

CONTACTING US

NEWSROOM:
(541) 346-5511
E-MAIL:
ode@oregon.uoregon.edu
ADDRESS:
Oregon Daily Emerald
P.O. BOX 3159
Eugene, Oregon 97403
ONLINE EDITION: www.uoregon.edu/~ode

PERSPECTIVES

EDITOR IN CHIEF
Sarah Kicker
EDITORIAL EDITOR
Mike Schmierbach
NIGHT EDITOR
Carl Yeh



Minorities have difficulty finding diversity on campus

It's not surprising minority enrollment is dropping when the University offers little diversity or money

OPINION



Kameron Cole

Take a figurative look around society. From bustling metropolises to genteel suburbs to podunk towns, America is getting more diverse. We feel a buzz of excitement because we are heading into the millennium multi-ethnic, multicultural and multi-lingual.

Take a look around the University, and the buzz fades.

Earlier this week it was reported that minority enrollment fell by four percent this past fall.

Administrative head scratching aside, can anyone possibly be surprised by the numbers?

First of all, the population of Oregon being overwhelmingly white, it is little wonder that retaining minority students from in-state is a problem. Many minority college students leave Oregon seeking the diversity they haven't found in their home state.

The most significant drop off, however, was in the number of students from Hawaii and California. Again, no surprise.

Consider that California, which pro-

vides many of the University's minority students, offers myriad scholarship opportunities aimed at keeping these students in the state. In addition, public universities in California instituted a tuition cut last year. Conversely, the University raised out-of-state tuition three percent this year and offers relatively few scholarships to out-of-state minorities.

But the larger barrier to minority enrollment is the simple lack of diversity that makes many minority students feel ill at ease.

It's a vicious cycle: How does the University lure minorities away from their multi-ethnic home states to become one of less than 2,000 minority faces in a school of over 17,000? After all, how many white students leave their familiar surroundings to attend historically black colleges and universities? How many people expect them to?

One of the University's goals is to increase ethnic and cultural variety on campus. It's a worthy goal, one that will have a positive impact if it is ever

attained. But in trying to achieve this goal, the school often neglects to give students an accurate sense of what being on this campus is really like.

Here I can draw on personal experience. My decision to attend this school had little to do with how much diversity it does or doesn't have. But after two years here, I'd be hard pressed to give minorities an unqualified recommendation of the University.

Were I to sit down and talk honestly with prospective minority students about the University, I would tell them that they could expect quality education and interaction with some truly dedicated people who genuinely want them to succeed.

But being honest, I would also tell them that it is by no means unusual for me to be the only minority student, even in a large class. More often than not, I am the only African American and almost without fail the only black woman. And that no matter how focused you are, this conspicuousness starts to feel strange.

Being honest, I would have to tell

this hypothetical student about the racial slurs I've heard on the way to classes; slurs made not out of hatred, but out of the ignorance of people who have little contact with people outside of their own race.

Providing a more truthful view of campus life will give students a stronger basis for making the decision to attend this school. The students who have made informed decisions are more likely to stay around, like I have.

If the University is at all serious about its commitment to diversity, then it is incumbent upon administrators to offset the impact of personal testimonials like mine with real change. It must look at students as more than a means to an end. It's not enough to lure minorities in; attention must also be paid to their needs after they've enrolled.

Kameron Cole is a columnist for the Emerald. Her work appears on alternate Wednesdays. Her views do not necessarily represent those of the newspaper.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

God could be bigot

I would like to answer the question Barry Williams of the Lane County Oregon Citizens Alliance asks in his most recent letter to the editor, "Could God have homophobia or be a bigot?" (ODE, Feb. 25). The answer is yes. The God that both the OCA and Barry Williams put their faith in is both a bigot and a homophobe and so is Williams. Do not conceal your fascist agendas with metaphysical justifications.

Furthermore, the logic that Williams stands behind is highly questionable. He assumes that "homosexual behavior is unnatural/dysfunctional" because "not once in the history of mankind has it succeeded in producing offspring." Well, if this is the criteria on which to base such an as-

sumption, then we may logically conclude that most sex is unnatural/dysfunctional. Barry, come one, be honest with yourself. Have you produced offspring every time you have had sex? Or what about the two-thirds of Americans you say agree with you? Will we all be denied the "Kingdom of Heaven"? I guess the few that do get to pass through the pearly gates will find it kind of lonely. But of course those "fortunate" enough to produce offspring every time they get between the sheets should have no problem populating the Kingdom of Heaven with their own children (assuming you get to "do it" up in Heaven). Perhaps you should stop wasting your time condemning others and turn your energies to finding some superfer-

tile woman with whom you can enjoy your eternal afterlife.

But Barry, this is serious. We're talking eternal damnation, or at least a life-long shame with our bodies and sexualities. Is this healthy? I don't buy the shame you try to pass off as "freedom from the bondage of sin." The only shame I see is in the complicit culpability that goes along with reading your opinions and not offering some form of resistance to such fascist sophistry.

Michael Wood
Graduate student

Don't defend Clinton

I thought I had heard it all. During my four years at this university, I have seen some of the most irrational arguments put forth by the readers of the Emerald in defense of their liberal

agendas. But the letter to the editor by Patrick Clancy tops them all (ODE, March 2).

In his letter, Clancy defends the alleged sexual misconduct by Clinton with biblical references. Not only is this insulting, it is ridiculous. To use the forgiving qualities of Christianity to defend adultery is hypocritical.

Furthermore, to insinuate that it would be wrong to "destroy the office of the presidency" by prosecuting Clinton is ludicrous. I wonder if Clancy holds this same opinion about Watergate and the Iran/Contra affairs. Even though these events were much more relevant to the security of our country, the issue remains the same. That issue deals with integrity. Whether the issue is political or personal, the American people

must hold their president to a higher standard than the common citizen.

In his letter, Clancy argues that the conservative Republicans are seeking to divide the country because they want to hold Clinton accountable for his actions. Clancy then goes on to say the "record support of the president reflects the wisdom of God and King Solomon."

I would argue the record support of the president only reflects what a low emphasis the citizens of America place on his honor and integrity. If we are not outraged by the notion of our president cheating on his family, then what does that say about our own moral integrity?

Aaron Artman
Journalism