

Oregonians weigh in on state issues

■ Oregonians are asked about growth, the dwindling water supply and the Kinkel verdict

Tony Papillo for the Emerald

It is often easy to speculate about what the general public's opinion is on issues such as increasing population and the environment. The Oregon Survey Research Laboratory recently released its second Oregon Annual Social Indicators Survey to find out exactly what people think about events that have affected Oregon in the past year.

The OASIS, which was conducted in November and December, gauged resident reaction to a

variety of issues including views on the sentencing of Kip Kinkel for his part in the shootings at Thurston High School.

According to the survey, the principle concern for those interviewed is Oregon's rising population, which is expected to experience rapid growth.

Sixty-five percent responded that the state's population is now "about the right size," while 29 percent found the state's population to be "too large." Only 2 percent said that the state population was "too small."

Another concern for those surveyed is how to preserve the state's depleting water supply. According to Stephen Johnson, associate director of OSRL and head director of the OASIS sur-

vey, problems resulting from the distribution of water resources will be an important concern for Oregonians in coming years.

Those problems are already being perceived by Oregonians. The survey showed that about 31 percent of them feel that there currently is a "very" or "somewhat serious" problem with Oregon's drinking water. As a result, 29 percent have an in-home water treatment system and close to 53 percent purchased bottled water during the past month.

The survey also gauged reaction to the Kinkel verdict, which sentenced him to almost 112 years in prison without parole.

According to the report, 56 percent of people polled "strongly agreed" with Kinkel's sentence

while only 9 percent "strongly disagreed" with the decision.

But Toshihiko Murata, a Graduate Teaching Fellow in the OSRL, said the survey seems to indicate that in spite of a strong agreement with the verdict, the results may not be as cut-and-dried as they seem.

"It's clear that there would be a relationship between the two percentages: those who believe in life in prison without parole and those who strongly agree with Kinkel's sentence of 112 years," he said.

For more information and results on the OASIS survey, it will all be posted on the OSRL Web page at darkwing.uoregon.edu/~osrl/.

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Lecturer accuses CIA of 1987 assassination

■ Journalist Joan Kruckewitt asserts her views on Ben Linder's murder in Nicaragua

Alana Lynn for the Emerald

In 1987, Ben Linder was the first American to be killed during the bloody takeover of Nicaragua. Linder's assassination at the hands of U.S.-supported rebel forces known as freedom fighters has sparked controversy for more than a decade.

Journalist Joan Kruckewitt explored these contentious issues surrounding Linder's murder in addition to the U.S. role in his

death during her lecture Tuesday in the aptly-named Ben Linder Room. Kruckewitt was in town to promote her new book "The Death of Ben Linder: The Story of a North American in Sandinista Nicaragua," which was released in November.

"I want people to know who Ben Linder was, a risk-taker and hero," said Kruckewitt, who befriended Linder in Nicaragua during the summer of 1983.

Linder, who was from Portland, went to Nicaragua during the summer of 1983 at the height of the Sandinista government takeover. During the takeover 40,000 Nicaraguans died. According to Kruckewitt, Linder helped

build bomb shelters and tried to introduce electrical power to small, poverty-stricken towns. He also led a key humanitarian effort in Nicaragua until his murder.

In her book, Kruckewitt goes into detail about what she believes to be the planned assassination of Linder, who she thinks was targeted because of his humanitarian work in the area. Kruckewitt said she believes, based on classified CIA papers that she has seen, that there is undeniable proof that Linder's death was orchestrated by the CIA in an effort to assist the rebel forces in the area, who were being supported with American dollars to fight the takeover of the government.

"I want the American people to see where their tax dollars went to," Kruckewitt said.

Willie Thompson, an organizer of the lecture, said he hoped Kruckewitt's lecture will provide a better understanding for students of American intervention overseas.

That message was transmitted to many who attended the lecture.

"Ben Linder shared a bond with oppressed people; he was a benevolent man whom we can learn a lot from," said Brian Wolf, a sociology graduate student.

"Americans need to be aware of their government and not be afraid to speak out against it," Kruckewitt said

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