

## Editorial

# Enjoy 'Friday' for the right reasons

As the line between advertising and entertainment becomes more and more blurred, so also does the line between why something is good and bad, so it seems.

The overly popular song "Friday," by 13-year-old Rebecca Black is the newest in the world of jokes some people get and others are patently oblivious or just, well, who knows.

The truth of the matter is, Black's parents paid to have her record a song at Ark Music Factory. The song "Friday" was her choice of from a selection of pre-written songs. After it was recorded, the video received little exposure until "Tosh.O" put it up on its list of videos to be ridiculed.

Usually, the videos seen are just laughed at for the remainder of the week, and life goes on, but "Friday" captured the attention of the online community in ways that defy logic.

This brings to the forefront the question of why? Why is this joke still going? There is little doubt that the song is awful. There is little doubt the lyrics are insipid; the product of marketing and little more.

And there is no doubt that the appeal of the song initially and likely still for most people, apart from teenage girls, is that Black's performance is only tolerable because it is so bad it is funny.

Why then, have a great many people taken Black's song to be something other than a joke?

For anyone out there citing their reason as, "I feel sorry for Black and appreciate her efforts," appreciate the royalties she is receiving from "Friday's" downloads on iTunes.

Appreciate that her idol — the also annoyingly adored by teenage girls Justin Bieber — performed a cover of the song. Appreciate that Rolling Stone praised Black and her charm. And especially appreciate that Simon Cowell applauds Black; well, Cowell applauds the joke and tells Black to enjoy the fact she is one of the most talked about singers in America currently. But still, he is even giving her some encouragement.

Despite all the jokes and parodies however — there are people listening to "Friday" that are not laughing, that are singing along and enjoying the song as being "good."

Yes, people should be allowed to enjoy whatever they want. Maybe everyone gets that the song is horrible and the celebrities appreciate the fame and social media drive of events like this and not the actual "talent" or "skill" of Black, but it is doubtful.

Social media events like this are surely spectacles to be applauded, but most of the time, the actual event is not. "Friday" is a joke, the situation around it is astounding and, with that in mind, please, everyone out there, keep laughing, keep applauding, but know why you are doing so, rather than just following the flock and not knowing the reasons things like this are famous.

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## Internet



Columnist Hanton argues that some providers should be regulated to use faster technology for their services. Courtesy photo: Thinkstock

# Question your providers

By Rick.Hanton@iowastatedaily.com

## ISPs should utilize best technology for services

If you have managed to live anywhere that is not on a college campus, you know that even high-speed cable Internet providers in the United States are not particularly "fast." Last week we found out that, sadly, Google didn't choose Ames as the location to test its 1 Gbps fiber network — though not for lack of trying, on Ames' part. Instead, they chose the city of Kansas City, Kan., to get 100 times faster Internet on a fast fiber-to-the-home network.

Kansas City, known at times as "the armpit of Kansas," where the current unemployment rate is currently more than 10 percent, will receive Google broadband at a low price for residents and no price for schools.

Google was keen to pick Kansas City due to the possibility of easy installation of their fiber lines using existing power poles and buried utility pipes.

They hope that by bringing in faster Internet service, they will help make Kansas City more prosperous and allow high-data services to proliferate on the relatively cheap network in a way that is not possible in other U.S. cities.

Google has always prided itself on the speed of its services. One of the reasons that google.com has always been quite plain is so that it loads quickly. It is rumored that Google had to double the computing power behind users' searches when they introduced Google Instant

search. One limitation to Google's services, like YouTube, is that users have slow high-speed Internet by world standards.

As an avid user of Reddit.com, I occasionally see a popular story about a user who takes a trip to South Korea, stays in a hostel and gets free 55 Mbps (megabits per second) Wi-Fi Internet there. While this is quite fast, the average internet speed in South Korea as of this writing is only about 33 Mbps, which is still incredibly speedy. Notably, on the other end of the spectrum, is the United States with 11 Mbps speeds.

The state with the slowest tested speeds, besides Alaska, is Iowa — at about 5 Mbps.

If any Iowa politicians manage to read my column, this is one of the reasons I am not incredibly interested in landing a long-term position in your state. I've heard a lot about the work done by politicians to draw smart, young students and innovative businesses to Iowa. Here's a great way to start. Figure out what needs to be done to give companies like Mediacom a kick in the pants to develop faster, cheaper networks.

I agree that the United States is hard to cover in high-speed networks, but without rules that force the development of open broadband connection lines that can be shared by multiple end-providers, there is little competition. To compete with the incumbent providers, you have to bury your own lines in the ground, or above ground like Google.

Other rules might be good, such as rules that regulate and test the speeds of providers,

forcing them to provide users with average rather than maximum rates.

I will agree that most Internet services will hit the maximum rate that service providers sell you on, but how often they hit it is another issue and is based on things like network congestion. When living and working in Cedar Rapids, I'd check a handy graph of speed kept on my router on occasion and noticed that while once in a blue moon, Mediacom might hit their maximum 12 Mbps speed, most of the time it would be half of that.

While some argue that we don't need regulation of the Internet, I would argue that we need a little bit, if not a lot of regulation of Internet providers.

There are tons of new services that use the Internet today, including companies like Netflix and Hulu.

It is in Internet companies' best interests to slow these companies down so that you flip on your TV rather than your Roku player and continue to pay them for a \$100 per month Internet/phone/cable bill.

Did I mention that Internet is much cheaper in other areas of the world like South Korea, as well?

Make sure you are careful what data services you pay for and how much you pay once you graduate or start working. We, as a generation and as a nation, need to question whether our high-data utility bills are paying for the best technology and the fastest service or for old generations of technology and money to line corporate monopolies' pockets.

## Justice

# Violence not the right answer

By Brandon.Blue@iowastatedaily.com

## Pastor Jones' Koran burning not worth murder

Remember last year, around Sept. 11, when Pastor Terry Jones of Florida's Dove World Outreach Center said he was going to exercise his freedom of speech and burn a Koran? Remember how the Westboro Baptist Church actually did burn a Koran on Sept. 11, 2010?

Well, Jones actually did it. And guess what happened?

On Friday, 15 people were murdered in Mazar-i-Sharif, Afghanistan over Jones' burning. So the natural question is this: Who's responsible?

First, we have to ask what happened. In Florida, Pastor Jones held a "trial" in a kangaroo court with the Koran in the dock.

Predictably, Jones, finding no irony in his own organization's name (the Dove World Outreach Center), found the Koran guilty. A copy of the Koran was promptly incinerated by a worshiper, Wayne Sapp.

What happened in Mazar-i-Sharif? A crowd of what I can only assume to be mental patients recently sprung from an asylum

somehow heard the news and decided to kill some U.N. personnel — people who have absolutely nothing to do with Pastor Jones, nor even specifically the United States.

I find this response unacceptable. I appreciated the criticism of Pastor Jones.

It was an interesting look at the First Amendment — when should we use our rights, and when should we use restraint with ourselves?

I came to the conclusion that part of enjoying the right to freedom of speech is knowing when and when not to use it.

I chose to disagree with Jones' intended burning and applauded him for what I interpreted as seeing reason and calling everything off.

It seems the scales on Jones' eyes returned. I now view the Dove Outreach Center, as all reasonable people should, as having no redeeming merits, guilty of fermenting hate, figuratively and literally playing with fire, and reaching out nowhere but into its own proverbial pants to spiritually masturbate itself over its disgusting view of justice.

This said, Jones and his rogue gallery in Florida incited nothing but — I think, rightly-placed — anger. Were I more fervently

religious and someone so openly mocked my religion, I can see some anger on behalf of myself and believers elsewhere. The Muslim community has every right to condemn Jones' thick head and hard heart and should. I certainly do.

But killing people, even killing Jones, were Friday's mob able to do so, is absolutely wrong. I can't even begin to describe the foaming-at-the-mouth overreaction that unfolded in Afghanistan. All that Jones and Sapp did, misguided though it may be, was burn a book.

That's what the Koran is — a book. It's just a book, printed on regular paper with regular words. What matters are the ideas in that book — that's what makes the Koran so precious to so many millions of people.

I understand that Muslims have a great deal more respect for the Koran than most do for other books, the Bible included, yet the Koran is still, in reality, paper and ink.

Burning the Koran's tangible form does to Islam what burning a Bible does to Christianity — absolutely nothing.

This is exactly why I'm not going to blame Islam: Islam is only an idea.

A single idea does not push

people to terrorism.

A single idea does not drive someone to kill.

Bear in mind that people weren't killed in America — they were killed in Afghanistan, which is a country different from ours in ways besides the religious ones. Stories of the U.S. "kill team" are still fresh, I'm sure, in the minds of the Afghani people.

Reuters reports that world leaders such as Afghanistan's president, Hamid Karzai and Pakistan's president, Asif Ali Zardari, have condemned Jones' Koran burning.

It's no stretch for me to see reasons the Afghani mob justified to themselves murdering innocent people over this.

Yet, it was wrong. The world holds the Afghani people to a higher standard. They aren't savages.

They're just like you and me. Their perversion of justice, killing unrelated innocents, is far more grave than any minor infraction Pastor Jones is guilty of.

The question of what exactly unfolded Friday and why is bigger than this column, but I look forward, as I hope the rest of the world does, to the murderers of UN personnel being brought to justice.