

Letters to the Editor:

Hypocrisy used in authors' argument

I find the recent Letter to the Editor by seniors Irene Arce and Sarah Downey less than impressive. Tackling an editorial by junior Jonathan Henry, whom they interpret as criticizing homosexuality itself, the authors engage in asinine hypocrisy. In apparent defense of homosexuality, they show scant respect for religion, seeking to write off the concept with paltry arguments that illustrate gross narrow mindedness, while accusing Henry of these same follies.

Their limited view apparently disallows them from any understanding of the billions of people who live observing laws written in books and regarding these laws as the law. The authors also find it incomprehensible that someone would offer his opinion, guided by the Word of God, on current sexual practices, while Arce and Downey themselves seem confused as to how much sex is too much. Forgive me, but anyone who reads the Bible would find this question easy to answer; ignorance (at least pretended) of the Bible's teachings does not make Henry's argument lose any weight, nor does the pot at one extreme calling the kettle at the other black.

"An excess of Puritanism" is how Arce and Downey describe Henry's assertion that there is too much sex in this society. I guess AIDS, the myriad of other STDs, teen-age pregnancies, abortions, prostitution or pornography must come from that hole in the Ozone layer (good news, I hear it's closing up). I can only hope that in

implying that sexual practices today are permissible, Arce and Downey do not think they represent the mainstream.

This not mentioning the condemnation of this society's sexual practices in the Bible, the belief in which is a cornerstone of Henry's argument. If you don't believe in the Bible, I suggest that you "worry about yourself," to borrow from the last worthwhile thing I read, which had to be less recently than the letter that I am addressing. Offering a final statement that I imagine they thought was convincing, and which one would expect to be well supported in their letter, the authors state that religion is irrational, leaving the hoped-to-be-rational itself, yet forever private contemplation that they had to come to this conclusion beyond us.

I can only fault Henry in his lack of assertion in stating whether he criticizes homosexuality. I do not fault him for doing so in the context of this argument, for, as Arce and Downey (despite their impressive Latin) miss, his argument does not rely on it; rather, I fault him for not saying it if he wanted to. I come from an entire culture that criticizes homosexuality, and if Arce and Downey think that homosexuals are anything near brutalized in the "Land of the Free," they are lacking the perspective that is a prerequisite for making such broad statements, resulting in their inaccuracy.

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Don't just dismiss values you don't like

If you think that snobbishness on this campus exists solely in superficial things, look again. The sort of deep-rooted intellectual bigotry to which I refer was manifested quite clearly in last week's issue of The Collegian with the Letter to the Editor by Irene Arce and Sarah Downey, titled "Rationality needed to criticize homosexuality."

Said article was full of such wonderful statements as: "Religion is irrational, and therefore, it cannot be used to sustain an argument."

I immediately noted the signs on every page of The Collegian demanding that all students have rational opinions, as well as the incredibly rational behavior that I see every day on this campus: spending large amounts of cash for nothing, using water guns, writing columns.

Such questions are so basically existential that they get one thinking — what's it all about, anyway? I mean, what sort of world exists that can have Ross Perot and Christmas puddings, French and Chinese?

In context, an appeal to rationality is incredibly amusing. Rationality can exist only if there is something about which to be rational: reality, or truth. And yet, in a spurt of post-modern immaturity Arce and Downey could only ask questions. Or, as in Monty Python's "Argument" sketch, practice simple contradiction, "No it's not!"

And so we have this marvelous mass of nothingness, which we might as well call Bob. The moment we toss out an idea, he gobbles it up because it doesn't taste exactly like himself, which doesn't taste like anything at all because he is nihil (Bob now changes his name to Ursula

because he enjoys shifting ground).

Back to reality and the world of something: I'm not even making an argument here about religion or about homosexuality, but about the free exchange of ideas, an idea which intellectual elitists so often claim for themselves but fails miserably in performance when the ideas of others don't match their own.

I'm sure that these two and others arguing for "rationality" would claim a great deal of "open-mindedness;" yet how open is a mind that says, "Religion is irrational?"

The true and final failure of this appeal to reason is that the system that supposedly must be overthrown (anything even remotely traditional, including the existence of objective reality and morality) gives support to all such ideas of critique, and such critique itself is rendered powerless if the system falls.

C.S. Lewis said: "If my duty to my parents is a superstition, then so is my duty to posterity...If the pursuit of scientific knowledge is a real value, then so is conjugal fidelity. The rebellion of new ideologies **against** the Tao is a rebellion of the branches **against** the tree: if the rebels could succeed they would find that they had destroyed themselves."

It's not an either/or proposition, but a *both/and*. If the value of human dignity exists, so may the value of sexual purity. That's not to say that all values are equally valid, but it does mean that, if you have any ideological integrity, you can't ignore them or label them "irrational" just because you don't like them.

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