

COMMENTARY

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Monday, December 9, 2002

Editorial

Quacks & smacks

Quacks to the University for listening to student group protests and changing course on their mandatory "O"-logo policy.

Smacks to University President Dave Frohnmayer for steadfastly refusing to admit that *not* taking a political stance — against KUGN-AM as the "voice of the Ducks" or against a war in Iraq, for instance — is an overtly political stance.

Quacks to the Eugene City Council for realizing that real family cannot be defined by any one model and approving a domestic partner registry.

Smacks to the City Council for being too "confused" to offer transgender people equal rights in public accommodations.

Quacks to The New York Times for changing its mind and deciding to publish two sports columns that it previously had refused to print. The columns were about the Augusta National Golf Club's exclusion of women and appeared to be in conflict with the paper's editorial board. Much of the national media had erupted in anger at the appearance of censoring columnists' opinions, but on Saturday, executive editor Howell Raines publicly stated that the columnists' opinions were not the problem and the columns could run after some minor editing.

Smacks to the writer in the Nigerian paper The Day, who suggested that Mohammed likely would have married one of the contestants for the "Miss World" competition. The column sparked rioting that ended with more than 200 people killed and tens of thousands forced from their homes, and eventually made organizers decide to move the pageant to London. Look out if Mohammed ever appears on "South Park."

Quacks to the University and Eugene community for coming together to support University junior Noah Smith, who was badly injured in a car accident while driving back from Thanksgiving break. Smith has lost complete use of his legs and partial use of his arms, at least temporarily, and will be doing rehabilitation at a Portland hospital for the next four to six weeks.

Smacks to the community for essentially stopping the donations for The Ninth Life cat sanctuary in Eugene. The nationally renowned establishment may be closing its doors very soon, as the owners don't have enough money to keep it going.

Quacks to the Oregon men's basketball team for eclipsing the power of Duck football... in the preseason. Watch these Duck men, they're going far this season.

Smacks to the Oregon football team for not having another golden season.

Quacks to the Oregon football team for hanging in there and fighting valiantly anyway, and to the real fans for realizing golden seasons don't happen every year — and sticking by their team.

Editorial policy

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Responses can be sent to letters@dailyemerald.com. Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged. Letters are limited to 250 words and guest commentaries to 550 words. Authors are limited to one submission per calendar month. Submission must include phone number and address for verification. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style.

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CORRECTION

Friday's story about a grievance filed with the ASUO Student Senate ("Students contends grievance that alleges threatening speech") should have said that the senate will handle the grievance at its next meeting on Jan. 15.

The Emerald regrets the error.

The Communist disguise

Communism is not a widely held political ideal in the United States. There is a reason Communist political candidates never win elections.

Communism has not proven itself to be an effective political system. After utterly failing to recruit Americans to their way of thinking, Marxists, Maoists and all of their socialist confederates responded with two main tactics in this country: hiding in the Democratic Party and infiltrating our institutions of higher education.

Before attending school at the University, the only Communists I was familiar with were either in movies about the USSR or fleeing to Florida on rafts. Imagine my surprise when the terms 'proletariat' and 'bourgeois' started popping up in every other book I was assigned.

In most of my classes, there was at least some allusion to the evils of a capitalistic economic system. Not just in sociology or political science, but also in areas where political opinions have no place whatsoever.

Some of these teachers have no qualms about identifying themselves as a political deviant, as they should, and this is commendable. But it is important to realize that even in classrooms where the professor's deviant opinions are not hidden, they go largely unchallenged, and as a result carry too much weight. What is hard to understand about our revolutionary professors who are so hellbent on change is why they choose to rally students against a system that affords such power to the common citizen.



Peter Utsey Emerald

to the common citizen.

If the majority of the people were convinced that Communism was the best political system, then we could simply vote to change the government. There is no need for violence or revolution. The problem is that these radicals know the only way they can realize a Communist government in this country is by overriding the opinions of the majority. Marx may have been right that religion is the opiate of the masses, but I would argue that Communism is the opiate of the malcontent.

A system that prevents personal achievement is most advantageous to the weak, the lazy and the stupid. A classroom is not a political platform. If Communists who have been able and willing to earn a Ph.D. in this society are so intent on bringing about so-

cial change, they should become politicians, not teachers.

Maybe Chuck Hunt, one of our more outspoken dissenters, wouldn't be quite so self-righteous if he had to defend himself in televised political debates with people as educated and intelligent as himself rather than in a room full of 18-year-old undergraduates. Maybe he would gain a greater understanding of the needs of his beloved proletariat when none of them voted for him.

Professorship is a position of tremendous power, and with that power comes a proportionate amount of responsibility. There should be a few professors on this campus preaching for the radical left. There should also be a few from the radical right. Here's a novel idea: How about a Republican getting to teach at this school? Although they are pret-

ty busy right now doing trivial things like putting food on our tables, running the government, and defending our nation against terrorist attacks, I am sure we could find one or two.

To the people on this campus who are so eager to be cut off at the knees with a sickle and hammered into their predetermined niche in society: Why bother wasting time trying to change things in America? There are several countries that already have Communist governments in place, and one-way airline tickets are cheap.

I am not questioning these people's right to voice their opinions, just their need to impose it on everyone else.

Contact the columnist at michaelcosgrove@dailyemerald.com. His opinions do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

Racist caricatures, mascots don't fly

Chalk up another point for a "multicultural" education. Recently, not one, but two fraternities have come under fire for their members' use of "blackface" at off-campus parties.

Members from the "highly educated" fraternity Kappa Sigma at the University of Tennessee in October dressed for a Halloween party as the Jackson Five, complete with their faces sponged in black for the full effect. In November, the culturally sensitive and historically aware members of Zeta Psi at the University of Virginia replicated their "brothers" in Tennessee by repeating the offensive costume idea at an off-campus party; a black Uncle Sam and the tennis champions Serena and Venus Williams "attended" this particular party.

There has been heavy controversy in the South over this issue. While both the

University of Tennessee and the University of Virginia have decided not to reprimand the fraternities, the national chapter of Kappa Sigma has suspended the local chapter, and the national Zeta Psi has yet to take action against their local chapter.

What is interesting about this entire controversy is the reaction by the community and the students at the colleges. According to KnoxNews, a graduate of the University of Tennessee contended in a letter to the editor section of the News-Sentinel that the issue was simply about "six white members of a fraternity paint(ing) their faces black, and UT got their chapter suspended because of it."

I believe that this issue is deeper than a fraternity losing their privilege to have parties and being a part of a university; the neglected issue here is that many groups of color have been the object of caricatures over the years and no one, including universities, is willing to take a stand against it.

Though caricatures of African Americans are a more obvious and untolerated aspect of racism, caricatures of Asian

Americans and American Indians, two groups that have been widely oppressed, still exist. Incidents such as Abercrombie and Fitch's racial "oops" of depicting an Asian-American laundry employee with heavily slanted eyes, in addition to the fraternity members' use of blackface are two obvious examples that structural racism is alive and well.

Furthermore, the wide-eyed, smiling caricature of a American Indian still remains a "mascot" for college and professional sports teams. When juxtaposed next to the well-known racist caricature of "coon" or "sambo," one can see that there is little difference between the two.

Structural racism is still prevalent in our society and as long as we accept — and universities endorse — one form of racism (caricatures as mascots) and denounce another (blackfacing) then our "educated" fraternities and the student body as a whole will continue to remain culturally confused and insensitive.

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Megann Farnsworth
Just think about it