

## HESITANT TO REPORT

In response to Keith Southworth's letter ["Rape Confusion," June 9], I question his reasoning behind the statement that "rape victims should either report to the police or move on in life." He suggests that women should be required to report rape within 48 hours, but doesn't consider the reasons why they may be hesitant to do this.

Maybe they feel ashamed, humiliated or terrified as a result of this traumatic event. Maybe the rapist has threatened to harm them or their family. Maybe they worry that their report wouldn't be taken seriously, which is a valid concern. Is it possible that some people are falsely accused of rape? Yes. It's also true that when rape is reported several years after the fact, it is difficult to prove anything one way or the other.

However, I strongly disagree with Southworth's assertion that American women are likely to go about "creating delusions" and "convincing themselves" that a consensual sexual encounter was actually a rape. This is not strictly an "American" issue, and it is, unfortunately, more likely that a woman (or man) will be pressured into believing the opposite: that a rape was in fact an "OK" and "normal" sexual experience.

Kendra Lady  
Eugene

## BIGOTED COVER

*Eugene Weekly* had a point going with the cover about immigration opponents' arguments, until it chose to write "RESPECT ARE COUNTRY." That is equivalent to saying the people who hold those positions are stupid, don't know the language they are attempting to force on immigrants and hypocritical. That is a bigoted generalization by the staff of the *Eugene Weekly*.

And in the article itself, a racially based political group led by a Senyor [sic] Carrasco is quoted with his picture in emphasis, "Taking away the language is the last blow of colonialism." What Carrasco seems to not understand is who is colonizing whom, and whose society is being changed by whom. To make these blunt analogies between the genocidal activities of European colonists and today's U.S. citizens reacting to social change is a distortion, to say the least.

H. W. Hutchins  
Eugene

EDITOR'S NOTE: As noted in the article, "Respect Are Country, Speak English," complete with grammatical error, was taken from an actual protest sign at a Tea Party rally.

## EUGENE TO ORLANDO

"Everybody get out of Pulse and keep running"

Those eight words were the first I saw and I will never forget them. June 12, 2016, 2 am, Orlando. It took hours to sink in, to understand, to feel. Once it did, the tears began to well. My heart sunk. Sixty-three hours and 46 minutes after that moment where dancing and laughing crumbled into bodies falling and cries for help — I have finally picked up my pen and paper in hopes to digest.

Hopes to digest the fact that this world that holds so much love and beauty is the same one that holds a kind of hate that isn't any way close to human. To hope to digest how sick and heartbroken my beautiful LGBTQ brothers and sisters feel. My heart and hands reach out to you all at this time. Your pain does not go unnoticed.

To the victims: Your names will not be forgotten, your potential will never not be missed and your tragedy will not be invalidated. What has happened to you has shook me to my core. The images I have painted in my head of you ducking on the ground and hiding in those bathroom stalls are all I can see. Forty-nine of you didn't make it out of that club.

To the ones who did: I can't even begin

to imagine the trauma you are suffering. I hope you can find a way to heal your internal wounds.

To the shooter, whose name I don't even want to speak: I'm not going to say I hate you. I'm not going to say these things because even they have an underline of emotion. What you did held no emotion. What you did was not human. I only am not saying I hate you because now is not the time for hate. That is all I will say to you, whatever kind of monster you are.

Finally, to my people: my loved ones, my community, the ones who I dance with on Saturday nights. Now is the time to join hands, to spread love and to fight against the spewing hatred. My mind is scared, my spirit is sad, but my heart is full.

From Eugene to Orlando: I promise you your light is being honored.

Quincy Wise-Dorbolo  
Eugene

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## VIEWPOINT BY ALICE CALLAHAN

# Attention Parents

### DON'T GET YOUR HEALTH INFORMATION FROM THE MOVIES

I have followed with frustration and sadness the response to the film *Vaxxed* which has been showing at the David Minor Theater in Eugene. The film inaccurately represents the science of vaccines and autism, and I worry that it may mislead parents in Lane County.

I am a mother to two young children, and I feel the weight of responsibility to make wise decisions about their healthcare. I am also trained as a scientist, and I've found that my background in the scientific process has been a valuable tool in helping me to make smart choices for my family.

I do not want to dwell too much on the problems with *Vaxxed*, but it does make for a useful example of how to assess the accuracy of health information.

For example, when presented with new information, it's smart to think carefully about the source. Is the narrator of this information trustworthy? Is he or she well trained with expertise in this area? Are there conflicts of interest that may compromise the honesty of the source?

The director of *Vaxxed* is Andrew Wakefield, and his history is full of red flags that should make us skeptical of his trustworthiness. In 1998, he published a small study of just 12 children that attempted to link the development of autism to vaccines. But investigations into Wakefield's research uncovered a number of problems, and his paper was retracted from the medical journal. He

had fabricated data and conducted invasive research procedures on children without their parents' consent.

Wakefield was also on the payroll of a law firm planning to sue vaccine manufacturers, which was a gross conflict of interest. In hearings with the U.K. General Medical Council, Wakefield was called "callous" and "unethical," and he was subsequently banned from medical practice. I do not recommend trusting this man to give you advice about the health of your children, whether packaged as a slick documentary or in any other form.

When assessing health information, we should also be wary of conspiracy theories. Viewers of *Vaxxed* may be intrigued by the tale it weaves of a Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) cover-up. Ignoring for a moment Wakefield's lack of trustworthiness, a closer look at this story shows no evidence of a cover-up at the CDC. It did not destroy data, and it did not lie about its research results. Wakefield dishonestly spliced together sound bites and scary images of syringes (much larger than any you'll see used to administer vaccines, of course) to convince viewers of his version of the tale. And while you may find a handful of celebrities and politicians voicing support for the film, they are not trained in immunology or infectious diseases, and they also are not trustworthy sources of health information.

Instead of listening to celebrities and conspiracy theorists, let's stick to the science. Many studies, conducted by scientists around the world (not just at the CDC) and including millions of children, have concluded that there is no relationship between autism and vaccines. Research suggests that autism is a genetic disorder that begins before birth, before our kids get any shots. The real tragedy is the vast amounts of time and money wasted studying this thoroughly debunked claim. It's time to put those resources towards research and services to improve the lives of autistic people and their families.

Vaccines are thoroughly tested before they are approved for use, and their safety is continuously monitored. Vaccinating your kids on time keeps them safe from diseases that can cause pain, suffering and death. It also strengthens the immunity of our entire community, reducing our risk of outbreaks of preventable diseases and protecting our most vulnerable citizens — newborn babies and those with compromised immune systems such as cancer patients. On this, every major medical organization and the vast majority of scientists and medical professionals agree without hesitation.

Who can we trust to give us accurate information if we have questions about vaccines? A great place to start is with one of the wonderful pediatricians practicing in our county, folks with years of medical training who care deeply about our children and our community. If you want another perspective, don't look for it at the movies. Save movie night for entertainment value, and look to trusted, evidence-based sources for health information for your family.

Alice Callahan, Ph.D., is a science instructor at LCC and the UO and the author of *The Science of Mom: A Research-Based Guide to Your Baby's First Year*, published in 2015 by Johns Hopkins University Press.