

Safe Removal of Mercury Fillings

Wellness Centered Dentistry

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Rob Whicker DDS

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The University of Oregon's
Center for Environmental Futures presents

A finalist for the Pulitzer Prize and a Guggenheim Fellow, conservationist and writer William deBuys will discuss a trilogy of books on the present and future of the planet: *A Great Aridness*, *The Last Unicorn*, and *The Trail to Kanjiroba*.

Thursday, April 13th, 3.30pm
Ford Lecture Hall, Jordan Schnitzer Art Museum
University of Oregon Campus

William deBuys

"Navigating the Rivers of Our Future: Preserving Hope and Commitment in a Challenging World"

BEER HALL | WHISKEY LAB | 6 FOOD VENDORS

FULLY ENCLOSED & HEATED TENTS

WEEKLY HAPPENINGS

MONDAY- TRIVIA WITH GEO

TUESDAY- BINGO WITH TY

WEDNESDAY- LIVE MUSIC

FRIDAY- LIVE MUSIC

SUNDAY- BEER+YOGA

PRE-REGISTER AT STOPDROPANDYOGA.COM

MAY 6th

DERBY DAY

418 A STREET | SPRINGFIELD | OR | PUBLICHOUSEHUB.COM

BEER BAR | COCKTAIL BAR | 6 FOOD VENDORS

*****FULLY ENCLOSED & HEATED TENT*****

WEEKLY HAPPENINGS

MONDAY- GIANT GAMES

BEATS & BOARDS- APRIL 17

TUESDAY- TRIVIA WITH GEO

WEDNESDAY- BINGO WITH TY

THURSDAY- LIVE MUSIC

SATURDAY- LIVE MUSIC

EARTH DAY

APRIL 20-23

777 W. 6TH AVENUE | EUGENE | BEERGARDENME.COM

National Dance Week

Daily FREE Events

April 16-23

Get your Dance Week PASSPORT for a chance to win prizes!

SUN. 4/16 KICKOFF
Dance Exchange
Farmers Market Pavilion

APR. 17-21 Lunchtime Performances
Kesey Square

SAT. 4/22 Pop-up Dances
Dtnw. Eugene

Eugene Cultural Services

Schedule of events:
eugene-or.gov/NDW

Co-sponsor:
Harmonic Laboratory

VIEWPOINT

BY SARAH BLAKELY

The Red Zone

CHALLENGING THE CULTURAL ATTITUDES

AND STEREOTYPES THAT PERPETUATE

SEXUAL VIOLENCE

Imagine you have just turned 18. You’re invited by an upperclassman to your first college party. You don’t have any friends at the university yet, so you welcome the invite, hoping to make a few new connections.

You arrive at the party with your new upperclassman acquaintance, and he serves you drink after drink. Eventually, he’s tipping your cups back, forcing liquor down your throat. Throughout the night, he gets more aggressive, isolating you from conversations with other people and pulling you away from potential friendships. He says there’s another party at his friend’s house around the corner, so you leave with him, expecting to walk into another rager. You walk through the door to find two guys sitting on a couch smoking weed from a bong.

You’re very drunk and uncomfortable now, trying to make small talk with the stoners on the couch to avoid the persistent intoxicated man who led you here. One more drink, he insists, mixing it himself, much too strong.

You wake up the following morning over a toilet in a stranger’s apartment with fragmented memories of that same upperclassman straddling you on a bed and forcing you to perform oral sex while in and out of consciousness.

My story is unfortunately not unique. The period between the start of the fall term and Thanksgiving break, known as “the red zone,” sees a significant increase in campus assaults. College-aged women from 18-24 are three to four times more likely to experience sexual violence, according to RAINN (Rape, Abuse & Incest National Network).

But what happens after the assault is equally traumatic. Perpetrators of sexual violence, especially in university settings, are rarely punished for their crimes. Even if victims do report the assault, abusers are often let off with nothing more than a warning. Meanwhile, victims may suffer for years, even decades, after their assault.

In my case, my abuser finished his degree elsewhere, with a mild slap on the wrist. He went to jail for a few days before his parents bailed him out. He now has a successful career, and I can’t even find his name online related to sexual assault, despite supposedly registering as a sex offender. He even got to write an anonymous opinion piece for the campus newspaper, the *Daily Emerald*, as part of his “punishment” because he was a journalism major.

But so was I. Why was I left with my own silence while the district attorney and the detective working my case, both male, offered my abuser an opportunity in his field of choice?

I remember the judge telling me after reading my victim impact statement that it was the most forgiving statement he had ever seen in his career. At the time, I took that as a compliment, thinking it meant I was a good person because forgiving makes you good, right?

Now, looking back, I realize I should have pushed for harsher punishment. Whatever emotional upset he had experienced in those few months when I was fighting to see justice served to a criminal couldn’t even begin to compare to the years of PTSD flashbacks, nightmares, anxiety and panic attacks that the future held for me. And the \$221.95 I had won to cover my medical expenses felt more like a slap in the face than justice for the victim of a crime.

A little more than \$200 for medical expenses wouldn’t even cover more than a single therapy appointment, and almost 10 years later, I still have nightmares of him on top of me, crushing my body underneath his for his own sick pleasure.

My story highlights the many problems with our justice system and how we deal with sexual violence. Until our criminal justice system actually pursues justice for the victims of sexual crimes, these men (and yes, I say men, because the vast majority of sexual predators are men) will continue to assault and molest and rape women (and other men) without fear of consequences.

Victims of sexual assault need to be heard, believed and supported. We need to educate ourselves and others on consent, healthy relationships, and bystander intervention. We need to hold perpetrators accountable for their actions and stop giving them a free pass to continue assaulting others. We also need to challenge the cultural attitudes and stereotypes that perpetuate sexual violence. Victim-blaming, slut-shaming and toxic masculinity only contribute to a society that allows sexual violence to thrive.

In sharing my story, I hope it empowers more women to come forward, speak up and fight to change a broken system. ■

Sarah Blakely is a writer and former student at the University of Oregon. She is also a survivor of campus sexual assault.