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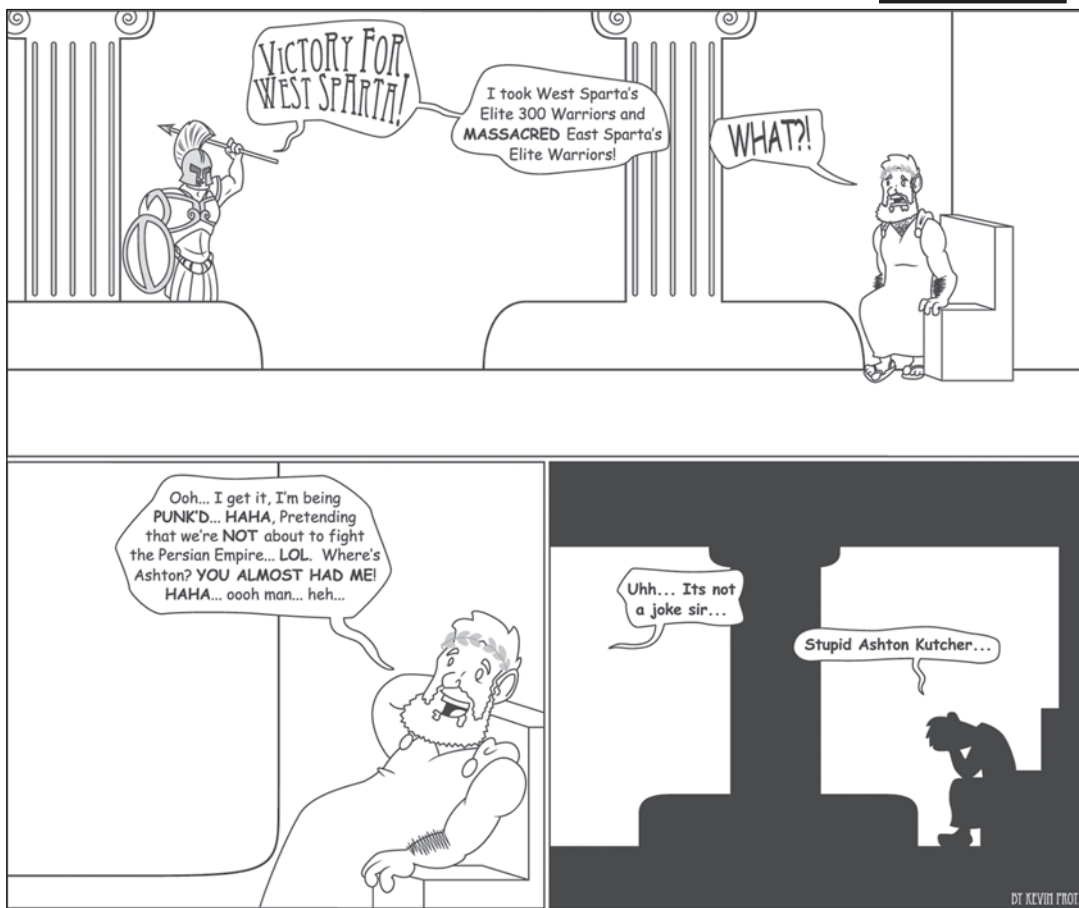


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OPINION

Leonidas isn't Bush and Thermopylae isn't Iraq

By OMER AHMED
News editor

Film interpretation is always a free-for-all. The 1978 version of *Dawn of the Dead* is the best example of the zombie film to some, an expression of disgust with consumerism to others and a pointless bloodbath to my parents. However, sometimes we assert our own fears and personal views on films when the film doesn't call for it. The most recent victim of this twisted form of interpretation happens to be the

testosterone-drenched *300*. As many of you have already seen, *300* is a stylized portrayal of the Battle of Thermopylae where 300 Spartans and their assorted Greek allies held back the huge army of Persia despite being ridiculously outnumbered. The movie itself is an adaptation of the comic book version of the story, *300* by Frank Miller, which was inspired by a previous movie, 1962's *The 300 Spartans*.

Watching *300*, I was taken in by the intensity of the film. It has

more testosterone than all the female-to-male sex changes in all San Francisco. My friend, on the other hand, saw the movie as a reminder to viewers that intelligent action, assertiveness and politicking are more valuable than passive intellectualizing and reckless violence. Many, many more have seen the movie as depicting the supposed current struggle between Western and Eastern civilization.

This last view, oddly enough, has even found its way to Ohlone. When the Speech Club put up a sign for their club with a depiction of the

King of Sparta in *300*, Leonidas I, quite a few students objected. One student mentioned that the sign was offensive to Muslims and Middle Eastern students because of the East/West conflict in the film being laced with a negative portrayal of the Persians.

Throughout the film, the Spartans are shown as strong, brave, noble and willing to die for their country's freedom. The Persians are shown as downtrodden, dirty and generally unattractive. In some case, they are even shown as monstrous, demonic and deformed. This makes it very

easy to think that the Spartans represent the United States. We have been portraying our perceived enemies in a negative light since the beginning of film as a medium.

Could Leonidas I really be a thinly veiled George Bush? I kinda doubt it. The movie certainly twists history. The Persian army was not a slave army as shown in the movie. Most of the men were soldiers and paid, though probably not very well. Additionally, Sparta wasn't the bastion of the free world as shown in the movie. It was not a democracy

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LETTER TO THE EDITOR

One reader's response to last week's article

DEAR EDITOR,

I was alarmed at the article that Mr. Abraham wrote about Americans, more specifically students of Ohlone, not caring about worldly matters. If Mr. Abraham truly cares about matters on which he speaks then it is recommended that he start a campaign that addresses the following three "closer-to-home" issues.

First, the *Monitor* publishes a newspaper that often has many left-over copies on the racks around campus. Why not send an email to

all registered students containing the *Monitor* instead of printing hard copies? Hard copies are a significant waste of resources. After all, the school is already paying for the electricity to run the servers that send out campus-wide emails. As it currently stands, Ohlone is paying twice to continue to publish the *Monitor* in hard copy while having a system that can deliver it to a wider audience for significantly less.

Second, why can't the ID cards issued by the school include a magnetic strip that can be used as a copy card? Are we supporting an industry that is dying or something? Some major libraries in the Bay Area

already use the same card that is issued to patrons as a copy card.

Third, when will the women's softball team have a comparable field as the men? It doesn't go unnoticed the stark difference between the two fields with which the our teams play their sports. Shouldn't a fairer system be set up to utilized the field that gets the most grooming attention?

These are just a few of the "act locally issues" that should be addressed while we're being encouraged to "think globally." Addressing gender bias on campus and better management of our resources are far superior goals than judging

others that you happen to overhear in the cafeteria.

Sincerely,
TOUCALIT BENTON

DEAR TOUCALIT:

We at the *Monitor* are very glad to receive letters from our readers. We are flattered that the issues stated above should be addressed to us, and that it is assumed that we can, with the swift stroke of the pen, rectify supposed gender bias and resolve issues of funding (and maybe even get a bit more funding for ourselves, as well). We readily agree that they are issues that

should be discussed.

As for the suggestion that we replace the printed version of the paper with a newsletter that would be emailed to students and faculty at Ohlone - there are many reasons why it is vital that we keep the printed version, at least for now.

The main reason is that the *Monitor* trains students for jobs in the real world - working on newspapers that appear in print form. They also publish online, as does the *Monitor*. To not publish on paper would be like having broadcast students record their radio shows instead of broadcasting them. It's not the same

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CAMPUS COMMENT >>>

What should Ohlone do for Earth Week?



KEAGAN O' NEILL
Business

"We should form a team to pick up scrap and plant trees."



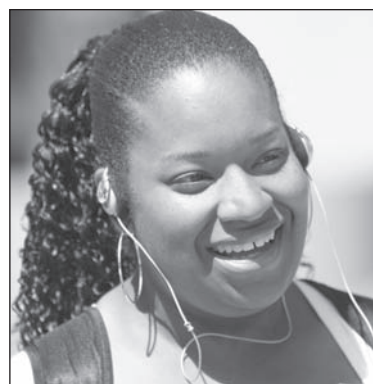
KAMARA HALL
Radiology/Photography

"They should improve the college's look by planting flowers."



JOHN PHENNING
Philosophy/Religion

"They should inform students on how to help the environment."



KELLY GREER
Theater

"We should have environmental issues awareness week."



YVONNE YAMASAKI
Marketing Merchandising

"We should pick up trash for extra credit. I'd do it without it."