

# Gays don't quite have it rosy in US, WSU

Editor:

This letter is in response to Jocelyn Silva's recent column "Homosexuals have it rosy at WSU" in the Sept. 9 issue of the Daily Evergreen.

I agree with some of Jocelyn's arguments, for instance, gays and lesbians can and do make great parents. But, what relevance does this have to the climate WSU offers to its sexual minorities? WSU has come a long way in the past few years. With the addition of the GLBA Center in the basement of the CUB, WSU has given a place for us (gays, lesbians, et al) to hang out, participate in a gay community, read great books and periodicals, and educate our fellow students with Speakers Bureaus, etc. But does this center make WSU "rosy" for its gay students? *Hardly.*

Getting ASWSU committee status was a great feat for the GLBA. Four very brave, students sat up in front of a room full of 300 supporters/non-supporters fielding questions and comments such as "Homosexuals have a 90 percent higher chance of becoming murderers than heterosexuals." But, you say WSU is "rosy" for homosexuals...hmmm.

Last semester, our African-American ASWSU president, Jesse Harris, and several African-American law students at Gonzaga University received hate mail directed toward their color of skin. A saving grace was that our university, as well as society in general, had no second

thoughts about how this situation should be handled. Being prejudiced against Blacks is not accepted anymore, not publicly anyway. Furthermore, a public address was made in the campus newspaper from the administration, as well as from Jesse Harris himself. The press concluded that this kind of bigotry would not occur on this campus, and that WSU was a university dedicated to "diversity" (gays and lesbians were not mentioned).

Recently, WSU has been under the attack of White supremacists. These people have posted signs on campus about the need to preserve the "White race." This was just last week, and I can count two columns that have already been written on this subject. These pieces focused on the importance of finding out who did this and stopping it right away.

Last semester the gay and lesbian community was attacked daily in our liberal, PC Evergreen. Does the name Peter Himmell ring any bells? His opinion columns accused homosexuals of being "pedophiles and murderers," while any semi-educated person who cares enough to look up the facts would know that the vast majority of pedophiles are *heterosexual males.*

For the most part, his suggestions were along the lines of "stay in the closet where you and your lack of morals and sick unnatural habits belong." Yes, there were a few people who wrote in to tell him how uneducated he was, but did the administration ever stand up and voice

their intolerance for this behavior? Nope.

Jocelyn goes on to say two women can walk down Glenn Terrell Mall holding hands and even frequent entertainment establishments together, here on the Palouse, and feel some degree of safety. Even if this were true, what about gay men? Jocelyn, are you aware that numerous acts of violence occurred at WSU last year, due to someone's suspicion of another being "gay"? A study done by New York City's Anti-Violence Project in March of 1995 reported that from 1993-1994 physical assaults rose 12 percent, police verbal/physical abuse rose 25 percent, and sexual assaults were up 47 percent against gays and lesbians in nine reported cities (Anti/Lesbian Violence in '94: National Trends, Analysis, and Incident Summaries).

These are cities like San Francisco and New York where the numbers of gay and lesbian residents is quite high. Yet, Pullman, of all places, is "rosy" for homosexuals. Go figure.

You are correct, Pullman and WSU are coming along in the fight for equality. After all, we are the 15th school in the United States to have a Gay and Lesbian Center with a full-time appointed staff member. Although the US has also seen plenty of advances in women's and minorities' rights, I wouldn't say that the US is a "rosy" place to reside for women, African-Americans, Chicano/Latinos, Asian-Americans/Asian Pacific Islanders, or any other minority group or person of color. WSU is "rosy" for the majority... people with skin and gender privileges (a.k.a White males) and that is it. The rest of "us" are merely "tolerated."

Kristin C. Manum

# If marriage is so bad, why would lesbians want it?

Editor:

I am writing in response to Fekadu Kiros' article titled, "Senators decide on queers' fate" in the Sept. 16 issue of The Daily Evergreen.

When I first read the article I was quite puzzled by the spirals of directionless opinions(not unlike many articles in the Evergreen). So I read it another time, and decoded some of the angry messages contained therein.

Then I was even more confused.

Why do you spend the first part of the column upset because same-sex marriages are being banned by the Defense of Marriage Act, and then spend the second part of it explaining that marriage is an unhealthy thing, anyway? Why would you want more of something you feel is bad?

**If you're looking through the eyes of a feminist lesbian, heterosexual marriage might seem like a subordinate place for women.**

Maybe, you feel we heterosexuals have done such a poor job with this thing called marriage, that we should forfeit it and hand it over to the homosexuals for a turn. After all, "the statistics show 50 percent of marriages (all heterosexual, mind you) end up in divorce."

And what was that about marriage being "the pot of patriarchy," placing women in a "subordinated position?" What position is that? The only position I see a married woman in is that of one who, with her husband, has a mutual voice in a household she chose to be a part of when she said, "I do." But, I guess that goes back to whose view of marriage you have. If you're looking through the eyes of a feminist lesbian, heterosexual marriage might seem like a subordinate place for women. But, I'm sure the mar-

ried women on this campus might be a little distraught at you calling them "subordinate" to their husbands. This isn't the 1920's.

One more quick point—you quoted a statistic showing three out of four Americans oppose same-sex marriages. This is called popular opinion. Maybe that's why our government passed the Defense of Marriage Act. You see, our government has the job of representing the people's views.

This may not always hold true, but apparently in this case, the members of congress are earning their pay. Of course, you stated in your article that our government is an "institution which is already unsuccessful." Maybe you should get away from this "institution" and start a new one, somewhere below Australia.

I hear that penguins don't have a problem with same-sex marriages.

Hallelujah, America is safe!

Andy Guyer

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