

PERSPECTIVES

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Skinny wolves in trendy clothing



A PAINFUL ROUTINE

CASEY HOLDAHL

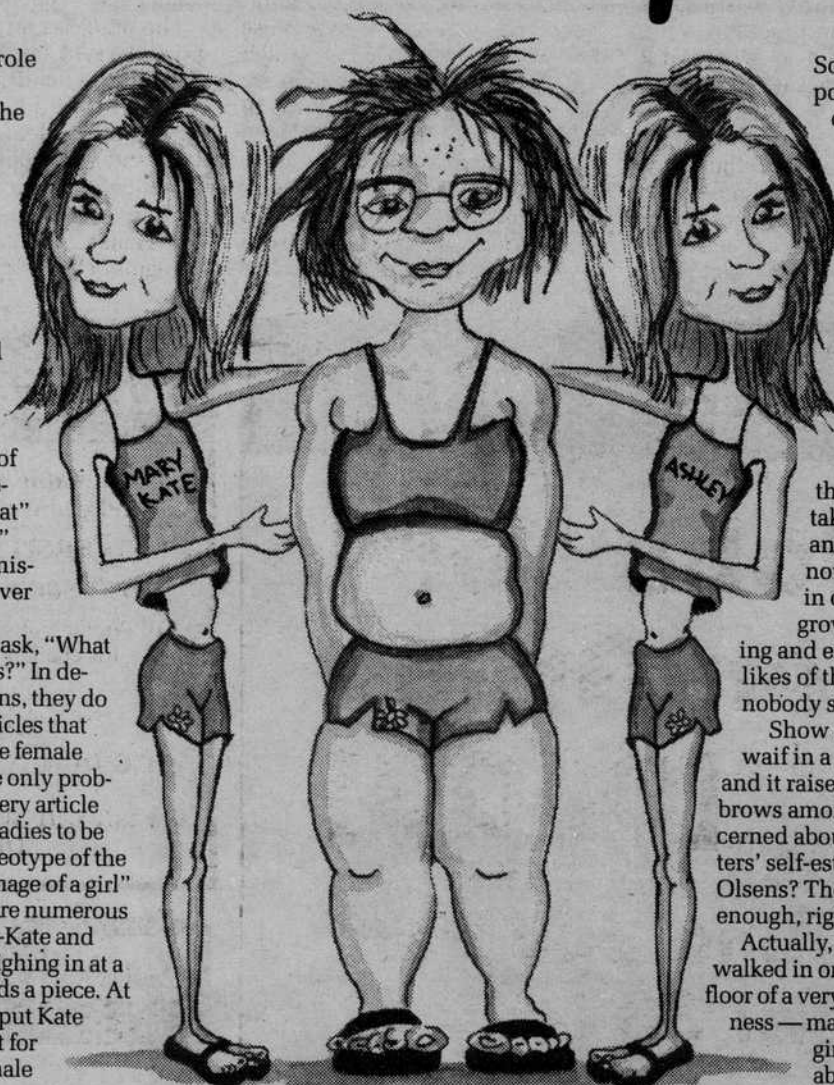
Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen have their own magazine. That's right, America's favorite identical twins have taken control of another form of media.

What a roller coaster ride it's been for the Olsens. Television, movies, books, phone lines, video games, their own clothing line and now the glossy glow of a bimonthly periodical. If Howard Stern is the self-proclaimed "King of All Media," then these two are the supreme intergalactic overlords. It's not the fact that the teen dynamic duo have their own magazine that bothers me so much, it's the content that really scares me.

First of all, I can only imagine what these two are really like. Gary Coleman was only on "Different Strokes" and a few made-for-TV movies, and look how he turned out. These two have spent their whole lives under a camera, and though I guess it's a possibility that they've turned out to be well-adjusted members of society, I sincerely doubt it.

What kind of role models do the twins make for the young girls of America? In almost every photo (of which there are countless) of the girls, they look easily five years older than their actual age of 15. Take away their names and the positioning of the magazine between "Tiger Beat" and "Teen Beat," and one might mistake it for the cover of "Cosmo."

So you might ask, "What about the articles?" In defense of the Olsens, they do try to "write" articles that reinforce positive female role models. The only problem is that for every article warning young ladies to be aware of the stereotype of the "ultra-slender image of a girl" in media, there are numerous pictures of Mary-Kate and Ashley, each weighing in at a healthy 85 pounds a piece. At least they didn't put Kate Moss on their list for possible first female presidents.



Bryan Dixon Emerald

So what's the point of picking on these poor girls? The point is this: There is a definite problem with the youth of America today. If you didn't notice it when you were in high school, then you can take a step back and notice it now. Young girls in our country are growing up idolizing and emulating the likes of the Olsens, and nobody seems to mind. Show a picture of a waif in a string bikini, and it raises some eyebrows among parents concerned about their daughters' self-esteem. But the Olsens? They're nice enough, right?

Actually, the twins have walked in on the ground floor of a very lucrative business — making young girls feel bad about themselves. Girls who already

feel well-rounded and secure don't buy the Olsens' halter top with matching skirt and sandals. And where the Olsens stop, "Seventeen" and "YM" pick right up. This could be all just be a figment of my imagination, but probably not.

Mary-Kate and Ashley are the Joe Camel of insecurity for a generation of girls growing up in a booming economy. The towheaded twosome are leading the charge for a neo-narcissistic generation, refuting the strides made during that beautiful recession of the early 1990s.

But today, Mom and Dad are bringing home six-figure salaries, and the Olsens are letting the young ladies know how to spend their allowance. Girls aren't growing up with eating disorders because of a lack of prayer in school or the absence of a flag salute every morning. They're growing up feeling empty because of the day-by-day assault on their perception of what a woman is supposed to be. Mary-Kate and Ashley obviously aren't the first to propagate this, but they are the newest.

I always thought that the continuation of Bob Saget's career would be the worst thing to spawn from "Full House." I guess not.

Casey Holdahl is a columnist for the Oregon Daily Emerald. His views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald. He can be reached at choldahl@gladstone.uoregon.edu.

Society should blame rape on the predator, not the victim

GUEST COMMENTARY

Shantell Rice

Several letters to the editor and an editorial ("Are women nothing more than victims?" ODE, May 2) were published in the Emerald about Judge Mitch Crane's speech on drinking responsibly. I did not attend this presentation, but I have heard enough to know Crane said nothing short of how our society views rape: As the fault of the survivor.

It's a tragedy that rape is seen this way. The survivor is usually female. In my four years here at the University, I have been to countless presentations about rape. These presentations are dominated by females, usually listening to a male presenter give us safety

tips. We are cautioned to watch our glass while at a bar or party, so that potential predators don't slip a substance into our drink. We are asked to not get intoxicated in order to prevent sending mixed signals, to avoid being in a position where a predator can attack. Consequently, if we don't follow these tips and something happens to us, it is our own fault. That's what we get for drinking.

I don't condemn these safety tips and am not suggesting that they shouldn't be followed. They can stop a tragedy, promote awareness and possibly make the cruel intentions of a rapist more difficult to enact. I simply ask for the blame to fall where it belongs: On the predator.

Rape is a male issue. It affects both men and women, yet it starts with the male. If men didn't rape, women wouldn't be in danger.

While not every man will rape, every

woman is a potential survivor. Many men would be appalled if asked not to rape or if asked to sit and listen to why rape is wrong, but I'm appalled as well.

I'm appalled that, according to statistics from the ASUO Women's Center, one in 12 college men admit to acts that meet legal definitions of rape and that one out of every seven women currently attending college has been raped. I'm appalled that somewhere in America, a woman is raped every two minutes. I'm appalled that a woman is 10 times more likely to be raped than to die in a car crash.

I am appalled and saddened that my friend was raped.

My friend was raped. I was not able to protect her when she needed it most, and because of that my life has been touched, and I will never be the same. Survivors are not to blame for the actions of a predator, but

our society assigns them the blame. Survivors take on this guilt and ask themselves why they deserve this act of violence. The answer is simple: There is nothing a person can do to deserve to be raped.

I would like speakers to come to campus and speak to male-dominated audiences about rape. I'd like presenters to explain that slipping drugs into a person's drink is illegal and violating, to explain that a drunk or passed out woman has not given consent for sex, and to remind males that the University's student conduct code states that an intoxicated individual cannot give consent to sex.

Presenters should explain that mixed signals are not really mixed if one listens. That no one wants to be raped. And that no means no.

Shantell Rice is a senior journalism major.

Letters to the editor

Peter DeFazio writes to The Register-Guard's publisher

Dear Tony Baker:

A union contract is a guarantee. It ensures fair play. It gives both partners a voice. It codifies the labor management relationship so that problems are solved in an atmosphere of trust and confidence. A union contract is a guarantee that both sides will do their best.

The Register-Guard has a long history of doing its best for the community. But your reputation as a good citizen is at risk as this labor dispute continues month after month. I

urge you to return to the bargaining table in good faith with the Eugene Newspaper Guild to negotiate a fair contract.

This struggle is now two years old, but there is still time to settle your differences and make this a win-win for everyone — the union, management and the community. It's what we expect.

Peter DeFazio
Fourth District
U.S. House of Representatives

The real "Flag Folly" is the "Stars and Stripes"

I did not know until this morning that "Blind Patriotism 101" was offered at the University. But from the editorial "Flag Folly" (ODE, May

1), someone has evidently taken the course.

I was appalled to read this editorial, written by a University student, which is so blatantly ignorant of the oppression that the beloved "Stars and Stripes" has stood for. The flag flew above armies that forced Native Americans to move from their homelands to reservations and a government that called for Japanese-Americans to be rounded up and kept in internment camps during World War II.

Most important is that the flag was a symbol of a country that allowed slavery for a hundred years before the formation of the Confederate States of America. Thomas Jefferson and George Washington were slave owners, and I don't hear an uproar about their profiles being on coins.

This editorial falls under the standard cliché of the pot calling the kettle black. America is just as guilty, if not more, of everything of which Pat Payne accuses the Confederacy, and nobody is complaining about the "Stars and Stripes."

Overcoming racial tensions and hatred is going to take a lot more effort than simply redesigning a flag, so why are people wasting their time on this issue? Come on people, we go to a liberal arts university, shouldn't we be trying to uncover the truths our society wants to keep hidden from us, rather than deflecting any guilt by accusing others?

Katy Reiber
senior
history