

SASS SUPORT

Recent articles concerning the sexual abuse of a young teenage girl by a former governor provides occasion for us to remind *this* community of the following:

1. Even today, too often survivors of sexual assault (including youth and children) are blamed and vilified by other persons. This dynamic sets the survivor in a place where community support seems distant, if not unreachable. 2. Sexual Assault Support Services of Lane County (SASS) is here with support, education, advocacy and counseling resources for survivors of sexual assault and the community at large. 3. If you are a survivor of sexual assault, please contact the SASS 24-Hour Crisis and Support Hotline: 343-SASS (7277) or (800) 788-4727.

We all deserve to be around people who support our feelings and validate our experiences. Survivors are entitled to support, advocacy, and care. In SASS, the community stands with survivors, and survivors experience community.

Warren Light
SASS board member

BODY VS. MIND

Science, or “modern technology” as Shannon Finnell calls it in “Chemical Love” (cover story, 2/10) certainly has increased our well-being (vaccines, sanitation, refrigeration, etc.). What it has also done is allow authority figures — chemists, doctors, biologists — to define and control our knowledge and care of our own bodies; and discursively and practically separate our bodies from our minds. This is particularly pernicious in the realm of human sexuality. It’s not

a far step from the studies that Finnell recounts to the very worst “evo-psych” arguments that couplings are inherently about fertility, reproduction, and who seems most capable of clubbing an animal and bringing it to our cave full of children.

Hormones and primitive urges can be used to justify force, abuse, and at the very least, selfishness and obliviousness in bed. It is far more empowering to instead remember that what arouses each of us and defines intimacy depends greatly on who we are. It enables us to treat each other with respect and to realize unique and personal pleasures by engaging our minds and our bodies.

Moreover, the limited gestures to the fact that sex isn’t just genital intercourse between one man and one woman, the choice of photography, and the disjointed and overly colloquial writing of this piece left it grasping for relevance through normative sexuality and humor rather than encouraging thoughtful reflection on “ways to love your body.”

Emily Jane Davis
Eugene

GRIDLOCK’S BLESSING

I think I understand why some businesses don’t want EmX buses coming to West Eugene. Better mass transit might get people out of their cars. God forbid a future without people in cars going through the drive through at Hodgepodge! Can Les Schwab switch to selling bicycle tires? Denser traffic is what these businesses want! Traffic jams are a blessing and a boon to business. Let’s build that parkway and some more gas stations to go with it!

During the decade of the 1940s, street cars and electric train lines in cities across the country were bought out and eliminated by General Motors in conjunction with several other companies just so people would be dependent on a s o l i n e - driven vehicles. It worked because there was spike in oil consumption and a decline of effective mass transit across the U.S. Think of how different cities like Los Angeles and even Eugene/Springfield might be today had this not happened.

The “Our Money Our Transit” folks do not represent me. As far as I can tell, they represent a slew of businesses frightened of what will happen if people move beyond cars.

Janice Sunseri
Eugene

OVERACHIEVERS

Thanks for the informative supplement on The Peace Corps (“Celebrating 50 Years of Peace Corps,” 2/17). It made me feel timid, self-centered and boring.

Kevin O’Brien
Eugene

BEAUTIFUL BREASTS

Kathryn Mason (Letters, 2/17) really needs to calm down. Her claim that the Feb. 10 cover of *EW* (depicting a woman’s cleavage as she holds a test tube of blue liquid for the Valentine’s Day issue) is “obscene by any standards” is hyperbole at best. As a matter of fact, it isn’t obscene by my standards, or even legally; any woman may bare her breasts in Eugene, as our community has decided that breasts, as they are owned by half of our community members, are quite lovely and not disgusting or dangerous in any way.

Her statement that businesses should be insulted to carry a publication displaying what any *customer* could display in those same establishments is ridiculous. I applaud *EW* for continuing to choose stories, and covers to match — acknowledging our community is full of alive, healthy and sexual people who are not in the least threatened by boobs.

We are people who would like to continue living our lives and reading our papers without constant nagging and ranting from sexually repressed busybodies who take it upon themselves to censor our community “for the children” or whatever. Welcome to the 21st century, Ms. Mason, and if you find an innocuous pair of breasts so very obscene, there are other communities that share that belief. I understand that Saudi Arabia is lovely this time of year.

Steve McAllister
Eugene

GROW UP

I would like to vehemently disagree with Kathryn Mason’s letter regarding your Feb. 10 cover. I am a *Weekly* advertiser and have found it to be the best use of our advertising dollars to date. I have also made two trips to Europe in the past six months and seen advertising in store windows that pale in comparison to the fairly tame cover the *Weekly* had.

When is the U.S. going to get over its hang-ups regarding nudity? Grow up, people. My kids saw more graphic detail in their fifth grade growth and development class. No wonder we voted the Tea Party into power!

Christopher Klein
Cottage Grove

viewpoint BY CAMERON MACDONALD



On Wisconsin

A letter from labor’s front lines

We thought it was bad when he gave away our train, returning Wisconsin’s federal funding for a proposed Midwest high-speed rail network.

Gov. Scott Walker, in office only six weeks, inadvertently set off the largest labor protest in recent U.S. history when on Feb. 11 he proposed the so-called “Budget Repair Bill” in the state of Wisconsin. The bill calls for many things, including drastic cuts to Medicaid, unilateral reductions in state employee benefits, and — by the way — busting state and local public employee unions. No wonder he put the National Guard on alert when he announced the bill.

In another state these measures might have passed quietly through the Legislature, but not in Wisconsin. What began as an “I ♥ UW” delivery of 2,000 Valentine’s cards to the governor’s office on Monday the 14th quickly

swelled by Saturday the 19th to over 60,000 protestors chanting, “This is what Democracy looks like!”

A few heartening tidbits in the midst of the mobilization: During the full week of protests, fewer arrests have been made than at an average UW Badger football game. Ian’s Pizza Delivery near the Capitol has delivered over 300 pizzas to occupying protestors — pizzas from donors in Egypt, Belgium and almost every state in the union. Protesters have cleaned up garbage around the Capitol lawn leaving it cleaner than normal for snowmelt season.

Wisconsinites are unfailingly nice. We won the Superbowl and didn’t overturn a single car. The atmosphere inside the Capitol, while smelling a bit like a dairy barn by day seven, has been noisy and friendly. When the firefighters union (who were exempted from the bill) paraded through the protest with bagpipes, they were met with hugs and high-fives. The AFL-CIO delivered bratwurst to cheers (yes, there is a food theme here). So we are polite, we have a sense of humor and we eat a lot.

But not, mess with our unions. The first public employee union in America, AFSCME, was founded in Wisconsin in 1932. We also take seriously our state motto, “Forward.” We don’t want to become a “right to work state” with low wages, oversized classes, and understaffed hospitals. We are proud of our public schools, ranked number two in the nation in standardized tests.

Union leaders and average citizens made clear that the protest is not about the money; it is about protecting bargaining rights. Citizen testimony in opposition to bill has continued almost nonstop since Feb. 15. The Capitol has been peacefully occupied 24 hours a day since hearings began. When the Republicans in the Senate, who hold a 19-14 majority, called an early vote on the bill on Thursday, Feb. 17, with 35,000 protestors in and around the Capitol building, the Democratic senators faced a dilemma — turn their backs on the protestors



or, as one protester put it, “make the ultimate sacrifice” and go to Illinois. They left Wisconsin and have not returned — leaving the Republicans one vote short of the quorum needed.

Ironically, none of this needed to happen. While there are budget problems, Walker’s “repair bill” is about power and paybacks, not finance. Facing his so-called “budget emergency,” one of Walker’s first acts was to quickly pass over \$110 million in tax breaks for corporations and the rich. For those watching from afar, remember, 1) Walker worsened the deficit, and 2) the state unions have *already* offered to help him fix the budget. The unions will take his cuts if he leaves their bargaining rights alone. He refuses.

So while our high-speed rail runs in California and Illinois, we Wisconsinites can proudly say that we have given our fellow states another gift: The rebirth of the labor movement.

Cameron Macdonald is an assistant professor of sociology at the University of Wisconsin, Madison. She studies the service sector and care work more broadly. Her most recent book, *Shadow Mothers: Nannies, Au Pairs and the Micropolitics of Mothering*, is available from University of California Press.