

Professor: Leave World Civ alone

Editor:

A Sept. 19 slanderous cartoon is only the latest distortion in an increasingly unprincipled campaign against WSU's World Civilizations courses.

Anyone with an ounce of sense can see that what the professor was

doing was sarcastically attacking the racism inherent in European expansionism, not endorsing racist views.

No one so utterly lacking in the comprehension of irony should be drawing editorial cartoons.

Paul Brians

Greg Louganis

Wednesday, October 8, 7:30 p.m.
Beasley Coliseum



The extraordinary life of Greg Louganis, four-time Olympic gold medalist, unites all kinds of people from all over the world. Now he's coming to Pullman to share his story of tragedy and triumph, from sexual assault and rape to his incredible comeback at the '88 Olympics. Athletes, multicultural groups, gay and lesbian people, actors, the physically challenged, and many other people will find much to enjoy in Louganis' speech, which incorporates elements of his book, *Breaking the Surface*. Louganis will appear Wednesday.

Admission is FREE.

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Promise Keepers good

Editor:

I'm writing in regards to the column by Fekadu Kiros, "Promise Keepers keeping wrong kind of promises."

They promise to honor Jesus; practice spiritual, moral, ethical and sexual purity; build Godly marriages and families; support a church; reach beyond racial and denominational barriers; spread Christian influence; and have other men hold them accountable to these promises. This is nothing but honorable.

To try and make this disreputable by splicing quotes and attacking the principles of its foundation is a travesty. These men stand for something!

They stand up to be honest, trustworthy fathers and husbands.

The men whom I know, who have attended a Promise Keepers gathering, are men with characters I can admire.

These men who strive for honor and leadership in their work and church and love and kindness in their relationships, are to be commended.

The fact that these men uphold Christian values is their choice and right as human beings.

I've heard accounts from my male friends and family of these gatherings. Men of many different racial heritages, classes and backgrounds came together seeking to unite under a strong set of values

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and standards.

We as women should, instead of searching for something that may be wrong with the Promise Keepers, support their efforts and build a foundation for ourselves that is as strong and united as the one these men seek to build.

Sarah Hager

FDA must approve drugs faster to make them effective

Editor:

As a third year pharmacy student I would like to respond to Mr. Douglas Gritzmacher's column titled "FDA needs more power."

Mr. Gritzmacher writes that "at least 90 people are suffering from the results of side effects produced by the use of two compounds, fenfluramine and dexfenfluramine, used in the diet drugs fen-phen and Redux."

He then goes on to claim fen-phen is "a drug that combines the two guilty compounds."

To set the record straight, fen-phen is not a drug at all. Fen-phen is a drug regimen that consists of two drugs: fenfluramine and phentermine. Redux (the brand name for dexfenfluramine) is another drug that also has been used to help patients lose weight, and is not a part of the fen-phen regimen.

Dexfenfluramine and fenfluramine both both have been associated with various medical problems, including pulmonary hypertension and heart valve problems.

Phentermine, however, has not

been associated with these problems and remains on drugstore shelves.

Many drugs are used in ways that are not approved by the FDA. In many cases, the FDA has not approved these "off-label" uses because nobody has ever applied to the FDA for approval.

Simply because the FDA has not approved a particular indication for a drug does not mean that drug should never be used in that situation.

At this point, it is up to the prescriber's discretion.

Fenfluramine and phentermine were approved by the FDA to help severely obese patients lose weight when other weight loss programs failed.

They were never approved for use together; however, they were commonly used together in order to decrease side effects.

When used together, the doses of fenfluramine and phentermine could be decreased.

Unfortunately, some physicians began irresponsibly prescribing the fen-phen regimen.

I am very confused about Mr. Gritzmacher's whole first paragraph

in which he writes about soon-to-be-born babies with severe disfigurements.

I can only assume that he must have been referring to the problems with thalidomide.

Yes, thalidomide did lead to unfortunate birth defects in the 1960s when it was used to treat nausea in pregnant women.

The FDA is considering approval for this drug for treating leprosy.

If approved, thalidomide will be subject to restrictions similar to the FDA-approved drug Accutane. Accutane is used in the treatment of severe acne and it also has been implicated in birth defects.

If a woman of child-bearing age is to receive Accutane, she must sign a waiver stating she has been informed of the risks, she must be on oral birth control and she must undergo routine pregnancy testing.

Mr. Gritzmacher goes on to claim that recent attempts to speed up drug approval are aimed at making more money for drug companies.

This is an alarmingly one-sided view of the situation. I implore you, Mr. Gritzmacher, to stop and think about those patients who are suffering from terminal illnesses.

They know it takes years to bring a drug to market, and they know they might not have years to wait.

Maybe you have never met someone who is HIV positive, is hoping and praying for new drugs that might improve his/her quality of life, and is suffering and dying despite all that modern medicine can do. I have.

Sarah E. Bevan
3rd year PharmD. student

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