

Letter From Ann Arbor by John Attarian

Libraries of Propaganda



Oliver Wendell Holmes used to say that upon first glance at the books in a library "one gets a notion very speedily of the [reader's] tastes and the range of his pursuits." One can only imagine what Holmes would have thought about our "range of pursuits" had he visited the University of Michigan's Harlan Hatcher Graduate Library, which I use heavily as a visiting scholar, last October during Gay History Month.

On the walls of the foyer behind the Grad Library's main entrance are several large (roughly 4.5' x 5') display cases, normally used for showcasing art or rare books or to educate patrons in proper care for books by displaying varieties of book damage (vandalism, food and drink spills, insect pest damage, broken spines from mishandling, etc.). Throughout October, however, most were propagandizing for homosexuality.

The second one on the left wall contained a rainbow flag (horizontal orange, red, yellow stripes) on loan from Common Language Bookstore, a local gay-lesbian bookstore, with a large "Gay History Month" sign, plus two books on gay-lesbian role models, *The Gay 100* and *Uncommon Heroes*.

The next case addressed homosexual literary figures: black lesbian feminist Audre Lorde; Pier Paolo Pasolini; and Yukio Mishima, a Japanese homosexual who received a feminizing upbringing from a smothering mother, rebelled against it, and ended up committing *seppuku* in 1970 after giving a fiery ten-minute speech to an unappreciative audience of Japanese servicemen at the Ichigaya military headquarters. Oddly enough, they missed the biggest pervert of all: the bisexual, sodomy-obsessed Marquis de Sade, of *Justine*, *Juliette*, and *The 120 Days of Sodom* fame and godfather of modernity. But perhaps not so oddly. Sade makes a pretty unconvincing martyr, and as I know from a conversation with Catharine Mackinnon a few years back, he's none too popular among

antipornography feminists.

Moving on to music, the next display case showed the ballet dancers Rudolf Nureyev, Diaghilev, and Nijinsky; composers Tchaikovsky, Benjamin Britten, and Leonard Bernstein. The mathematics display on the rear wall featured computer pioneer Alan Turing, who headed the British team of mathematicians at Bletchley that broke the German "Enigma" machine cipher during World War II. On the right wall, the Pop Culture, Sports and Politics display showed Greg Louganis and Harvey Milk.

Best of all was the Michigan case, on the right wall, between the right stairway to the second floor and the entrance to the circulation desk, making it almost impossible to avoid seeing if you were heading upstairs or going to charge out books or request a book search or recall. Here were portraits, biographical information, and so on for the university's directors of its Lesbian Gay Bisexual Programs Office (LGBPO), part of the Division of Student Affairs. But the chief attraction in this last display case, and my favorite, was a banner packed with leftist and gay political buttons. Clinton-Gore buttons, portraits of Martin Luther King; "Housing is a right not a

privilege"; "Pro-choice is pro-life yours and mine"; "Silence = Death"; "Born Again Pagan"; "U.S. out of my uterus"; "No little Dutch boy is going to plug this dyke"; "If you're a pro-lifer, then adopt an interracial mongoloid or shut the f--- up!" and much else.

In all my years as a student (1976-1984) and employee (1985-1990) of the university, I never saw anything like this. Fortunately, it's history; when I stopped by the next day to return some books and photocopy the following data from this year's university budget, the homosexual display cases had been cleaned out, except for the music exhibit. Perhaps someone on the library staff has a crush on Nureyev.

The Gay History Month display was arranged jointly by the Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian Library Association (BGALLA) and the University Library Exhibits Committee. The unavoidable conclusion is that promoting homosexuality is the official policy of the University of Michigan, a public, taxpayer-supported institution. "U.S. out of my uterus"—my tax dollars at work.

They're at work promoting homosexuality at the university in other ways, too, through the good offices of the Les-

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bian Gay Bisexual Programs Office. Located in the Michigan Union, LGBPO provides educational programming and events, information and referral services, support groups, a resource library, a speaker's bureau (one doubts, somehow, that speakers not openly homosexualist would be scheduled), mentorship for new students, faculty and staff, etc. The "resources" it furnishes include *OUTspoken*, a locally published gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender monthly newspaper. I picked up a copy of the November issue from a literature rack in the Division of Student Affairs front office. It denounces the "radical Christian right-wing" and "arch-homophobe Senator Jesse Helms" and deplores the banning of *Heather Has Two Mommies* in schools. A feature article purports to explode "the Christian nation fallacy." There are also lesbian comics, a calendar of events, and

so on. LGBPO's booklet of area resources for lesbians, gays, and bisexuals, available on the same rack as *OUTspoken*, mendaciously claims impartiality with a disclaimer on its back cover: "Publication of listings in this guide is done as a public service and does not imply endorsement or affiliation." Really?

The university's general funds budget for the Ann Arbor campus budgeted \$124,343 for LGBPO in fiscal year 1990-91, rising to \$133,008 in fiscal 1994-95. To put this in perspective, in fiscal 1990-91 Student Services had a general funds budget of only \$89,362 for the Office of Ethics and Religion. Meanwhile, the College of Literature, Science and the Arts budgeted \$1,118,897 for Classical Studies and \$59,591 for Judaic Studies. In fiscal 1994-95 the general funds figures for these programs are: Classical Studies, \$2,098,680; Judaic Studies, \$70,792, and the Office of Ethics and Religion, nothing—it disappeared from the general funds budget in 1993-94.

In 1990-91 state appropriations were 43.6 percent of the Ann Arbor campus's general funds budget, meaning taxpayers paid \$54,514 for the Lesbian Gay Bisexual Programs Office. For 1994-95, the state taxpayers' share was 37.3 percent, so their share in funding LGBPO was \$49,612. The figures are less important than the principle. Michigan taxpayers are being forced to finance a militant ideology of sexual perversion, which few of them endorse.

If how an institution spends its money reveals its priorities, and common sense says it does, the University of Michigan is more concerned with providing "support" for student perversity than with providing ethical and religious counsel, and legitimizing perversion is more important than studying the history and culture of the people who gave us Moses and monotheism.

Judging from the lack of outrage over all this, most Michigan taxpayers either have no idea this is happening or don't care. Nor, one suspects, do the alumni, thousands of whom send the university millions of dollars every year, and hundreds of whom make the pilgrimage to town every fall, with their fluttering Michigan car pennants, Michigan sweatshirts and block-letter M and "Go Blue!" buttons. Their awareness of what's going on at their alma mater seldom goes beyond their beloved Michigan football. One only hopes that some of these happy strollers down memory

lane swung also by the Grad Library on their way to or from the stadium.

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Letter From Alabama by Jeffrey Tucker

Crime and Moonshine



The jurors who tried the 14-year-old black boy who shot and killed three widows last year, one of them my own dear neighbor, found him guilty and gave him several life terms. By law, he got the maximum. He is too young for the death penalty. It is beyond me. If you are old enough to murder, you are old enough to pay the ultimate price.

As it stands, this sentence did not settle matters. Three Christian women are dead, and nobody really believes his punishment will deter a future case. Death, quickly and publicly inflicted, might have. But not a lifetime of living at taxpayer expense in the prison community.

A year after the ghastly incident, the local newspaper finally printed the full story. The boy walked into the indoor flea market, demanded money from the owner behind the register, then shot her. He did the same to a shopper, and another shopper ran out the front. My neighbor, the only other person in the store still alive, turned toward the boy and said: "You're doing the Devil's work; stop in the name of Jesus!" He shot her in the head. She stumbled to the back of the store where she lay until the ambulance came. She died on the way to the hospital.

The boy had excuses. He lost his cool. He needed some money. When his friends asked if he had ever killed anyone, he was embarrassed to say no. No, a life in prison is not justice.

Tragedy has been central to Southern history for 135 years, so people have learned how to face it squarely while containing its repercussions. Downtown Opelika, for example, where the old railroad station still stands, was the scene

