

Editorial

Symposium Boycott demonstrates racism

After a boycott by several minority groups on campus and charges of racism, the Women's Symposium was cancelled last Monday. This is a great educational loss to everyone at the University because one of the goals of the Symposium was to increase awareness of women and minorities.

But the concerns voiced by the minority groups reflect a deeper problem inherent in the organization of the symposium. There was a lack of communication and misinterpretation between the Women's Task Force who organized the Symposium and minority students.

Nonetheless, the complaints of these women should be looked at seriously in order to prevent this unintentional racism from happening again.

One of the main concerns of the Coalition of Women of Color, which organized the boycott, was that the task force did not listen to their ideas or acknowledged its willingness to participate in the planning of the symposium.

Sharon Elise, a member of the coalition, said she contacted the task force in February and offered herself as a resource. Because of other commitments, she could not be involved with the specific planning.

According to Elise, the task force was not willing to listen to her suggestions. It was not aware that a problem existed. Elise said this may be because of a lack of communication but "you need sensitivity to listen."

By ignoring the Women of Color, the task force practiced a form of institutional racism. It was not deliberate but based on an ignorance of the minorities on campus.

Heather MacTaggart, coordinator of the task force, realizes that there were some problems with the planning process.

The women on the committee were all inexperienced at planning a symposium. This was probably one of the major factors in the misrepresentation that occurred. "It was not blatant racism," MacTaggart said. "It was ignorance, not malice."

MacTaggart did try to contact minority students in October and December and encouraged groups to get involved with the planning. She said there was very little response.

The task force had good intentions and meant well, but it lacked the experience needed to involve these groups in the planning of the Symposium.

Whatever did happen between the task force and the minority groups, a lack of communication and somewhat self-centered attitudes prevented them from working together. Both groups believed it was the other's responsibility to contact them.

The boycott has drawn the public's attention to the inadequacies of the organization of the Symposium. The concerns of the minorities should not be ignored, brushed off nor resented, otherwise discrimination will continue.

The format for the task force must be changed. People with experience and an understanding of campus minority groups should be placed on the committee. This will alleviate some communication problems.

Both sides must realize that they need to work together in order to achieve a successful symposium next year. Only then can compromises be reached.

DEATH PENALTY QUIZ

CAPITAL PUNISHMENT IS IMPOSED MOST OFTEN AGAINST DEFENDANTS WHOSE VICTIMS ARE:

A. BLACK

B. WHITE

C. DEAD

CIRCLE ONE!

J.D. (P) W.F.
COPY THE RUBINE SAN
COPY THE RUBINE SAN

Letters

Out of line

The Republican Party is not being fully, and therefore, accurately represented in Lane County. Individuals are not being barred from party doors, but their multifarious views are not receiving the welcome mat.

A concentration of far-right, fundamentalist thinkers are creating a barricade to stymie attempts of liberals, moderate, and non-fundamentalist conservatives to express alternative sentiments.

The vehicle being used to increase the fundamentalist stronghold is a denying of significant party positions to members who fail to fit the contours of a "cookie mold" of established views.

The recent distribution of anti-homosexual pamphlets by Lane County Republican Party Central Committee Chair Floyd Beam is a bold step "out of line."

Beam's actions were a flagrant violation of party principles and by-laws, and must be addressed further than the press conference held last week.

Mr. Beam may have a false sense of security that his views

are the only ones shared by Republicans in the Willamette Valley. Party members cannot afford to allow Mr. Beam to perceive that he lacks accountability for such an infraction.

It is the responsibility of party members to inform Mr. Beam of his errors, inform him that alternative views do exist, and put Mr. Beam back "in step."

Michael P. O'Conner
Press secretary
Timothy A. Cushing
Chairman
University College Republicans

Dif'rent strokes

John English, in his letter published April 13, provides an excellent example of why Gay Pride Week is necessary. It is haters like himself who make it necessary.

It doesn't seem to occur to John that gays and lesbians are attracted to members of the same sex for the same reason I like ice cream: they just are, that's all, and they owe him no explanation whatsoever.

Maybe I'm prejudiced since some of my dearest friends are gay or lesbian (although I myself am, if anything, overenthusiastic about my heterosexuality).

Everywhere I look, their bedroom practices are placed under scrutiny by ignorant busybodies. No one concerns himself with how many sex partners John English (or Stan VerNooy) has had in the last year.

No one makes his sexual practices, or mine, a criterion for determining his eligibility for a job, renting an apartment, or receiving custody of a child. Gays and lesbians must deal with this issue constantly.

Simply because of their choice of romantic and sexual partners, they must listen to fools like John English badgering them. One week to counteract such bigotry is very little to ask.

If John English wants to make Gay Pride Week unnecessary, he could do one to two things:

he could take the next train out of town, accompanied by all like-minded bigots, or he could wake up and grow up enough to realize that people who live differently from him are no threat.

Stan VerNooy
GTF, math

Pull the switch

Dear U.S. justice system,

I'd like to ask one simple question: How does a man who had kidnapped, raped and mutilated a 15-year-old girl by cutting off her arms above the elbow with an axe obtain his freedom after serving only seven years in a California State mental hospital?

I'll answer for you. Through asinine stupidity.

Larry Singleton has been set free after serving only seven years of a measly 14-year sentence. What ever happened to the death penalty? Oh, I forgot, poor Larry had a little mental problem, and therefore, we should feel sorry for him and forgive him of his heinous crime.

What about the girl who's life has been ripped apart? What about the woman of the town poor Larry chooses to reside in? I think it's high time we stopped treating mentally deficient criminals with kid gloves.

Fourteen years (with time off for good behavior, of course) is a ridiculously short time for this freak to serve.

Mentally deficient or not, he committed the crime and should be punished accordingly. Accordingly to me means dead! Hey, if no one wants to pull the switch on poor Larry, I volunteer.

It would give me sweet satisfaction to see justice served and to put to rest the fears of his past and potential future victims.

Greg Halvorson
Senior, marketing
Monday, May 4, 1987

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