

Letters to the editor

Our purpose is higher than that of Horowitz

In a manner that some might understandably assume is simply a marketing strategy for his book, author David Horowitz has placed, or attempted to place, full-page ads in campus newspapers at several dozen of our country's leading universities, including our own University. Horowitz lobs simple catch phrases and slogans into a set of issues that are complex and divisive. He has a right to do so — to be simplistic, and if he chooses, even to be cynically provocative.

Different institutions have responded to Horowitz's ad in different manners. Our University has the opportunity to respond in ways that show our distinctive strengths. This week our University benefits from the hard work and leadership of students, who have organized the "Dr. Edwin Coleman Conference," and then May 11 our Wayne Morse Center sponsors its conference on "Labor in a Global Economy."

These academic and institutional settings are important venues for students, faculty and staff to focus on race, class, inclusion and social justice. These are venues in which ideas are explored, illuminated and constructively challenged. Further, we are launching this year our Center on Diversity and Community, with the purpose of engaging us in constructive research, conversation and public service concerning the societal challenges and opportunities developing as our society faces its diversity.

Horowitz's purpose can be to sell books. That is his right. Our purpose is a higher one — to build community, to honor identity within community and to engage in thoughtful and respectful conversation.

Dave Frohnmayer
president
University of Oregon

'Coon' is short for 'raccoon'

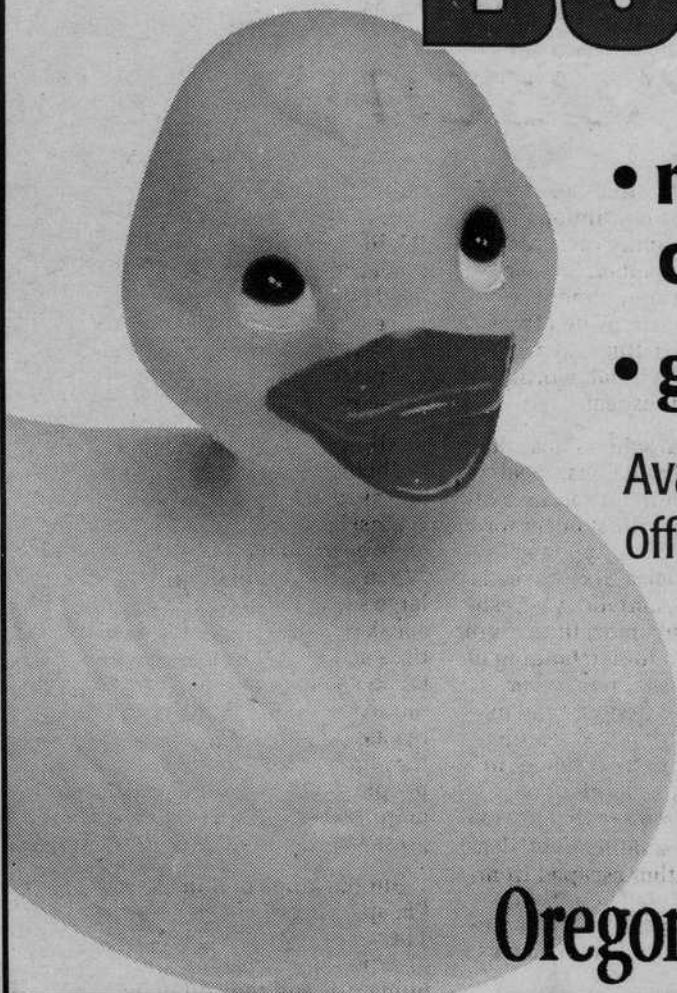
Oh, please. Dr. Coleman may indeed be a wise man, but he is no etymologist. He chastises a friend ("MCC gears up for activism, diversity," ODE, April 18) for saying "coon's age," claiming it is racist. While "coon" itself is a derogatory and racist term relating to blacks, other uses are entirely unrelated to race. It is very simply a colloquial term for raccoon.

Blacks and other historically oppressed minorities have plenty of real reasons for claiming victim status; there's no need to start making up new ones.

Mark R. Baker
class of '85
Gladstone, Ore.

Editor's note: According to a book titled "I Hear America Talking," by Stuart Berg Flexner, coon was originally a short form for raccoon in 1741, went through several other meanings, then became a reference for a black person by 1862. According to the "Encyclopedia of Word and Phrase Origins," the phrase "a coon's age," meaning a very long time, is an Americanism first recorded in 1843 and probably related to the old English expression "in a crow's age."

Duck BUCKS™



- money-saving coupons
- good all term

Available at the Emerald office (Suite 300, EMU).

Oregon Daily Emerald

Advertise in Oregon Daily Emerald Classifieds! Call 346-4343!

*This Friday
no cover before midnight*

SCANDALS DANCE CLUB

endless possibilities

Money Grab @ 11:00 pm • \$2 Chinese Food Special • Hip-Hop and House music • Cheap Drinks

2222 Centennial Blvd

(Next to Autzen Stadium)

343-4734