

## Oregonophobic

In response to Nicole Kristal's commentary about the "homophobic ignorance" of Oregonians (ODE, Nov. 27), I have a few views that I would like to share.

First, her stereotypes are sickening. Consider her high school teacher. She didn't think a guy like him would stand up for people's sexual orientation because he was a "big guy who liked racing cars, speaking gruffly, and was from Nebraska." Nebraska!! I'm surprised they even let the sucker come within 50 miles of San Francisco!

And those women from your women's studies class? How dare they that one of them not want to be hit on by someone she was not attracted to! If she said that she was afraid to be nice to a large, hairy Nebraskan because he liked her, she would be "Nebraskaphobic" right?

And the other one, who didn't want to think about the two men she knew having sex together — now, there's a crime. There are quite a few heterosexual couples that I'd rather not picture having sex. Call me Roseanne-and-Tom-Arnold-phobic if you want!

Besides Kristal's arrogant claim that California's Bay Area is the most "socially advanced" area in the known world, I find her condemnation of Oregon quite irritating. My thanks to Kristal for her patronizing remarks about our backward state. I encourage her to go on back to California (home of Pete Wilson, Proposition 187, the East Oakland School District and the L.A. Police Department) and stay there. She should leave Oregon and the rest of the Northwest to us real progressive, political activists.

Nathaniel Farnam  
Sociology

## Wrong number?

On my voice mail two weeks ago, I found a series of indignant messages concerning an item on a recent African-American celebration in the *Oregon Commentator*. This puzzled me because I had no knowledge of the article and only an admittedly modest level of awareness of the celebration itself.

Obviously, my extension had been mistakenly circulated amongst several minority student organizations. Copies of the article had become scarce by the time I sought to read it, but I did manage to find one. Although I didn't understand some of the references in it, I agree with the callers that it went way over the line of satire, free speech and free press as I understand them (i.e. being intentionally hurtful to someone else).

The whole thing was pretty depressing as I got to thinking about the kinds of forces that bring people's state of mind to such a poisonous place. Although the episode was a minor nuisance to me personally, it certainly served to raise my consciousness about such matters on campus.

The main irony in this case of switched phone numbers is that the messages the callers were trying to send did not find their intended mark; this letter is intended to make them aware of that.

Such occurrences serve to remind us that even when (and if) we find a peaceable level of tolerance for one another's differences, we'll still have a long way to go in terms of true empathy, forgiveness and — sorry if this sounds corny or naive — love for others. Some of us believe that nothing less than survival of the species is at stake.

Ken Paul  
Fine and Applied Arts

## No more hate

It is time to bring attention to an issue of grave importance to our University community. I firmly believe that the University is a place where the right of free speech must be fostered. In fact, this right is a necessary part of campus life that enables us to better ourselves and our community.

While I still affirm the right to free speech, I must take issue with the publication of racist ideals. The November 15 issue of the *Oregon Commentator* is a disservice to the campus community.

The back page of this issue is proof that racism and bigotry are still rampant. The *Commentator* trivializes the history and importance of the Black Student Union's Kwanzaa celebration by testing for what it calls "an oppressed victim seeking an empowerment ID badge."

Kwanzaa is the type of event that every student benefits from as we share our cultures. This issue is the most disgusting display of stereotyping that I have seen in my four years on campus.

Last April, the *Commentator's* back page was dedicated to glorifying date rape as a "proud, gender-specific custom," and an "aggressive male mating practice." I hope that all students who are offended by these two issues as I am will let the *Commentator* know that this is an unacceptable use of student fees. These types of direct attacks on our community are unacceptable.

Please join with me in letting them know that the University is a place where free speech is celebrated, but where racism, sexism and bigotry are not. Call them at 346-3721 and let them know how you feel. Let us continue to work toward building communities, not breaking them down.

Jennifer Williamson  
ASUO President

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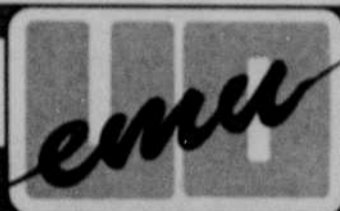
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