

COMMENTARY

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Editorial

Sexual abuse isn't about sex; we must take back control

It's not about sex, really. Real sex is mutual. Real sex involves communication, and partners are respectful about the limits and boundaries of the other. Real sex is responsible. It means shared pleasure for partners and is often an expression of love.

Sexual assault or sexual abuse is about having control over another person. It happens when someone chooses to take away another person's right to decide what happens to his or her own body. It is an act of violence.

Sexual violence happens in this community, and it affects us all. Through participating in events offered this week, many community members are paying closer attention to the realities of sexual assault and are making commitments toward ending sexual violence.

We are taking the opportunity to learn about how alcohol is used to facilitate rape — that a drunk person often isn't able to consent to sex, and that sex without consent is rape.

We are seeking to better understand the connections between sexual violence and other forms of oppression that exist in our society — including, but not limited to: sexism, racism, heterosexism, exploitation of children, youth and elders, those with disabilities, those with fewer socioeconomic resources, those who identify as transgender, and those who do not practice the dominant religion or communicate in the dominant language.

All of us know at least one person who is a survivor of sexual assault or abuse — even if they have never told us about it. One way to show our support and help break the silence that surrounds sexual violence and violence against women in our community is through participating in Take Back the Night and other events happening this week.

This editorial was written for the Emerald by Michelle Edwards, community education program coordinator for Sexual Assault Support Services, a non-profit agency dedicated to ending oppression and sexual violence through education, support services, outreach and empowerment in Lane County, Oregon.

Bush's carrot may be riskier than his stick

As former Secretary of State James Baker so patiently explained to Ali G, international diplomacy is a game of sticks and carrots. Now that President George W. Bush has proven to the world the proficiency with which he wields his stick, he is turning to the less arousing but still satisfying task of doling out the post-engagement carrots. Thus, New Europe is reaping the rewards of its amenability toward the Iraq war, while Old Europe is being admonished for its recalcitrance.

The United States on Thursday endorsed seven Eastern European countries for inclusion in NATO, while proposing a backseat advisory role for the United Nations in the reconstruction of Iraq. Both of these moves are calculated to reduce French and German influence, which could very well deepen the rift that has ruptured the Western alliance. Bush, in demanding what amounts to a dotting fealty from allies, risks the demise of a balance of power that America itself worked so hard to create. That's a hard carrot to swallow.

Editorial policy

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to letters@dailyemerald.com.



Peter Utsey Emerald

Turning back the clock on civil rights

I wonder what part of the world Albany, Ga., is in. More importantly, what part of the world does Taylor County High School belong to? Apparently, it's the 1800s, when slavery and segregation were all right.

Last year, the high school took leaps and bounds by hosting 'the first integrated prom' in 31 years ("Some students choose not to integrate prom," The Register-Guard, May 2).

The first... I'm speechless, and that's a first.

Has society, this nation, advanced so little that the community is willing to spend the money for two separate proms because they fear interracial dating?

According to Savannah Now Newspapers, in 2002 students voted unanimously to have an integrated prom. But according to those same reports, Taylor County isn't the only school to opt to forgo the school-sponsored dances or events. Most students find themselves at country clubs or dance halls.

According to CNN, up until last year, the school officials stopped sponsoring dances because they feared interracial dating.

Every year, parents and students would organize the events.

Apparently, the school thinks that problems only arise when people date people of different colors. Oh, right, white couples have absolutely no relationship woes. So, I guess that means that I'm not allowed to date Mexicans or Irish because that's what I am. Please! No one in this nation is pure white.

You see, in good ol' Taylor County it's OK to not like the "colored folk," as people in this country's more ignorant days would call black people. Thank you, Taylor County High School, for slamming the civil rights movement back several decades. I thought we were in the 21st century.

There were just a few students that wanted an all-white prom. Why do they get their way when they are not even the majority? Obviously, the school administrators need a lesson of their own — one of reaching out to the majority and still including the minority. Students can go to both if they want. Well, that's interesting. It's not enough that white students get an all-white prom; they get to go to one where the students actually have advanced into the 21st century.

Gerica McCrary, a senior this year, helped to organize the integrated prom last year and was reportedly very upset by the separate proms. She told the Associated Press, "I cried. The black juniors said, 'Our prom is open to everyone.'"



Salena DeLaCruz
Say it loud

Online poll

Each week, the Emerald publishes the previous week's poll results and the coming week's poll question. Visit www.dailyemerald.com to vote.

Last week: Do you agree with the Bush administration's Healthy Forest Initiative?

Results: 90 total votes

Yes, increased logging will help to prevent forest fires — 18.9 percent, or 17 votes

Yes, the forests are there to be logged — 18.9 percent, or 17 votes

No, there are other more effective alternatives — 20 percent, or 18 votes

No, leave the forests alone! — 28.9 percent, or 26 votes

What Healthy Forest Initiative? — 6.7 percent, or 6 votes

Leave me alone! — 6.7 percent, or 6 votes

This week: What do you think of homosexuality on campus?

Choices: It's disgusting and should be hidden; It should be out and proud; Everyone should be able to feel comfortable on campus; No sexuality should be publicly displayed on campus; I don't care; Leave me alone!

CORRECTIONS

The person pictured in the photo accompanying Tuesday's article about the Prefontaine Classic ("El G' won't run Pre Classic mile, but Webb might," ODE, May 6) was actually William Chircher. William Chircher will not run at the Pre this year, while Cornelius Chircher will.

Friday's article about the Race Against Racism ("Race combats local prejudice," ODE, May 9) should have listed this Thursday as the deadline to register. Registrations will also be taken the day of the race.

The Emerald regrets the errors.