

# Students hold a community forum on campus climate

More than 40 people began a dialogue Tuesday about the safety of queer students

BY AMANDA BOLSINGER  
NEWS REPORTER

In a community forum Tuesday night, more than 40 University students gathered in the EMU to express concerns about the climate of campus and suggested a University effort to educate students about queer issues.

The forum, prompted in large part by the recent debate over whether to fund the Oregon Commentator after the magazine published what some call hate speech, focused mainly on lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer students' feelings of personal and emotional safety on campus.

The purpose of the forum, also attended by faculty and administrators, was to begin dialogue not only about the Commentator but about other issues on campus that students said have been ignored.

Heavy emphasis was placed on the lack of University administration accountability and a general lack of awareness and education about queer issues.

"Administration hasn't gone that far to study policy and find things out," ethnic studies major Maceo Persson said. "Like, can I go to the (University) Health Center and not be treated like I'm fucked up because of my name and pronouns, and that I have to talk to every teacher before class about my name and pronouns."

Forum participants said they shouldn't have to feel like they are being physically threatened for people to take them seriously.

"I get asked if the campus is really safe and then to prove it," University sophomore and former ASUO Student Senator Emily Sousa said. "I can't prove if I feel unsafe. They have to take my word for it until it gets violent. It shouldn't have to get to the point of someone actually being put in danger."

Forum participants suggested educating students about queer issues through mandatory classes for all freshmen, workshops at IntroDUCKtion, workshops in the residence halls or by changing multicultural requirements.

"One idea is a class that all freshmen



TIM BOBOSKY | PHOTOGRAPHER

Junior Joey Macdonald spoke about the discomfort of being asked "What are you doing here?" for being in a women's restroom on campus. Macdonald addressed this and other issues at the community forum on the campus climate held in the EMU's Fir room Tuesday night.

have to take that will cover all groups and issues that will also provide tools to deal with transawareness," graduate student Alethia Hostetter said.

Junior Joey Macdonald discussed living in the residence halls and experiences there, such as being asked, "What are you doing in here?" after walking into a women's restroom.

"The class would be a good place to start," Macdonald said, adding that optional workshops would only draw those already interested in queer issues. "It doesn't solve the problem of educating people that don't want to see the issues ... It's like preaching to the choir."

Participants said loopholes in the Student Conduct Code are partially to blame for allowing the Commentator to publish what some view as hate speech using incidental fees.

"The Student Conduct Code is very open to interpretation," Sousa said.

She discussed section 19b of the conduct code, which states that harassment in the form of insulting a person in his or her immediate presence is a violation of the code.

"I would say that a publication is immediately in your presence," Sousa said. "If I, to use a Commentator phrase, said I wanted to 'hate fuck' somebody to them, then I sure as hell would be in offense. But because it was in a publication, it's all wishy-washy."

Administrators and faculty listened in at the forum to hear what changes students wanted to see on campus.

"My commitment tonight is to come and listen," Vice President for Student Affairs Anne Leavitt said. "I came and listened and heard from a lot of different students talking from their hearts and experiences and with a lot of expectations."

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# No one shows up for Valentine's Day sex, suicide party

BY JEFF BARNARD  
THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

KLAMATH FALLS — Valentine's Day passed without anyone showing up for a sex and suicide party allegedly planned by a Klamath Falls man through Internet chat rooms, the Klamath County sheriff said Tuesday.

Deputies watching over the green and white mobile home where Gerald D. Krein Jr. lived with his parents talked to some relatives who came by to see Krein's mother. But no one was planning suicide with Krein, Sheriff Tim Evinger said.

"We feel the imminent danger has passed," Evinger said. "The sad part is we don't know how many people he encouraged. A reasonable person would dissuade these people."

On Monday, deputies seized three computers Krein had access to while staying at his cousin's house in Klamath Falls before moving in with his parents, Evinger said. The cousin, Joe Best, has been questioned by investigators, but has not been charged.

Klamath Falls police talked to Krein at the cousin's house last September after receiving a tip from a woman in Missouri that Krein was suicidal and might be trying to recruit people to join him. Krein denied being suicidal or in touch with the Missouri woman and suggested someone had hacked into his Yahoo! Internet account, police said. He was not charged.

A computer Krein used at his parents' house has been sent to the FBI to see whether it will reveal the names of people he contacted through e-mail, instant messages, chat rooms and news groups on the Internet.

"It probably will be an extended investigation," Evinger said.

Klamath Falls police Officer Mike Anderson, who went over Krein's computer before it was sent to the FBI, said he saw news group postings seeking a group of more than 20 women to join him for a sex and suicide party along with some responses questioning why he wanted more than 20. Anyone interested was asked to send him an e-mail.

"There were some derogatory statements made toward him," Anderson said. "There were a couple people who wanted more information."

Authorities have said Krein told a woman in Canada that he was in touch with 31 people about a Valentine's Day party where women, some bringing their children, would join him for sex, then commit suicide by hanging from the neck naked.

Based on a tip from that woman, sheriff's deputies arrested Krein on Feb. 9 at his parents' home.

He made similar Internet overtures while living in Texas in 2000 and in Sacramento, Calif., in 2003, authorities have said. Investigators have heard from five women who said they were in touch with Krein. The women are from Virginia, Missouri, Georgia, Portland, and a suburb of Toronto, Canada.

Defense attorney Evelyn Merritt said Krein would enter innocent pleas on Thursday when he is arraigned in Klamath County Circuit Court on indictments alleging one count of solicitation to commit murder and four counts of solicitation to commit manslaughter.

"Both he and his mother are pretty upset," Merritt said.

Krein has been held in the Klamath County Jail under special observation and is separated from the other prisoners. Bail was set at \$100,000.

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