

OPINION PAGES

Our VIEW

Trading places

Protesters take to streets to find solution

It'll be a show, that's for sure: About 240 "mock" sea turtles (protesters in cardboard outfits) will take to the streets in Seattle today, along with thousands of their "human" counterparts, in an unprecedented attempt to disrupt the World Trade Organization gathering, already called the largest trade event in U.S. history.

Protesters cross all sorts of political boundaries. Human rights and animal rights activists will link arms with labor organizers and food safety groups to bring a threatened 50,000 protesters to the streets for a conference with only 3,000 delegates.

What's it all about?

The power of the WTO crosses borders, streamlining international trade in products that may have been produced under inhumane conditions, by unorganized labor and involving unacceptably high levels of pollution - to name a few concerns raised by protesters.

We should clarify that the standards involved are American and may not be shared by every nation of the world.

That is sort of the point.

In this country, environmental, humanitarian and other activist groups have labored long and hard in support of legislation regulating how products may and may not be produced - only to face the possibility that the globalization of trade may make all their efforts pointless.

In this country, we believe, for instance, that children should not be exploited as labor. If the sweater you buy tomorrow (at a discount) was made in another country where childhood is not valued in the same way, well, what good does your value system do you?

Protesters are right to try to pressure the WTO to see things their way, as there is no public referendum, no at-large voting on its policies. They are trying to make their voices and concerns heard.

However, international trade organizations do seem to be an inevitable product of our times.

Trade will become less and less a matter of legislation as economic forces come to bear within the protected context of the WTO or similar institutions.

As an instrument of the future, the WTO should do more with the growing power it possesses to ensure that human rights violations and ecological disasters become more and more things of the past.

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Obermeyer's VIEW



DN LETTERS

Not 'All'

I am writing in response to the supplement titled "Holiday Guide" (Nov. 22) in the DN.

I opened the supplement to see a story titled "Celebrations for all."

I am a Muslim, and, as I read the article, I didn't even see a single reference to Islam.

During most of December, through Hanukkah and Christmas, over 1 billion Muslims and the 8 million Muslims that live in America will be observing the holy month of Ramadhan.

Ramadhan is a sacred month when Muslims abstain from food, drink and smoking from sunup to sundown.

We do this for many reasons; namely for our great appreciation of all God gives to us and so that we might understand the feeling that many people have when they go hungry.

I hope the next time an article called "Celebrations for all" is published, Muslims are also included.

Tareq Khedir Al-tiae
freshman
biology

Christian

As the religion rant slowly begins to cool off, I just want to add that having faith is not easy.

Turning your life over to a being who is impossible for the human mind to grasp is a huge undertaking, especially when you have no concrete proof that this being even exists.

But faith is a matter of trust. It is extremely easy to believe in something that you can prove. You never hear of people not believing in trees, for example. And, for that matter, I can't think of anyone who doesn't believe in reason, either.

True faith is believing in some-

thing that you can't understand and can't pin down - something like love, or hope or religion. As I said, this is not easy - to be blunt, it can be downright scary!

But as a Christian, I have to admit that presented with the choice of reason or religion, my "social construct" has always proven to be the strongest.

Christy Linnell
freshman
computer science

Where's the beef?

Why has the DN taken all the substance out its paper and replaced it with idiotic and campy bullshit at the expense of the reader?

Your Monday edition had FIVE pages of sports, including three extremely large articles about the CU vs. NU football game.

Everybody watched the game! That is, anybody who cared (me included).

So why do they need to read three stupid pages about it?

Maybe you should take your classically weak news section (remember the word NEWSpaper) and bolster it by cutting a few pages off the sports novella you throw at us every day.

And, as if that isn't bad enough, Monday's opinion page was about as substantive as a cheese sandwich!

Where are the issues, folks? Why are we wasting precious space (and trees) babbling on about the editorial writing process (which I'm sure was funny for the five guys that work down there in the DN but not for us little people) and rehashing what we saw on TV the night before and then not even making a point about how TV enslaves small minds and traps them in a maze of mediocre material (kind of like the DN did today).

It is your job to set the agenda, so

have some guts and have an opinion!

Joe Fraas
sophomore
pre-medicine

Abort!

The anti-abortion advertising supplement "What you don't know can hurt" (November 18, 1999), talks at length on the undesirable effects of having an abortion.

What it neglects, though, is to compare these with the parallel undesirable effects of NOT having an abortion.

Yes, an abortion can, rarely, lead to health complications. But so can carrying a fetus to term. Any medical procedure carries risks, including childbirth.

And abortion actually is less dangerous than childbirth.

Yes, a woman who has an abortion might regret it and might have psychological problems afterward. But post-partum depression, sometimes severe, is common even in mothers who sincerely want their babies; a woman who carries to term and then gives up the child for adoption might regret that far into the future; and a woman who keeps her accidental child might regret that, too, although it would be hard for her to admit it.

Yes, abortions usually cost money. But obstetrician-gynecologists who perform them can get much more from caring for a woman through full-term pregnancy and delivery.

The upshot of all this is that the difficult decision to abort or not to abort has to be made in the individual case, and neither decision is guaranteed to be right.

Edgar Pearlstein
professor of physics, emeritus

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A Mind Is a Terrible Thing to Waste



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