

Rebellious advertising

'Culture jamming' allows the powerless to effect change

By Christina Watts
Evergreen staff

Stakes with bright orange ribbons reading "Pile-o-Poo" peppered the lawn of Colby Farvour's apartment complex.

The junior communication major put stakes in his yard to mark all the piles of dog droppings from his neighbors' dog. It was the cause he chose to address for his Fine Arts 382 "culture jamming" project.

"(Culture jamming) is used by people who are not in power to effect change," fine arts assistant professor Stephen Chalmers said. "It's guerrilla communication, operating under the radar, getting a message out to a lot of people in an inexpensive fashion."

Chalmers gave his class of approximately 10 students the task of incorporating photography into a project confronting or addressing a topic of interest to them.

The pieces were then displayed in locations relevant to their message and the class visited the various spots on March 21.

"I liked Colby's (project) in terms of the playfulness of it," Chalmers said. "Just seeing the sheer number of animal droppings left, I can understand why he'd want to take action for that."

The projects of senior fine arts major Bryn Mooney and junior fine arts major Daniel Mitchell took the class to local grocery stores.

Mitchell used his project to discourage drinking and driving by inserting small notices into cases of beer.

"I wanted to bring up something different than the ads you see on TV," he said.

It was a cause pursued not only for the class but for personal reasons. Mitchell said he had a friend from the West Side who had a close call after drinking and driving.

"It really brought to my attention that people need to

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Junior communication major Colby Farvour created stakes with orange ribbons attached to bring attention to the inconsiderate nature of the pet owners at his apartment complex.

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know about this," he said.

Mooney screenprinted text on grocery bags to encourage shoppers to choose reusable totes instead of paper and plastic. The bags had phrases like "find an alternative" and "plastic is not biodegradable."

"I was really excited about it," Mooney said. "It worked out better than I thought it would."

Her project helped "shock people out of complacency," Chalmers said.

Mooney said she felt compelled to use her own bags when she went shopping later that weekend. Mitchell and

Mooney both said the projects were a positive experience and forced them to go outside their comfort zones.

"We really brought up things that people usually don't think about and used the media in our own way," Mitchell said.

Chalmers said the assignment not only illustrated the power of photographs, but also showed students that individuals can make a difference.

"I think it's really useful for students (to see) that though they are only one person out of 6 billion, there are ways to make a change in our world," he said.



IMAGE COURTESY ADAM SHAY

Senior fine arts major Bryn Mooney made screenprinted plastic and paper bags.