

# Discussion will end sexual-orientation battle

By William Moore

In response to some of the events and statements made during the recent "Gay Pride Week" on campus, we offer the following observations and comments:

Many of the statements and stories in the *Oregon Daily Emerald* seemed to reflect both a defiant determination to cling to behaviors and attitudes that most people in our culture believe to be immoral and abnormal and a demand that all these people replace their beliefs and values with ones that support homosexuality. There also seemed to be much anger, frustration, pain and sadness evident in the lives of the homosexual people featured.

## Commentary

First of all, we acknowledge the rights of advocates of homosexuality both to choose their lifestyle and to seek to convince others of its legitimacy. This does not mean we think their choices are morally legitimate, but simply they are capable of choosing. We reject the idea that homosexual practices are normal and legitimate practices of human sexuality.

We do not hate or fear homosexual people. Our opposition to homosexuality is both philosophical and practical in nature. We are convinced homosexual practices violate the design of our bodies and the intent of our sexuality itself, and thus do great harm to beings of great worth and significance.

We reject the assertion that because of our opposition to homosexuality we are in need of being "educated" by advocates of homosexuality. We point out there is a fundamental difference between education and propaganda. We are not persuaded that those who seek to legitimize this behavior have demonstrated they possess either the moral authority or the wisdom necessary to educate on this subject. This does not mean, however, we are unwilling to engage in reasoned, civil discussion with any who wish to do so.

We are not denying the humanity or the inherent dignity and worth of homosexual people, nor are we attempting to justify acts of violence or expression of hatred and contempt being directed against them. Such acts are themselves truly wrong and ugly. Neither do we believe people who engage in homosexual activity are

somehow sub-human, or heterosexual people are morally superior.

We are not "seeking to impose our morality" on the homosexual community. We are seeking to convince people of the validity, authority and wisdom of the moral boundaries given to us by the One who made us. We believe this topic needs to be seen and discussed in the larger context of the existence and nature of morality and truth.

Either inherent moral standards, or absolutes, exist, or they don't. If they do exist they are not subject to popular vote — they apply universally whether or not we like them or agree with them. If they don't exist, then literally all standards of morality become mere personal preferences, on the level of favorite flavors. Only the concept of moral absolutes is discarded, and then not only can homosexual activity be defined as "normal," but any acts, including brutal and destructive ones (i.e. child abuse or racially motivated violence), becomes exactly as moral as acts that are responsible and caring.

We understand homosexual people have strongly felt needs and desires. We sympathize with the strength and potential seductive and addictive character of the intense pleasures present in the human sexual drive. We believe it is not our sexual nature itself that is wrong or harmful, but rather the abandoning of ourselves to the pursuit of pleasures so that all else becomes unimportant, including our own dignity and honor.

This happens to heterosexual people who misuse sex as surely as it does to homosexually-oriented people. The boundaries which exist governing the expression of our sexuality are there for our protection and benefit. Outside those boundaries, the raw power inherent in our sexual drive becomes enormously destructive of individuals and cultures.

Advocates of homosexuality

often asset the inclination toward homosexuality has been proven to be inborn, and thus describe it as natural and unavoidable. We suggest this has not been proven, but even if this were the case, the presence of a particular inclination or of strong desires does not justify the expression of that inclination any more than a married man's strong desires for other women legitimize adultery, or an inherent temper justifies violence.

We believe homosexual lifestyles so entangle those who engage in them that they often leave people unwilling or unable to distinguish between their identity as people and their sexual orientation and desires. Our identity as human beings is not synonymous with our sexual orientation or our desires. We are all much, much more.

We acknowledge the ugliness and brutality that has been directed against homosexual people in our community, the more sadly because it is sometimes done in the name of Christianity. As believers in Jesus Christ, we oppose the hatred, contempt and violence directed against homosexual people. We affirm and value their humanity. We do not believe, however, that to acknowledge the humanity of people means that we must automatically accept as legitimate the ideas, attitudes or practices they hold.

Is there no room for differing points of view and reasoned discussion on this topic? Is the pro-homosexuality position so fragile that every disagreement must be met with name calling, hostility and stridency? Labels and names such as "homophobe" and "bigot" are being used like rocks at those who dare to dispute the current, "correct" position concerning this issue.

These terms seem to carry as much dehumanizing hatred and contempt as terms like "queer" and "faggot" that are screamed at homosexual people. Recent letters in the *Emerald* demonstrate a chilling vi-

ousness. Are name calling and hatred only wrong when they are practiced by people we disagree with?

Believing as we do that homosexual lifestyles are inherently destructive to people, it would be wrong for us to speak against them. Human lives of great value are at stake. We sincerely invite interaction from

people willing to avoid scolding and name calling and to discuss ideas and issues.

*William Moore is a member of the classified staff in the music department, while coauthors A.M. Sauerwein, Casey Christopher, Kevin Benfield, Patrick Gibson and Joseph Worley are members of the music department.*

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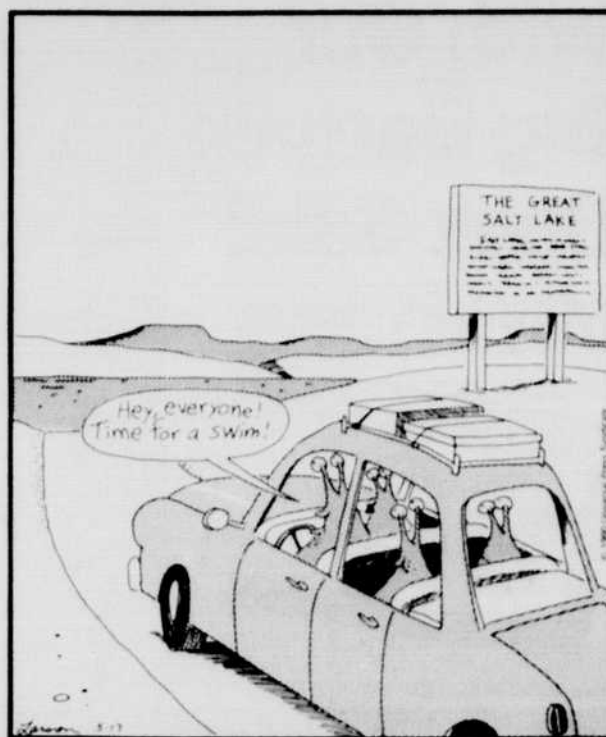
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