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Committee listens to students

By Chester Allen
Emerald Reporter

Last winter, a student didn't feel safe when she walked to Knight Library at night.

Lights on the stairs between Gerlinger Hall and Knight Library were broken, and a pole light was broken in front of the Museum of Art. She also thought the safety call boxes were isolated from the area.

The student filed a complaint with the Student Senate Grievance Committee and one month later the lights were repaired. The Office of Public Safety was also examining the location of the emergency call box.

About 150 students filed complaints with the Grievance Committee last year, said Seth Walker, Grievance Committee chairperson.

"The Grievance Committee exists to make sure students know their rights at the University," Walker said. "The committee is just one part of a big grievance system here at the University, and we want to help students navigate through the system."

Most students seek the committee's help to solve grading disputes or other problems with the University, but students' complaints range from the trivial to the very serious, Walker said.

"We had a complaint last year from someone who was upset about the price of coffee on campus," Walker said. "We looked into it and we found that there wasn't much we could do about it."

Walker said students with serious complaints are referred to the proper University organization.

"For example, in a case of sexual harassment, we help the student contact the Office of Student Advocacy," Walker said. "If the student is having problems with an instructor, the



Photo by David Natt

Dick Lee (left), a sophomore English major and Student Senator, explains the grievance table to Michael Omogrosso, a junior majoring in journalism.

Student Senate representative from the student's school meets with the student and tries to sort things out with the instructor."

Marlene Drescher, director of the Office of Student Advocacy, said the Grievance Committee provides a valuable service for students.

"The Student Senate Grievance table gives students a point of entry to the grievance process," Drescher said. "Many students have legitimate grievances that unfortunately go unreported on this campus."

Walker said being on the Grievance Committee can be a difficult job.

"Some of the more outrageous stuff like sexual harassment really makes you think," Walker said. "We try to be as professional as we can, but anyone with any heart just can't leave it at the Student Senate office."

The Student Senate grievance table is open on Wednesdays from 9:30 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. near the Fountain Court Cafe in the EMU.

DEBATE

Continued from Page 1A

"We celebrate Martin Luther King Day. Does that mean we're promoting being African or are we recognizing diversity?" she asked.

Miller said she believes the passage of the measure would mean her children's teachers could make judgment calls about her family. Miller, a lesbian, and her partner are raising three children.

"This measure will require teachers to teach my children that our family is abnormal, wrong or perverse," she said. "There is nothing wrong with our family."

Lively said Measure 9's intent is to let voters decide whether homosexuality is right or not, instead of allowing special interest groups to push gay rights laws through.

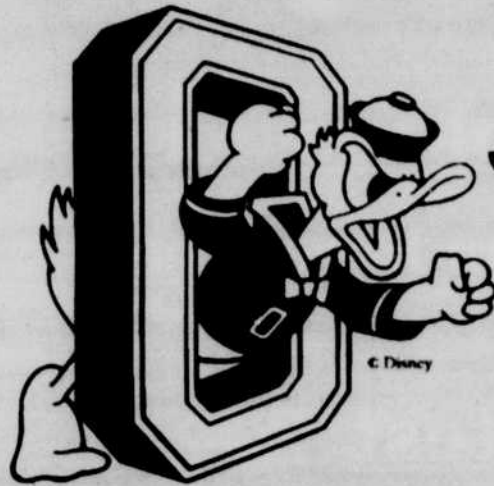
By putting the measure to voters, the OCA is saying homosexuality is Oregon's biggest problem, which is an "insult to our intelligence," Miller said. Instead, Oregonians need to focus on real problems like homelessness, child abuse and hunger, she said.

"We can never solve the real problems if we're divided," she said.

The idea of loving your neighbor is a good one, Lively said, but people must care about their neighbor's behavior.

"But isn't the bigamist our neighbor, too," he asked, "or the dead beat dad? You love the person, but reserve judgment about their behavior."

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*The Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual
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"Progress and Backlash of Creating Change"

An address by
Kevin Berrill,
Training and Organizing Consultant
National Gay & Lesbian Task Force Policy Institute
and
Claudia Brenner, author of
Hate Crimes: Confronting Violence Against Lesbians and Gay Men

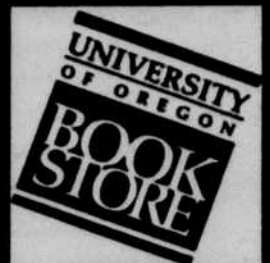
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