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Response: Letters to the Editor

The Maine Campus

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Response

EQUAL TIME



The *Maine Campus* welcomes letters to the editor. Letters should be brief and include a name and telephone number. Names will be withheld only under special circumstances. "Anonymous" and open letters, although welcome, will not be published. The *Maine Campus* reserves the right to edit letters for libel, clarity, taste and to fit available space.

Apathy and the awareness crusade

To the editor:

I simply do not understand the "rationale" behind "Gay Jeans Day." Mr. Sabol, in Ms. McCann's article, seems to presume that all "clothes wearers" are one of two types: those who are supportive of the issue and those who oppose.

In our crusade to awareness, as you said, there is a large portion of the populace that will not care. How then will they be forced to face the issue? To make a choice? In effect how does one consider

an issue and take a stand when one is apathetic. This seems we as a society, might have a new form of social behavior, according to you. I propose that we plan the academic year (as we all are academians) to revolve around other such awareness activities (i.e. getting haircuts in support of the elderly, NOT wearing jeans in support of minorities, or breathing in support of vegetarians). All are just causes and should be seen equal to yours, don't you think.)

Also I would like to clear

up the issue of WMEB's proposed "Hat Wearing" for anti-support. Yes, this did happen once. Where you got the documentation that "three disc-jockeys" came up with this, I'd sure like to know, that one mention was quickly squelched. It has been and always will be WMEB policy to NOT take a stand on controversial issues.

Thank you for your consideration, and keep watching "60 minutes."

Jeremy A. Prescott
General Manager., WMEB-fm.

Reflections on bigotry

To the editor:

Being one who is sympathetic to the problems of the gay minority, as well as to other minorities, I would like to comment on your editorial byline Tuesday.

I too have just begun to see the anti-gay comments pertaining to this Friday (many of them written on bathroom doors), and they reflect a closed-minded bigotry that is scary. Like many emotional issues, it has been twisted and reduced into something different.

It is not, however, one's sexual preference that the jeans represent, but rather, whether or not you support the right of gays to be gay; or whether or not you support the right of anyone to be different than main-stream, Archie Bunker America.

Yet you chose in your comments and cartoons to put forth an interpretation that encourages students to treat the issue as a "joke" or "infringement". Of course we all want the right to wear blue jeans with out being subject to ridicule - but the problem isn't inherent in the blue jeans or in the sexual preference. The problem is in those who do the ridiculing.

So instead of criticizing the organizers of Gay Blue Jeans Day, why not direct your comments at those who do the ridiculing. Why not turn a potentially "abusive" day into an educational one.

It is a sad moment when a college student (who by definition should be open-minded) can no longer find the

guts to accept and be supportive of individuals different than him/herself.

Brent Snow
Bradley.

It's sick

To the Editor:

This Friday the 13th is definitely an unlucky day for U.M.O.

I really think it's too bad that I won't be able to wear pants on Friday (jeans are all I have).

The situation is really out of hand. It's infringing on my right to keep my legs warm. This Friday. We give these gays an inch and they take a mile: we were nice enough to cut down on the beating deaths of gays, and now they're taking over our wardrobe.

It's sick, and I'm disgusted!

Joe Park
Brewer

Afraid?

To the Editor:

The editorial and accompanying cartoon in Tuesday's *Maine Campus* strikes me as rather narrow-minded. First of all, the wearing of jeans on Friday is intended only to express support for gay rights, not to indicate one's sexual preference. Secondly, I fail to see how anyone is being imposed upon. What are you afraid of? A university is supposed to be a place of learning, of free and open exploration and exchange of ideas, and hopefully a place in which bigotry and stereotypes are exposed as the shallow forms of thinking which they are.

James Johnson

How about it, Professor Hartgen?

To the Editor:

So Professor Vincent Hartgen is opposed to censorship is he? (*Maine Campus*, Nov. 11) Then in all fairness he should present a photographic display celebrating the male form during the month of December in the Memorial Union, or else I won't feel I've been given what I paid for. After all, didn't we all come here to gape at photographs of naked people?

When any student objects to those photos and then Professor Hartgen leaves them there, how on earth can he say the "prudish" are dictating from above? He is in the driver's seat in this instance and it seems to me that if

anyone is doing the dictating it is himself in person.

I am no prude, but his cavalier attitude to honest criticism is galling. I personally will shoot two rolls of black and white or color film, his choice, if Professor Hartgen will pose in the altogether for me. Then if he can't come up with an appropriate display for those who want some equality around here then we can use his pictures. Will he say that wouldn't be art? It seems to me that a refusal to pose on that basis will amount to a censorship judgment on his part as to what art is. Will he refuse on a whim? Then that means, does it not, that his whims are more important than mine. Ah, another case

of censorship/judgment. How about it Prof? Your place or mine?

Mary Hooper
Bangor

Support gays

To the Editor:

Tuesday's cartoon pertaining to "Blue Jeans Day" was a total misrepresentation of the day's purpose. It is *not* a "Wilde-Stein day where all the gays are supposed to wear jeans" as stated, but an opportunity to express support of gay rights by wearing jeans.

Stephanie Laurie
Wilde-Stein

Stand up for basic human rights

To the Editor:

Who's forcing Mr. Bondeson or Mr. Sandblom to do anything? They are the ones who decide whether or not to play the game. If they want to wear jeans on Friday they should do so. And if the Wilde-Stein Club makes them uncomfortable, that's too bad. The Wilde-Stein Club is not the only thing in their lives that will stand up and force them to take notice. If Mr. Bondeson and Mr. Sandblom haven't already learned that the world is still there even after they close their eyes, they'll learn it soon.

What's at issue here is not so much gay rights but simple human rights. A person's sexual preference should have no more or less status in

relation to his rights than does his religion, sex, color, or nationality. But in the case of homosexuals, their homes, their friends, and sometimes their very lives are placed in jeopardy by those who think differently.

If we're going to continue living together in this ever-crowding world, we are going to have to start making room

for each other. That includes gays, blacks, Jews, Russians, women, men, and everybody else.

So don't go discriminating against gays until you are prepared to say that you're against basic human rights. Support human rights - wear jeans on Friday!

Kit MacGregor
Old Town

A fool's sexual insecurity

To the Editor:

John Sandblom's brilliant satiric piece on "Jeans Day" almost had me fooled. The sarcasm with which he described the most extreme sickness of intolerance was almost perfect.

I know, however, that his

tongue was in his cheek when he mentioned his desire to punch gays in the face.

Only a fool, after all, would so publically disclose and willfully hold up to ridicule the pitiful insecurity of his own sexuality.

Dan Lourie
Orono

