

COMMENTARY

Don't tell me what to believe

By Stephen Crawford

In the state of Oregon, there is a battle going on in the arena of homosexual rights. The University is one of the main battlefronts of this war, with a decided leaning toward the homosexual cause.

It is no secret that the OCA, the enemy of the homosexual movement, has no friends that it is gaining ground in the rest of the state. The OCA's new measure, freshly reworded, is a lot more user-friendly, and if the many small towns that have voted in favor of the measure are any indication, this measure could pass in the next statewide election.

I am no friend of the OCA; indeed, I voted no on Measure 9 in the last statewide election. However, after reading the *Emerald* for several months, I have been noticing more and more an insidious trend which, I believe, emanates from the liberal camp of the politically correct.

What I am talking about is thought cleansing, which is not about telling people that they cannot discriminate or that they cannot be openly hateful and bigoted, but that they cannot even believe a certain way if it is not in compliance with the politically correct rhetoric. This thought cleansing is not limited to just the issue of homosexuality, but is also rampant in the arenas of feminism, racial issues, abortion, etc.

In particular, I am referring to the April 29 issue of the *Emerald* and the two articles focusing on this campus, written respectively, by Lia Salciccia and Tasha Eichenseher. Both articles deal, to a certain extent, with homophobia. But instead of attacking the problem in a somewhat reasonable manner, both are content to try to discredit the thoughts and minds of those who do not agree with homosexuality. This is unfortunate at a so-called haven for free thought and openmindedness. It appears, according to these articles, and in general the liberal faction of society, that you can think what you want, as long as it is in agreement with what they think.

I did not like Measure 9. I do not like any measure that points out a specific group of

people, nor do I like the uppity attitude of the OCA. However, I do not agree with homosexuality, either.

I am not talking about the homosexual movement, whether it exists or not; I'm not talking about the way homosexuals are depicted in OCA propaganda movies, either. I don't hate homosexuals and I don't believe in castigating men and women who "come out of the closet."

I do believe that homosexuality is "wrong" both morally and ethically. I have reasons for thinking this way, and I think that I can back up my views with very logical and reasonable arguments. However, if I state my own personal point of view I am immediately labeled a bigot and prejudiced. I am told to "honor diversity," though this buzz-phrase only seems to apply to politically correct concepts, and I am told to go beyond my prejudices. In short, I am told that I cannot think the way that I want, that I have to believe according to prescribed rhetoric, that I am a hateful bigot, much akin to the Nazis, unless I believe their way.

Lia Salciccia, in her opinion column about Gay Pride Week, says that "the truth is, queers are punished routinely by society. Many religions decree homosexuality a sin, people make fun of gays all the time, and even some of the most openminded straight people get queasy about what homosexuals do beneath the sheets."

Wonderful. What we are being told is that unless we find nothing wrong with the homosexual sex act, we are not openminded; if the religion that we adhere to decrees that homosexuality is a sin, then that religion is wrong; if we would just sit down with a homosexual and not judge them, we would eventually find that they are right and we were deluded all along, that society has told us that homosexuality is wrong and we are not think-

ing for ourselves.

This is thought cleansing. We are being told what we can and cannot believe. In Tasha Eichenseher's profile of Jackie Balzer, coordinator of educational and support services, Balzer gave some examples of what she termed "subtle homophobia," including "being in a classroom or dorm where you are assumed to be heterosexual." So now if we accidentally assume that someone is a heterosexual, we are bigots and homophobes.

I have some news for Ms. Balzer: most people are heterosexual, and assuming that someone is heterosexual is not bigotry. It seems that if we are made queasy by the homosexual act, which I believe to be a normal human reaction for most of society throughout time, I am a bigot. "Part of the process of universal acceptance," says Ms. Salciccia, "is looking at the difference between us and understanding them without judgment." Anyone who has taken a psychology or sociology class knows that judgment is a normal human faculty. It is how we discern for ourselves what we should and should not do, what is "right" and what is "wrong."

We, as moral free agents, do not need to be told how to think. It is all right to expound your own personal views, but don't have the audacity to tell me what I can and cannot think.

Once again, the *Emerald*, the bastion of free journalism, has limited itself to a very narrow viewpoint. It has become increasingly disappointing to read the propaganda of the liberal left, the so-called politically correct faction who would control the very thoughts and minds of the people of this country. Please, don't tell me how to think and I will give you the same courtesy.

Stephen Crawford is a philosophy major at the University.

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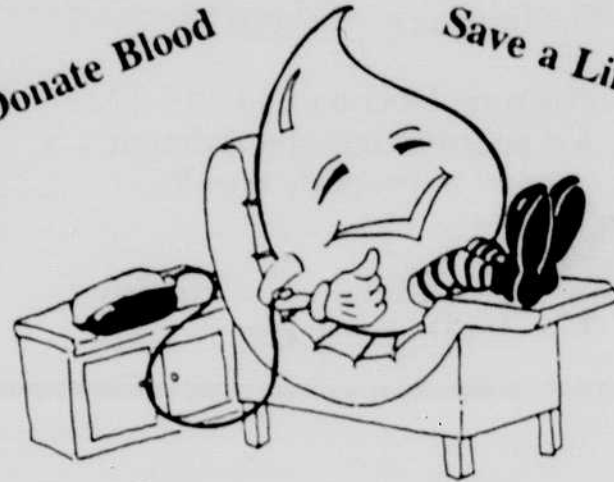
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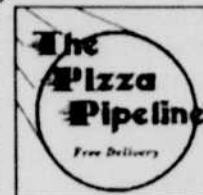
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