The Daily Collegian
New England's Largest College Daily online

Veterans, grannies protest war

Matt Rocheleau, Collegian Staff

Issue date: 10/2/08 **Section:** News

Event moderator and formerly an active duty member in the Air Force, Michael VanValkenburg, said he remembers being told by a superior during a training exercise to target women and children because they could be terrorists.

"The dehumanization of the enemy really stood out," said VanValkenburg. "I became opposed to what we were doing by how I was being trained and the impact of it had on my brothers and sisters in the military."

In 2005, when Daniel Blain's child was born, he was training as a military policeman.

"The first thing that came to mind was not 'Wow, I'm a dad,' but 'how can I train to kill someone else's baby?'" said Blain, "I as a Christian and a father could not continue to serve."

Blain said he then applied for discharge as a conscientious objector, which allows soldiers to avoid participation in combatant warfare based on religious, moral or ethical grounds.

He said his application has not been accepted and has seen soldiers wait up to 18 months before having theirs considered. During the process, Blain said he has not been supported by many military members.

"I have even faced scorn and derision from family members, including my parents," he said.

Natalia Tylim a member of the Campus Antiwar Network and a senior at Smith College also spoke and said the government has given many people a false sense of hope on the success of the insurgency of troops in Iraq.

The crowd applauded each speaker, including members from the Raging Granny's of Western Mass. who introduced the event with a song.

The women are part of an international group who sing for peace and justice where people request them.

Raging Granny member Donna McKay told how she appreciated the stories each speaker shared.

"They were here giving us their experiences at their own expense," she said.

"I was really moved by their comments and stories," said Packi Wieland, another member. "I appreciate their honesty and how important it is for us to hear those stories.

Continued...

POLL

This month, UMass Chaplain Kent Higgins was reprimanded by the University for offering credits to students for their participation in the Obama campaign. Should a state university offer credits to students for partisan campaigning?

- Yes -- it encourages educated citizenship.
- No -- it compromises the University's ethic.
- It's all the same to me.

Submit Vote
View Results

24 Hour News

Article Tools

Share: Facebook Blogger del.icio.us digg newsvine
Subscribe: My Yahoo! Google

The Massachusetts Daily Collegian has an 'open door' policy with regards to reader comments. In the interest of facilitating an open discourse, comments are not screened or edited for spelling, mechanics or content. Comments on our website cannot be verified by The Collegian and in no way represent the opinions of The Massachusetts Daily Collegian or its staff.

Viewing Comments 1 - 1 of 1

Ed Cutting
posted 10/02/08 @ 7:19 AM EST

I look at this quite simply -- it is a violation of the UCMJ to commit war crimes, and it is a violation of the UCMJ to fail to report others committing war crimes. (Continued…)

Details Reply to this comment

Post a Comment

Name: (required)

Email: (required)

NOTE: Email address will not be published

Website:

Notify me of followup comments via e-mail

Type your comment below (html not allowed)

I am not posting spam. I understand posting spam or other comments that are unrelated to this article will cause my comment to be flagged for deletion and possibly cause my IP address to be permanently banned from this server.

Post

News

Pagan pride '08
Drum Corps leader honored
Library evacuation forces study break
NPHC hosts 'Meet the Greeks' Event
Real Talk: Black in America

Arts & Living

Voices of Guantanamo Bay to haunt Amherst
Students' guide to English pubs
Pinback ready to dominate
Sci-fi "Eagle Eye" full of action and explosions

Editorial / Opinion

In Mass., it's a 'green' ballot
Invisible campaigning
SGA, student apathy
Unresponsible hospitals

Sports

COMMENTARY: Minutemen can't find net
UM struggles to capitalize
Minutemen return to McGuirk after bye
Salvaggione nets game winners
Beam leads 49er's

National College Advertising and Marketing | Privacy Policy (8/15/07) | Terms of Use (4/28/08)
Content Submission Agreement (8/23/07) | Copyright Compliance Policy (8/25/07) | RSS Terms of Use

© **The Daily Collegian**

Powered by **College Publisher**

College Publisher powered by ...U and NETWORKS