

HEY JAY: Activism doesn't stop with WRC



SAINT AND PROFITS

ERIC PFEIFFER

Jay Breslow is not your ASUO president. Jay Breslow is revenge gone wrong. He is fulfilling his role as the George W. Bush of University politics. Someone I wouldn't mind going to a barbecue with, but someone who takes orders from a shadow boss.

I don't question that Breslow is passionate about student activism. Most people, upon embracing activism, are passionate. And single-minded.

For example, dozens of young fascists who have their parents buy them \$1,000 tents so they can camp on a lawn and tell the world how to think. Or a few dozen anarchists who decided "breaking shit" was a movement and subsequently drowned out the message that 45,000 union workers, religious leaders, students and activists were promoting in Seattle last year.

Breslow, like most politicians and the government itself, is victim to the special-interest lobby.

Jay Breslow was not elected ASUO president on his merits. He was elected by the backlash to his opponents in last year's election, C.J. Gabbe and Peter Larson.

Anyone who even remotely follows the ASUO knows this is the truth. When it was a real contest, based on political connections and grassroots activism, the Gabbe ticket

devastated Breslow in the primary election. Then, fear set in.

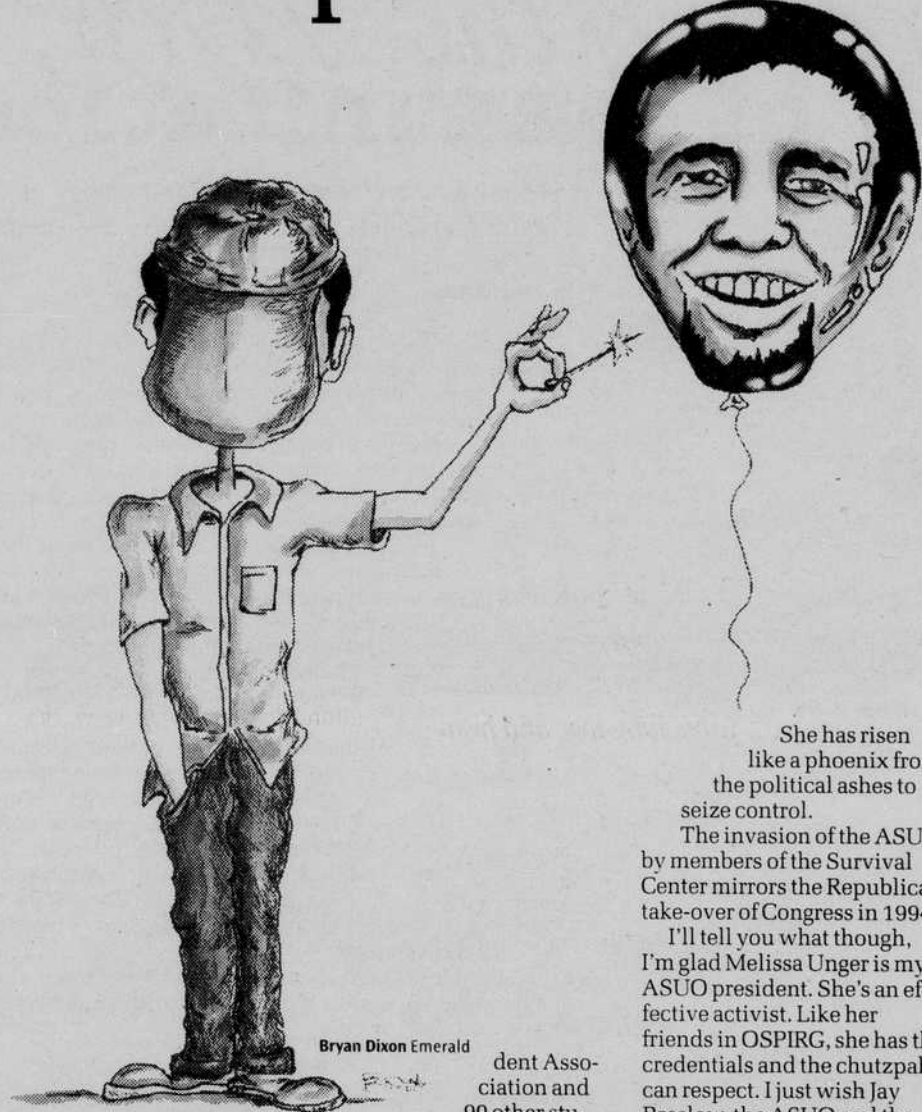
If you do the math, Gabbe received 834 votes in the primary election, compared to 548 for Breslow. The other candidates received a combined total of 483 votes. Then, in the general election, Breslow surged to 1,037, while Gabbe dropped slightly with 806. Cut to the chase: Breslow won on a platform of collective hate.

Those voters (myself included) who did not support a Gabbe presidency simply transferred our votes from the candidates we actually favored to what we perceived as the lesser of two evils. We played a childish game, and now the Karma chameleon has bitten us in the ass.

Breslow flirted with fascism in a Sept. 27 Emerald interview: "Student leaders are student activists, and those who don't believe it shouldn't be student leaders." Translation: Play by my rules or go home.

Jay, I didn't get the new Dave Matthews CD. I don't wear armbands to show my political affiliation (my Dad did as a Black Panther growing up in Watts, when that actually meant something). And I don't base my beliefs on how many cameras show up. Am I disqualified from the cast of WRC Activist, 90210?

Now, put down your solidarity sticks. This is not an attack on ideals. I embrace some of Breslow's adopted beliefs. He seems to be a decent and relatively intelligent young man. However, I also believe that the method is as important as the message. And his



Bryan Dixon Emerald

method is flawed.

If Breslow wants to be an activist, he needs to realize that activism is not just a code word for Worker Rights Consortium. The Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgendered Alliance, the Black Student Union, the International Stu-

dent Association and 90 other student groups deserve resources and recognition as well. These are the activists who fight every day to preserve their livelihood, even when the mainstream media and political circles look the other way.

The truth is, Melissa Unger is your real ASUO president.

She has risen like a phoenix from the political ashes to seize control.

The invasion of the ASUO by members of the Survival Center mirrors the Republican take-over of Congress in 1994.

I'll tell you what though, I'm glad Melissa Unger is my ASUO president. She's an effective activist. Like her friends in OSPIRG, she has the credentials and the chutzpah I can respect. I just wish Jay Breslow, the ASUO and the students knew who really was in charge.

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QUOTED

"I had fun at Yale. I got a lot of great friends out of Yale. And I didn't pay attention."

—George Bush, in The Washington Post on July 23, 2000.

"Every time we tried to do something, Al would catch us and say, 'I'm telling! I'm telling! I'm telling! I'm telling Dad!' He was an egregious little tattletale."

—Barbara Howar, childhood friend of Al Gore's sister Nancy, in The Washington Post on Oct. 10, 1999.

"He is a caring, sensitive, good parent."

—Eminem's lawyer, Harvey Hauer, in People magazine on Aug. 25, 2000, speaking of the rapper, who is due in a Michigan court today on charges of assault with a dangerous weapon and carrying a concealed weapon.

"Our men are really manly men!"

—a crowd of protesters in Tabalosos, Peru, chanting in response to a TV report that said drinking water from a river that runs through the town of 14,000 has turned the men into homosexuals, as reported on www.advocate.com's Oct. 9, 2000 issue.

Dustin Preuitt
 graduate student
 computer and information science

Letters to the editor

The courageous Emerald

It's frustrating to me, really, to see what's happening in regards to the Yahoo! controversy. Whether or not the Yahoo! ads were offensive, I get this feeling that people are fighting against the ads for two reasons: Because the Emerald ran them and because everybody else is arguing about them.

Just like the protests and outbursts of before, there are just a vocal few who are swaying the opinions of many more:

"Hey! Did you see this horrible ad in the Emerald? Let's write them a nasty letter in protest!"

"The ad wasn't that bad, and I think you're blowing it way out of proportion."

"But you don't like the Emerald."

"Good point, let's get pissed at 'em!"

I was happy to read Ms. Reynolds and Ms. Hilles' letter, as they say what I've believed all along: You shouldn't argue just because you can.

I support the Emerald running the

ads. I've seen the ads, and while they're not in great taste, they created enough debate that people will remember it. And that was probably Yahoo!'s intention. I don't blame the Emerald at all for running them and believe that it took more guts to run these ads than it did to not run them.

Jake Ortman
 Class of 2000
 Bend, Ore.

Funds should support Pedi-Cab

The leasing of police-style cruisers by the Department of Public Safety is most certainly a misuse of funds. Not only does this decision violate law and capitalize upon students' (and community members') fears of flashing blue lights, but the cruisers take funding away from programs that DO build a campus community.

Instead of spending money to operate vehicles that may be illegal, why not fund programs such as Bicycle Taxi — a

program that is not currently running due to "accessibility problems"? Odds are that for far less money than it costs to operate a fleet of illegal cars, we could BRING BACK THE PEDI-CAB!

Ben Andrews
 geology

HRA not truthful

Why does the Human Rights Alliance see fit to lie in its commentary in the Emerald (ODE, Oct. 4)? Specifically, I am referring to its statement that "there is no democracy on this campus." This is quite absolutely not true. This campus is rife with democracy at nearly every level. The most obvious case is the annual ASUO elections, which recently supplied the HRA with a "mandate" from students — and, by the abhorrently low turnout, simultaneously demonstrated that most students are here for an education, not for social policy debates.

Another lie by the HRA was the statement that "students, faculty, staff and

other campus constituencies have a voice only if President Frohnmayer allows it." Perhaps the HRA is unaware that the Oregon Legislature provides the University with much of its funding as well as helps influence policy decisions. The Legislature receives its revenue from Oregon taxpayers and its mandate to govern from Oregon voters. Students, faculty and staff have a voice: Vote for the legislative candidates who support your views — the University does not operate inside a vacuum.

Perhaps the HRA really wants to replace the current democratic system with its own local oligarchy. Creating such a quasi-autonomous, non-governmental organization would have two possible outcomes: Either take policy decision power away from the Oregon Legislature, voters and taxpayers, or lose state funding and sit back as our tuition rises to the levels of private colleges.