

OPINIONS

Letters to the Editor

Director of GLBA explains why

Editor:

According to a recent survey of Massachusetts public schools, students hear an average of 33 homophobic slurs per day. About one-third of teen age suicides are related to issues of sexual orientation.

GLBT students are more likely to attempt suicide, more likely to drop out of school, more likely to be assaulted than their heterosexual counterparts. These students face incredible pressure every day of their lives.

We Are Family '98, a conference for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered youth and their allies, was intended to be a brief and educational break in the pressure.

Unfortunately, the level of anger and protest directed at the university and at me personally from around the region and indeed across the country made it clear that if the conference continued, it would be held at the center of a firestorm of homophobic intolerance, in a media circus, and at the expense of our goals for the event.

With great sadness, and with a commitment from Dr. Bataille that the university supports the continued work of the GLBA Program in this area, we cancelled the conference. There was no conspiracy. No secret meetings were held. We simply made the best decision we could, focusing first and foremost on the safety and well-being of the young people we had invited to campus.

Readers who are interested in a professional journalist's report may want to look at PlanetOut's coverage, which can be found on the Web at <<http://www.planetout.com/pno/news/planet/archive.html>> for 5 June 1998.

Melynda Husky

A thank you from Friends of Gladdish

Editor:

I wish to thank all the 105 people who responded to Friends of Gladish May 1 mailing in the Pullman Disposal bills. We appreciate their contributions of money and offers of help.

Our need for more community support continues. We are trying to raise funds for roof repairs, elevator, back stairs to the parking lot and additional handicapped access which we hope to get under way this construction season.

People living in apartments and those who lost their remittance envelopes can still contribute by mailing checks to Friend of Gladish, P.O. Box 231, Pullman, WA 99163. Annual memberships are \$25, life memberships \$500—any amount is welcome.

Gladish Community Center is an economic and cultural asset to Pullman that deserves broad-base community support. An estimated 500 people a day use the building, about 200 of them children. An estimated 100 people earn all or part of their livelihood there. Activities using the building include child care, preschool and after-school care, a private school, dance classes, Washington Idaho Symphony, artist's studios, Whitman County Historical Society Archives, plus several small businesses and others.

With the improvements we hope to make, the building will better be able to fulfill its potential as a first class facility. So far, we have carried on the project solely with rentals, private donations and loans. No tax money has been involved.

A number of people have given hundreds of hours to give Pullman the Community Center its residents asked

for. It is time for Pullmanites to get behind this effort with financial support. Again, our thanks to all the civic minded citizens who have given of their money, time and labor to help us.

Lenna Harding

Support initiative 686 call...

Editor:

Funding a college education for young adults is a private matter except in Washington State. If divorced parents in Washington disagree about the financing of a college education for their children, this state believes the courts shall make the decisions regarding the amount of college support a parent will pay. Courts regularly enforce Washington State law (RCW 26.10.090) whereby "the court shall exercise its discretion when determining whether and for how long to award post secondary (college) educational support..."

The Supreme Court of Pennsylvania ruled in 1995 a similar law in their state was unconstitutional "Neither the United States Constitution nor the Pennsylvania Constitution provides an individual right to post secondary (college) education" and this law classifies young adults according to the marital status of the parents, establishing for one group an action to obtain a benefit enforceable by court order that is not available to the other group. The relevant category under consideration is children in need of funds for a college education. "Ultimately, we can conceive of no rational reason why those similarly situated with respect to needing funds for college education should be treated unequally."

In Washington, married parents

cannot be court ordered to pay for college but divorced parents can. There is an unfair presumption that non-custodial parents will not support their children's college educational goals and therefore must be compelled to do so. This is biased and blatantly not true. There are parents who will and parents who won't, married or divorced. I always thought the constitution of the United States and of the State of Washington held that all citizens are to be treated equally under the law.

There will always be difficult decisions for parents who believe in teaching young adults financial responsibility while achieving the goals of a college education. Initiative 686 lets the parents decide. The Official Ballot title reads, "Shall courts be barred from ordering any divorced parents to pay support for the post-secondary education of their dependent children over eighteen years of age"

Please support Initiative 686 - Call 206-233-9472 for your petition.

Dan R. Antoni

Sen. has twisted set of morals

Editor:

I am sitting here wondering where Rep. Marc Boldt and Rep. Bob Sump's Christian morality and concern were when there was a Holocaust revisionist on campus claiming that millions of lives were just a historical miscalculation. The cancellation of the GLBTA conference is yet another sad lapse in our school's commitment to diversity.

Even sadder is the administration's inability to step forward and honestly (and consistently) say who was responsible for the cancellation. To me, this is worse press for WSU than any threatened picketing.

What prospective student would want to go to a school where a whole section of the community is shut out? Could the GLBTA hold their conference off-campus? Would that be more appealing to the conservative groups?

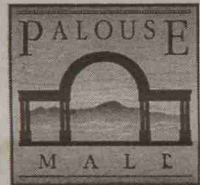
If Holocaust revisionists are allowed free speech on campus, why aren't the GLBTA?

Julie M. Frank

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