

Dear Editor:

I would like to respond to the letter written by the people who call themselves "Humanists" in the November 19th issue of the "X-Press".

First of all, it would have served you well had you provided some examples of the "perceived" harassment by Feminists. Personally, I cannot recall any such incidents and if you are going to make such a strong statement against others, you really should provide some concrete examples. If you call people standing up and speaking for they believe is harassment, you are wrong. I would like to suggest, however, that perhaps it is you who is constantly harassing others with your childlike attitudes, petty personal attacks and repeated attempts to "bait" us. You seem to have an overabundance of energy which could best be put to use in more positive causes.

Secondly, your definition of Humanists makes absolutely no sense (along with paragraph four). This calls to mind another of Sarah MacLeod's letters which was illegible in places. If you feel so strongly about something, and feel you must share it, you should take caution in ensuring that it is readable.

In the Webster's Dictionary, "humanism" is defined as "a way of life centered on human interests or values." "Feminism" is the theory of the political, economical and social equality of the sexes. Humanism, as I see it, must include feminism if it is, in fact, centered on human interests. Anything of interest and value to women is a human interest (we are human) and feminism is concerned with women's advancement in a society predominantly concerned with male interests and values. It doesn't mean we are against men; only that we want to be equal to them (which is something we should not have to struggle for). Feminism is a pretty simple concept; however, people who feel threatened by it turn it into something that it is not, making it complex, exclusive to many and harmful to society. As Rebecca West wrote in 1913, "I myself have never been able to find out precisely what feminism is: I only know that people call me a feminist whenever I express sentiments that differentiate me from a doormat."

In regards to your opinion of feminists as aggressive and confrontational, you have, again, failed to provide examples. The only aggression or confrontation that I have witnessed is that in which feminists were the victims. You also must remember that when people are

personally attacked or backed into a corner, they will respond. Perhaps that is what you consider confrontation -- when the people you are trying to silence speak up.

In regards to the "movie", it seems to me that you "don't see the forest for the trees". Although you may see it as a silly satire which you have the right to show, you are, in fact, promoting the hatred, degradation and violence towards women (especially feminists) which the movie portrays.

Is this a humanist value? Those who are offended by it have good reason to be and you are criticizing them for exercising the very rights to which you so commonly refer. At no time, did we suggest that others are weak-minded or incapable of forming their own

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opinions. It is logical, however, that if the movie is to be shown on campus, it should be done in an educational light. It actually is a very good film for people with feminist theory to critique and since no one in the Soc/Anth Department offered to do this, we suggested that we would provide the evaluation.

Personally, I am sick of hearing the words "academic freedom". I feel it is a lame excuse used in offending others and a right which, I feel, you are abusing.

In closing, I would like to say that I believe you are just another part of the "Backlash" against feminism and encouraging you to voice your opinions causes me to feel very proud of myself and happy because I know I am doing a good job. Thank-you.

Libby Whelan

P.S. I didn't have the time to get people who support me to sign this, but I know they are out there and I am confident enough to sign alone.