A Parent’s Take on Recent Debates

Editors, The Weather Vane,

I am writing in response to Ken Roth’s “coming out” and all the verborosa that has transpired on your editorial pages since that date.

We live in an instant gratification society: instant food, instant money, instant entertainment, and yes, instant sex, running the gamut from pornography, to prostitution, to practicing homosexuality, to fornication, to adultery. Everybody has a right to have their “needs met”! It’s our right as Americans, even as American Christians.

Segments of the church are getting bogged down in this quagmire as well. It was refreshing to see that Harvey Yoder, campus counselor, was trying to make some sense out of this whole issue. I was also glad to see the physical education department leading the way and saying there are a few of us here that still hold to the church’s view. The point is not lost on which department of the college this did or did not come from.

I want to commend the Board of Trustees for the stand they have taken, even if it is unpopular with some faculty at EMU. I represent Mr. Joe Mennonite who is spending $23,000 to send my kid to EMU. I have a voice, too. Mennonite Church USA is much broader than a few specks of academia that dot the land.

Without my money and other parent’s like me, some of you in academia would not have the employment that you currently hold. I, for one, am tired of hearing and reading of all the brouhaha over the issue of practicing homosexuals and their relationship, or lack thereof, to the church. Every issue of The Weather Vane I open up, I find more people blaming away on this issue and some of the faculty are in the forefront in keeping it going. It stirs up the entire academic community and brings out all of the people in the woodwork who have a “bone to pick” with EMU over the past 40 years.

Academic freedom, like all freedom, comes with a price and with responsibility. Some people on the EMU staff seem to have a difficult time with this. I sent my kids to a church school because I thought the academic community would generally support the church’s position on life styles. Dialogue, is a fine thing. But dialogue, until you wear the other side down, is coercion. That seems to be some people’s objective since the Purdue statements came out a number of years ago.

Even though The Weather Vane is a student newspaper it has become a place for some “disgruntled” faculty to air their “dirty laundry”. I question the wisdom of using this venue for this kind of intra-faculty squabbling.

Jake Leichty, parent

A Statement from SGA

Dear Editors of The Weather Vane,

We, the Student Government Association, wish to express concern regarding the statement recently issued by the Board of Trustees in the Nov. 8 and 9 meetings. Although the statement does not represent a significant change in policy from previous expectations, we feel that the recent wording is threatening to EMU employees who may feel limited in their ability to practice their faith on campus.

The phrase “publicly advocate” has been a source of confusion and debate. We request clarification of what is to be included under the term “public.” Also, it is important for the EMU community to understand the motivation behind, and catalysts for, this statement.

Another key part of understanding this statement is more specific knowledge of its implications.

We ask for clarification on the ways in which we can expect the Board’s statement to be put into action. We consider the classroom a place where ideas are explored and the university a center of dis- cussion for the future leaders of the church. The educational experience is enhanced when all perspectives can be presented and carefully weighed by students. There are ways for EMU to maintain strong connections with the MC USA while allowing for open and honest discourse about controversial issues. As representatives of the student body, we desire to participate in the process of further understanding what this means.

Respectfully,

The Student Government Association

Group of Employees Affirms Board

To the Board of Trustees and The Weather Vane:

We, the undersigned, affirm the Board of Trustees calling for all EMU employees to adhere to, and support, the school’s statement on Christian lifestyle. We also affirm that the proper expression of intimate sexual life is in the covenant of marriage between a man and a woman.

We feel this isn’t much to ask of a Christian institution. Three thriving Christian schools of distinction—Wheaton, Messiah, Gordon—have similar expectations of all their employees. This is not meant to be a show of power or to create a battle of words, but a simple statement of what we believe is God’s will for Christians.

Respectfully,

Larry R. Martin
Lucinda Schlabach
Tom Baker
Greg Becker
Harlan delbrun
Robert D. Ronschley
Karen delbrun
Jenny Ulrich
Garret Brink

Mike Downey
Suzanne Martin
Beth Chenault
Paul D. Johnson
C. Eldon Kurtz
David N. Alger
Phil Guengerich
Doris Dunavant
Mike Dunavant

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Correct: In the Nov. 14 issue of The Weather Vane we mistakenly omitted the names of two Physical Plant workers. They are: John Murch on pg. 1 and Johan Weiss on pg. 4.

We apologize for the omission.