

# Feminists march in EMU to dispel misconceptions

A group of 20 feminists marched through the EMU on Thursday with T-shirts also stating their message

By Jared Paben  
News Reporter

About 20 men and women wearing "This is what a feminist looks like" T-shirts drew confused glances and inquiries as they walked in slow motion through the busy halls of the EMU on Thursday.

The group, which included members and supporters of the ASUO Women's Center, was trying to show a strong feminist presence on campus and debunk misconceptions about feminism, organizer Sarah Wells explained.

She said ideas of militaristic lesbians have been wrongly attached to the feminist movement, and that part of their goal in holding the rally was to discredit those myths.

"The dictionary definition of feminism is a belief in social, political and economic equality of the sexes," Wells said. "You don't actually have to be a woman to be a feminist, anyone can be a feminist, and most people are if they accept that definition."

The walk was part of a recent campaign by the Women's Center to help the public connect with the idea of feminism. A series of six posters meant to show the public the everyday faces of feminists were created with photographs of student group leaders, she said.

Women's Center Director Lisa Foisy explained to those rallying before the start of the march that the walk would be a combination of art and activism —



Tim Bobosky Photographer

Women's Center Director Lisa Foisy leads a group of feminists through the EMU as they wear shirts reading "This is what a feminist looks like." Proceeds from the sale of their shirts will go toward the University production of "The Vagina Monologues."

and they would be the art. By walking in slow motion the marchers would draw attention and arouse curiosities, she said.

"This is a marketing tool for people to stop and look," she said.

Women's Center employee Mona Jones said the performing art aspect of the walk was right up her alley because she is a dance major. Jones volunteered to help hand out brochures and explain to the public the reason for the march.

She said they originally wanted to have an open house ceremony for the center, but decided it wouldn't reach enough of the public. Instead, they decided to hold a walk to garner public attention.

The Women's Center charged \$10 for each shirt and sold a total of 35, Wells said, adding that the profits will all go toward "The Vagina Monologues" pro-

duction, for which the Women's Center badly needs funding.

Wells, a junior studying public relations, first hatched the idea for the walk during a bike ride to school.

"I was riding my bicycle to school one day and I thought, 'Wouldn't it be cool if everyone wore their feminist T-shirt on the same day?'" she said. "And then I just off-handedly mentioned it at the staff meeting and there was a lot of support."

Wells said that if the walk is successful in attracting people to the Women's Center, organizers will plan to do it again next year.

"If we can bring one person into the Women's Center who's never been into the Women's Center, it'll be a success," she said.

Contact the people/culture/faith reporter at [jaredpaben@dailymerald.com](mailto:jaredpaben@dailymerald.com).

and courtesy; however, Keim said the message underlying the event's jovial atmosphere is actually very serious.

"There are some really ridiculous things that have happened on campuses," Keim said. "When peoples' teams win and they go out and trash their towns or schools, what's the point of the game?"

Keim — the author of "Fan Etiquette," a book on violence perpetrated by collegiate spectators — was himself the target of fan harassment when he took his family to the 2001 Oregon State v. Fresno State game.

"My wife was threatened; I was harassed," he said. "Just leaving the stadium was one of the scariest experiences of my life."

Keim's program has been lauded nationwide as a progressive response to the growing severity of fan misbehavior, gaining recognition in newspapers such as The New York Times and the Chicago Tribune and drawing praise from schools throughout the Pacific-10 Conference.

Despite this, the gravity of the event's underlying themes was not able to dampen the mood at Edison on Thursday. Although representatives from

Oregon State failed to attend, Muesle and Keim managed to carry the program through on schedule.

"I think that things were definitely successful," Muesle said. "The point of this whole event is to show kids that sports aren't about hating the other team, but about teamwork and just playing the game."

Keim was also positive about the program.

"When we went to Adams Elementary in Corvallis, the kids cheered the Duck," he said. "That is the whole point right there."

In addition to an entertaining assembly, the Interfraternity Councils and the Panhellenic Councils of both universities donated \$500 to the opposing city's elementary school.

"This is just a really good opportunity," said freshman Duck quarterback Brady Leaf. "Of course on Saturday it is going to be intense — its even more intense than I thought it would be — but we don't hate them. This just gives us a chance to show the kids what it's really about."

Andrew Shipley is a freelance reporter for the Emerald.

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spond a little bit more, since I'm from around here," he said.

The audience did respond to the players, who towered imposingly over the more than 100 students who filled the Edison gym for the 45-minute assembly. While waiting in the school's entrance for the assembly to begin, an excited group of students swarmed the players, waving scraps of paper and begging for autographs from anyone more than 6 feet tall. The excitement only increased upon the arrival of the Duck, whose strutting and random hugging of teachers was greeted with cheers from the laughing students.

"The energy is great," Greek Life event Coordinator Erin Muesle said. "You can't help but have a good time."

As the event's founder, Keim directed the assembly. He spoke to the young students primarily of the importance of respect and academic dedication, in between performances by the cheerleaders and a football team skit. It was difficult for the athletes to repress grins as Keim led the children in chants of friendship

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