

Viewpoint

Sexist T-shirts defeat purpose of night march

I'd never seen anything like it in my four years at Elon College. Some 600 women and men poured into the college streets, candles lit, posters aloft, chants filling the air. The women of Elon were reclaiming, in one symbolic march, their sense of strength and power and unity, even under the fearful glow of the streetlights.

What once was only whispered about behind closed doors was thrust into the open, with women sharing their stories of abuse and violence and shame. They trusted the crowd gathered at the fountain with their very souls. They trusted that all who marched for their cause truly believed in it. They praised the men that marched for making strides to become part of the solution, rather than part of the problem. I believe, however, that many of these men betrayed that trust, that many still don't understand why they were there.

As I sat listening to my fellow classmates, I noticed the T-shirt of a male student sitting right on the front row. It read, "Ten Reasons Why Beer is Better than Women." Some of those enlightening reasons included, "Beer doesn't expect to be satisfied, it satisfies you," "After you've had a beer, the bottle is worth ten cents," and yes, "A beer always goes down easy." I sat in stunned disbelief. My blood began to boil as the stories of these women rang in my ears.

Two other such T-shirts were brought to my attention that night. The first featured busty, bikini-clad babes fondling a nerdy fisherman, which read, "It's easy to reel 'em in when you've got a big Johnson (a fishing pole)." The other, complete with more bosomy friends, read "Drink until she's cute."

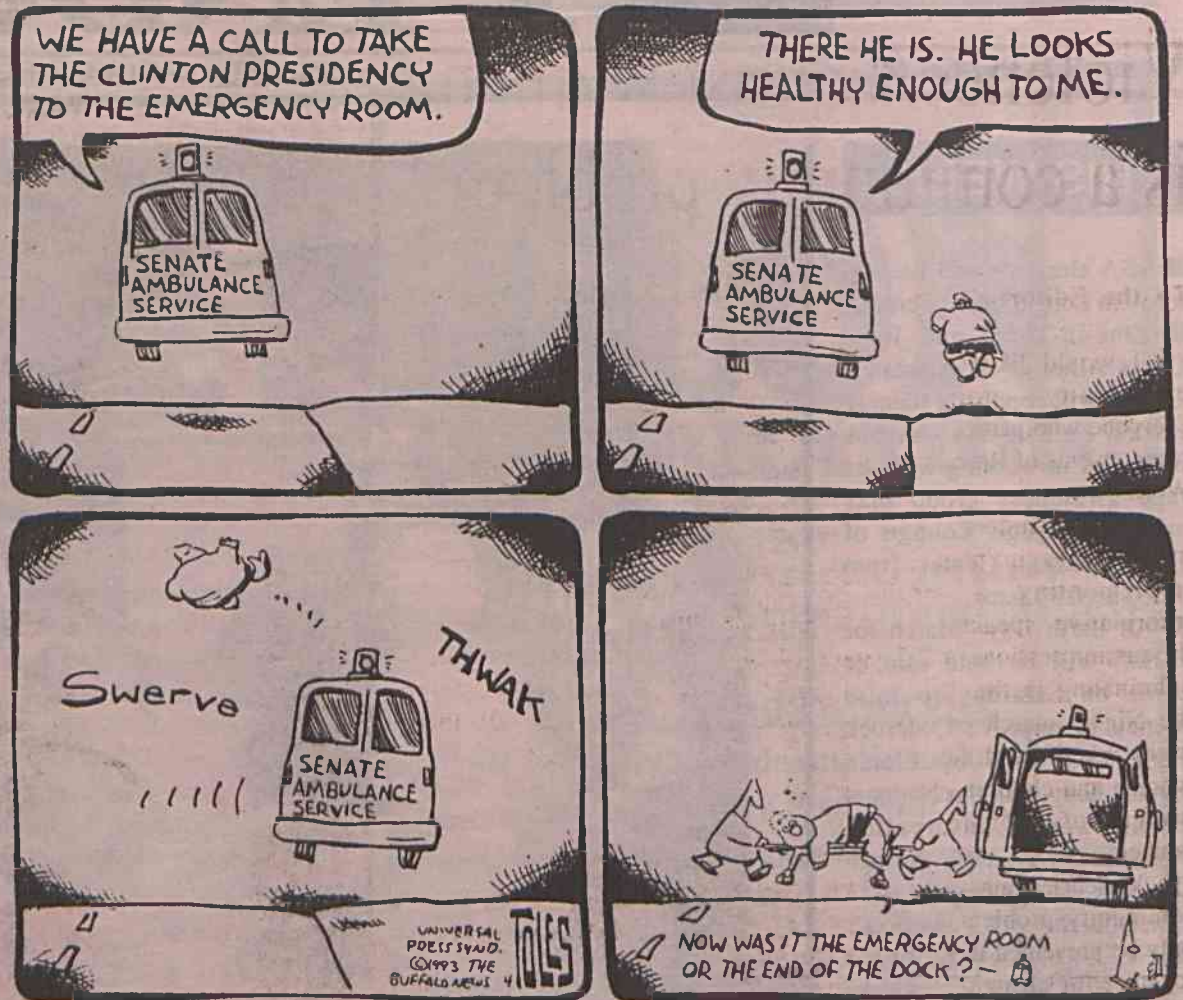
The very idea of wearing such an image at a rally for women's issues is at the least counter-productive, if not disrespectful, sickening and disheartening. What hope do women have of putting an end to sexual violence when the very men who profess to be on their side, who chant and carry signs for them, continue to buy into and project these conflicting signs on their backs? What is truly frightening is that these degrading images of women are so accepted that these men obviously didn't think twice about wearing them proudly, even at an event like "Take Back the Night."

And if these wolves in sheep's clothing wanted to score big brownie points for being "sensitive men of the '90s," they must've thought we were as stupid as the "dumb broads" on their shirts. Do they really care about women or is it their image as swell guys on campus that they really care about? Were they just using women yet again for their own PR? And meanwhile they managed to tear down the efforts of all the men there who were truly sincere in their support of women.

And this goes beyond shirts and conveys into action. One woman stood and spoke of her best friend's rape. Through gritted teeth, she said that her friend's attacker was in the midst of us. I felt a chill go through my body as the reality of her words weighed on me.

Who can we trust if we can't trust the sign wavers? After all, a rapist is more likely to be the Big Man on Campus than the scary stranger lurking in the bushes. The reality is that one in three women will be raped in their lifetimes. Call it male-bashing if you will but women aren't raping themselves. You're either for us or against us. It's time to end the charade.

DeeDee Carowan



Duval's College Dictionary

A guide to campus life and how to bluff your way through

baseball 1. painfully long sport, 2. ingenious method used to track physical contact.

books what often get in the way of your college education.

capitalism a good idea, will fail.

coffee to be a true intellectual consume by the gallon while saying things like "you know, Malthus was right" and "Shakespeare is cliché." Purists take it black, Europeans with vodka.

communism a good idea, has failed.

communist what your college roommate assumes you are when borrowing your clothes.

crabs culinary delicacy. Better to eat them than to have them.

critic (literary) one who knows he cannot write, telling someone who can - they can't.

crook what Nixon said he wasn't, but was.

Democrat a person with a list of noble reasons to tax you.

doctor (medical) a professional guesser.

economics the phrenology of our time. Will go the way of the 8-track.

hair crown jewel of human

Jack Duval



vanity. Subject to parting, primping, teasing, curling, dying, and other tortures.

Harvard graduate will invariably bring the fact up in conversation.

incontinence what you either are or wish you were.

law (The) the law is like a spiders web - the little bugs get stuck while the big bugs fly through.

lawyer an expert at billing.

Limbaugh (Rush) overweight man with permanent constipated look. See Republican.

love a noun, though often a verb.

lucubrate all college students lucubrate at least twice a semester.

marijuana a medicinal weed cultivated in closets, garages, and gardens across the word, esp. on college campuses.

Middle East almost always "the problems in the Middle East." This phrase will always be timely. **new math** foundation of Reagan/Bush fiscal policy.

90's (The) when brought up in conversation, say "the 90's will make the 60's look like the 50's" and watch the faces express awe at your insight.

party always referred to as "crazy" or "lame." There is always an excuse to party.

philosophy when speaking of, say "all of philosophy is but a footnote to Plato" and change the subject.

politics the devil's boredom game.

"pro-lifer" one who believes life ends at birth.

prostitute a wage earner. Myth has it they make good wives.

religion 1. imaginary spirits advising against consumption of real ones. 2. An excuse to kill someone.

Republican usually an overweight person with a permanent constipated look. See Limbaugh (Rush).

sex cures headaches.

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