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OPINION

editorials, letters, commentary and perspective

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Exploitation can't be ignored

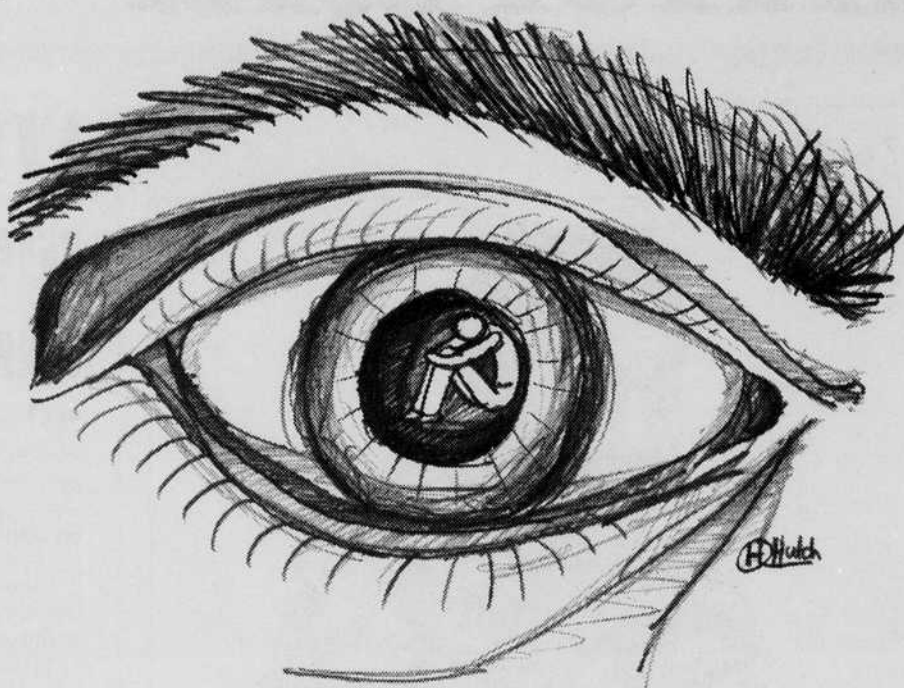
Until people face up to problems in the world and respect life, suffering will remain

We were all kids once. And for those of us who didn't have to wonder if enough food would be around for the next meal or worry that a parent would use a wooden spoon or a belt to take out frustrations again or something worse, life was good. We knew how to live — have fun, play, laugh. Somehow, when we grew up, most of us

lost that and learned a new way of life — exploit, kill, take more. And if that seems a bit extreme, look around.

Who made those shoes you're wearing? Well-fed Mexicans or Koreans who work eight-hour days and receive two weeks of paid vacation and all the benefits, including health and dental insurance? Probably not. Instead, we should be asking which sweat shop your stereo came from — one in the United States or one in China? Who worked in a factory with a temperature over 100 degrees so that you could eat canned soup for lunch?

The product of exploitation is everywhere around us, and we just keep buying. Why? Are we too concerned with our little corner of the world to think about where the things we buy come from and whether the person who made it will get the reward he or she deserves?



Are we so scared to face what's going on in the world that instead we choose to ignore it?

Of course, our society and the rest of the world don't ignore all problems. A friend of mine recently pointed out that another way the world deals with people that it doesn't like is to kill them. If a woman is pregnant and doesn't want the baby, hey, why not kill the baby? Of course, some people don't approve of doctors performing abortions, so people just take the doctors' lives too. If a group of people have different religious views, well, why not just shoot them or kill them off by some other equally effective method? Some people standing in the way of a country acquiring more land? Get rid of them.

Why must we kill? Why

can't we agree to disagree? The adults of the world should be mature enough and wise enough to see that nearly all our problems begin in our own backyards. We begin by teaching our children they are second class citizens "because I said so." Instead of teaching tolerance, we teach that being different is unsavory. If someone is not of "our kind," we tell ourselves it's okay to exploit him or her. The earth is slowly being changed into a wasteland, and it is populated mostly by people who have had their human rights taken away by the small percentage of people who run the world.

If everyone acknowledges the problems the adults before us created, then we can start to piece together a solution. Respecting all life is the first step

to ending exploitation and murder. That means we respect human beings from all countries, religions, sexual orientations, as well as people with disabilities and others who are different from ourselves. If children can appreciate the beauty of a flower or a song, then perhaps we adults can appreciate and respect the value that every human being possesses.

Only humans can solve these problems that humans have created. It is time to open our eyes.

Laura Daniel, a junior majoring in biology, is a columnist for the Emerald. Her views do not necessarily represent those of the newspaper. E-mail: moonpie@gladstone.uoregon.edu

LETTERS

Civil debate

Regarding Colin Campbell's reply to my letter concerning the so-called "rampant" use of LSD on campus, I was disappointed to find that, instead of offering a reasoned, civil, critique of my position, he decided to wallow in insults and ad hominem attacks (ODE, April 2).

If Colin indeed works at the Counseling Center, I hope he considers finding a line of work which would make better use of his talents in the area of potty humor.

I think that we should indeed insist on evidence from policemen when they make wild claims. To ignore the results of a survey done by health care professionals in favor of unsubstantiated propaganda from a cop is not what I call reason. The "drug war" is consuming ever larger quantities of treasure and lives, and to swallow uncritically anything a policeman says on this topic would be ludicrous and irresponsible on the part of an informed citizenry.

One acid freak-out in the dorms does not constitute a huge problem. I maintain that whatever problems arise from the use of drugs in our society should be treated as a medical problem, and a problem of information, not as a legal problem.

This means getting the cops off the "drug

war" sugar-tit, and getting them out there solving real crimes. We are imprisoning our citizens at an alarming rate, for violations of idiotic, ineffective and constitutionally dangerous laws.

You do yourself no favor by trading in insults, Colin. I invite you to write again in response, if you find yourself able to disagree in a civil manner, as befits a member of a civil society.

Joseph Renaud
Germanic Languages

Drug virtues

I sincerely hope that when Colin Campbell writes to us from "counseling services," he does so as a part of either the clerical or janitorial staff, because I would sooner share my life's dilemmas with a stranger on the bus than with someone who conveys such an antagonistic demeanor and erratic logic as he does in his April 2 letter to the Emerald editor.

Whether it's smoking, drinking, eating, watching or playing at something habitually, what I find qualifies a behavior as abusive is when that activity is used as a repeated distraction from doing the work that's needed both within us and around us. Psychedelics such as LSD, psilocybin

mushrooms and peyote do not induce a state of denial; on the contrary, they tend to highlight and magnify both the painful and joyful elements of one's life.

Call it ritual, religion or simply healing. It's certainly not something that started in "the Sixties." Tribes all over the world have used psychedelics as part of their rites of transformation since the dawn of civilization. In speaking up for their potential as such, I do not deny that problems with addictions exist in our community. Nor do I claim that psychedelics represent the only path to enlightenment, freedom, salvation, etc.

But I do claim that they are both less addictive and physically less debilitating than cracking one's knuckles, and also that the Constitution guarantees my right to heal, be spiritual, or pursue happiness in any way I see fit, so long as I respect the rights of others. I invite Mr. Campbell to offer any evidence to the contrary and to present a rebuttal worthy of a university publication, instead of falling back on such rhetorical device as calling my opinion "crap" or suggesting that I shove something up my ass.

Scotty Perey
Alumnus

WINNERS

MAGIC JOHNSON

While the ex-basketball star is not free of HIV, according to his doctors, the virus has been reduced to undetectably small levels.



Dennis Rodman

In addition to being a pro basketball player, hosting his own television show and dabbling in pro wrestling, Rodman is now starring in the movie "Double Team" with Jean Claude Van Damme.

Mad Magazine

The humor magazine recently celebrated its 45th anniversary with a new and "unimproved" look and "an edgier attitude."

LOSERS

The Hult Center

Measure 47 cutbacks will probably lead to serious funding cuts for the entertainment center.



Jason Priestley

The star of "Beverly Hills 90210" is, by his own admission, no longer a teenage heart-throb but "the celebrity of yesteryear."

THE TOBACCO INDUSTRY

New documents show the tobacco industry knew the perils of nicotine in the '60s and also targeted advertisements at specific ethnic groups.



JAGUAR

The luxury car company is recalling almost 5,000 of its XK8 sports cars, close to half the total supply currently being sold.



Eric Clapton

The famous blues guitarist was fined \$480 for driving 101 mph — his third offense to date.

CORRECTION

In the April 1 edition of the Emerald, it was reported that the trip to the Grand Canyon was sponsored by the Office of International Education and Exchange. The group that sponsored the program is the Office of International Education and the Peer Assistants. The Emerald regrets the error.