

# Oregon Daily Emerald

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MICHAEL CRISP/Emerald

Several local media experts and a sizable crowd gathered Thursday evening in the Ben Linder Forum to discuss the paparazzi and the role of the press.

## Panel ponders role of press

By Jay-E Shih  
 Freelance reporter

Princess Diana's death brought the public's attention to what rights individuals have and what role journalists play in America.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) in Oregon formed a panel to discuss "Paparazzi, the Princess and the Press: Media Ethics in a Post-Diana World," Thursday in the EMU Ben Linder Room.

The panelists were Tim Gleason, Interim Dean of the University School of Journalism and Communication; Jim Godbold, Register-Guard managing editor; Rebecca Force, an independent producer; KVAL News Director Paul Reiss; and David Fidanque, executive director of the ACLU of Oregon. Professor Jim Upshaw of the School of Journalism and Communication led the discussion.

The panelists covered the role

of journalists in death-related situations, the personal privacy of public figures and potential regulations on the press after Princess Di's death.

"The public does not know about the ethical decision-making process," Godbold said. "For example, there were 12 people cited by police in the 17th Avenue riot. We had a discussion on (whether) we should publish the names of twelve people. The public sure would like to know."

"But, we asked ourselves, did we publish the names in other incidents when other people were cited? I think that the public should be informed about how we make these kinds of decisions."

Force said the question is one of human nature: people take celebrity photos because publishers are willing to pay \$1 million for them.

Arnold Ismach, former dean of the School of Journalism and

Communication, said reporters and photographers wouldn't run stories or pictures of private lives 50 years ago. That began to change about 25 years ago, as publishers competed for readers.

And the subjects of such coverage often don't have a legal basis for their complaints, Gleason said.

"The right to privacy does not give anyone the right to selectively decide when he or she is going to be in the public eye," he explained. "If you are in a public place or you are in a place where you can be seen from a public place without an extraordinary effort, what you are doing is public."

That doesn't mean the media should publish everything they can, Professor Tom Bivins said. The government could step in if the media don't regulate themselves.

"If you don't exercise self-control, someone will control (you)," he said.

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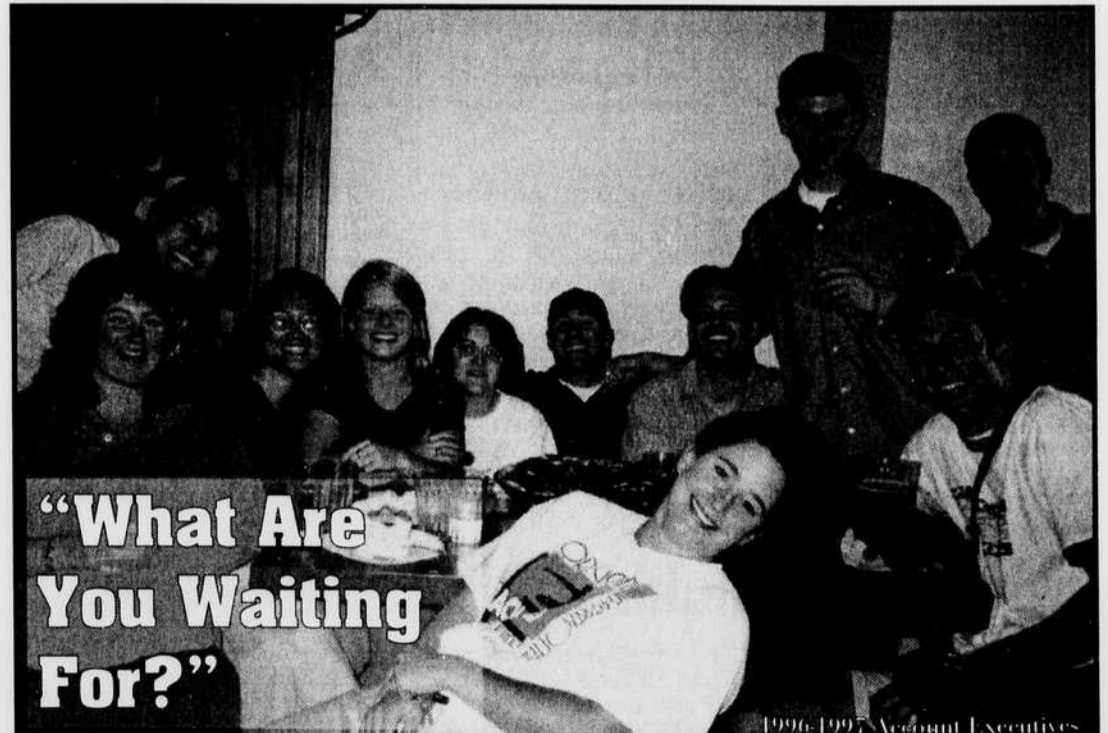
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