

PERSPECTIVES

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Baka to the left of me, Baka to the right



CAPTAIN SENSIBLE

PAT PAYNE

If the large left-wing baka (idiot) population is looking for a columnist who's going to agree with its ideas of political change (i.e. pillage and rapine), look somewhere else. If you're a right-wing mouthbreather with an IQ smaller than your hat size who thinks of Rush Limbaugh as a role model, I'm not your guy either. Basically, here's the deal. I try to offend everyone who deserves it. So here's my first attempt.

Baka (Japn.): (bA-kA) n, adj. 1. A fool or fools. 2. Foolish. 3. A term referring to certain persons on both the extreme political left and some major industrial and political institutions.

Remember Seattle? Remember the chaos that erupted when activists and police clashed in the streets? It seems that ever since the "victory" in Seattle in 1999, no protest can be peaceful anymore. Someone has to turn every peaceful march into a battle with the authorities through what is now known as "direct action." Direct action seems to be a code word for the destruction and disruption of peaceful speech.

The right to protest a government's policies or a company's beliefs is one of the hallmarks of American society. At times, it is necessary to disobey laws to protect that right. However,

what happens when exercising the right to free speech becomes destructive to property and overshadows other voices?

In Seattle, Washington and Prague, the worst part of the baka taking over was that everyone with legitimate protests and concerns was overshadowed and out-shouted by a handful of attention-seekers and media hogs who were only there because the cameras were.

For every "Ruckus Society" member out there, there were more people who weren't being violent. Who remembers their pleas? We only remember the shots of windows being broken by looters acting under a political umbrella.

The Ruckus Society and its ilk are just the descendants of '60s baka like Jerry Rubin, whose main claim to fame was that he tried to levitate the Pentagon. With the Ruckus Society and Rubin, the message is not human rights or saving the rain forest. Direct action is the message. Do you think the Ruckus Society would actually go to Indonesia or Korea to shut down a Nike factory? Do you think they would really go to China to protest human rights abuses? Any chance they'd tie themselves to trees in the Brazilian rain forest? They'd never be heard from again. Much easier to disrupt a meeting of head honchos in this country or Europe, where the news cameras are sure to be. Besides, what's there to loot and smash in Indonesia? The anti-Suharto riots pretty much cleaned Jakarta out.

The idiocy surrounding them notwithstanding, the problems and complaints are relevant. In China, political prisoners are used to make con-

sumer products as part of their penal servitude. Indonesian factories are virtual sweatshops where workers are forced to labor 15 hours a day or more without breaks to make clothing articles for American backs.

There shouldn't be an argument that these practices are wrong. Nike, for instance, should take more control of what their factories are doing in the far corners of the world.

Still, two wrongs don't make a right. By destroying a Starbucks, you're putting 10 or more people out of work for anywhere from a week to a month. By clogging streets, you're keeping people here in the United States from earning a living. By rioting, you cast a pall of fear and turn off people like me who see all demonstrators as rioters, not as people with legitimate complaints.

Of course, if you've read to this point, you're probably not a demonstrator.

Pat Payne is a columnist for the Oregon Daily Emerald. His views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.



Bryan Dixon Emerald

Letters to the editor

Yahoo! protesters seeking to be offended

As females and University of Oregon students, we would like to respond to the outrage generated by the recent Yahoo! ad campaign. We feel that the letters appearing Monday, Oct. 2 demand a second opinion. First, we regard ourselves as strong-willed, respected women and we do not find these ads offensive either to females or to homosexuals.

A mild expression of sexual attraction toward a woman taking her top off is hardly indicative of rape culture; this level of extrapolation is absurd. The motivation behind rape is power, not sex. If the genders of the names in this particular ad had been switched (i.e. Jon is about to take his shirt off), we doubt anyone would have complained. Why is this type of sexual desire acceptable but the other is not?

On another note, cross-dressing is not a strictly homosexual practice. Portraying both male and female genders is normal for all humans: homosexual and heterosexual, male and female. Furthermore, Yahoo!'s advertisement does not promote homophobia by depicting a man who has experimented and rejected cross-dressing because it's uncomfort-

able. We strongly feel that these ads, intended simply to grab the reader's attention, have been misconstrued because people have projected preconceived prejudices onto them. When one views these ads from an unbiased perspective, there is very little — if any — offensive content. Instead of seeking to be offended, perhaps the student body should focus its energy on more constructive ways of furthering equality of all people.

**M. Suzanne Reynolds
 R. Lynn Hilles**

Blame squarely on editor

There are a few things in Jack Clifford's Oct. 2 commentary about the Yahoo! ads that are disturbing to hear from a newspaper editor-in-chief.

Apparently the purpose of the ODE is to sell newspapers, not to disseminate information: "The newsroom writes stories ... to fit the space not filled with ads." Perhaps this was an unfortunate phrasing, but I always thought the purpose of a newspaper was to report news, facilitate the exchange of ideas and enhance our understanding of our world.

Later, Mr. Clifford defended the division of the paper into two departments that "are careful about

the information we share" (read: "don't talk to each other." it appears) by saying "I don't want anyone from the sales department ... telling me what stories should run in the newspaper." This is ridiculous. Of course the sales folks should not be dictating story content, but that is because nothing should dictate story content but the events of the story. However, that does not mean that the editor-in-chief should not set advertising policy.

Finally, Mr. Clifford accepted responsibility for the Yahoo! ads and almost immediately rejected it: "The buck doesn't stop on my desk, even if it does slow down." Mr. Clifford, as editor-in-chief, it does indeed stop on your desk. That's what your title means. You do not make every decision in the newspaper's production, but you are responsible for setting the policies which inform these decisions.

**Joshua Madden
 graduate student, CIS**

Women constantly under attack

In response to Brandon Oberlin's letter to the editor — yes, people DO care, otherwise there wouldn't have been such an uproar about the Yahoo! ads!

I mean this in the nicest way,

but maybe you don't understand because every second of your life is *not* subconsciously ruled with the knowledge that you are viewed as a sexual object and nothing more.

You don't have to worry about walking past guys and receiving blatant stares, comments and other behavior that makes you feel like a piece of meat. You don't have to worry about the message your clothing is sending, about walking anywhere alone, about date rape, about group mentality and drunk guys at parties trying to cop a quick feel because their friends will laugh. But women understand this because these thoughts are *constant*. And we are so used to it, in fact, that we often don't pay attention to it anymore.

I didn't think anything of the Yahoo! ads until someone said something. Then I realized that there was something wrong. It is so common, this treatment of women, that it has become acceptable and disregarded at the same time. No one gives it a second thought. But we need to, because it makes women feel like crap, to be quite honest. We are good for a hell of a lot more than showing some skin, and it's about time we were treated with the respect we deserve.

**Lindsey Merrell
 junior**

Emerald clarifies position on WISTEC

When we wrote on the Autzen/WISTEC parking lot problem last week, we were more confused than we realized. We made a mistake and we simplified the lease issue, which is in no way straightforward.

The dilemma is complicated, but that shouldn't diminish the importance of WISTEC continuing to operate. WISTEC serves an incredible purpose in our community by providing young people with a direct, hands-on scientific experience. It also has a program for older girls to act as mentors to younger children, which gives girls confidence and skills in science instruction. The University should support this however possible.

And now, for the correction: The \$26,000 WISTEC makes every year from the paved lots on their land represents approximately 14 percent of their yearly income.

The clarification: WISTEC does have a lease for the land they use, but it's a non-exclusive lease for the paved lots in question. This means the city owns those lots and according to the city's attorney, the city has the right to make an additional inter-governmental agreement with the University (as it has done in the past) that allows the University to also use the lots, so long as WISTEC still has space for employees and patrons to park.

We regret confusing an already complex issue.