

Passage of 20-08 starts dark chapter

What now, Springfield? What's going to happen now?

On Tuesday, Springfield voters approved Measure 20-08, which amends the city's charter to prohibit the local government from "promoting, encouraging or facilitating homosexuality."

The Oregon Citizens Alliance, which sponsored the measure, claims it was created to keep gays and lesbians from receiving "special rights." In an exit poll conducted by the *Register-Guard*, three-quarters of the measure's supporters said they voted for it for that very reason.

Whatever. Now the question remains, what does Measure 20-08 actually mean?

The language is so ambiguous, so chock full of loopholes, it can be interpreted in any number of ways. Is letting a gay or lesbian couple live within the Springfield city limits "facilitating" homosexuality? Is renting a lecture hall to a speaker — who just happens to be gay — "encouraging" homosexuality? Will the city government arrest lesbians walking down the street, holding hands, because they are "promoting" homosexuality?

Come on, OCA. What do you really want to happen?

The measure wasn't about family values, religious preferences or special rights; it was about politics. It was about one group trying to impose its will on another. In one fell swoop, the OCA has managed to demote Springfield's gays and lesbians to the level of second-class citizen.

Welcome, one and all, to the land of intolerance.

As University students, we mock Corvallis, call it "Cowvallis" and make fun of its agricultural background. Well, Corvallis voters also had an OCA measure on the ballot. They saw if for what it was — a naked, blunt attempt at political control, and they defeated it 8,048 to 4,486.

Try to laugh now, Lane County.

The above scenarios might not happen, but the law was passed, so they could. To those who passed the measure: Is this what you wanted? Were you that fired up to ostracize, stigmatize and damn? Maybe you weren't, but that's the land mine you've bequeathed upon Springfield. The potential for oppression is enormous.

By condemning what they don't understand, Springfield voters have taken their city back to the darker chapters of world history. The parallels are there and Tuesday's vote indicates just how far (not much) the human race has progressed.

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COMMENTARY

UMASP overlooks Asian Americans

By Clarence Spigner and Jon Motohiro

When is a racial minority not a racial minority? No! Being a white South African is not the answer. The correct answer is when that racial minority is an Asian/Pacific American student on the college campus.

Ironically, the University prominently displays pictures of Asian/Pacific American students in brochures ostensibly to illustrate a commitment to student diversity. Yet when it comes to eligibility for some minority scholarships, Asian/Pacific American students are not considered as a matter of policy.

Asian/Pacific American students represent families victimized by the same (sometimes worse) insidious racism and discrimination endured by African American, Latino/Hispanic American, and Native American students who rightfully deserve to compete for those scholarships. Yet Asian/Pacific American students are excluded from certain scholarship eligibility solely because of their race.

The Oregon State System of Higher Education, by excluding Asian/Pacific American students from its Underrepresented Minority Achievement Scholarship Program, evidently rationalized that by doing so, the enrollment of blacks, Latino/Hispanics and Native American students will be brought to the same level as Asian/Pacific American students.

As explicit in UMASP's title, we feel the rationale and methodology behind "underrepresented" is inappropriate in that it conversely asserts "overrepresentation" and creates a "glass ceiling." Thus, why are Asian/Pacific American students, with a recognized history of racial discrimination against them, being used as the "representative" yardstick?

OSSHE's decision to exclude Asian/Pacific Americans from UMASP (see their Feb. 28, 1992 newsletter, *The Board Bulletin*) can most likely be traced to the ridiculous myth of the "model minority," popularized by the media in shows such as *60 Minutes* and the *MacNeil/Lehrer News Hour*. The *New Republic* even referred to them as "America's Super Minority."

Such limited informational features attributed the modest success of hard-working Asian Americans to their commitment to education, parental sacrifices and entrepreneurial spirit. But such characteristics describe virtually all racial and ethnic minority groups who make up the American cultural mosaic.

Interestingly, spring 1991 enrollment statistics indicated Asian/Pacific American students made up around 5.7 percent of undergraduate enrollment. Is such a percentage the "glass ceiling" for UMASP students mentioned earlier? Given the monochromatic complexion of the University campus, we strongly endorse black, Latino/Hispanic and Native American enrollment be raised and raised separately. And since quotas are illegal (*Bakke vs. Regents of the University of California, 1978*), minority student enrollment should not stop at certain percentage points.

Moreover, Asian/Pacific American student enrollment should not be used as a criteria if such is the case, as we believe it is. Moreover, it is not fair that Asian/Pacific American students be blocked from access to any minority student scholarships as a matter of in-

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stitutional policy.

Finally, reports of success in the "American Dream" attributed to Asian Americans are exaggerated. For every story of success, there are many other Asian/Pacific Americans locked out of the social mainstream. The myth of the model minority ignores the enormous diversity within Asian/Pacific Americans; from generations of American-born to recent immigrants; from those in the corporate boardrooms to urban street gangs.

The more than 30 different languages within the Asian/Pacific American subcultures are just as distinct. But still, policy makers, perhaps ignorant of the range of diversity within the Asian/Pacific American experience, create and then excuse programs that discriminate against this minority group.

We respectfully request that before the Bush Administration totally wipes out the program, OSSHE allows Asian/Pacific American students the opportunity to at least compete in UMASP. After all, that is the American way.

Clarence Spigner is a professor at the University, and Jon Motohiro is a student senator.

COMMENTARY POLICY

Commentaries should be between 750 and 1,000 words, legible and signed, and the identification of the writer must be verified upon submission. The *Emerald* reserves the right to edit for grammar, style and length.

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