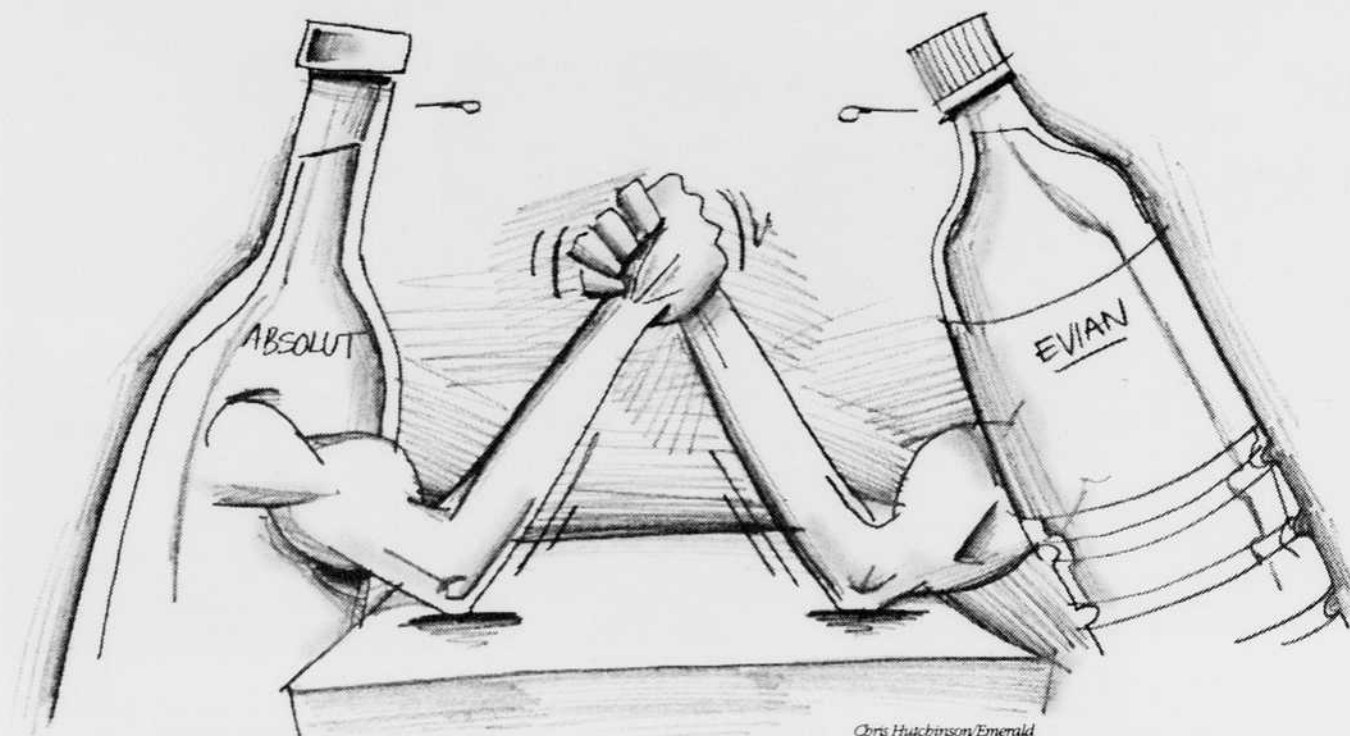


# PERSPECTIVES

## Behind the Fitness Fad

*In the age of healthy living, a columnist wonders what ever happened to good old fashioned debauchery*



Chris Hutchinson/Emerald

**I**n a world where sex and drugs and rock 'n' roll seem to have fallen into oblivion, a new type of college breed appears to be on the brink of conquering a majority status amongst the University of Oregon students.

I'm talking here about the health freaks that consume all that healthy-food merchandise they sell on TV, wear those tight tank tops and crowd the UO gym on a daily basis to display their horrendously bulgy and protuberant muscular limbs.

### Opinion



Vince Medeiros

There are so many of them, it's scary. And the outbreak is so serious that the number of followers of this sinful sect seems to be rising by the minute.

It is in the midst of all this vitamin-infested, power bar stomaching, fat-free dietary product hell that I think it's about time someone steps up and puts a stop to all this ego-tripping, muscle-fetishist, fitness worshipping fad that is swarming our campus.

Someone just has to do it. And since no one else appears to be willing to, it might as well be me.

Thing is, it's not that I don't like gyms. They're all right. I've actually ventured stumbling into one once. Lasted about a week my failed attempt at riding my body of the increasing rolls of chub that were building up in the area around my gut. That whole week I'd leave the gym and run sick straight

into a bucket, while the lactic acid tortured every micro ounce of my terribly aching body. Hell. Just had to quit.

But despite my unfortunate experience, I've got to admit that the UO has one pretty choice gym. It's the Harry Jerome Weight Room, located inside Esslinger. One rather cool place, indeed. It's always filled with lustrous and sweaty people, it's got a ton of looking glasses to caress the ego of those big, buff boys, and it plays KNRQ's non-alternative rock on a constant spool. The place is kind of like a bar, only without chicks, beer, pokies and a pool table. So it's not so bad.

It also has quite a vast variety of muscle stimulating equipment. It has dumbbells to work on that feeble, Ghandi-like biceps. It's got lat pull-downs to put some extra beef on that weak, under built back. And it's got bench-presses to sort out that pigeon chest, as well. Plus, it has aerobics gear aplenty; stuff like exercise bikes and step machines and treadmills.

Also it's in that very gym that you can get those classic dietary hints as well as hear the latest about carbohydrates and proteins.

So, it's a pretty all right place, the gym.

Only I can never understand why people go there. Lifting life-threateningly heavy weights sounds more like a masochistic ritual than anything else to me.

But they keep on doing it.

And there are so many students frequenting the place I dare say we are witnessing a fever of unprece-

dent magnitude. Even a good friend of mine who used to do all sorts of freaky shit and indulge in some very dirty and unhealthy perversions has turned into a fitness nut now.

Guess where you can find the bastard every single afternoon of the week at around five? The gym, course, and I fully don't get it. Whatever the reasons that lead people to live such a crazy lifestyle, the fact is that this whole celebration of the body deal has gone a bit too far. Working out simply cannot be fun. The thing is a freaking drag: Nothing can be worse than the drudgery of lifting weights that weigh loads for a whole lingering and heavy hour. It just can't be fun.

But if these people want to keep on wasting their precious existences hoisting massive weights in the confines of a sweaty, testosterone-filled, stinking gym, be my guests. Although I'm trying, I guess I can't stop them.

All I know is that it would be classic if we could forget this absurd health obstinacy and bring the good old sex, drugs and rock 'n' roll philosophy back to our campus. That'd be top.

But while this remains a wish and those guys keep heading for the weight room, I'll just sit here and finish off my lager. In the heat of all this workout drawl I forgot I had a coldie ready and waiting for me.

*Vince Medeiros is a columnist for the Emerald. His work appears on alternate Fridays. His views do not necessarily represent those of the newspaper.*

## Letters to the Editor

### A message to rioters

On Halloween night I was walking back home from Safeway with my baby on my back in the hopes that he would drift off to sleep during the walk. Unbeknownst to us, we were downwind from this year's campus riot. At 19th and Ferry, I smelled sulfur, and in a matter of seconds felt like my face was on fire.

With my eyes, nose and throat burning, I ran in the opposite direction. With each second the burning intensified. My eyes and nose streamed and I could barely see. Any moment I expected my baby to burst out screaming in pain. People on both sides of the street were dropping to the ground and

grabbing their faces.

I've heard students posing the argument that riots are inevitable when combining students with police in riot gear. Please. You had the choice to be responsible. Your actions precipitated the tear gas. That tear gas caused pain and suffering to people who didn't choose to be involved.

In addition, the police are too eager and willing to lob tear gas. There must be more appropriate methods that stay confined to the problem area and doesn't drift off to punish innocent people in other neighborhoods.

Please understand I don't have a problem with rioting for a good cause. There is nothing

honorable in being drunk and stupid. As a fellow student I'm embarrassed for you. As a mother I'm pissed.

Arwen Maas-DeSpain  
Sociology

### Animal research unethical

In response to the letter from Jocelyn McAuley of the Institute of Neuroscience (ODE, Oct. 27), I have the following to say:

While I agree with you that it is a poor attempt at journalistic humor to make light of the primate's escape, I disagree with your utilitarian view of their lives. Simply

put, your logic escapes me. You find worth in the research value attributed to a set of living, breathing organisms. You find justification in confining and subjecting them to studies that may or may not yield beneficial results. I can only speculate on what motivates such work. I can only speculate on what compels you to view such work in an ethical light. Of course cures for cancer, malaria, leprosy and AIDS must be found. It is a contradiction, however, to trade the life of an innocent organism for the chance of such discoveries; a life is a life.

Dustin Herron  
Eugene