

staff *editorial*

Student fees should not support P.A.C.T. bus service

In keeping with the theme of a "greener" campus, Pittsburg State University administrators are pledging their support to the fledgling Pittsburg Area Community Transportation bus service. The program is a commendable one, and we agree with the assessment of vice president Steve Erwin that the P.A.C.T. has the potential to benefit the community and the environment.

While we're on board with PSU doing what it can to help the program, we hope the administration will put the brakes on any plans to use student fee moneys to support the venture. Erwin proposed letting students vote on the matter of using their fee dollars to support the program, but to our way of thinking, the very idea of asking students to

subsidize an endeavor that is not meant for their exclusive use is unacceptable. With other, more pressing needs (faculty salaries, dorm improvements and deferred maintenance) for our campus dollars, funding a citywide bus system should be well below those issues in terms of funding priorities. That said, the university can and should still do its part to help the program. Rather

than a significant contribution of university dollars, that support could come in the form of assisting in writing grants, lobbying one or more alumni to make a contribution to the P.A.C.T. program, or using some of its prodigious political clout to help secure funds on the state level. So the university is doing its civic duty, and not at the expense of students.

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Who's really wearing the pants?

Too many stores patronize their patrons

REBECCA BAUMAN

Opinion Editor



Magazine ads of yesteryear were often unapologetic in their presentation of typically sexist ideas. Powdered, smiley women in aprons selling vacuum cleaners. Busty women draped over businessmen wearing Rolexes and expensive cologne. Women doused in whipped cream and cherries, promoting hair care products. Young women, naked, curled into convenient positions, pushing everything from purses to cigarettes.

Still, the ads we're seeing today are perhaps worse in their own sneaky way.

Of course, today's ads mark themselves as dramatically and fearlessly "progressive." They feature women on dirt bikes, women on sailboats, women on horses, women kicking butt. There's no room for misogyny here, not with woman-child models bereft of makeup, tall and lean in long pants. Not with the "message" of an ad scrawled in bold-faced type across the bottom of the page - words like "independent" and "spirit" and "free" and "strength."

But that kind of mock-up doesn't automatically make an ad morally noble. Indeed, it makes the ad nothing more than manipulative.

We're being patronized; we're being fed a line. Advertisers are working us over by producing advertisements that promote **EMPOWERMENT**. But I see that so-called empowerment compromised time and again by the subtle presence of everything that's chipping away at the psyches of modern men and women.

Take this Spring Gap ad for an item called "The Boyfriend Trouser." They're basically khaki pants. And the models in Gap's ad for said pants display such plain apparel with ease. There is nothing overtly sexual about a woman wearing trousers, a long-sleeved shirt and sneakers, right? She's not being pinned down or tied up ... she's not pressing her hands against the wall and arching her



An ad for 'boyfriend trousers' from the Gap's spring line.

back. These chicks are just ... standing around ... wearing boring clothes that leave practically everything to the imagination.

So, no harm done? Well, don't you dare let them hand you this bone!

First, let's look at these "real" models. These models, in particular, while not wearing short skirts or bathing suits or stilettos, are, without a doubt, the boniest girls I've come across in the last few issues of Jane magazine (from which I pulled this particular ad). It's almost as if the fact that Gap isn't using girls adorned with heels and blush and lipstick and push-up bras forces the company to, instead, compromise by using hyper-skinny models who, without all of the above accoutrements, still exhibit the age-old girlie-girl, ballet-dancer, light-as-a-leaf idealizations that have plagued the women of this century and the last.

Their skulls, their collar bones, their super-sternal notches - like inverted camel humps - could hold large quantities of valuable fluid, the basins of these women's bodies so deep and defined ... so apparently emaciated they are. Their unsmiling faces, their hips cocked, one blonde model bringing the bottom of her foot inward, like a little girl giving a nervous presentation during first grade show-and-tell. Yes, they show no breasts, no cleavage - but that's just it! There's hardly any signs here of post-pubescent femininity, of women who are satiated and happy and healthy. These girls are fully clothed, and, all at once, they are stripped, hollow, skeletal.

Furthermore, what the heck is Gap trying to pull by calling these pants "BOYFRIEND trousers?" How did that meeting go?

AD AGENCY EXEC: *OK, people. What would a girl go ga ga over?*

LACKEY 1: *Chocolate?*
LACKEY 2: *Um ... butterflies?*
LACKEY 3: *Handbags?*
LACKEY 4: *A boyfriend!*
AD AGENCY EXEC: *JACKPOT!*

What does every girl want? A BOYFRIEND! Slap the word "boyfriend" on something and girls will snatch the stuff up like packets of Splenda. "Boyfriend" trousers - gives the feel of wearing your BOYFRIEND'S clothes. Like, say, after a night of lovemaking at his penthouse, he takes you out for waffles - you, trim and doe-eyed in his baggy khaki pants and button-down shirt. Isn't this wonderful? You feel so petite and so svelte and so ... ravaged, swathed entirely in his masculine attire,

the very material that marks you as "taken," as "loved." You wear it because it's his, you wear it because you can, you wear it because you are feminine enough to bypass looking frumpy in men's clothes. I mean, that's why

he likes you, right? You're a butterfly! A little chocolate butterfly ... with a handbag.

Blow it out your ear, Gap.

It'll take more than a pair of \$90 pants to make me think you give a rat's patoot about women's lib or about real women in general.

We've only taken steps back when corporations pat us on the back for being so independent, so strong ... in the hopes we'll be dense enough, weak enough, to let their pandering win us over.

How the U.S. will win in Iraq, Afghanistan

It's now May, and soon I'll be completing my time at Pittsburg State.

I guess I'll have to start looking for a job. I'm thinking of something in the czar department, like a drug czar or a counterterrorism czar. But wait! A war czar! That's right up my alley.

After all, I do have an inordinately high opinion of myself and am able to shift blame with relative ease. Yes, war czar. I'll have to get my resume ready.

The war czar, according to the Washington Post, is supposed to oversee operations in Afghanistan and Iraq. Sweet! The fact that three generals have already turned the job down does not deter me. Among those

who rejected the job was retired Marine Gen. John J. "Jack" Sheehan, a former top NATO commander. He said, "The very fundamental issue is, they don't know where the hell they're going." Typical defeatist attitude from the United States military. Sheesh.

What Sheehan and others don't understand is the war czar is the one who will figure this out. The czar is supposed to manage the conflicts and issue orders to the Pentagon. Think about it: If anyone can control unregulated mercenaries and war profiteers, it's a czar. The Washington Post article also said that the Bush administration came up with the idea of a war czar because civilian and military components in Iraq and Afghanistan can't get along. Evidently, the State

and Defense departments don't know what their rights and responsibilities are and the White House has been stuck in the middle.

This is a travesty! If there is one thing the executive branch should not have to do is deal with executive agencies. Why should the president have to sort all that out? It's complicated. That would require meetings and briefings. And let's not forget, being president is a tough job. It requires lots of vacation time. Otherwise, the stress could get to you.

This proposed czar would, according to what the Bush administration told the Washington Post, eliminate some of the bureaucracy that hinders operations in Iraq and Afghanistan. It's supposed to make for more efficient leadership that many say is lacking. The Washington Post reported that the plan is endorsed by Newt Gingrich.

"The slowness and ineffectiveness of

the American bureaucracy is a major hindrance to our winning, and they've got to cut through it," he said.

Indeed! It seems so obvious now! All this time I thought we were losing in Iraq and Afghanistan because of a piss-poor PR campaign and because we continue to do dumb things like keep Guantanamo Bay open.

But it's really bureaucracy. That Newt. He's a visionary.

Democrats say it will take more than just one person to fix what is fundamentally a bad policy. Well, I say they can take their non-binding resolutions and stick it where the sun don't shine. The policy isn't bad. We've just had no one to implement it. I need only point to the wild success of the drug czar to illustrate the effectiveness of such a position. The illusion of change is just as good as actual change.

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