

letters

Red scare

To the Editor:

In February of 1950, a young Wisconsin Senator named Joseph R. McCarthy became known the world over for his accusations of Communist Sympathizers infiltrating the ranks of government.

McCarthy used the media as a means of exposing hundreds of alleged U.S. government communists to the American public. Many of these exposed American citizens were, of course, innocent, but their lives were in many cases ruined by these false accusations. McCarthy's methods became known as, "A style of which the principal elements were reckless accusations, and careless inaccuracy of statement."

Freedom of the press is one of our most cherished American freedoms, but this freedom must be tempered with the responsibility of accuracy in writing.

In the February 17, 1977 edition of Cougar Print, a young staff writer named Bradley A. Boyer made a number of unreasoning accusations about an alleged drug problem in athletics at Clackamas Community College. It is about this article that I am writing.

First of all, to quote facts and figures from a very small random sample is a poor practice which leads to incorrect assessment of situations. The article on "Pill Popping Athletes," makes mention of only three athletes who talk about the drug abuse on the CCC football team. The CCC football roster had some 80 members and to question three or four members about that team's over-all involvement with drugs is not a very broad sampling of the members.

A second point I would like to make is the reference to his choice of Tony McBride as a source to quote facts from on drug abuse at CCC. McBride is a member of the Oregon College of Education football team which plays football games on Saturday evenings or afternoons. In 1976, there was not one CCC game that a member of OCE's football team could attend because of similarly scheduled playing times of both OCE and CCC. Since this is the case, McBride's statement that "drug use at CCC is stronger than at OCE" can be based solely on assumption rather than fact.

Boyer's flare for the sensational obviously carries more weight than his responsibility to accuracy. I have the greatest amount of confidence and trust in the football athletes at CCC. They are the finest group of attitude athletes I have ever been associated with in my coaching career.

Although it is a tragic event when an athlete takes drugs to improve his or her performance, some athletes here at CCC probably do use drugs to an extent, but I would be very surprised if over 10 per cent of our athletes ever use drugs in this manner.

Just as McCarthy's false accusations affected the lives of hundreds of innocent Americans, these unfounded accusations by Boyer can also be a detriment to CCC athletes. Show a little more class in the future before you go shooting off your mud-slinging pen by digging a little deeper into the facts.

Tim Hundley
Assistant Football Coach
CCC

Drug use doubted

To the Editor:

I am writing this in response to Brad Boyer's article which appeared in the last Cougar Print. What I have to say are my own ideas and do not express those of the rest of the coaching staff or ball players.

Several areas of the article gave me real concern about the validity of the information. First, a former athlete was quoted as having first hand information on a situation of which he has been separated for two years, and we are talking about the present, not the past.

I question if 70 per cent of the football team took drugs before a game. It seems to me that with the coaches being with the players all the time before a game that it would be very difficult for that percentage to pop a pill without being seen.

I guess one of the quotes which makes me question the validity of the article was the one which stated, "The pills are easy to get. You always know someone who is selling, so why not take speed and have an advantage". The interesting thing about this quote is that it was stated by a baseball player. I called a meeting with my basketball team the day this article was written as it gave me some concern. But after confronting the basketball team with this and discussing it, I feel very good and confident that the 30 per cent given in the article is only about 29.9 per cent off. I feel that we have a good basketball program here at Clackamas and that the players respect the program and want to be successful and would not jeopardize the program by lowering themselves to take drugs.

It is my feeling that any athlete which takes drugs is showing the lowest form of ignorance, a total disrespect for his body, the program and the school.

We must keep in proper perspective the fact that drugs permeate all facets of society. They are in the Biology classes, English classes, Automotive, etc. Athletics are part of this society and we can't expect to be immune to them. The ratio though, I feel, is much smaller in athletics as compared to other areas.

It's unfortunate that when one wants to grind an ax in the area of education, they often pick athletics. The reason I feel this is done is because a large part of society just doesn't understand that athletics are as much a part of the total educational picture as Math, Science, etc., and the educational values gained from athletics far surpass most non-athletic peoples understanding.

I believe an article such as this one should be reviewed much closer by the editor and advisor of the paper before it is printed. I believe in freedom of the press, but also feel that an article such as this one can only cause bad feelings, misrepresent a good program, and give out erroneous publicity in which another ax grinder will take up the cause.

I think we have enough negativism in our world, state, community and school without continually trying to build it up even more. Let us start pulling ourselves together in every area of the college, showing concern first for all individuals, second for all departments, and third, concern for the total college. The garbage will always surface by itself, but the good or positive aspects sometimes take a little effort. I'm all for showing a little effort toward the positive. Let's try to build each other up in love and not try to tear each other down for our own advancement.

Len Tirrill
Basketball Coach
CCC

Editor's note: Tirrill's statement that the quote concerning the availability of amphetamines was attributed to a baseball player is incorrect. See "Pill-popping Athletes," 2-17 Cougar Print page 5, column 3, paragraph 9.

Compliments

To the Editor:

I would like to compliment the Cougar Print and especially Brad Boyer for his well-documented article on the use of stimulants by athletes. Brad's article was well prepared and full of input from faculty and students who are directly involved and in a position to know.

I would also like to compliment the Cougar Print for the fine service it has performed and the courage it has demonstrated in dealing with this very controversial subject.

I was particularly impressed by the discretion shown by Brad in protecting the sources of his information. It is comforting to know that we have people working to provide information to the students, even though in providing that information they might place themselves in jeopardy with their friends and instructors.

In closing, I'd like to say Brad's article was well balanced, full of substantial information, and worthy of further investigation.

Gerard Bellavita
ASG Senator

