

Discrimination rules permeate University

By GWENDA RICHARDS
Of the Emerald

Discrimination — a key word in light of several controversies plaguing the University this past year.

During the year, the University community has heard reports concerning the revamped minorities program, the Academic Opportunities Program (AOP) and the alleged misuse of authority by AOP officials.

Anne Frentz, visiting assistant professor in the Center for Educational Policy and Management, claimed earlier in the year that she was dismissed from her job because of her sex. The State Board of Higher Education has also been involved, spending almost nine months hammering out anti-discrimination guidelines for the state's institutions.

And according to Myra Willard, who is charged with the mammoth task of advocating for all minorities at the University, the Department of Health, Education and Welfare (HEW) has received several discrimination complaints from this campus.

As persons become more and more sensitive to discriminatory practices, the person playing the "watchdog" role is becoming increasingly important. Willard is director of the Affirmative Action Office at the University and is also the University's Title IX and compliance officer. She has had her hands full this year doing everything from counseling grievance cases to coordinating written Affirmative Action plans.

Willard's primary philosophy toward her job revolves around her belief that she is not here to be the Affirmative Action project for the University or to police the school. "We're here to help the University develop a non-discriminatory system — a system that works to provide equal opportunities...adequate consideration and resolution of discrimination problems...identification and correction of employment procedures and practices," she says.

The University, required by law to designate a person to coordinate its Affirmative

Equal opportunities on the rise



Myra Willard

Action program, hired Willard from a field of 300 applicants in January 1973.

A chemistry graduate from Immaculate Heart College in Los Angeles, Willard credits her management background in the aerospace industry and her involvement in other Affirmative Action programs as the reason for her selection.

Her management experience probably comes in handy since she is required to juggle a variety of tasks at once. Her position as Affirmative Action director requires her to assure equal employment opportunities on campus. As the Title IX and compliance officer, she is the advocate for equal opportunities in education.

Although her tasks are varied, compiling self-studies is a standard part of her job. In conjunction with her Title IX duties, Willard has recently overseen a task force charged with conducting a self-analysis of the

University's success in providing equal education opportunities. As part of the self-study required by Roy Lieuallen, chancellor of the State System of Higher Education, she will be studying the material covered by the Equal Opportunity Committee (EOC) in its investigation of the AOP.

"We won't go over the same ground that the EOC went over," she says. "We will review material they have gathered and see how this applies to state law on discrimination in the educational process and make recommendations to the president."

Her office will follow the progress of the Student-Faculty Committee on Grievance, which is also investigating the AOP.

Besides overseeing self-studies, Willard must coordinate a written Affirmative Action plan which analyzes the University's hiring practices. This means examining salaries and ranks and spelling out what the University needs to do to improve the situation. Willard conducts an analysis of the campus labor situation each year.

In conjunction with this analysis, Willard identifies recruiting sources, making certain that when positions are open on campus, applications are received from women and minorities. She monitors the filling of every faculty and staff position on campus.

"We look at the selection process and try to ascertain whether selection was based on appropriate criteria and not arbitrary standards," Willard says.

Although she does not normally serve as an advocate for individual grievances, Willard is a source for information on grievance procedures and University policies.

"We don't examine the evidence to see if policy has been violated, but we do counsel the grievant on how to have it examined and get a satisfactory response," she says. "We advocate for classes of people — for practices and procedures that have a discriminatory effect."

Willard says she uses grievances as a springboard to investigation. "They are used to identify weak spots in the system where there may be a procedure that's not

working," she explains.

But Willard stresses that she is not the final authority in discrimination cases — she only negotiates and advises. A school dean or department head must give the order to comply with Affirmative Action suggestions.

"If we aren't satisfied with a plan, we have a series of negotiations," she explains. "If we are still not satisfied, we talk with the president (University Pres. William Boyd). Depending on how substantial the case is, the president will enter into the negotiations."

While Willard's role is advisory, she reports each year to HEW, which periodically conducts both off and on-site reviews of the University's compliance with federal anti-discrimination regulations.

In discussing the changes made at the University since she arrived, Willard says, "Sometimes it is hard to see all the changes from my perspective because we play an activist's role." She says other people, however, have commented on how different the University is.

A significant change she points out is the open recruitment program for faculty. Prior to this, recruitment was by word-of-mouth.

She also says there are more women enrolled in the Law School and the business college. "In those two schools you can see the increases yearly. We still aren't satisfied, but it is increasing," she says.

She also says enrollment in the educational administration program is increasing.

"When I first came here, there was a poster in the Center for Educational Policy and Management that said something like 'Here are our graduates since 1969.' There was a list of 30 and all were men," she says.

Despite the recent clamor about discrimination on campus, Willard believes the situation is curable.

"If there is not a policy or procedure to take care of something, we need to create it," she says. "If the system is there, we must develop it. If it breaks down, we must find a way to fix it."

Class studies alternatives in education

Interested in helping control the destiny of the College of Education? If so, the Students for Educational Clarification (SEC) SEARCH class wants you.

Begun this year, SEC will continue next fall and, says coordinator Marsha Barr, student participation is needed to keep the class active and worthwhile.

Activities of SEC include organizing a city-wide conference on alternatives in education, a College of Education newsletter, curriculum input, further SEARCH class offerings and a speakers' forum.

"We cover different areas of education not covered in the College of Education," says Barr. "Things such as how to get a job."

Barr says the SEC is an undergraduate student organization in the College of Education and may eventually evolve into a College of Education student union.

One of the SEC participants, John Pollard, a broadcast journalism major, says the class is a "buffer between the College of Education and education students." He says SEC concerns itself with alternative education and utilizing better teaching techniques at the elementary and secondary levels.

Those interested in the class can contact Barr at 343-8962.

AV head once saw Bigfoot?

'The creature appeared eight to eleven feet tall'

To many, the "Bigfoot" phenomenon is a relatively new one. But to Don Hunter, head of the University's audiovisual department, it is at least 34 years old.

In 1942, says Hunter, he and his wife took a camping trip through the Cascades. While waiting out a rainstorm at Todd Lake, Hunter says they saw a figure across the lake in a meadow, and got out of their car for a better look.

"I couldn't believe it," says Hunter. "The creature appeared to be 8 to 11 feet tall." He says it was tall and skinny, and later called it a "Sasquatch."

"There's no question but what it was two-legged," says Hunter. "I'd be more inclined to call him a person — he looked more like a person to me."

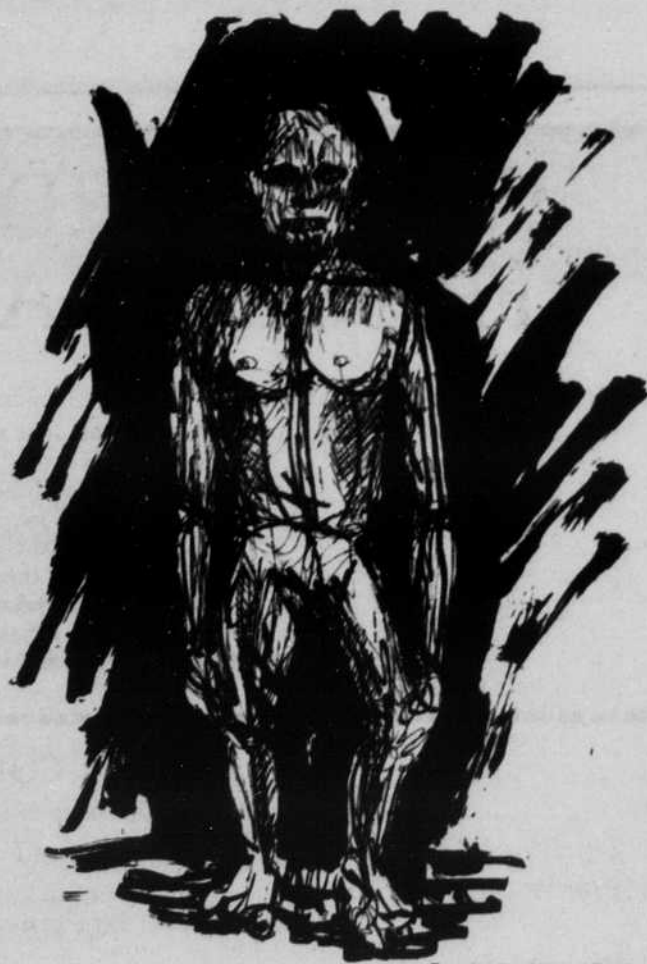
"I'm a great one for taking pictures," says Hunter, "but I didn't even think about taking any."

As they stood watching, Hunter says the creature began to move toward the edge of the meadow. Afraid the Sasquatch was circling around toward them, they got in the car to leave, only to find their engine was flooded. After waiting a few minutes, they got the car started and drove to Brokentop Crater, some six miles away.

Passing through the Sisters area, the Hunters stopped to inform a forest ranger of an abandoned touring car which they had passed, and incidentally mentioned their sighting to him. "He was completely disbelieving," says Hunter.

The Hunters never went back to see the footprints — their only souvenirs are the mental images. And they kept the story to themselves for years. There was little talk of "Bigfoot" in those days, and Hunter did not associate what he had seen with the "abominable snowman."

The experience has affected his opinion of the more recent reports, however. "I know some of them are hoaxes, but I also know there's something to it. I tend to believe those reports because I know what I saw."



Drawing by JoAnne Fahlgren