

Dr. Martens advertisement promotes violence against women

Lazar's Bazar recently placed an ad (*ODE*, Oct. 18) featuring the footwear brand name "Dr. Martens" printed on a woman's naked buttocks.

This brings to mind the typical arguments about how such imagery objectifies women. The woman's buttocks are stamped like meat — USDA prime cut no doubt. Or maybe, considering the woman is still alive, her buttocks are branded to show ownership — as is done to chattel and other forms of male "property."

Nevertheless, this simple question continues to command my attention. What does footwear have to do with a woman's naked buttocks?

Perhaps this is a far-fetched theory,

COMMENTARY

Leeann Bennett

but I'm forced to wonder if the juxtaposing of footwear and a woman's naked buttocks isn't a promotion of violence against women. Does the ad not suggest that wearing Dr. Martens and kicking a woman's ass are fashionable?

Ours is, after all, a culture seething with violence — particularly against women.

The last public service announcement I heard on the radio proclaimed that every 11 seconds another woman is battered. That same day, the edition of the *Register-Guard* featured a domestic violence display at Sacred Heart Hospital constructed in memory of Oregon

women who were murdered by their husbands or partners.

Furthermore, images of violence against women abound in TV shows, news media, movies, music, advertisements, ad infinitum and ad nauseam. Hack-and-slash horror movies are especially adept at filling our minds with extreme violence. Granted, these movies frequently include male victims as well as female victims. But clearly there is a disproportionate number of female victims who are hacked and slashed while they are naked, either before, during or after some kind of sexual conduct.

After some time, the seemingly endless barrage of this and related imagery works its way into our collective, cultural unconscious. The imagery becomes

part of that taken-for-granted portion of our cultural beliefs — beliefs that are no longer examined with a critical eye. We just accept naked women/sex/violence as a viable image.

To overcome this harmful image of women, it is imperative that the issues be brought to a conscious level to work them out of our cultural unconscious and eventually out of our culture altogether.

I am asking the *Emerald* to consider the issues raised herein. I am asking the *Emerald* to place integrity above profits by setting a higher standard for printing advertisements, by refusing to run such ads and by essentially just saying "no" to sexism.

Leeann Bennett is a resident of Eugene.

LETTERS

Thanks, guys

Thank you, Jesse Bohrer-Clancy, for your explanation through quantum mechanics that God exists in the lectures you fell asleep in (*ODE*, Oct. 13).

Oh, and another big thanks to Saul Harper for his contribution to scientific understanding at the University (*ODE*, Oct. 17).

My favorite part was when [Harper] "dared to say" that any "God" that existed in scientific mystery must be a "Christian god" and that Bohrer-Clancy's vision that God only existed in the unexplained was based on "Christian theology."

It seems his understanding of quantum physics is only surpassed by his studies of the Bible.

Joshua Akin
Physics

GTFF allegations

Yvonne Rauch and Ernest Stromberg made some very serious allegations (*ODE*, Oct. 19) about the Graduate Teaching Fellows Federation's leadership. The upshot of the allegations is that the executive board is not interested in running a democratic union.

I hope to demonstrate that nothing could be further from the truth.

First of all, they alleged that the members were not informed

about the usual pre-ratification meeting that occurs after a tentative agreement on a new contract that has been reached between the GTFF and the University. That meeting occurred on Oct. 13 and was publicized in advance in the *GTFF Voice*, the union newsletter that all full members receive. Many of the questions they asked about staff changes were also addressed in the *Voice*. I can only wonder why they didn't consult this newsletter before making such spurious allegations in public.

Their second major claim is that GTFs are being kept in the dark about the negotiating impasse that now exists between the executive board and the professional staff. There are several ways that GTFs can get information about this. They can attend the biweekly executive board meetings (which are publicized in the *Voice*), or they can contact the GTFF office at 344-0832 and make arrangements to speak to one of the union officers. If an officer is not in the office when you call or come by, one will contact you to arrange an appointment. Finally, any GTFF member is welcome to attend the actual contract negotiating sessions.

The members of the executive board have put a lot of volunteer time into this union — in my case somewhere between 12 and

15 hours a week. We want a more democratic union where the members are better informed and more actively involved.

Ken Pendleton
GTFF Vice President for
University Relations

Sexism is

Hey, Kay Krautscheid. You're right — women study and work in virtually every field. However, this doesn't automatically equal equality, as you assumed in your column, (*ODE*, Oct. 20).

Have you compared the numbers of women with the numbers of men in those fields and seen that women are by far the "minority" of those educated, well-paid workers? Have you looked at the statistics comparing the salaries of women and men doing the same job and seen that women are paid less? Apparently not.

Maybe if you opened your eyes a little wider and took a look around you would realize that the "sexism that once existed" still does.

Shannon Varney
Eugene

Not there yet

While I'm pleased Kay Krautscheid has not experienced overt discrimination (*ODE*, Oct. 20), that is not nearly as surprising as it used to be.

She probably *has*, however, been a victim without realizing it.

Current research still indicates that teachers pay more attention to male students, give them more help, and grade them more highly. In the workplace, identical resumes with male names get more favorable rankings. Women are still in the minority of managerial positions, making less than 75 percent of what men earn, even when they do get a job.

Maybe Kay really hasn't been discriminated against, but that's not the point.

The point of affirmative action is to encourage society to be more equitable. This is still not a reality, either for racial minorities or for women. Interview top executives or administrators and you will find that many still have stereotypical views they will likely take to their graves. Some of our parents and grandparents are of their generation and hold these beliefs.

Parents today still encourage their children to play with gender-specific toys, and teachers in grade school still think girls don't do well in math. We have come a long way, but we have not reached gender equity and equal opportunity yet. Until we

do, and attitudes have changed, taking discrimination with them, then affirmative action will not have finished doing its job.

Barbara DeFillippo
Graduate Student
Psychology

Vote for Lee

I would like to show my support for Bobby Lee, who is running for the Eugene City Council. As his former roommate, I have witnessed Lee's commitment and integrity firsthand and have found him to be highly respectable, intelligent and generous.

A group of young University alumni was formed throughout the state to help elect Lee because we all felt that the Eugene City Council desperately needed a dramatic change.

Lee can be that change for the better. He is progressive, environmentally conscious and innovative in policy making skills.

For some of you seniors, if you remember Bobby Lee when he was ASUO president back in 1992-93, you know he has the leadership skills. Talk to your friends, and support Bobby Lee for Eugene City Council.

Marc Hill
UO Young Alumni
for Bobby Lee

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