

Multicultural center not truly necessary

If two students can collect 850 signatures by today, University students will be given the opportunity to vote on a proposed multicultural center April 27 and 28.

If approved, student fees would increase \$2.45 per term and generate \$109,025 for the center, which would be adjacent to the Footnotes office on the lower level of the EMU.

Aside from the fact that asking students for more money these days may be considered admissible evidence of insanity, a more basic question arises — is a multicultural center needed? The answer is yes. And no.

Yes, a central, visible location that provides students with exposure to cultures other than their own can only be considered a positive move. But no, another isolated room in the dungeons of the EMU is neither the way nor the place to do it.

One of the greatest complaints made by minority students is their sense of isolation on this campus. And it's true, an incredibly overwhelming percentage of the student body is white.

Unfortunately, some student leaders would respond to this dilemma by retreating into the shadows, rather than bringing the issues of minority students to the forefront.

One of the reasons minority students feel isolated is because they tend to cluster within the confines of the various student unions, and thus their various cultures also remain in isolation.

A multicultural center will serve only to further isolate students from each other. The center's sponsors want a place where minority students can meet comfortably. There are already a number of places, both in the EMU and throughout the campus, where students of any ethnicity can congregate.

If students pushing this idea don't want a place where students of all colors can go, of which there are already many in place, what they are really after is a minority student bunker. The center can do nothing to further multiculturalism. It can only increase isolationism.

Student unions absorb thousands of dollars in student fees every year. Certainly they can find a way to use that money to make their cultures accessible to students in general. All it takes is a little initiative and a genuine desire to foster true multiculturalism. Spending more than \$100,000 to provide a redundant service is ridiculous.

It's not as if they're short of funds. It's simply a matter of how they choose to spend them. Instead of spending money on catered parties, karaoke sing-alongs or renting ballrooms at the Eugene Hilton, they could spend the money here on campus and create a true multicultural center that would encompass the entire University, not just the bowels of the EMU.

Another isolated room in the dungeons of the EMU is neither the way nor the place to do it.



LETTERS

Real men

I'm responding to Scott Bishop's letter (*ODE*, April 6) attacking "foul-minded Christians" for promoting a billboard titled "Real Men Don't Use Porn."

Bishop asks, "How do you use porn?" He answers his question twice in the next three paragraphs, making his letter irrelevant.

It's clear that the billboard is intended to make people think in formidable terms regarding pornography. Obviously it concentrates on a deeper level than the physical "manipulation" of one's "generative organs," as the confused Bishop writes.

That level starts in the minds of men who "use" pornography. The damage only begins there. Think about the destruction done in our society that clearly can be linked to pornography. We're talking about men, so consider the ill-respect toward women as a result of a demeaning centerfold.

Weigh the facts. There have been steady increases of rape and sexual harassment cases in the United States. Pornography is another ingredient in promoting this trend.

I'm happy the billboard exists because "real men" don't belittle women, they don't harass women, and they certainly don't rape women.

As for Bishop's question — through his graphic details, it sounds like he already knows how to use porn.

Casey Nicholson
Alumni Foundation

boy magazine and finding his mother, sister or girlfriend in all her glory. I'm willing to bet that his views and ideas of "art" would quickly change.

Robyn K. Hagg
Pre-Journalism

Good job

The staff of Oregon Student Lobby would like to thank the delegation of students from the University who attended OSLS's Oregon Lobby Day March 3 in Salem. We would also like to thank the faculty and administration who were supportive in the students' efforts.

The lobby day was extremely successful — at least 500 students from around the state were there to oppose tuition increases, program cuts and enrollment reductions in the State System of Higher Education and to encourage legislators to work for replacement revenue in the wake of 1990's Ballot Measure 5. University students were a vital part of the rally and lobbying activities that took place.

We would also like to thank all the students who wrote letters opposing the cuts in programs and enrollment and opposing the tuition increases. These letters in support of a strong higher education system for Oregon are crucial to our efforts. The personal visit segment of the lobby day was especially successful. Students met with lawmakers in more than 140 separate meetings.

We encourage all students to continue to write their legislators. The Oregon Legislature will have the final word on funding the state system. The Legislature could still act to put a replacement revenue plan before Oregon voters this year, before the program cuts and tuition increases take effect.

There are also other events students can attend: The Heart of Oregon Coalition Lobby Day May 14, and the State Board of Higher Education meeting in Monmouth April 23.

Robert Nosse
Ed Dennis
Oregon Student Lobby

Astounding

Stephanie Sisson astounded me yet again (*ODE*, April 5). I must wonder if Sisson doesn't think, or if she suffered some sort of tragic accident as a child that caused irreparable brain

damage.

First she managed to upset me with a comment that was insulting to Jews and Judaism. I would like to remind her that the Jewish holy books are also considered holy in Christianity, and that Jesus was a Jew. But that is irrelevant; she should not be ridiculing the scriptures of any religion.

Then I wonder what planet she is on. Does she honestly believe that society sees it as hip to be queer? Her reality is seen through a strange lavender shade.

The core of her diatribe is against homosexuals. Of course she does not hate or fear homosexuals; she has no cause to. But homosexuals have much to hate and fear in her type of discussion. I resent and wholly reject any statement that asserts that homosexuality and bisexuality are any less valid or "right" than heterosexuality.

With overpopulation as it is, in fact, perhaps laws should be enforced to punish heterosexuality and its reproductive consequences. I don't care if homosexuality is biological or chosen, I refuse to subscribe to the belief that heterosexuality is a "better choice."

The only hope that Sisson can offer me is that she and others of her intolerant, ignorant and bigoted views would just shut up.

Heidi Bowman
Comparative Literature

Offends Jews

I respect Stephanie Sisson's right to be a Christian and live a life according to the New Testament. This is her choice, and hey, this is America.

But being a Christian does not give her the right to make fun of, or put down, any other religion or spiritual path. As a Jew, I am extremely offended by Sisson's references to the Old Testament and the laws that were "given to the Jews."

Anyone who read her column can surely feel the anti-semitic undertones (or overtones) in her blatant mockery of the Jewish faith. One should not need to put down someone else's faith in order to reaffirm his or her own.

If Sisson does not want to be called a "KKKistian," then maybe she should stop acting like one. Think about it.

Yohanna Kinberg
Co-director
Jewish Student Union

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It's not art

I would like to address Stephen Frost's letter to the editor (*ODE*, April 7) titled "Playboy art." Frost asserts, "The pictures are displayed as art. I beg to differ."

As a young woman, I am absolutely disgusted with such "art forms" as *Playboy*. Magazines as such are not art; they exploit, degrade and dehumanize women in the highest form.

Frost claims "that the human body is a beautiful thing and the 'revealing' of it is not harmful unless shown purely as a sex object (e.g. unnecessary poses)." The only thing magazines like *Playboy* do is show women as sex objects just because they exist, regardless of the poses the women have.

I would like to see Frost's response upon opening a *Play-*