

# PERSPECTIVES

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## University community responds to controversial ad

**GUEST COMMENTARY**

**Randy Newnham**

**Ad glosses over history**

In response to Tuesday's ad in the Emerald by David Horowitz regarding reparations, the Survival Center would like to say a few things. First of all, the Survival Center is dedicated to ending all forms of oppression, whether it be racism, sexism, heterosexism, ableism, slavery, etc., and as such, opposes Horowitz's beliefs.

Whereas slavery is among the cruelest injustices ever perpetrated by anyone upon another, and;

Whereas the industrial base in the United States was created through slave labor, and whereas African-Americans have received little or no benefit from this industry, and;

Whereas this industry is responsible in whole or in part for

the relative economic prosperity of the United States, and;

Whereas slavery in the United States, as an institution, was made possible by the policies of the U.S. government and the consent of those benefiting from it, and;

Whereas the U.S. government still systematically discriminates against African-Americans through racial profiling by police and disproportionate imprisonment, and;

Whereas racism in the United States against African-Americans still exists, in no small part due to the ideas fostered about African-Americans by those in power, who profited from their subjugation and wished to create a social mechanism to maintain that subjugation, and;

Whereas the African-American community should be given the freedom to decide its own destiny, and it should have the resources to make those decisions that would better their community — resources that

their forebears worked hard to produce under the most exploitative of conditions, and;

Whereas a disproportionate amount of African-Americans live in poverty and are denied many opportunities for advancement as a result of the vicious cycle poverty creates, which could in many cases be traced back to times of slavery;

Be it resolved that the Survival Center opposes the ideas presented in Horowitz's ad. There can be no equality in this country while any segment of its population is demonized and oppressed. While a mere monetary allocation cannot summarily end racism in U.S. society, the issue is best dealt with through a true dialogue. The ideology Horowitz puts forth serves only to gloss over history in a way that demonizes those who demand accountability.

Randy Newnham is a senior anthropology and linguistics major, and this opinion is representative of the Survival Center staff.

**GUEST COMMENTARY**

**Mark Tracy**

**Horowitz reminds us to examine information sources**

I am writing this letter to add another voice to the debate around the David Horowitz advertisement. First, let me state that I support the Oregon Daily Emerald in printing the ad for two reasons.

The first reason is the freedom of speech argument. It is the same argument we hear over and over again; if we censor one way of thought, what keeps the powers from censoring any unpopular thought? History has shown us too many times the consequences of censorship.

A second reason why I support the advertisement is that this is a campus of higher education, and this environment should challenge us in a variety of ways. We, as a community, should embrace, celebrate and debate different thoughts and opinions. This ad has sparked conversation across the entire campus, and that is a positive thing. Many of us might disagree with the author's opinion, but it is good to see students, faculty, staff, administrators and community members discussing the issue openly.

I also think this advertisement can teach us a very important lesson in where we get our information. That is one of the skills higher education has given to me — the knowledge and

awareness to question the information presented. One of my initial reactions to the advertisement was that people of this community might read this and not question where the data and research came from. And that scares me.

The ad was well produced; it has half-truths mixed in with stereotypes and misinterpreted data. And for that reason it can appear that it has been well researched and the information is valid. One thing everyone that read the advertisement should consider is how it appeared in the paper. Did it require any validated research or editorial scrutiny? I think all it took was \$750.

I remember an experience matriculating through my undergraduate years at a historically black institution. Once we had a guest lecturer give a speech on African-American history. Throughout his entire lecture he continually stated that we must educate ourselves, and that we as a society cannot afford to allow mainstream media, textbooks and society tell us what is right and wrong. It was our responsibility to research and question the information.

That is what I hope this ad does for everyone. I hope this ad inspires everyone to do more research and question the information given to us. Today the information is about slavery; tomorrow the information may be something you hold dear to your heart (the environment, health care, politics, education, art, music, athletics, etc.). Regardless, I hope everyone has done the necessary research to make an informed decision.

Mark Tracy is an assistant dean in the Office of Student Life.

**GUEST COMMENTARY**

**Nathan Sutton**

**Ten reasons why running Horowitz's ad was a bad idea — and racist too**

I. The fact that many different groups of people throughout history have practiced slavery does not excuse Colonial European and American involvement in slavery. It's not OK just because "everyone was doing it."

II. The social detriment that American slaves suffered outweighs any economic "benefit" that might have been the result of slavery. Slavery shouldn't have been financially good for anyone.

III. The act of enslavement was less significant than the ethics behind slavery in Colonial America. Very few Colonial Americans, wealthy enough to own slaves or not, transcended the racist mindset that allowed the enslavement of an entire race of people.

IV. The progress of racial tolerance that has occurred in this country does not erase the past. We all need to be conscious of how far we've come by remembering the struggle of American Colonial slaves.

V. The argument that "many blacks" were free or owned slaves themselves during the era of slavery is a poor excuse for the many more black people who suffered enslavement during that time.

VI. If Horowitz thinks that discrimination does not still exist, he needs to take a look around. We have a long way to go as a country concerning discrimination based on race, gender, sexual orientation and many other factors.

VII. African-Americans don't need David Horowitz to say when they're being victimized. No

reparations messages can be more "damaging" to the African-American community than an immature and ignorant argument such as that of Horowitz.

VIII. The damage done during slavery has not been and cannot be repaired. Money and laws do not make up for an entirely inhuman practice that lasted more than 300 years. The best we can do is to make sure we don't make similar mistakes in the future.

IX. No few white "Anglo-Saxon Christians" deserve all the credit for ending slavery. The American value that "all men are created equal" owes itself to the effort of all different races and types of people working over the course of many, many years to come to an understanding based on tolerance and mutual respect. Black people owe no "debt" to America. They had to work as hard or harder than anyone else to gain that respect.

X. Horowitz is in no position to judge how an entire race will react to any kind of reparations. "The nations that gave [black people] freedom" (only after having enslaved them) should have less ignorant representation than the media voice of Horowitz.

I am not an expert on the reparations claims that Horowitz addresses, nor am I an expert on slavery. I do know, however, that Horowitz's advertisement, no matter how complicated, nonetheless exemplifies the kind of ignorance and racism that continues to trouble this country. Furthermore, I'm convinced that Horowitz is trying to anger people for the sole purpose of causing harm. There is no beneficial motive behind Horowitz's advertisement. I am surprised and disappointed by the publication of his work in a seemingly open-minded and tolerant newspaper such as the Emerald.

Nathan Sutton is a freshman English major.



**CONTACT US!**

The Oregon Daily Emerald welcomes and will attempt to print all letters on topics of interest to the University community. Letters are limited to 250 words. The Emerald may edit any letter for length, clarity, grammar, style and libel. Letters may be mailed, dropped off at EMU Suite 300, or e-mailed to the addresses at the top of the page. Also, please feel free to give your feedback to any individual story or column directly at our Web site. Feedback comments may appear in print at our discretion. Keep in touch!