

COMMENTARY

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Editorial

Praise is due for teach-in efforts, ideas

Participants of Tuesday night's teach-in should be commended for their efforts to further educate the community about the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks and contemplate the pros and cons of retaliation. In an overwhelming act of support for the event, more than a thousand people crowded into the EMU Ballroom and then spilled out into the Maple Room, the Oak Room and the second floor lobby.

The enormity and eagerness of the crowd shows how dedicated this community is to understanding and supporting the exploration of complex issues facing all Americans. The dialogue was balanced with opposing views on military action from University professors and organization members. Praise should be given to audience members who responded to the views peacefully and respectfully. A discussion of events of this magnitude warrants contrary points of view to be effective. The discussion was not simply an anti-war rally, but an introductory education in global politics and an exploration of alternatives to an American military response to the terrorist attacks on the East Coast.

The Concerned Faculty for Peace and Justice, which is composed of about 70 faculty members, did an excellent job of sponsoring and promoting the event. As the situation between the United States and Afghanistan progresses, more panel discussions should be encouraged, as they are obviously supported by the University community.

The teach-in accomplished what a university setting should provide for the community. The thoughtful discussion fostered an environment where divergent ideas could be presented without judgment.

Some of these ideas were reminiscent of two female lawmakers who voted against entering into war in two different eras. Jeanette Rankin was a representative from Montana and the lone member of Congress to vote against the United States' entry into both World Wars. In Rankin's footsteps, Barbara Lee, a democrat from California, voted Sept. 14 against House Resolution 64, which endorsed military action in retaliation to the terrorist attacks three days prior.

Whether you agree with their stance or not, these two women showed courage of conviction, which was also prevalent in many of the ideas expressed during the teach-in. More people should show such courage in the uncertain days and weeks to come. We thank the faculty group for starting the conversation.

Editorial Policy

These editorials represent the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. The editorial board members are editor in chief Jessica Blanchard, managing editor Michael J. Kleckner, editorial editor Julie Lauderbaugh, assistant editorial editor Jacquelyn Lewis, community representative Gabe Shaughnessy. Responses can be sent to editor@dailyemerald.com. Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged. Letters are limited to 250 words and guest commentaries to 550 words. Please include contact information. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style.

THE MEDIA'S NOT-SO-MAGIC MIRROR

We've heard a lot about how the media affect women's self images. And it's true. For as long as I can remember, I have been surrounded by images of the "ideal" woman. Since early childhood, I have felt the need to measure up to this ideal. From playing dress up to dieting to losing a suspicious amount of weight in high school, every effort was put forth to achieve the glossy, elusive image of the perfect woman.

I've never been fat. Not even before I went hungry in pursuit of an impossible goal. I've never been ugly. Not even before I discovered makeup and Calvin Klein. But somehow I could never measure up to the image created by a combination of my own insecurities and the media's suggestions. I know I speak for thousands of women on this issue.

I can say with complete truth that the images in magazines and commercials do encourage insecurities and eating disorders in predisposed women. While it isn't fair to blame the media for every insecurity or eating disorder, there can be no argument that popular images contribute to both. Studies upon studies have mirrored this correlation. Isn't it funny how excessively thin, "beautiful" women appear on both men's and women's magazines? They seem to scream, "Be thin, and life will be great!" I got thin. I got thinner. Life didn't get any better.

It isn't just men who perpetuate these images, either. Women's magazines seem to show even thinner models on their covers. And we still buy them. I don't know about other women, but I would rather see a picture of Tyson Beckford on the latest issue of Glamour than Kate Moss. I also

know that men feel media pressure to look good too — but that's another article.

I used to think the solution to all of these woes was changing the media. However, one of the most important things I have learned through journalism classes and life is that rather than changing the world we have to change the way we think about it. There is no miraculous solution that will make every insecure girl or woman feel better about herself. It would certainly be wonderful if the media portrayed more varieties of shapes, sizes, and ethnicity. But it would also be silly to think we could obliterate images ingrained in our culture. We purchase magazines because they give us a momentary escape from real life. We want the illusion they present. But it's important to know that's exactly what it is: an illusion.

Sure, those models might look like goddesses after three-week juice diets and air brushing, but in real life, they're just people. They get zits. They have fat days. It's impossible to reach a standard that not even the models themselves can achieve in real life. It's a hard thing to realize, but I know it can be done.

Don't get me wrong. I like magazines. I love the pictures. I also like how I look. But that's only because I've realized you don't have to weigh 80 pounds to be attractive. It's perfectly normal to want to be sexy, and as I see it, if you've got it, flaunt it. But you can "have it" without shrinking yourself to the unnatural and



Steve Baggs Emerald

oftentimes unhealthy weight we see on commercials, television and in magazines.

I've learned that it's okay to thumb through the occasional fashion magazine, but you can't let it become your magic mirror. It is possible to be a female, or a male for that matter, in this society, dealing with today's popular media images, and still have a healthy self-esteem. You just can't let the images define how you feel about yourself. Only you should have the power to do that.

Jacquelyn Lewis is the assistant editorial editor for the Oregon Daily Emerald. Her views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald. She can be reached at jacquelynlewis@dailyemerald.com.

News briefs

Military action will bring peace

Three weeks after the attack on America, the University of Oregon sponsored a teach-in designed to foster tolerance and peace worldwide. I would like to know how we can call for peace when 6,000 innocent U.S. citizens were killed.

When 6 million Jews were killed in Germany, the U.S. sent troops to bring peace and justice. I don't think the killing would have stopped if we hadn't intervened militarily. Nevertheless, speakers in the teach-in said that open dialogue with our enemies will bring about peace. How do you negotiate with the Taliban, a regime that oppresses its people and harbors terrorists?

Americans have a duty to prevent another mass slaughter of their fellow citizens. I do not advocate an attack against Muslim people. But I would like to pop the phony bubble of peace that people on this campus have created. I don't want Sept. 11 to happen again. We need military action and intervention to bring

about peace, justice and safety for every American citizen.

Cayla Campbell
senior
journalism/Spanish

Emerald stereotyping adds insult to injury

I found it interesting that in an editorial titled "Eugene healing needs to begin" (ODE, 10/01), the editorial board found it necessary for their healing process to insult my birthplace and home, Springfield.

Yes, I am from Springfield, and I was able to read the editorial, contrary to beliefs. I don't have a pick-up truck. I am not inbred. I don't play the banjo. I am just a University student trying to get an education and take those upper-crust professional jobs from Eugene citizens.

I don't appreciate that a paper is so insensitive that it would dare stereotype my town by mentioning a "thing" that killed and injured my friends. It seems the Emerald staff has some anger problems to work out. Maybe they should shop at Target more.

Rather than rudely insulting your kind

neighbors, maybe Eugene should look into a mirror. After all, it is not our fault PeaceHealth moved here. Besides, I welcome having two of the best hospitals in the nation in my wonderful town. I am proud to have "Springfield, Oregon" on my birth certificate. And remember, a Springfielder might be sitting right next to you in class, debating on your forensics team or playing on your football team.

We are all over the University campus, and you can't even tell the difference. And besides, the way the current trend is going, I am looking forward to the University moving to Springfield. It would save commute time from my non-trailer park residence.

Brandon Lasher
senior
history

Editor's note: The reference to the Kip Kinkel shooting was mentioned in Monday's editorial because it is associated in many peoples' minds with the name "Springfield." It was not the editorial board's intent to trivialize the shooting or devalue the victims or survivors.