

Editor in chief: Jack Clifford
Associate Editors: Jonathan Allen, Jeff Smith
Newsroom: (541) 346-5511
Room 300, Erb Memorial Union
P.O. Box 3159, Eugene, OR 97403
E-mail: ode@oregon.uoregon.edu

Perspectives

Oregon Daily
Emerald

*Take a step back before you dive into judgment
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Too many of us are quick to judge the actions of those willing to take a stand for their beliefs. We shouldn't be.

A recurring commentary from certain segments of the local population regarding this past weekend's anarchist rally was that it didn't accomplish anything and was just destructive. The word was that it only created more trouble for police officers, wasted tax money, scared business owners and intimidated some Eugene citizens.

Some people used more constructive criticism aimed at the protest. While seeing the call to completely overhaul our current society as idealistic, they say at least it has merit in the fact of trying to bring about change, change to a system they see becoming increasingly more unfair.

But where were the people making those claims? Yes, a few were at the Washington-Jefferson Park, getting a first-hand look at what they eventually rebuked. Yet, the vast majority of objectors to the "Carnival Against Capital" were most likely at home, watching it all play out on television. Watching the events unfold while sitting around, maybe eating chips and dip, talking to the tube as if it could carry on a dialogue.

Well, it can't.

And if you are going to criticize this anarchist movement, then you need to seek out more information about it, because it's not all about a bunch of testosterone-laden punks running through the streets, breaking stuff. Those are the images that are seen because those are the images that the me-

dia want you to see.

The Emerald is not absolved from this ignorance. This newspaper doesn't always seek out the more responsible voices in the community when it comes to finding out exactly what anarchy truly means in Eugene.

We fall into the same trap as other newspapers and the television stations in town. We splash the more vocal, more antagonistic minority voices across our pages, and call it good. We don't take that extra step, make that simple phone call or seek out a saner opinion on the real issues and an opinion on what might be real solutions to the problem.

There are several examples of critics claiming that something they disagree with is a travesty, and yet then it's found that the person or group doing the criticizing hasn't even truly seen what "offends" them. The Robert Mapplethorpe photography exhibit in Cincinnati about 10 years ago falls into this category. So does Martin Scorsese's movie "The Last Temptation of Christ," which when it was released cause a firestorm of controversy among Catholics, although most never saw the film.

We — all of us who are not clued into the entire picture — do the same thing with the anarchists. We watch on TV a bunch of people play Red Rover in the street and curse those damn punks.

Excuse us, but when did the game of Red Rover ever have anything to do with anarchy? Do you think that if Mikhail Bakunin or Emma Goldman — two anarchists fighting for the working class and women's rights, in the 1860s and 1880s respectively — had been on the streets of Eugene this past Sunday they would have been playing Red Rover? Highly doubtful.

But don't let the antics of a few sway your opinion of the group at-large. The next time you want to criticize the anarchists in town, find out who they really are.

Check out groups such as the Industrial Workers of the World, the Wobblies, at www.efn.org/~iwwlu. Go see what volunteers with Food Not Bombs do each Wednesday, Friday and Sunday at 4 p.m. in Scobert Park — yes, that's in the Whiteaker neighborhood, but word on the street is that they don't bite. Instead, they serve free vegan meals to the people who want some decent food.

Then, if you still don't like their politics, or their desire to be free from such institutions altogether, at least you can make an informed opinion.

And look at it this way, at least you'll get a break from your TV watching.

This editorial represents the view of the Emerald editorial Board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.

Learn how to minimize your major 'party fouls'

With memories of Info Hell homework, bio finals and academic responsibility quickly melting in the hot summer sun — at least for those of us not taking summer courses — it's time to let down our hair and go a little crazy ... isn't it? Yet we still need to be aware and not totally lose control of our judgment, which could allow the slowest-paced season to get out of control.

While tropical weather and barbecues coax partygoers outdoors, the sight of large groups of socializing young people, beer cans, red plastic cups and raging music tends to attract police. Though it's natural to want to take the fun outdoors, open containers outside can result in a slew of fines from police, especially if underage

drinking is involved.



COMMENTARY
Rebecca Newell

According to the Eugene Police Department, those of you 21 or over are in the clear if drinking at a private residence or a licensed establishment. But the moment you step onto the sidewalk or into the parking lot of a nearby 7-11, you can be charged with consumption in a public place.

And if one underage person at a party decides to take their drink outside — to check out the neighbors, relieve themselves in the bushes or perform any other act that only makes sense when you're intoxicated — they've just provided probable cause for the dwelling to be entered. Minor In Possession is only the beginning of possible charges, and fines can add up to astronomical

amounts, not to mention marring your criminal record.

In this widely proclaimed "party season," we women especially need to be cautious. Roofies, or the "date-rape drug," medically named Rohypnol, has been showing up in college communities all over the United States during the past year. This colorless, odorless drug creates a drunken effect within ten minutes of ingestion and results in extreme sleepiness. Alcohol only speeds up this process, and contributes heavily to the amnesia that typically surrounds the 8-hour period after ingesting a roofie.

So girls, while going hot-tubbing, skinny-dipping or for a beer run with your new male "party friend" may seem like an exciting and spontaneous idea, it can also be extremely dangerous. Exercise caution, especially at large parties, where the crowd and noise alone draw people — what your mother would label

"strangers" — from who knows where.

The buddy system you used to cross the street when you were 5 really is a smart move. And using common sense — such as not taking drinks from someone you don't know or trust and not leaving your drink somewhere without watching it — will help keep you out of trouble.

Have you tuned me out yet? Am I starting to sound like your mother, or even worse, reminding you of your grandmother? Just remember to have fun safely this summer. Sure, act a little crazier than normal. Enjoy yourself in ways not always possible during the academic year. But remember to buckle your seat belts while enjoying the ride.

Rebecca Howell is a reporter for the Emerald. Her views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald. She can be reached at rnewell@gladstone.uoregon.edu.

THE WEEK IN THUMBS



To Senate approving hate-crime legislation:

The Senate voted Tuesday to strengthen federal hate-crime laws to include violence based on gender, sexual orientation and disabilities. The decision was long overdue, but still faces a tough battle in the House.

To having more change to pay the meters:

With the increased production of petroleum we should be seeing a drop in those annoyingly high gas prices. The Federal Trade Commission is already investigating signs to fix those prices, which means we might actually have enough change left in our pocket to avoid the parking ticket lady.



To the entire weekend of unrest:

To the so-called reenactment of last year's riots, to the unnecessary saturation of police officers and to the unnecessary lengths of time arrestees were detained at the Lane County Jail.

To letting the referees decide the NBA Champion

C'mon, did we really need the whistle to blow with less than a minute left in Game 6 of the NBA Finals? The Lakers were up 110-109, but two questionable calls later, Los Angeles won. Weak!

