

Race on campus: It's time to start talking

■ **OUR OPINION:** To remove racial barriers, we must examine what and where they are — in real terms

Big-city racism.
Watts. East Los Angeles.
Atlanta. New York.
Columbia. U.C. Berkeley.
University of Southern California. MIT.
Division. Separation.
Anger. Poverty. Brutality.
Guilt. Bigotry. Prejudice.
Hatred.

America's ugly wound just can't seem to heal. And it seems the infection has not escaped our generation.

Almost 30 years after the civil rights movement, race on campus has again become the issue of the day.

Collegiate baby boomers thought they had dismantled 200 years of racism. Yet now, on campuses around the country, students are faced with racial walls that were built in the shadow of politeness and politically correct vocabularies. But this time, it's not clear what, if anything, we intend to do about it.

Here, in this largely white community, we speak of racial tension in abstract terms. We watch our televisions and read our newspapers. We cluck our tongues and shake our heads. "What a shame," we say. "We are so lucky we don't have that problem here."

Or do we?

More has been done to enhance racial diversity at the University in the past decade than at any other time in its history. New students this year are required to take two multicultural courses, and the number of non-white students on this campus has continued to rise. And we all seem to co-

WHAT DO YOU THINK?

What do you think about race relations on campus? Please submit your letter to the Emerald offices at Suite 300 in the EMU or send us your thoughts via e-mail at ode@oregon.uoregon.edu. Letters on this issue will be published Nov. 6.

exist in this friendly, if not distant, atmosphere.

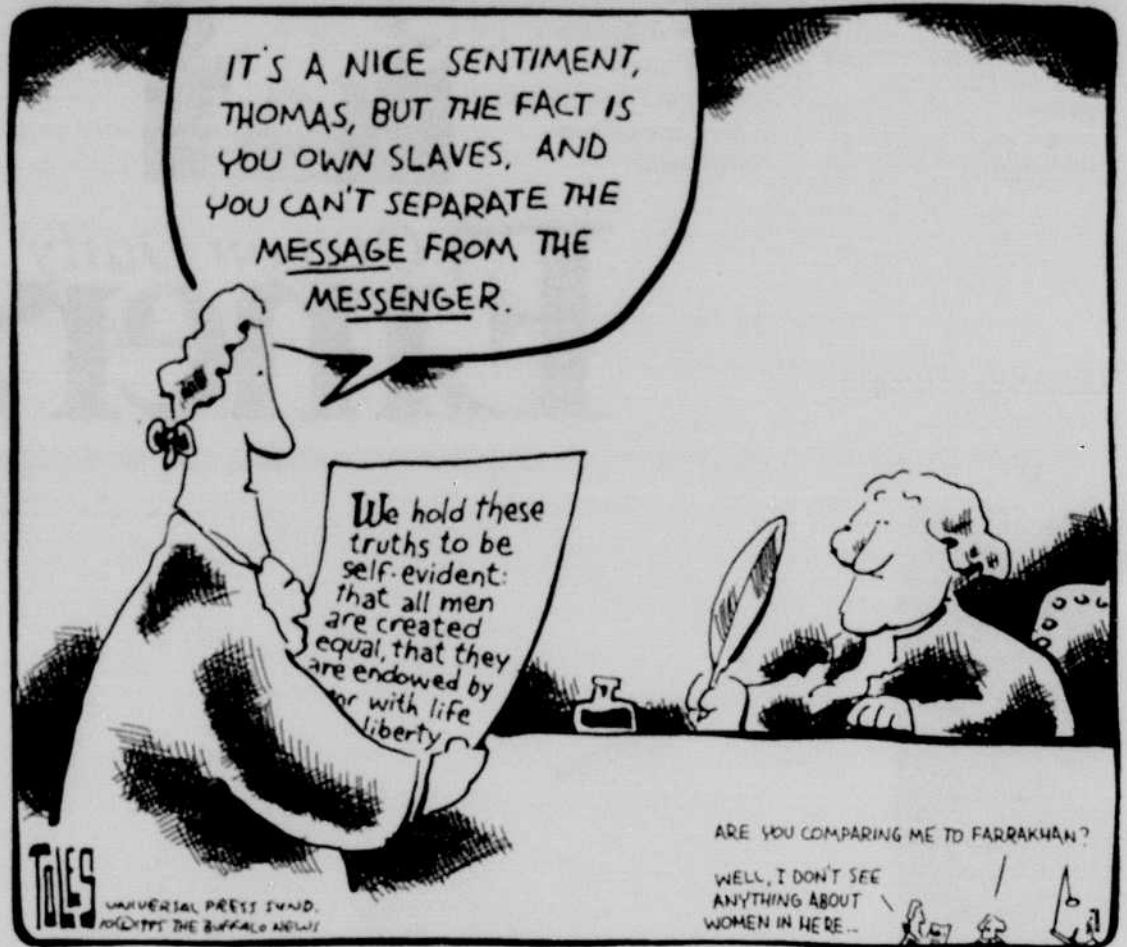
Yet, a glance around campus on any given day illustrates that we may not be as unified as we like to think we are.

Most students, it seems, prefer to socialize with people of their own ethnic group, and rarely do we see groups of students of varying skin colors sitting around a table studying or laughing together. This arrangement, if accurate, seems comfortable for everyone involved. After all, these are just choices we've made based on personalities. Our friends just happen to be (insert race here).

But when the racial problems of the big cities are thrust into our laps — when beatings and verdicts and marches and Esslinger Hall flyers speak to us of "other people's" problems, the color line that cuts across this campus begins to materialize.

It is up to us, now, to decide how we are going to close the gap. Multiculturalism cannot take place only in a classroom. It is time to open a forum on this issue and really talk and listen to one another.

We are the future of race relations in this country, and the sooner we understand the wall, the sooner we can dismantle it. Permanently.



Tonight, real Witches won't ride brooms

Witches and Halloween have always gone together, it seems. But real Witches don't have green faces, long pointy noses and warts. After all, I'm a Witch, and I don't have any of those things.

Did you ever wonder what real Witches were like and what they do on Halloween?

Halloween has always been one of my favorite holidays. As a child, I loved Halloween for all the traditional reasons: trick-or-treating, haunted houses and dressing up as anything I wanted to be.

Besides, Halloween was one of just a couple of holidays my mom really got into, and I mean full-throttle. Pink Silly String spider's webs hung thick on the front porch under a black light, and scary sound effects blared from our eight-track player. We had beautiful hand-made clown costumes (even though my mother probably couldn't have sewn anything else to save her life), and she spent 45 minutes applying professional-quality clown makeup. I was taught to live for Halloween.

Try as I might, I still can't make a decent spider's web out of that canned string, but at least scary sound effects sound better on a CD player. And I still love to dress up.

One of the best things for me at Halloween, though, is that it's one of the few religious holidays the rest of America acknowledges with me.

Yes, for Witches, Halloween is a religious holiday. In fact, it's one of the most important of the eight holy days Witches celebrate each year.

A lot of misconceptions float around about Witches, so I'd like to clear up some of them.

Witchcraft (more formally known as Wicca) is a religion, legally recognized in this and other countries. Actually, the U.S. Army's chaplain's manual has an excellent entry on Wicca, even though it hasn't stopped all military discrimination against Witches. But that's another story.

Witches do not sacrifice children or other small animals, nor worship (or even believe in) Satan. Witches also do not cast love or revenge spells on people, so don't write to me and ask me to do any spells for you. You'd be surprised at the things people ask me.

Witches do believe all life is sacred. Birth, love, sex, death — the driving forces of life are sacred to Witches. Witches worship a goddess and a god, and many Witches worship several goddesses or gods.

We believe everything in nature is both sacred and alive: animals, of course, but also rocks, rivers and trees. We celebrate the full and

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new moons because the moon is both sacred to and symbolic of the Goddess. Witches do believe in magic. We don't ride brooms — stop being silly.

We have one law: If it harms none, do what you will.

Witches do not believe one religion is right for everyone, so each Witch's beliefs and practices vary. These are the common denominators of witchcraft.

Halloween, Samhain (pronounced sow-eeen or sow-in) to Witches, is the Witches' New Year and the feast of the dead.

Death, as a part of life, is considered sacred. Death is an end, but Witches believe in reincarnation, so death also signals a new beginning as the dead go to the Underworld to rest and prepare for rebirth.

Samhain is a time when Witches say, "The veil between the worlds is thin."

The barrier between the world of the living and the world of the dead, of spirits and of the unknown is most easily traversed at this time.

Samhain is the time for remembering and honoring our ancestors and people we know who have died. It is also a traditional time for divination — the art of seeing into the future using tarot cards, crystal balls or other tools.

So what do real Witches do for Halloween?

I'll dress up and play my scary-sound-effects CD for the trick-or-treaters. I'll take my kids, who are 7 and 4, trick-or-treating, and then we'll go to the East Campus Haunted House. Of course, typical Halloween depictions of Witches abound, so I'll talk to the kids for the umpteenth time about the difference between real Witches and fairy-tale witches.

When we get home, we'll have a special Samhain dinner, and we'll set an extra place at the table to remember the dead. We'll light candles in remembrance of our ancestors and friends and family members who have died. I'll explain to the kids the religious significance of Samhain. I'll read tarot cards.

And I'll call my mother (who's not a Witch, but who knows that I am), and I'll ask her one more time how to get Silly String spider's webs to hang properly.

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