

points of view

# How about a 'race-free' setting?

WHAT WOULD those '60s radicals say if they were back in Ann Arbor today?

Maybe they'd raise their fists in support of the new "sensitivity." Or maybe they'd throw some Molotov cocktails through somebody's window.

But they sure wouldn't recognize that Midwestern bastion of liberalism that was home to the protesters of the Vietnam era. The times they are a changing.

After trying to outlaw "racism" on campus last year by passing a policy that made a mockery of the First Amendment, officials of the Big U have now decided to educate it out of their hand-picked students.

On Monday Big Blue became the first college in the state to require

students to take a course on racial or ethnic intolerance before they can graduate.

The requirement applies to students enrolled in the College of Literature, Science and the Arts — that's about 18,000 students, more than half of the university's enrollment.

They'll be given a variety of courses to choose from, but each course must address the meaning of race, ethnicity and racism; racial and ethnic intolerance in this country and elsewhere; and comparisons of discrimination, based on race, ethnic origin, religion, social class and gender.

WHILE ALL OF this sounds good on paper and makes it look like U-M



Jack Gladden

is determined to "do something" about racism, I suggest a different approach. Instead of ruffling up the curriculum even more with what one report estimated could be as many as 60 to 70 different courses dealing with the subject, why not just refuse to admit anyone who is a racist?

Just add one question to the application form: Are you a racist? If a student checks "yes," he's out. Big

Blue already has the toughest admission standards of any public university in the state. Adding one more requirement wouldn't change things that much, and it would probably make life even easier for administrators who decide who gets in and who doesn't.

Of course the applicants who really want to get into the place might lie when answering the question.

So how about this? Ann Arbor aspirants (Remember Ann Arbor? The pot capital of the '60s?) can now check a box on their admission applications electing to live in a drug-free, alcohol-free environment? Why not a racism-free environment?

Just add one little box to the application form: "I prefer a roommate who is not a racist." Yeah, that'd do it.

You could also choose to live in a dorm with others who are non-sexists, non-Democrats (or non-Republicans, depending on your political orientation), non-hunters, non-vegetarians, non-religious or non-atheists, non-pornography or non-censorship, non-Jewish or non-Christian or non-Muslim or non-Hindu (that list of "nons" could get pretty big, non-jock or non-egghead and on and on.

I MEAN, let's face it. You can't develop (and REQUIRE) courses to cover every single social issue that some special group feels is important. So, if America is really the "pluralistic" society that seems to be the vogue today (whatever happened to the "melting pot" concept, anyway?), then let's just separate every-

one into their only little niches and let them be as pluralistic as they wanna be.

At least the curriculum wouldn't be corrupted with courses that, as some U-M profs said when this same issue arose last year, amount to "forced political indoctrination of students."

Not to mention the fact that such an approach is an insult to the intelligence of students at one of the most prestigious universities in the country. If courses like this belong anywhere . . . and I'm not sure that they do . . . it's in grade school, not at Big Blue.

Jack Gladden is a copy editor at the Observer & Eccentric News-papers. He lives in Canton Township.

## from our readers

### Our park is being ruined

To the editor:  
I wish to add my voice to Joe Dorek regarding the despoliation of Heritage Park.

After the area was acquired, my wife and I determined to walk at least three miles a day, five days a week, all year, winter or summer, rain or snow.

We came to know where the wild flowers grew, where the springs, brooks and swamps were and observed a great deal of wildlife.

We were delighted that our administration was so enlightened and noble-minded as to preserve our heritage and keep development to a minimum.

But we neglected to remember the power of empire builders. By expanding facilities, a supervisor with a clerk can become a director with a staff and maintenance crew.

So as good Republicans we will add facilities and staff, with more taxes, and more taxes for maintenance and operation.

BY THE WAY has anyone considered what happens in winter, and these asphalt "chutes" become death defying slides? Can the city be sued? Will they just ban foot traffic?

The worst idea is the creation of some stagnant ponds on the flood plain, replacing a lot of oxygen producing vegetation, and displacing the wildlife.

The fox have already moved on, since four parking lots are being laid next to their den. So please leave the river course alone.

This is not to say that what has been done is not in good taste, but if we continue and the park is going to become a place that is "all things for all people," it will cease to be our Heritage.

James Watt,  
Farmington Hills

### Cover the 3rd party candidates

To the editor:  
I wanted to commend you for profiling State Senate candidate Steve Silver in the Oct. 11 issue.

The country seems to be in an anti-incumbent mood. But if the incumbent Republicans and Democrats are voted out, they'll just be replaced by Democrats and Republicans. Nothing will change.

The time is long overdue for voters to consider candidates of third parties like the Libertarian party.

Only they can be counted on to bring about genuine change.

Unfortunately, the news media seems to do all it can to hide the existence of third parties from the public. I hope that in the future you will continue to write about third party candidates, letting people know that there are indeed viable alternatives to the "Republicans."

Roger F. Hane,  
Farmington

### Thanks to all who help

To the editor:  
The Farmington Area Community Women would like to thank these local merchants who helped make our Mommy & Me Dance a success: IGA on Orchard Lake Road, Sweet Connection, Farmington Bakery, Kruger, Ground Round, T&L Printing and Moto Photo.

Mothers and children had a fun time dancing to the tunes played by Mike of Music to Go. Proceeds from

the dance will be turned back to the community in charitable ways.

FACW is a community service organization. The organization contributes to the community through financial support, services and various club social events.

To learn more about the group, call Michele at 477-5893.

Diane Matsons,  
Farmington Hills

### Motor safety isn't a joke

To the editor:  
Sharon Dargay's Sept. 10 article — "Life's a squeal behind the wheel" — was irresponsible.

The next time Sharon is balancing enchiladas on her lap and sipping coffee while cruising at expressway speeds, maybe she should munch on the fact that every 12 minutes a person is killed in a motor vehicle accident.

As she performs her "stop eye shadow go/stop blusher go/stop lipstick go" maneuver in bumper-to-bumper traffic, perhaps she should focus on the fact that 80 percent of deaths and serious injuries occur in cars traveling under 40 mph.

And as she does the "one-handed grope through grocery bags for taco chips while backing out of a parking space at the supermarket", maybe she should think about the fact that since 1978, about 17 percent of all traffic deaths have been pedestrian.

Motor vehicle crashes are the leading cause of death among Americans 1-40 years old. The number of people that die each year in cars, light trucks and vans compares to the number of American soldiers killed in Vietnam; equivalent to a 727 passenger jet crashing every day.

I wish Sharon's disregard for the responsibilities of operating a motor vehicle were not my concern. Unfortunately, my family has to share the road with her.

Mrs. J. D'Annunzio,  
Livonia

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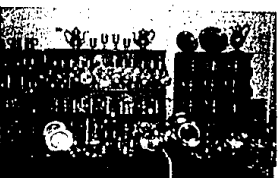
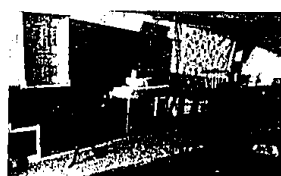


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