

# Many men don't understand problems of rape, abuse



PAUL VAN SICKLE

As a man offended by Michael Endicott's commentary (ODE, May 1), I feel the need to set the record straight on some of the grossly chauvinist and ignorance-based statements he made.

Endicott is upset by the display in the EMU that asks "Are all men potential rapists?" Obviously, he is missing the point of that message, because he couldn't understand "what... could be gained by such an obvious attack on men?"

The goals behind "Are all men

potential rapists?" are far more broad and consciousness-raising than simply an attack on men. Endicott's "angry white-male" attitude is probably what keeps him from seeing past such a mundane interpretation. The question posed was not meant as an attack on men, but rather as a form of education to both men and women.

Obviously, not all men are potential rapists — the blunt answer to the question being "no." But it in no way ends there. Ignorance has long been seen as a major stepping stone in rape prevention. The question "Are all men potential rapists?" is meant to put that question into women's minds. The fact is that at least 80 percent of all rapes are perpetrated by someone the victim knew. If one rape was prevented because one more woman understood that "My boyfriend/my uncle/my friend

has just as much potential to rape me as some stranger," don't you think, Mr. Endicott, that you could bend over and take a couple of whacks to the ego for such a noble cause?

At the same time, that question that offended you so much as a man was trying to educate you. Many men also do not comprehend the scope of the rape problem in this country. The author of the question "Are all men rapists?" was hoping that instead of whining about the oppression of men in the United States, you would stop for a moment and consider why a women's group would promote such an idea. Yes, it was shocking, but if it got you, as a man, to think about the problem of rape in our society for just a few minutes, then it did its job.

Unfortunately, feminism has long had to turn to shock value to get its point across, especially

to closed-minded conservative men who, in the words of Rush Limbaugh, believe "that the best part about the women's movement is walking behind it."

It is for this reason that men need to be insulted now and then, to raise their awareness about the power position they hold in the American culture. The ASUO does not need a men's center to promote men's issues; they are already out there. Their arrogance is what precipitates the need for such controversial phrases as "Are all men potential rapists?"

Women's issues need the promotion that the women's center provides. As long as men are unwilling to give up the power they have throughout the corporate, political and domestic areas of American society, then the need for women's centers will continue to exist.

A woman is abused in her

home every eighteen seconds and one in four women will be raped in their lifetime.

Women got the right to vote only sixty years ago. Forty years ago, they could attend a public university. And only twenty-some years ago, they received control of their own reproductive systems. Men have had free-use of theirs for centuries.

Please, don't bore us with the oppression of the white man.

And calm down, Mr. Endicott. You don't need your rights protected any more than any other white upper-middle-class male in this country. You might consider thinking about why you were so offended by that question. You might get somewhere faster than petitioning for a men's center.

*Paul Van Sickle is a columnist for the Emerald.*

■ LETTERS

## Keep homebirth

If you asked any of the women attending the Nurse Midwifery Birth Center last month, when the Eugene Clinic announced it would close in 60 days for undisclosed reasons, they might not agree that the merger of EC with PeaceHealth was "not immediately threatening" as you assert.

Overwork among backup physicians was cited, but the solution for current patients was to transfer them to the care of the same backup physicians! Many people believe the merger is responsible.

After significant public concern, the Eugene Clinic did agree to keep the Birth Center open until Dec. 30, so the current pregnancies could reach term.

After that time only homebirth or hospital birth will remain in Eugene. If a woman chooses homebirth, that nurse midwife will not be able to admit her to Sacred Heart if complications arise during pregnancy or labor. She will be in the care of strangers.

Denying homebirth midwives hospital admitting privilege is not a law — it is Sacred Heart's policy, compounded by regressive insurance regulations. Only the birth center allows a

woman the comfort and safety of an out-of-hospital birth with the security that if something goes awry, her midwife will be with her every step of the way.

If you are concerned about our rapidly narrowing choices, please call Citizens for Birth Centers at 341-0766. Remember, the need for reproductive choice continues throughout pregnancy.

P.S.: I would like to thank Students for Choice for their quick response to this crisis and their role in convincing the Eugene Clinic to grant an extension.

Shasta Willson  
Math/Physics

## Skepticism

I am beginning to wonder if I will be spending the rest of the term addressing the simian rantings of Brian Womack.

In his "opinion" (ODE, May 9), he somehow manages to contend that the social activism of the 1960s is in part responsible for the bombing of the Oklahoma City federal building. I find the comparison "insulting" as well, but more importantly I find it to be utter bullshit.

He mentions the activities of the Weatherman organization, specifically their use of bombings. The key difference

between the Weatherman and the Oklahoma City bombing is that the Weatherman, in all instances that I am aware of, took pains to minimize the loss of human life in its attacks. This in no way excuses its use of violence, but it mitigates it, vis-a-vis Oklahoma City.

Second, it was not the counterculture or the New Left which "created the contempt for the government"; it was government itself which perpetuated such hoaxes as the Tonkin resolution and such crimes as the Watergate affair on the American people.

A certain skepticism and mistrust concerning government is vital to a liberal democracy, and it is not the mistrust of government by right wing groups which is the problem, rather their use of violence.

I wonder about Womack's praise for the days of "consensus" of the 1940s and 50s, days of segregation and McCarthyism, of fear, silence and repression, and the notion that we should look back to those days with nostalgia is repugnant.

Joseph Renaud  
Germanic Languages

## Smokin' joints

We'd like to thank Brian

Womack for his comedy, er, opinion column regarding the legalization of hemp (ODE, May 2). We were laughing pretty hard reading it, as we were smoking a fatty hemp joint....

Mr. Womack, each of us is entitled to our own opinions, but since yours is in print, shouldn't you check your facts?

You've made a major mistake. Hemp, my friend, is not synonymous with "Mary Jane." They are related, but they are two different strains of plants in the cannabis family. The "future former" president certainly didn't inhale hemp. It would be pointless — there is not enough THC in the hemp plant to get the high one gets from smoking marijuana.

You write that someone has claimed that hemp cures "brain tumors, sickle cell anemia ...." Perhaps this was an exaggeration on your part. Where are your sources? Who said this? If you're referring to the medicinal uses for cancer patients, it is marijuana, not hemp and it is not used to cure the cancer. It's used as a pain reliever or to enhance the patients' appetites.

Exaggeration to get your point across is one thing, but your spiel about tanks and the Eiffel Tower is ridiculous. Hemp has many uses — fuel, paper, fiber, clothing and food.

You spend a large amount of the column giving us "facts" from one book. What does this have to do with legalizing hemp? Again, you're substituting marijuana for hemp? One cannot say that pot is even remotely comparable to the dangers of crack, powder cocaine and heroin. As far as producing hallucinations — do you know anyone who has hallucinated from pot (unless it has been laced)? We don't and it's obvious we know a lot more smokers than you do.

As far as alcohol being the most prevalent drug today, you're right on the mark. It's much more harmful than marijuana. What are the statistics of auto accidents caused by stoned drivers? Nowhere near the drinking and driving stats. Alcohol often makes people more violent. How often have you heard about fights or abuse caused by someone high on pot? The examples go on and on.

So, Mr. Womack, get your facts straight. Then you can share your opinion with your readers. Our opinion is that both hemp and marijuana should be legalized.

Allison Hall  
Pre-Journalism  
Julie Wirth  
National Student  
Exchange

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