

PERSPECTIVES

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Giovanni Salimena Emerald

Random acts of publishing

It's certainly no secret that the denizens of Suite 1, in the ground floor of the Erb Memorial Union, have left-wing beliefs and an activist bent. OSPIRG and the Human Rights Alliance share office space in Suite 1. So it was no surprise to see that the December issue of *The Insurgent*, a student newspaper also headquartered in Suite 1, included an eight-page insert on animal liberation.

It was a shock, however, to read the four middle pages of this insert, titled "the ALF Primer, Your Guide to Economic Sabotage and the Animal Liberation Front," which contained detailed information on breaking into, damaging and burning research laboratories where animals are used.

Whether or not we share animal liberation values or believe in direct action as the best method of social change, a student-funded newspaper publishing information which gives explicit instructions on sabotage, vandalism and

arson is not just unwise, but patently wrong. The text of the primer is clearly designed to persuade readers that committing these crimes is the rational thing to do.

Worse, the layout of the eight-page section has the A.L.F. information on a page facing *The Insurgent's* own content, where is printed the names, phone numbers and, in two cases, home addresses of University professors who engage in animal research. There is no explicit call to action by *The Insurgent*; it isn't encouraging activists to vandalize these professors' homes or offices (in fact, the text reads, "Please take a few moments to write them an e-mail or call them"), but an illustration of a hooded figure opening a lab dog's cage is placed next to the professors' personal information.

Even if there is no explicit connection, one can see a link between instructions for doing damage to research facilities and home addresses of researchers. The connection is similar, while not iden-

tical, to the pro-life Web site which published personal information of abortion doctors on a list where the doctors' names were crossed off after they had been killed or injured. Both of these situations are irresponsible publishing at best and a crime at worst. In the case of the pro-life Web site, the owner was found guilty of a crime and held responsible for his actions.

We're not lawyers, and we're certainly not saying that *The Insurgent* has committed a crime, but it is a violation of U.S. Code (title 18, part I, chapter 12, section 231) to teach people how to burn down research facilities. In addition, it's a violation of U.S. Code (title 18, part I, chapter 19, section 373) to solicit or persuade others to commit such crimes. An argument could be made that publishing the A.L.F. primer did those things.

Illegal or not, *The Insurgent's* publication of this material is a gross breach of trust between the newspaper and the students who

fund it. In a culture so bent on desktop publishing, free speech and individualism, there is plenty of opportunity for activists to print A.L.F. primers at home (or at Kinko's, if no one's looking) and distribute them as widely as those activists can reach. They can leave primers at coffee shops or tack them up on bulletin boards.

No person's name is connected to such actions, and activists are free to leaflet, provided they don't get caught. But when a publication says it is a newspaper, a different standard is required. Newspapers cannot print material that could be read as a violation of federal law. A newspaper has names attached to it and the public trust to uphold. Whether it is morally right or wrong to do so, a newspaper must follow the law. Student-funded newspapers have perhaps a greater standard, because there is no publisher holding the purse strings. Students give *The Insurgent* the money to publish, and they deserve better.

One professor named in the insert has indicated he will press charges. For concerned members of the campus community, we suggest a short walk to the ground floor of the EMU. Go into Suite 1 and have a conversation with the staff of *The Insurgent* about where they went wrong, or step across the room to the ASUO office and make your concerns known to student government.

That's all the information we can offer, because we are also a student newspaper. Nowhere in our pages can be found information on how to vandalize Suite 1. We'll even say outright (without a snotty, sarcastic disclaimer, like A.L.F. uses) that damaging *The Insurgent's* property because you disagree with them would be wrong. But we do hope *The Insurgent's* collective makes more responsible decisions in the future.

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.

Looking for worthwhile news in all the wrong places

So, with the hubbub coming from Washington, D.C. this past week — President Bill Clinton exited stage left with a liberal strafing, while President George entered stage right, trying not to stumble over his words — maybe you missed the really big news. That's right, Oregon head football coach Mike Belotti's airplane landed safely Tuesday at the Eugene airport.

At least that was a local television station's take when it showed

footage of Belotti's late-night flight touching down without a mishap. Of course, the underlying reason for the "photo-op" was that Belotti had just turned down a chance to take over the vacant head coach position at Ohio State University and was returning to town.

That "story" launched a hundred rumors, a thousand opinions and probably about a million written words between print and online, but the main question was never posed: Do we have to get in

a lather every time a University coach in any sport has lunch with or takes a phone call from another school's athletic director? Is there any point to the needless conjecture, the "around-and-around-we-go" attempts to answer a rather banal question: Will he/she stay or will he/she go?

Sure, there are students on campus who chose to attend the University because it's a Pac-10 Conference school and sports are a big draw in that arena. Yeah, college

sports generate a lot of exposure and some extra money for participating schools; especially football, since Belotti may have received about a two-fold increase from his present \$600,000 annual salary if he had left for Ohio State.

Get over it already, though. Belotti is just another University employee, one who spent a day or two exploring his work options.

Maybe we are jaded here at the Emerald. Maybe all of this reality TV is getting to us. Hmmm,

there's an idea: Why not put Belotti on an exotic island, surround him with dollar-clad athletic directors getting him drunk and wooing him, all with the goal of tempting him to leave the "love" of his life, Oregon football.

That would make a much better photo-op than a plane landing at Eugene Airport, don't you think?

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