

Hyundai controversy illuminates latest Northwest dilemma

Poor Hyundai. All it wants to do is make computer chips. Controversy over Hyundai's inadequate Willow Creek wetlands proposal inspired a crop of "No Deal Hyundai" banners in yards all over town. Public opposition groups condemned the Korean firm's poor environmental record. The reviewing agency called Hyundai's wetlands proposal ridiculous. Local journalists wrote zealous columns on the dangers of boom town development.

Hyundai retreated to the drawing board. When it resubmitted its factory proposal, the Eugene City Council approved it, but citizens have been slow to take down the signs.

Their message lingers: "Go Away." And the message isn't only reaching Hyundai. South Koreans in the community are being affected, too.

"When I saw the signs, first of all I felt bad," said Min Hyung Yoo, a South Korean business student at the University. "Hyundai is my country company." I saw it grow and become recognized. I'm proud of the company for coming to the U.S. but I want it to follow the regulations and study more about Oregon."

The University hosts 1,600 international students every year. The majority of them hail from Asia — especially from Korea, Japan, Singapore and Taiwan. For many, it will be their only visit to the United States.

They are attracted to the Pacific



OPINION
Sonia Sherwood

Northwest for many of the same reasons Hyundai is: its proximity to Pacific Asia, its tradition of American/Asian cultural exchanges and its reputation for friendly, tolerant people.

However, they often find Eugene's commitment to diversity contradicted in real life. International students often experience this contradiction in American students' insularity; Hyundai encountered it in the community when the public made it clear that the environment came before the marketplace. On campus and in the city, assimilation is a struggle.

Hyundai might feel it can do no right when faced with Eugene's eco-liberals. Likewise, an invisible wall of misunderstanding separates international students from their American peers. The friendships that are so vital to their cultural growth are difficult to form. For some, the language barrier is impossible to surmount; others encounter plain indifference. The famously friendly Eugeneans, they say, are not very accepting.

"I feel distance," said Japanese exchange student Michiko Ono. "Like they don't care about other cultures."

Yet, Oregon could be a leader in Asian/American alliances. The Univer-

sity has one of the best-developed Asian networks in the Northwest. The Office of International Education and Exchange promotes cultural interaction through study abroad, information fairs and work programs. The American English Institute hires native English speakers to tutor more than 400 visitors each year and coordinates activities during the summer.

Last month, the state received a \$4 million grant to establish a model international-internship program. The internship program's purpose is to link Northwest businesses and Oregon's young professionals to other countries and prepare them for the world of increasing international interdependence.

Welcome to the global corporation but not to Eugene.

The Hyundai controversy sits in the middle of such cultural symbiosis like a \$1.3 billion contradiction. While the apostles of Marshall McLuhan preach interdependence and globalization, Eugene digs in against rapid growth and issues forth its tireless vanguard of environmentalists to contest, delay and lobby the wetlands issue into the ground.

No growth is better than boom growth, they say. Let other cities internationalize and modernize; Eugene's commitment to the environment and small businesses is what makes it desirable place to live.

They're correct, of course. Except that a new industry is exactly what save the forests. And failing to modernize means falling behind. International diversity is also part of what makes Eugene a desirable place to live.

The problem that Eugene and the rest of Oregon must face is how to come to terms with our inevitable future as a cultural and commercial cauldron of Asian interests. Like it or not, the Pacific Northwest's secret has gotten out to the Asian semi-conductor industry. (The secret got out to students and visitors long ago). In addition to Hyundai, Samsung (the only company worth more than Hyundai in South Korea), Sumitomo and Fujitsu have considered sites in Oregon for future silicon-wafer factories. The *Oregonian* estimates that companies building or thinking about building in the region amount to investments of \$10 billion or more. That's equal to the cost of 10 space shuttle missions.

With its resources and enviable quality of life, Eugene will continue to attract foreign industry and foreign nations. The community must make room and practice tact. You can't make assumptions about your neighbors when your address is the global village.

Sonia Sherwood is a columnist for the Emerald.

LETTERS

Dorm torture

Had I known that resident assistants were permitted to inflict their sadistic whim on hapless dormies, I would have considered myself for the job (*ODE*, Oct. 19).

The beer thing was great. Was the pizza raw take-n-bake?

In case the R.A.s are in need of a few more spirit-breaking antics, I'd like to offer up one of my own.

First, start with a 4 a.m. fire drill.

As you go room by room to make sure everyone is out, invite 13th-Ave. street urchins to crash in their beds. To avoid suspicion that you're actually doing this because you thought it would be cool to see people suffer at your whim, you can hold a 30-minute talk about homelessness before anyone is allowed to return to their beds. The trust-fund Rastafarians will be sleeping by then, and the dormies will be good and sleepy.

Some might think that such a hoax could go further. However, it is in the aftermath

when even the Marquis de Sade himself would be proud. Having turned off the hot water to the showers and filled the laundry machines with mud or seaweed, most dormies will be ready for some coffee — having given up all hope of ever getting back to sleep. It is then and only then that you can tell them you would like to have a 30-minute talk about the link between caffeine and migraines. Of course, you will have switched their regular coffee with decaf ...

J. Pierson
History

Victim?

Barbara DeFillippo declares that although Kay Krautscheid has not consciously been aware of being a victim of sexism, she nonetheless probably has. (*ODE*, Oct. 24) Huh?

Granted, a society where men are masters of covert sexism does sound scary, but is not a society where first-hand accounts of equality are cynically discredited as delusions

of acceptance any less frightening?

Perhaps Barbara would prefer a social system that mandates children's toys to be gender ambiguous, or possibly a system where women that profess to have feelings of equality are described by psychologists as utilizing one of Freud's defense mechanisms because the reality of sexism is too damaging to be consciously acknowledged; or even a school system that enforces a specific quota of female students to enroll in classes where the male/female ration is off by one, the list could go on.

My intent is not to downplay the importance of addressing sexism as a corroding force on our country (it most assuredly is!). On the contrary, my intent is to simply help us perhaps reassess our goals in the light of the social phenomenon of "political correctness." If you deem no reassessment required, consider this letter a defense mechanism.

Brian Borre
Sociology/Psychology

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