

Struggle for diversity not won by retreating

No problem has ever been solved by running away from it, yet that is exactly what some of University minority students are proposing to do if the administration fails to respond to their needs.

Students of Color Building Bridges issued a list of demands Monday, in which the group called for increased efforts from the University in its attempts to foster a multicultural environment on campus.

The strongest of the group's complaints is the low number of minority faculty at the University. The group wants the administration to make available a list of new minority faculty and to improve techniques for identifying and hiring minorities.

Of course, the administration immediately turns to 1990's Measure 5 as an excuse for slow progress in recruitment. The students respond by alleging the administration's reliance on Measure 5 as an excuse is only a smoke screen for lack of commitment. But the tax-limiting measure is a reality.

The budget cuts that have already taken place, and the budget cuts to come, make it extremely unlikely the University will go on a hiring spree any time soon.

The group also wants to separate Ethnic Studies from the Folklore department. Again, a legitimate request (who wouldn't be offended to have their culture identified with folklore?), but, again, change is unlikely without a realistic funding plan to accompany the demand. A person doesn't have to look far to realize the University is eliminating, not creating, departments. This is not an excuse pulled out of thin air.

One attainable goal the group has listed is the hiring of bilingual admissions counselors and advisers. University students are expected to learn a second language; there's no reason the administration and its employees should not be required to meet the same multicultural expectations as the students.

Sensitivity seminars for students, faculty and staff are another of the group's demands. This goal could be attained by fixing the multicultural curriculum, not by requiring "re-education" seminars. Sensitivity cannot be taught but is acquired as a result of exposure to other cultures and environments.

If these and other demands are not met by as early as March 12, the group has threatened to begin a campaign of disinformation, telling local high-school students and their parents about the "oppressive nature" of the University. Perhaps the University isn't a bastion of multiculturalism, but no campus in Oregon is as accepting of diversity as the University.

The group has also threatened to leave the University as a last resort. Rather than staying to fight for change, its members would rather give up, pack their bags and move on to more diverse pastures. This may be an option for those who can afford out-of-state tuition, but it is academic suicide for those who must remain in Oregon. They'll have no place else to go.

If these students are interested in building, rather than burning, bridges, they will stay and carry on the struggle. Change will come — running away will only make it take longer.



OPINION

Fight the real evil, tear up 'TV Guide'



Write Angles

We Are Outraged! And We're Not Going To Put Up With It Any Longer! Or so screamed the headline in a full-page advertisement in the Forum section of *The Sunday Oregonian*.

Egads! And just what terrible injustice are we to be Outraged! about? Clinton's tax plan? Serbian war crimes? Anything said by the OCA? Dan Quayle being allowed to roam free?

Nope. No such trivial issue at hand here. We've brought out the big typeface to tackle the big issues this time, and the target for our Outrage! is — the entertainment industry. Certainly you're familiar with the entertainment industry. That bastion of cultural elitists who dared bring us a pregnant Murphy Brown, a *Wayne's World* movie and Madonna naked on top of a dog.

Giving the ad's sponsors the benefit of the doubt, I read on.

The sponsors, the ad says, are "mothers, fathers, grandparents and other citizens who are outraged at how today's movies, TV programs, music videos and records are hurting our children, our families and our country."

No small list of dilemmas there. Thank God we're getting to the heart of these problems. Sociologists have spent years looking for the answers to society's ills — when all they needed to do was read the A&E section of the local paper.

Bearing the gravity of these problems in mind, I read on.

The ad says the members of the American Family Association, who purchased the ad, are **DISMAYED** that millions of girls between the ages of 15 and 19 get pregnant each year. They are **SHOCKED** when they learn two thirds of all births to girls ages 15 through 19 are out of wedlock.

They are also **FRIGHTENED** "at the way violence and crime are spreading everywhere." Not **FRIGHTENED** specifically at

violence and crime, but rather the way in which they are spreading. Maybe if they were spreading a different way, we would be all right.

So where is this ad going? I read on.

"We say it's time to put the blame where we think it belongs," screams the next line. And where would that be. On abusive parents who mistreat their children? Economic conditions that make it more profitable to sell drugs than get a job? A glaring lack of sex education in the schools?

Nope. The blame falls squarely on the shoulders of the Board of Directors of music companies who put out records and music videos "which blatantly encourage sex and 'say' to our children that sex is proper at any age." Damn. I missed those videos — not for lack of looking.

SHAME, says the ad, on those in charge in Hollywood for "an endless stream of PROFANITY, NUDITY, SEX, VIOLENCE and KILLINGS." It's common knowledge that in society at large, these problem behaviors occur much less regularly than Hollywood would lead us to believe.

In case I am too dense to recognize VIOLENCE and SEX when I see it, the ad provides me with an example. "The giant hit 'Basic Instinct' features murders during orgasms." Yikes! Of all the rotten times to be murdered. But hey, when your time comes, that's it.

Hoping the ad will give me further advice on what to watch, I read on.

SHAME on NBC and *Saturday Night Live* for performing "skits about masturbation, morticians having sex with dead people, etc., etc., ad nauseam." Damn (again). I missed those skits. Where have I been?

Slowly compiling a list of "must see" movies and TV shows, I read on.

According to the ad, TV directors **KNOW** that TV violence is implicated in 22 percent OF ALL JUVENILE CRIME AND HALF THE HOMICIDES in America. No kidding. But, has it ever been proven? Has anyone ever said, "Yes your honor, after watching *The Cook, The Thief, His Wife and Her Lover* for the six-hundredth time, I decided to

'The giant hit Basic Instinct features murders during orgasms.' Of all the rotten times to be murdered.

kill and eat my wife's lover." Look for this one on *Law & Order* soon.

At last, my eyes have been opened. I now know what's wrong with this country. And just think, by mid-1994 we'll have 500 channels of the devil's work to choose from. I can feel my soul blackening even now.

But wait! Try as I may to repress it, the voice of reason pokes its nose into my moral business. "What about freedom of speech and expression," the voice whines. "Shouldn't people take some personal responsibility for their children's behavior?"

What? Personal responsibility? Never! We are all victims of the establishment, which seeks to oppress us and keep us brain dead by feeding us whitewashed information through the elitist media.

Wait a second — that would be me. Never mind.

Coming back to my senses, I take up the censorship argument. The ad, always one step ahead of me, already has the answer.

"Spare us the censorship lecture — you in the entertainment industry." They can't mean me. I didn't get Murphy Brown pregnant, I didn't turn a two-minute comedy skit into a two-hour movie, and I've never taken pictures of anyone simulating sex with a dog (not for lack of trying). Obviously, I'm not in the entertainment industry, so I may continue my censorship lecture.

Perhaps God's greatest gift is the remote control and our own sense of right and wrong. These societal ills existed long before television and will likely never completely disappear as long as there's cable.

I wonder what time the video store closes?

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