

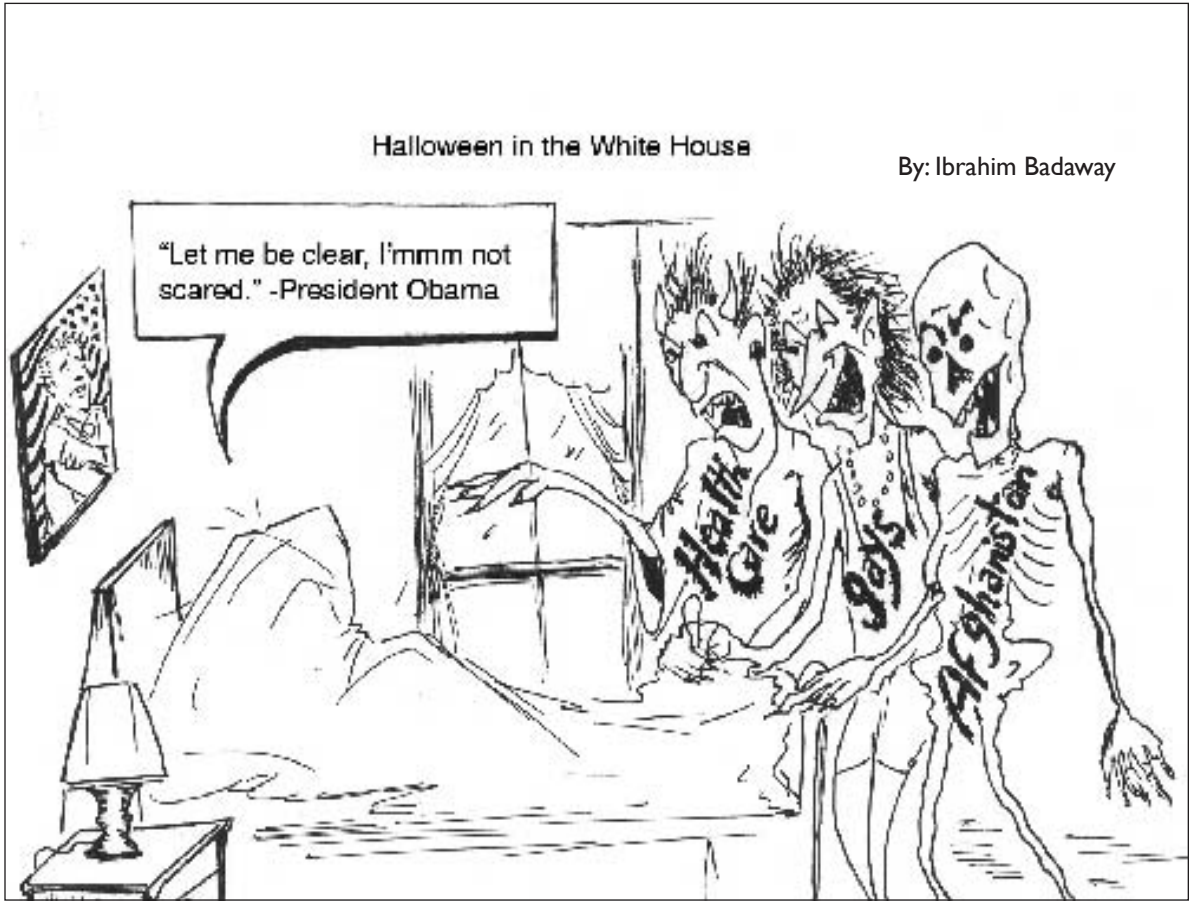


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OPINION

Desensitized to the crime of child molestation?

By JAPANEET KAUR  
Photo editor

A few weeks ago, I was reminded painfully of why I am only a begrudging news reader. It is essential to remain informed of current events in one's local community, one's nation, and the world overall, but it is often heartbreaking to read news stories of kidnappings, rapes and murders. Worse still than reading a story about one of those things is reading one about all of them. While I no longer remember what led me to several painful stories about children being sexually abused, I don't think I will ever forget what I read.

One account told of a 13-year-old girl stalked online by a teacher and misled into having sex with him at his apartment. Alongside molestation by relatives, his is perhaps the

most commonly recognized type of sexual abuse, children being preyed upon online and then abducted, raped or killed. This led me to a string of stories about countless children in poor countries who have been sexually abused by teachers from the U.S. and other well-off Western countries. Underprivileged countries are sometimes so desperate for English teachers that they do not even bother to conduct basic background and credential checks – and when they do, the results are often ignored.

Then I read what is hands-down the worst account of a child being sexually abused that I have ever had the misfortune to learn of. This would be your cue to stop reading if you are soft-hearted or easily hurt – trust me, I wish I could hand this knowledge back to wherever it came from. I read about an 18-year-old

man who raped and beat his own one day-old daughter. Throughout this piece, I have encountered several more cases of infant/toddler rape, and have been forced to acknowledge the existence of a whole new level of child pornography. I, who have often fretted that I am quickly becoming desensitized to horrifying news, have had nightmares fraught with the agonized crying and screaming of babies.

I have the option here to skate lightly over the issue or be graphic, and I choose the latter because I do feel that many of us are partly desensitized to horrible goings on in our world simply because we hear so many stories of a similar nature. On the other hand, there are those who never build proper relationships with family members after becoming paranoid with the knowledge that such things do

happen. And dear God, do such things happen.

According to the Department of Justice, one in four girls and one in seven boys will experience sexual abuse before the age of 18. I don't doubt that there will be more than a few people out there who have experienced sexual abuse reading this. The Justice Department further reports that there are about four million pedophiles in the United States, but even this cannot be considered a completely accurate number because so many child molesters are never caught.

What are popularly known as Megan's Law and Amber alerts came into being because of two little girls who were abducted, raped and killed, and abducted and killed, respectively. However, studies have shown that the creation of Megan's Law has not helped to reduce the

number of children abducted and sexually abused – instead the number has steadily been increasing over the years. What else could be expected when people do not make use of the available resources? Sure, there are registries for convicted sex offenders, but who out of us actually takes the time to check the registries for our local areas?

I'm not here questioning why there are pedophiles or why child molesters do what they do. I'm here to implore you to take whatever action necessary to help prevent something horrible like this happening. Educate yourself about how to recognize child molesters and molested children, make it your duty to report anything suspicious rather than just standing by and allowing it to happen. Keep an eye on the news for things like the Amber

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LETTER

The correct term now is 'deaf/hard-of-hearing'

EDITOR:

I am writing in response to *Monitor's* article on Oct. 15, 2009. There is a featured article on Page 5, titled "A spotlight on Disability Awareness Week." The writer is to

be commended for bringing attention to Ohlone's Disabled Students Program & Services. The more information we provide about serving different populations on the campus, the better understanding and empathy Ohlone students, faculty, and staff can display toward them.

There is a particular use of a term I would like to bring attention to. The writer was focusing on "Auditory Discrimination" and wanted to raise awareness about the challenges some people face. The writer also mentioned "hearing impaired people." The writer's

intention was good as she tried her best to educate the community about the challenges.

Unfortunately, she didn't realize using the term "hearing impaired" to describe deaf and hard-of-hearing people is derogatory. The phrase "hearing impaired" is being phased

out in favor of "deaf/hard-of-hearing" in today's world. Deaf people are seen as members of a linguistic and cultural minority group rather than a disabled group.

The Ohlone College Center for Deaf Studies has a long and rich

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CAMPUS COMMENT >>>

What is your favorite childhood Halloween costume?



**Cynthia Velasquez**  
UNDECIDED  
"The girl from *The Ring*."



**J.D. Guerrero**  
ADMINISTRATIVE JUSTICE  
"Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles. Michaelangelo."



**Alex Campos**  
BUSINESS INFORMATION SYSTEMS  
"Robocop."



**Jacki Martinez**  
CRIMINAL JUSTICE  
"The red M&M."



**Cassie Eddleman**  
UNDECIDED  
"Belle."