

REGULATE THE COPS

A week ago I read your article about racial profiling of blacks and Latinos in Eugene. It really touched home for me because I am an African-American woman. I moved here three and a half years ago from Michigan. Before moving here I had never been pulled over, but since moving here I have been pulled over numerous times (coincidentally only by white males), all for pointless reasons, like having my old Michigan license plate in my car window where the policeman could see it. I have been ticketed, but every time I have fought it and ended up paying nothing.

Today, only 10 days after the article came out, I was pulled over again. I have my front license plate in my front windshield (like a third or more of Eugeneans) instead of on my bumper. The policeman proceeded to take my license and registration. When he returned and gave me my information back (which I don't understand why he needed in the first place), he asked if I had any illegal substances in the car. This offended me because this cop had no reason to question me except his stereotypical assumptions. I said no but he kept on pushing: "No marijuana or paraphernalia?" I heatedly said no and he left.

This is the last straw! Something needs to be done. If the police won't start regulating their people I say we should do it for them. If you have any ideas please write to the *Weekly*. If we all pull together as a community we can make a difference in the fight against racism in Eugene.

Jenny Hoeksema
Eugene

OUR PHYSICAL NATURE

Regarding the letter "Killing Us Softly" (10/23): I understand the writer's concern

about women being seen as nothing but objects to be used, but it seems like there's often a quick leap to the victim mentality. Do all women who pose in provocative ways later feel they're victims of some male conspiracy? And people's attitudes toward females, and whether or not they should be treated with respect, are determined largely by social and familial environments, not sexually suggestive pictures (which don't necessarily depict purely selfish exploitation).

The fact is, we're heavily influenced by our senses, and according to research, males are more visually oriented on average. Erotic imagery has always been persistent in free societies, even those with low incidences of sexual assault, and also in our culture of increasing repression and prohibition. The question is, how does an image that is subject to interpretation automatically lead to the conclusion that women are nothing more than "objects"?

I also wonder why some women resent those who don't mind being provocative and showing their beauty (which can include body and mind). And wouldn't a world without the enjoyment of physical and sexual beauty be at odds with the undeniable physical side of our nature? Perhaps it's time to get back to a little more reality.

Ryan T. Newburg
Eugene

LITTLE TOO FOXY

Besides the obvious deluge of tacky ads and unbelievably repetitive and mind-numbing promos for their tacky tacky programs, Fox did a few things to baseball that are too egregious to let slide.

Did anyone else notice how the break between innings was just a moment (about 60 seconds) longer than we have grown up with? We avid baseball watchers have an inner

TOO MUCH COFFEE MAN BY SHANNON WHEELER



clock that tells us exactly when to return from the refrigerator or bathroom in order to catch the first pitch.

Fox extended each break infinitesimally in order to run that much more advertising past us.

As if that wasn't enough, they rarely allowed us to see the pitcher's last warm-up toss and the catcher's throw down to second which are the traditional start to every inning. We never got to see the leadoff batter settle in and his approach to the plate. Instead, we were ripped away from the billionth promo for "Joe Millionaire" just in time to see the first pitch already on its way! Egad! Red

Barber is rolling in his grave. Can't imagine how Vin Scully handled it.

Fox invariably manages to turn a perfectly good baseball series into some kind of "baseball reality show and vanity orgy." Too many close-ups! Too much personality! Show us the field, dammit! Maybe let us see a pitch from, gasp!, behind the plate, or even from the press level.

Indeed, it was a great post-season for baseball. Cubs and Red Sox made it unforgettable. Even Fox couldn't completely mess it up ... but there's always next year.

Robert Sposato
Eugene

KUMBAYA DAMMIT BY DAN CAROL

A Channel of Our Own
Narrowcasting vs. broadcasting.

Welcome to milepost 3 on the road to regime change. Last time, we sketched out a new map for taking power – via state-by-state effort to rally the D/democratic troops.

This time, the challenge is derivative. Just how can we sound the call to arms – when we know it won't be on Fox News? Or NBC, or anywhere else?

While tempting, we won't change much by moaning about Rush Limbaugh and the ever-annoying shortfalls of the "mainstream media." Nor will our dreams for a progressive media network be realized anytime soon.

Sorry, but it's tough love time, folks. We have to understand there are *no* miracles on the horizon. The fact is, even if we had a spare \$500 million to start a liberal cable channel tomorrow, it's highly doubtful we could fill it 24/7 with compelling programming. Frankly, we'd be lucky to deliver a few hours each day of liberal talk that was provocative – rather than preachy. That's the bad news.

The good news is we can create our own liberal "echo chamber" using the media platforms, opinion soapboxes and marketing channels we already control. The model will be driven less however, by "broadcast" media (e.g. Rupert Murdoch's Direct TV), and rely more on "narrowcasting" mechanisms such as face-to-face outreach and peer-to-peer contact. Imagine, for instance, an army of progressive Avon ladies (and gentlemen!) fanning out to preach to our "choir" – and to win over potential new converts.

So what are the pieces we can cobble together to create a liberal, Avon "media platform" of our own? It's really not such a bad line up:

- Soup cans and string: very affordable and popular with the small fry. Or better yet, add a salad and hold house party for ProgressiveMajority.org, MoveOn.org or another effective group you support. Voila, you've created a marketing channel that's more fun than Fox.
- The color of money: Sorry, Ann Coulter, but liberal authors like Jim Hightower, Arianna



Huffington, and Michael Moore are top-10 best sellers. Publishers are getting the clear message that our politics actually *sells* books. Watch what happens when organic consumers get seriously empowered to act through new media channels like Organic Valley's Farm Friends Network (www.organicvalley.com). These and other efforts will, I bet, change quickly our thinking about what an "action figure" really looks like.

• (Not) The alternative press: Hey, pardon me, but I hate this term – it marginalizes so-called "alternative" newspapers. Why do their editorial opinions count less than other papers? Because we help that happen by calling the others papers "mainstream." Let's stop.

• Pop & politics: It used to be we'd spend tens of thousands of dollars on a rock concert to get thousands of folks excited about an issue – and then we'd leave the scene with six e-mails. Not good. Fortunately there's a new generation of organizers who can stage cultural conversations, teach-ins and concerts that bottle the positive energy that artists create at events effectively – before it dissipates. There's even a manual for this new form of channeling. E-mail info@rollingthundertour.org to get yours.

Yes, in the long run we will want to re-capture mass media outlets on TV and radio from the media giants who own them now. (Al Gore, in fact, is actively developing a progressive news channel targeting a young, MTV-style audience and a liberal talk radio network is reportedly in the works). That said, we're not going to reverse the right's hold on traditional media overnight – or by traditional means. We shouldn't copy their business model either. In fact, in a new age of 500 cable channels and TIVO technology that allows viewers to fast-forward through commercials, the old advertising-based model that supports Fox, Clear Channel and other conservative conglomerates is in serious jeopardy.

What's back in season? A fresh approach to an old idea – the membership-based revenue model of public television offers the most sustainable pathway for growing liberal media. That – plus content that engages and entertains.

Having trouble tuning in to all this media jargon? I'll bet.

Check out www.mediareform.net for the clearest thinking in this area. Their national conference – coming up this weekend – will be a great well-spring to tap.

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