

'Pink' marketing promotes business, not cure



Jean Kaul

Pink, pink, pink. I'm sick of it. Everywhere I go there are pink ribbons festooning cars, cereal boxes, t-shirts, six packs of Mike's Hard Lemonade and even, according to a friend, a package of batteries she bought earlier this week. Even the least news-savvy among us know the pink ribbon is a sign of breast cancer awareness, and during October, National Breast Cancer Awareness Month, the barrage of pink is ubiquitous and becomes even more so with each passing year. We're all invested in finding the

cure, even if it just involves plunking money down for products with a pink ribbon covering it.

Every person who buys something pink or wears one of those shirts wittily (not) inscribed "Save Second Base" feels like they're doing something for the cause. The cause we think we're passively donating to, breast cancer prevention, is an incredibly worthy one.

Unfortunately, the cause we're more likely donating to is corporate greed rather than finding a cure for the third-leading killer of women. According to the consumer watchdog group, Think Before You Pink, companies are making a great deal of money by putting pink ribbons on their products and saying part of the proceeds will go to breast cancer research. Never mind that the amount is incredibly miniscule. For example, Eureka put a pink ribbon on their vacuums and then donated the grand amount

of \$1 per vacuum to research, according to Think Before You Pink. That's less than 1 percent of total proceeds donated. I'm tired of cancer being exploited so companies can make a few extra bucks off us well-meaning but uninformed and rather uninterested schmucks.

I know many people, some close to me, greatly affected by the scourge of breast cancer, and I applaud organizations like Susan G. Komen for the Cure, a foundation that has raised \$55 billion since 1982.

Yet I find it interesting that breast cancer prevention and its extension, the pink ribbon, has become such a fashionable cause. Ladies, be glad your breasts are so fashionable. Breast cancer research receives an overwhelming amount of funding and support compared to the male equivalent, prostate cancer. Apparently, pink is sexier than blue — I don't see anyone printing out "Save

Third Base" shirts. Statistically speaking, second and third base both need to be saved. In an American male's lifetime, one out of six will contract prostate cancer, while one out of eight women will contract breast cancer. In comparison, one out of four female deaths this year will be due to heart disease. Though the number of prostate and breast cancer patients might be close, the funding is nowhere near the same. Fundraising for breast cancer research far outstrips the money raised for prostate cancer research.

I have no problem with all the money that has been raised for breast cancer research. Clearly there have been some passionate and enthusiastic advocates of the cause, hence the huge success of events like National Breast Cancer Awareness month. However, I think we need to be conscientious and aware consumers. Are we supporting breast cancer research, or are we

playing into the hands of marketing campaigns that manipulate one of our greatest fears about the health of our loved ones? If I'm giving money, I want to give it to companies that are donating more than a dollar to finding a cure. Using a service like Think Before You Pink can help you find out what and who is really doing good work on behalf of cancer sufferers. Better yet, if you are passionate about donating money to breast cancer research, go directly to the source and donate to the research foundations themselves.

Maybe the biggest lesson is: Don't be sucked in by the marketing juggernaut. More than second base needs saving. Don't let a little pink ribbon on your next cereal box fool you.

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Policy change would develop goodwill



Toby Hausner

Although national attention in recent years has gravitated toward diplomatic turmoil with countries such as North Korea and Iran, American foreign policy has proven to be inconsistent at best historically. Perhaps it is now time to turn our gaze back to the original "rogue nation" — Cuba.

The current policy with Cuba has remained virtually static since an embargo was placed on the country in 1963. Cuba represented a pivotal Cold War strategic location, allowing communist powers a location for operation in the Western Hemisphere. Cuba was considered vitally important on both sides as historical events such as the Bay of Pigs and the Cuban Missile Crisis transpired in the tug-of-war of the idealist-driven juggernauts: The Union of Soviet Socialist Republics and the United States.

The purpose of the embargo is to deprive the Cuban people economically to the extent they would become so displeased with their leaders they will overthrow the communist leadership, thus ending the presence of Communism so near to American soil. This reasoning behind the ongoing embargo seems outdated and obsolete. Do we really fear that Cuba will continue to be a tipping point in the balance of power, considering the USSR has been extinct for nearly 20 years?

This blockade on trade is idealistically driven, and perhaps made sense in its time. But what message is it sending today, not only to the Cuban people, but to the world? Are we really this blinded by idealistic zeal that we continue to fight a war against a country, even though the war ended 20 years ago?

I guess my question is, what harm does Cuba represent to us anymore? The reasoning behind

our policy is now a history lesson, yet the policy itself remains. If we were to judge the policy on its ability to cause the Cuban people to overthrow their government, I believe the evidence would show it to be a failure. Perhaps it is time to use the inverse tactic we put forth in almost every other instance. Give the Cuban people a taste of democracy and capitalism. Open trade and give the Cuban market a chance to function within the world market. If we really believe capitalism and democracy are inherently correct, the mere taste of freedom will cause dynamic change in the Cuban political scene.

This would be a perfect foreign policy position for Obama to push. It would garner international praise and portray the United States as a

caring international leader and no longer the bully on the block. We would become a country that leads by example, influencing others by benefiting them not through coercive deprivation tactics. In this way Obama could start earning his Nobel Peace Prize, which was based on the goodwill of the international community.

Clearly the Cuban situation today bares less significance compared to the nuclear stalemates of North Korea or Iran, but it could serve as a foundation to a consistent international policy. Maybe this new policy won't change Cuba into a democracy, but it is not as if the old policy has proven successful in that endeavor either. Our goal in removing the embargo would be to make a statement that we are the country of goodwill. We will adapt a policy that does not directly benefit us but would aid the lives of the millions of people in Cuba. This perception would prove beneficial to us whenever we engage in any foreign affair.

Besides, all rational and serious reasoning aside, I think we all want to know if Cuban cigars are really all they are hyped up to be.

Toby Hausner is a junior political science major from Kansas City, Mo.

AROUND THE QUAD

What is the funniest Halloween costume you've seen?



"My friend went as a censored naked person."

Scott Biggerstaff junior



"Someone dressed as a chicken during a marching band performance."

Joe Siegel junior



"My roommate dressed as a Jewish rockstar."

Josh Schisler junior



"My roommates dressed as rock, paper and scissors."

Alyssa Persons sophomore

Scandalous costumes corrupt children's fairy tale characters



Alex Boles

When I signed into my e-mail the other day, my homepage revealed some disturbing images.

The image I came across was a Little Bo Peep Halloween costume. It was disturbing because it was a scantily clad woman in fishnet stockings and a skirt merely there to appear as if she had bottoms on, although we could clearly see everything. The only resemblance to the storybook character was the fact that she had a staff.

So when did women start replacing pantaloons with fishnets? An article from the Atlantic City Press said revealing costumes portraying storybook characters have become really popular in the last four years. I understand the need for women to look good and attractive in a Halloween costume, but I think we need to leave children's storybook characters out of this pathetic attempt to throw yourself at the opposite sex. I mean, leave something to the imagination!

When I Googled "Little Bo Peep costume," a majority of the results were

less than conservative adaptations of the original character's look with just a few children's costumes intermixed.

I was shopping for my Wicked Witch from "The Wizard of Oz" costume at Wal-Mart a couple days ago. When browsing the fabric department for a cape, I noticed more disturbing images. They actually created design patterns for "Sassy Wizard of Oz Costumes." You might be thinking that you have seen such a costume for Dorothy before, but a revealing Tin Man, Scarecrow and Lion costume, too? Designing your own revealing Scarecrow costume is putting an entirely new spin on the whole not having a brain thing. What type of image do these women think they are thrusting onto young, impressionable children who idolize these characters? It will completely taint their perception of the character and infiltrate their minds with unnecessary images of what once was a conservative and modest representation of a popular storybook character.

Not to mention, deciding to wear these racy costumes and going to the extent of making one of your own is completely demeaning yourself. You're allowing men to look at you as nothing other than a representation of what they desire most. Most likely, the men you are attracting are not the ones you could take home to Mom, but I guess that's just my perception of who is attracted to a revealing outfit. When did the costume competition go from who

has the scariest costume to who can be the most revealing? It's ridiculous. Some might say that my opinion is as such because I'm not one who should, as society defines it, be wearing one of these costumes, and maybe that has something to do with it. But if being more conservative because of the way I look allows me to wear a costume that leaves something to the imagination, I'm not complaining. I would rather be a witch that has every part of her body covered than have men only looking at me because I'm wearing a revealing costume. Maybe wearing more conservative clothing will attract the men who want to look at your face, not your other features that should be hidden by clothing but seem to pop out during Halloween when people deem it appropriate.

I just think we should nix the revealing costumes that portray storybook characters for fear of showing impressionable children and teenagers that demeaning these characters and yourself in the process is OK. It won't do any good for them to see this type of representation of such a popular idol. Leave the sexy costumes to the characters children don't necessarily idolize, and put on some clothes this Halloween. You know, October is a cold month.

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Legislation shows discrimination not in the past



Molly Skyles

Burning a cross on your lawn or drawing a swastika on your front door are examples of hate crimes. These actions are bias-motivated crimes with the sole purpose of discrimination. Whether directed against a specific group of people, a race or religion, hate crimes can involve physical assault, property damage or harassment.

Now, add discrimination against homosexuals to that list of hate crimes. The federal government recently passed legislation that protects the victims of crimes

committed because of gender, gender identity or sexual orientation. According to an Oct. 22 article in The New York Times, this measure allots \$5 million each year to the U.S. Department of Justice to aid in the investigation of hate crimes and provide assistance in prosecutions if local agencies desire the help. However, this is not the first attempt at establishing legislation to protect homosexuals. About a decade ago, Sen. Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts introduced hate crime legislation to the Senate. None was passed. So, it took an entire decade for people's eyes to be opened to the injustices of discrimination, and we are still not fully accepting yet. It should not be taking this long.

There were 1,460 reported hate crime offenses based on sexual orientation in 2007, according to the Department of Justice Web site. I can only imagine how much

these numbers have grown in two years. With six states permitting same-sex marriage, and a few others recognizing its legitimacy, we as a society should know better by now.

Homosexuals deserve the same opportunities and rights as any other person, but it should not take a hate crime for people to recognize this. I am glad some type of measure is in place to protect victims of gender or sexual orientation crimes. However, I don't understand why we need to be told its bad to discriminate. Do we not have manners people? Our society is advanced and evolved. Yet we still cannot accept anyone who breaks the norm.

History shows us that our society has a hard time adjusting and accepting any non-white, non-heterosexual male as a worthy person. The first women's rights convention was held in 1848 at

Seneca Falls, but women did not get the right to vote until 1920. Therefore, it took at least 72 years for women in the United States to gain suffrage rights equal to that of men. Also, African Americans in the United States have been fighting for equality since our nation's independence. Between the 1950s and 1980s, though, the Civil Rights Movement was in full swing. Hate crimes and even deaths occurred during this period, all so African Americans could accomplish things like being considered for a decent job or being allowed to sit in the front of the bus.

Currently, homosexuals are in the same boat that women and African Americans were in the past. They are treated unjustly and they are not given equal opportunities. A person should not have to lie about his or herself to gain respect. However, currently, hiding their sexual identity is the only

way these individuals ever will be able to be looked at without a sneer of disgust or rejection by anyone in authority. Is it really necessary for it to take so many years for society to accept homosexuals? We need to wake up and learn from the mistakes made throughout history.

The recent hate crime legislation is just one attempt at ending discrimination. But honestly, how long will it take for people to accept difference? Having to go as far as to make discrimination of homosexuals a federal hate crime is like saying that we, as people, have not grown whatsoever in the past 100 plus years. We should be ashamed.

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