

# Military directive violates affirmative action rule

By Shannon Oliver

As required by the Career Planning and Placement Services Office and the Erb Memorial Union Board of Directors, imagine that the Ku Klux Klan had signed the Affirmative Action Compliance Statement

## Commentary

form gaining access to the University facilities to recruit students for employment. Imagine Tom Metzger tabling and showing training films in the EMU. Further, the Klan offers educational scholarships and classes specifically to white students and rescinds educational scholarships to those found not to be white.

Absurd? Cruel to suggest? I agree; yet, a similar policy of discrimination is playing itself out against lesbian, gay and bisexual students at the University.

Defense Department Directive No. 1332.14 which says, "homosexuality is incompatible with military service ... homosexual acts are crimes under the Uniform Code of Military Justice" effectively bars lesbian, gay and bisexual students from military service or schol-

arship at the University.

Despite their official policy, the armed forces have signed the required University Affirmative Action Compliance Statement form, which explicitly states that recruiters must affirm themselves as equal opportunity employers by complying with Oregon Administrative Rule (OAR) 580-15-010. This rule, in spite of a federal policy of discrimination against lesbians, gays and bisexual people, is the inclusive of affectional/sexual orientation, al/sexual orientation.

In effect, the armed forces signed away their policy in order to gain access to recruitment facilities. Their very signature on the Affirmative Action form would indicate a policy contrary to the DOD directive which says, "persons who engage in homosexual conduct or who, by their statements, demonstrate a propensity to engage in homosexual conduct seriously impairs ... the military mission."

"... By their statements" infers that not only the actions but the words of individuals come under military suspect as queer. I raise this point in connection to the gender discrepancy which arises in the actual enforcement of the DOD direc-

tive. Since 1983, defense department statistics show women have been discharged for "homosexual conduct" at a rate almost 10 times that of military men. (*New York Times*, Dec. 4, 1988). Pentagon statistics show that while women comprise only 10 percent of the U.S. military, they comprise 26 percent of the 1,050 service members discharged due to allegations of homosexuality between Sept. 30, 1987 and Oct. 1, 1988. (*Washington Blade*, March 3, 1989). Many of these people were, or planned on becoming, students.

How does the military come to suspect more women than men of loving the wrong gender? Are women harmlessly coerced into confessing they are not attracted to men in uniform? How, exactly, does the military carry out its witch-hunt?

Although the witchhunt is not as directly violent as say a Klan hunt, it does ruin people's lives. If the military can extract a confession or has "proof" of homosexual acts, people are discharged without judicial proceedings to the tune of 1,400 men and women a year.

Those under suspicion of homosexuality suffer interrogation with bright lights on the

eyes and their wrists handcuffed. They are told their hometown newspaper and parents will be called. People are threatened with loss of child custody and promised an easier time if they provide the interrogators with more names. Often times, lesbians and gay men enter into false marriage contacts to provide themselves with a cover during their service with the military.

It is clear that discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation by employment recruiters is prohibited under the Oregon Administrative Rules governing our University. Any attempt by the administration to bail out military recruiters and the Career Planning and Placement Services Office (an office which has failed to uphold the University Affirmative Action Compliance Statement) would be disingenuous and contrary to President Myles Brand's stated commitment to equal oppor-

tunity on this campus.

Gay and lesbian soldiers, like their heterosexual peers, often join the military to escape poverty and gain education. With tuition on the rise and diminishing federal financial aid for higher education, one can expect an increase in enlisted soldiers.

The University Task Force on Lesbian and Gay Concerns has recommended that if the defense department policies toward lesbians and gay men are not changed within the following two years, the Military Sciences Department should be terminated. I would add that armed forces recruiters be asked to leave the EMU until President George Bush signs an Executive Order to rescind DOD Directive 1332.14, as Harry S. Truman did in 1948 to racially integrate the military.

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## LETTERS

### XYZs

I think I should first apologize to the general University community for becoming one of those students who responds to the response of a response of some original letter nobody remembers. However, I could not resist the tongue-in-cheek response to the recent debate over the word woman and the connotations associated with it.

Let's look at one response's interpretation of the word woman lightheartedly. She views the word woman as simply the word man with the ad-

dition of "wo." This, she says, makes a woman "just a different kind of man," pointing out that a man is not called a manwo. However, who said that the root of woman is man? It could just as easily be argued that man is simply the word woman with the wo taken out.

What is the actual difference between the sexes? Most (dare I say politically correct?) people would agree that the only true difference between a man and a woman is, or should be, a physiological one. If you look at the differences between men and women at a biological lev-

el, the differences all hinge on one thing, the X and Y chromosomes.

The cells of females have two X chromosomes, while males have only one X chromosome. In light of this (despite some major faults in my genetic reasoning!), perhaps one shouldn't view gender names purely additive, but also consider the possibility that they are subtractive. This argument would seem to give an advantage to "womyn" in what is a somewhat silly debate.

James Thompson  
General sciences

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By GARY LARSON



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