

COMMENTARY

Newsroom: (541) 346-5511
Room 300, Erb Memorial Union
P.O. Box 3159, Eugene, OR 97403
E-mail: editor@dailyemerald.com
Online Edition:
www.dailyemerald.com

Editor in Chief:
Jessica Blanchard
Managing Editor:
Michael J. Kleckner
Editorial Editor:
Julie Lauderbaugh
Assistant Editorial Editor:
Jacquelyn Lewis

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ON OUR MINDS...

Opening up the debate on patriotism

Patriotism has become somewhat of a catch phrase of late. In the media, we're bombarded with examples of what the "patriotic" response to the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks is — some say it's to support the U.S. air strikes in Afghanistan; others say it's to practice our freedom of speech and right to protest. Still others say we should show our patriotism by flying the flag, by sending donations to help the victims' families and friends, or by spending money to stimulate the economy.

In an attempt to begin a campuswide debate, the Emerald asked several students and community members how their views of patriotism have changed since the attacks.

Here are some responses:



"I'm disgusted by it. I don't think its being used correctly, and it's nice people are coming together, but I don't care about the cause. What are people being patriotic about?"

Lauren Donohue
sophomore, fine arts



"(Patriotism) is kind of a put-on. We're not in the same kind of threat as World War II, so people aren't really into it."

Travis Kliever
freshman, undeclared



"There's a part of me that doesn't feel good about people making money off of flags, but they stand for something most of us do feel strongly about, so I'm not going to say anything derogatory about it."

Randy Burke
Rochester, New York



"Patriotism has gotten a lot more popular, and it's kind of neat to be an American these days. What happened is sad, but it's taught our country a lot about freedom and what it's worth and what it costs."

Lauren Sexton
senior, journalism

How do you currently define patriotism?

We want to know what you think, and we'll attempt to print all responses we receive on this important topic. Letters should not be more than 250 words in length and guest commentaries are limited to 550 words. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for grammar, style and libel.

Photos by Thomas Patterson Emerald

Paying the price

Professor Cheyney Ryan labeled it best as "the phenomena of the endless war." With World War I, our goal of total Japanese and German surrender was clear. And in the Gulf

War, the distinct objective was to get Iraq out of Kuwait. In Afghanistan, the United States initially wanted to win the war by bombing, a task that is really only successful in developed countries.

The likelihood of a ground war is looming.



**Rebecca
Newell**
Columnist

When it happens, the government said it will take 500,000 soldiers to control Afghanistan. There's also a possibility that we'll end up occupying Pakistan because of its nuclear weapons, requiring even more troops.

However, the armed forces can't ship more than half a million soldiers and expect to continue to replenish those numbers with extra troops. We currently do not have those types of numbers, which would mean reinstitution of the draft — something many Americans have been nervously whispering about since the Sept. 11 attacks.

The reinstitution of the draft frightened me enough when I realized it could mean my 18-year-old brother could be called in to serve Uncle Sam in the near future. And then I was introduced to another possibility that hit home even more — the likelihood that women would be included.

Since President Nixon abolished the draft in the 1970s because of tremendous opposition during Vietnam, women's rights and gender equality have made progress in leaps and bounds. And we'd be ignorant to think that a draft would step back to the masculine ideals of several decades before, after we've spent the last 20 years demonstrating to society that there is no such thing as a weaker sex.

With the draft comes the draft dodgers. The government only recognizes a few excuses for draft deferment, and student status isn't one of them. Religious deferment, if you're Quaker, Mennonite or Jehovah's Witness, is.

Another is homosexuality. Why? The government's explanation is including homosexuals in the service would lead to bad morale for the troops

by making them uncomfortable.

But how will this be handled today? Would the draft board ask to receive proof (letter from a psychologist, etc.)? Scenes from a Pauly Shore movie run through my mind, and I'm not laughing. Add pregnancy to the deferment mix. One can only hope that attempts to dodge the draft wouldn't result in a baby boom.

My own feelings on the draft are mixed. I can understand that I should be prepared to fight for a war that I'm going to be affected by. Do I believe it's a violation of my civil liberties that the government can force me to serve — and basically control my life or death? No, but that doesn't make me eager to make the trip to Afghanistan to face up against Osama bin Laden's followers, who have no problem killing me for their cause.

However, if we aren't faced with the actual possibility of having to make real sacrifices for war, then isn't there something wrong with supporting a war we personally have no investment in? It's easy to applaud or criticize the war effort when it's someone else's life.



Steve Briggs Emerald

Even Elvis served in the Army for two years. If the King could put his life on hold for the benefit of our country, I won't complain if I'm called.

Rebecca Newell is a columnist for the Emerald. Her views do not necessarily reflect those of the Emerald. She can be reached at rebeccanewell@dailyemerald.com.

Corrections

In a story about University cost-cutting measures ("University reveals budget revisions," ODE, 10/30), OPEU bargaining chairman Bart Lewis stated a ratio of officers of administration to classified workers in the Oregon University System. That ratio does not exist "systemwide" because the University of Oregon is the only university to classify administrators as officers of administration.

The Emerald regrets the error.

Letter to the editor

Public overreacting about anthrax

I would like to congratulate Josh Brown on showing just how overdramatic people can be. According to his letter ("Anthrax cartoon shows poor taste," ODE, 10/29), Brown has a problem with an editorial cartoon that was printed in the Oct. 19 edition of the Emerald. Well, I hate to break it to him, but the cartoon was an editorial and did not necessarily convey the feelings of the paper or its staff.

Brown believes that there was no comedic value to the cartoon. On the contrary, I believe it spoke volumes about just how many people are running around thinking the sky is falling. Take, for example, the plane that was grounded in Califor-

nia following the first anthrax diagnosis because someone believed that confetti from a greeting card was anthrax. Or consider the casino that was evacuated and closed because of salt spilt on a table and believed to have been anthrax. We used to be able to punish those that screamed "fire" in a crowded theater, but I have come to realize that one cannot punish stupid people. They are just born that way.

So when the sky doesn't fall, what are we supposed to do with all those that believed it was going to?

Another question for Brown: Should a newspaper be held responsible for being "distasteful" for publishing?

Christopher Ouellette
senior, political science