copy of that day's *ODE* (Feb. 7). There was a commentary written by three clergymen from the Newman Center, offering a different perspective than is usually presented on the recent tragic killings of abortion clinic workers and volunteers.

I read the letter and found it thought-provoking. Though the writers should have taken more care to emphasize their condemnation of violence against abortion clinic workers, in general, their explanation of the probable causes of terrorism was well-considered and convincing.

I hoped that the well-educated and politically sensitive readers of the *Emerald* would be able to give this article their fair-minded reading it deserves. But I know that, even as I write this letter, the clergymen are receiving abusive, hate-filled phone calls. Tomorrow, they will receive hate mail. By Thursday, the *Emerald* will have received

numerous hysterical, censorious letters accusing Pimentel, Lucci and Vajda of condoning murder, caring for fetuses more than women, trying to force their feelings on everyone else, etc., etc.

You can bet that the main thrust of the article, that terrorism emerges when a group's legitimate message is repressed or dismissed as irrelevant over a long time by adversaries who have a monopoly on power, will be ignored or summarily denied.

Ironically, that will go a long way to prove their hypothesis.

Rita K. Freedman
Eugene

Explanation

After reading the Feb. 10 article regarding Project Saferide's budget hearing, I found that the allocation description needs some explanation. We did not receive a 53 percent increase from last year's budget.

When Project Saferide went for its budget hearing in winter 1994, it received \$22,015. In spring 1994, ridership was increasing steadily and it was decided that another dispatcher was needed. Saferide presented a ballot measure to the student body. It was approved and Saferide added another \$20,319 for a new van and \$13,248 to pay a second dispatcher to its budget, making Saferide's 1994-95 budget a total of \$55,582 from student fees.

This year, Saferide presented a budget with the second dispatcher's pay already added. The Finance Committee approved the new budget. Without the van, which was a one-time only purchase, Saferide received a 4.1 percent decrease in its budget. If the van is to be included, it was actually a 39.1 percent decrease. I hope this clarifies the allocation Saferide received for its 1995-96 budget.

Sandra Macke
Project Saferide

Pro-choice

I am writing in response to the Feb. 7 commentary in which priests from the Newman Center condoned abortion clinic vio-

lence as a last resort in the movement to restrict women's right to abortion. The priests claim that *Roe v. Wade's* legalization of abortion is unfair to those who oppose it, and after 20 years of protesting, anti-abortionists feel they have no choice but to react in violence.

The *Roe vs. Wade* ruling finally allows women jurisdiction over their own bodies and gives women the legal right to determine their own reproduction. This should be an indisputable right, but unfortunately there are those people who do not see it as so. The anti-abortionists have gone from picketing abortion clinics to blocking women's entrance into the clinics to acting in violence against abortion clinics. Clinics are bombed and set [on] fire. Doctors and their families are harassed and threatened. In several instances, doctors have been murdered. These acts of terrorism against clinics and doctors and against women are inexcusable in any instance. Reversing legislation on account of the violence would be giving in to terrorism.

The pro-choice movement works to maintain women's right to reproductive freedom and to keep all options safe and legal. Contrary to what the anti-abortionists would have us believe, pro-choice is not pro-abortion. No one is pro-abortion. The Newman Center priests say that most Americans are opposed to abortion rights, but they fail to cite their statistical sources. According to a 1988 survey done by Hickman-Maslin Research and American Viewpoint, 77 percent of American voters believe that "abortion is a private issue between a woman, her family and her doctor [and that] the government should not be involved."

The anti-abortionists are desperate to inflict their views upon the rest of the nation and in doing so, many have resorted to violence. Terrorism is unjustifiable in any form and under any circumstances. Until these acts of violence stop, women's rights and Americans' beliefs will continue to be infringed upon.

Grace Smutz
Students for Choice

Oregon Daily Emerald

P.O. BOX 3159, EUGENE, OREGON 97403

The Oregon Daily Emerald is published daily Monday through Friday during the school year and Tuesday and Thursday during the summer by the Oregon Daily Emerald Publishing Co., Inc., at the University of Oregon, Eugene, Oregon.

The Emerald operates independently of the University with offices at Suite 300 of the Erb Memorial Union and is a member of the Associated Press.

The Emerald is private property. The unlawful removal or use of papers is prosecutable by law.

Editor-in-Chief: Kaly Soto
Managing Editor: David Thom
Editorial Editor: Robbie Reeves
News Art Editor: Jeff Paslay
Freelance Editor: Lori Beltineski

Associate Editors: Tasha Eichenseher, Student Government/Activities; Marcelene Edwards, Community; Tiffany Smith, Higher Education/Administration

News Staff: Steve Asbury, Amy Columbo, Amy L. Devenport, Primo Fontana, Gayle Forman, Christopher Fox, Matt Garton, Gary Grass, Joe Harwood, Kris Henry, Trevor Kearney, Shannon Kiduff, Adam Kincher, Suzanne Marta, Mark McTyre, Patrick Minford, Ben Moebius, Natalie Montgomery, Anne Moser-Kornfeld, Colleen Pohlig, Sherry Rainey, Kate Sabourin, Paul Van Sickle, Sean Smith, Jeremy Stinson, Kim Weiss, Brian Womack, Les Zaczek

General Manager: Judy Riedl
Advertising Director: Mark Walter
Production Manager: Michele Ross

Advertising: Anne Amador, Anita Borgaes, Marco Ching, Tony Fox, Erin Hersher, Nicole Herzmark, Jeremy Mason, Sarah Mitchell, Tom Mittelstaedt, Kelsey Wekell

Classified: Becky Merchant, Manager; Kyle Davis, Joli Seiten
Distribution: John Long, Ferenc Rakoczi, Graham Simpson

Business: Kathy Carbone, Supervisor; Judy Connolly
Production: Dehelia McCobb, Production Coordinator; Shawna Abele, Tara Gaultney, Brad Joss, Molly McCanta, Jennifer Roland, Clayton Yee

Newsroom: 346-5511
Business Office: 346-5512

Display Advertising: 346-3712
Classified Advertising: 346-4343