

# OP-ED

## Sexual McCarthyism

By Christian Sinderman  
Guest Columnist

The anti gay rights initiatives presently before the citizens of Washington are works of blatant discrimination, wholly rooted in arbitrary, personal prejudice, and are largely unconstitutional.

In what would amount to sexual McCarthyism, gays throughout the state would be subject to the cruel whims of narrow-minded employers, co-workers and landlords if these tragic pieces of legislation are enacted. Behind an eminence front of morality, such individuals would be free to deny employment, housing, and a myriad of other rights and opportunities to qualified candidates based solely on their private pursuits. Victims of this vile discrimination would be left without legal recourse against such bigotry.

The mere possibility of codifying homophobia in Washington is ethically abhorrent, not to mention legally tenuous. Acts of unadulterated discrimination don't sit well with the US Constitution. A similar initiative passed in Colorado in 1992 has been rendered impotent and unenforceable by a judicial system which thankfully does not answer to the harpy cries of the Christian Right.

To demonstrate the absolutely baseless and arbitrary nature of these initiatives, it is useful to apply the same motives to different contexts.

Imagine if a group decided that joining a fraternity was an immoral and unhealthy act, leading to degradation of commonly held behavioral mores. Certainly, some people may feel this way, but if any were to go so far as to propose a measure largely criminalizing rush week, forbidding outreach and education about the Greek system, and affording the opportunity for employers to fire workers based on their fraternal allegiance, it would be literally laughed off the ballot.

If indeed homosexuality is genetically determined, as is increasingly evident, these proposals begin to smack of the same malignant bigotry employed by many to justify segregation, slavery, even ethnic cleansing. Is it not so far a mental leap as one would imagine.

Consider an organization that determines that individuals of English ancestry are predisposed to certain behavior, and display phenotypes not compatible with the organization's moral agenda. Aware of the stigma attached to outright lynching, they pursue a legislative path to realize their dream of a society where the Anglican genotype is relegated to a legitimized underclass, banished from desirable housing and employment, and denied the breadth of rights enjoyed by those who are not genetically tainted.

If these examples sound ludicrous, apply Initiative 608 and 610 to the same test. They are just as preposterous and insulting.

The proponents of these mean-spirited documents allege that they believe in equal rights. That is a lie.

There is no equality to be found in the denial of due process. There is no equality in the defamation of a segment of society through hateful legislation. There is no equality in denying freedom of speech to educators.

If we ban awareness of homosexual lifestyles, what is to prevent future proposals barring awareness and understanding of other cultures, religions and races (already scantily represented) incongruous with the pipe dream of a heterosexual, Christian society?

America's rich and diverse history is tarnished by the mistakes our forebears made in denying basic liberties to minority groups. And while we are not wholly accountable for the ignorance and prejudices of the past, we must emerge the wiser as a result. The terrible fact is there are some individuals who do not yet comprehend the danger inherent in seeking moral and legal justification for their personal prejudices.

To peer into the private lives of our neighbors and co-workers, in a sinister campaign to criminalize their actions, is nothing short of a witch hunt. It is certainly illegal.

We can only hope the citizens of Washington are aware of the evils of this attempt at legalized discrimination, and will refuse to tolerate it.

## Three brothas in lecture



ISAMU JORDAN

Besides, why do you always find a way to wake me up right when me and the Black Panthers are about to take on the Klu Klux Klan on the Family Feud? Huey P. Newton was about to go for the steal and —

Quincy: What goes on in that nap-surrounded brain of yours? And when are you going to cut your hair? Pee, your crop looks nasty.

Pee Wee: So does your sista but I'd swing an episode with her.

Quincy: What'd you say about my sister? Do you know I will rip your spine out of your body like my name was Sub Zero?

Pee Wee: Did I say your sista? I met that sista on the new Salt and Pepa video. You know, the one wit the creamy peanut butter skin and the bad-mamma-jamma boo-tay.

Quincy: Yeah, she was fine and the booty was on hit, but her teeth look like she got hit in the mouth with a spiked bat.

Pee Wee: Whassup "D," what's the word for the day?

Dallas: Nocturnal. Mi amigo negro, I'm tired. I stayed up all night watching that Bugs Bunny marathon.

Quincy: Dallas, why are you always so late for class?

Dallas: Dog, why you ridin' me? At least I came.

Quincy: I just want you to make sure you don't get caught up.

Dallas: Thanks dad. Anyways, what'd I miss?

Pee Wee: Professor Monotony gave us a paper to write.

Dallas: What about?

Quincy: Some junk about Black History Month.

Pee Wee: "Q," why you always talking down Black History Month? This a celebration for our people.

Quincy: On the contrary young brotha, Black History Month is not for Blacks.

Pee Wee: Wait a minute. You lost me. I thought you said Black History Month isn't for Blacks.

Quincy: That's what I said.

Pee Wee: Please enlighten us.

Quincy: My pleasure. Let me break it down for you. Black History Month is a gift to Africans in America. It's an attempt to requite us for the lack of Black History in American history books. If the historical contributions of Black people were appreciated enough to be recorded in these texts, there would be no need for Black "His Story" Month. It ain't nothing but guilt relief.

Quincy: Pee Wee, wake up. Why're you always sleeping in class?

Pee Wee: I can't help it, homeskillet. Professor Monotony's lecture is like a lullaby.

Pee Wee: "Q" you starting to sound like Joe Isuzu kid who was talking that jive about racism in the Evergreen last week.

Dallas: I think homie was right on the money. He was just a little too militant about it.

Quincy: Militant. Ya'll kill me with that word. He ain't militant, that brotha was just speaking up, and I support him.

Dallas: We support him, don't get me wrong. But Y.T. don't want to see that nigga, my fault Quincy, that brotha, gettin' all radical and stuff.

### "On the contrary young brotha, Black History Month is not for Blacks."

Quincy: But he wrote despite and we heard what he was saying.

Pee Wee: That's true.

Quincy: Back on the subject, Black History Month is a diversion from the real issue. Why are textbook writers, educators, and school boards so unwilling to include people of color in the curriculum of our children's education? And if this society is such an advocate of multiculturalism, and cultural pluralism, then why don't we have a Native American History month? Hell, they founded this land, and the textbooks say they ain't much more than savage scalpers. Why don't we learn about Chief Sequoyah and other great Native American leaders?

Dallas: Who?

Pee Wee: Isn't that the guy who invented the Cherokee alphabet?

Quincy: Right. And what about all the other people who live in this country? Surely White people are not the only contributors to historical progress.

Pee Wee: That's true, but what about the opportunity for us to learn more about our culture and history?

Quincy: That's a hot one. You mean to look me in the eye and tell me, with a straight face, that the only time to celebrate your culture is on an appointed month — the shortest month of the year even. Black culture should be a daily routine for us. Other people are welcome to observe our culture, but I'm soaking in my history everyday.

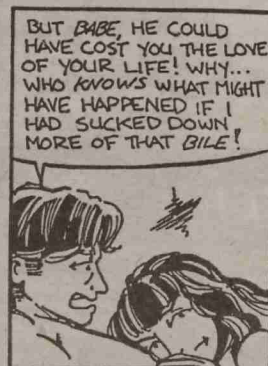
Pee Wee: What about the efforts of the Black History Month Task Force?

Quincy: Those efforts are greatly appreciated, those brothas and sistas are doing good work. But why limit it to one month? Black history flows through us in the way we walk, in the way we talk, act, dress, the food we eat, the music we listen to. It does not come around once a year. We make history everyday, therefore we should reflect it just as often. Black History Month ain't for us because, whether ya'll know it or not, we're celebrating Black History Year, all day everyday.

Dallas: I feel you dog.

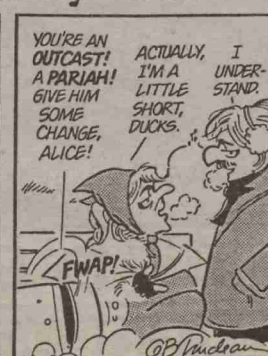
Quincy: I knew you would.

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Student Publications Office: Room 113, Edward R. Murrow Communications Center, Pullman, WA 99164. (509) 335-4573. Third class postage paid at Spokane, WA.  
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