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EDITORIALS

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The balance weighs against the Klan.
A.C.L.U. president to address first amendment rights

By Jennifer Feldman
Independent

Monday, November 9th, SUB Lectures will be presenting Nadine Strossen, national president of the American Civil Liberties Union. Strossen has an enthusiastic interest in the First Amendment, which may shed light on the decision by the political science club to invite Colorado KKK leader, Shawn Slater, to speak during racial awareness week in February.

In January of 1991, the A.C.L.U. elected Strossen to be the first female president in the organization’s 71 year history. Strossen is a professor of constitutional law, Federal courts and human rights at New York Law School. She has served on the A.C.L.U. as a board member since 1983 and as general counsel since 1986. She has taught at Columbia and New York University law schools and practiced commercial litigation at several New York firms.

Strossen was the editor of the Law Review while she attended Harvard Law School and graduated magna cum laude in 1975. Throughout her education, her belief in the Constitution and human rights increasingly grew stronger.

Strossen’s stance on issues is described as a neutral position, although she insists on defending the rights of people regardless of their politics. “I think this is the most important organization in the country, if not the world,” Strossen says of the A.C.L.U. “To say that what we’re doing is controversial is to say the Bill of Rights is controversial. I want to emphasize the American in American Civil Liberties Union.”

Strossen has written numerous articles and book reviews that reflect this position as well as her concentrated belief in the Constitution of the United States.

Strossen is also a strong advocate of involving young people in the process of protecting civil liberties. She helped found a student A.C.L.U. chapter at New York Law School. Most recently, she has spoken at Duke University and the University of Virginia where she has made a notable impact.

Strossen plans to discuss Amendment Rights Monday evening with an emphasis concerning all the controversy surrounding the KKK and Fort Lewis College.

Andrea Doe, SUB Lectures Chairperson said she “thought it was really relevant to this campus to hear about First Amendment Rights.”

Doe also said that Strossen is an extremely busy person and that she only had one day open on her calendar for the month of December, yet she made the time to come to FLC. “I think it’s amazing she made the time to come to Fort Lewis,” stated Doe.

The lecture will be in the Fine Arts Auditorium at 7:00 p.m. There will be a $1 charge for students and $3 for non-students. The lecture is sponsored by the Student Union Board Lectures Committee and the Political Science Club.

Minority students speak out on Klan issue at Fort Lewis

By Kenneth Andre Cantu
Independent

The recent speaking invitation extended to Colorado KKK leader Shawn Slater has stirred up a lot of feelings among the FLC minority population.

Melissa Frank, a member of FLC’s black community, offered that, “I think them coming here is a lot different from them being in ‘the South’ because [I] was used to seeing them. Here, because of the Native American group, the Hispanic group, the Oriental people, it’s a lot different. I think [the Klan’s presence] will have a negative impact, in that people will feel frightened or inhibited in some way,” she explained.

“In my personal opinion,” offered Michelle Graham, of FLC’s Asian community, “I think that if the Klan comes it would be detrimental to the student body here.”

Some students would have been interested in Shawn Slater’s appearance at FLC. “I actually want to hear what [Shawn Slater] says” said Warren Lee of FLC’s Native American Indian community.

Many students who expressed their opinions were in agreement that the Klan should have the right to speak freely here on campus.

“I believe in the right to free speech,” said Frank, “but what the Klan is all about and what they say is inhibiting another group. So, I don’t think they should speak at FLC.”

“I think we will have people coming out-of-the-closet about racial issues.”

“Free speech is the constitutional right of all Americans,” Graham explained, “but all the ‘right to free speech’ says is that we can’t ban them. As far as I understand it, the K.K.K. isn’t asking to come here [FLC] is asking them.”

Whether or not the Klan’s presence on campus would interfere with the students’ education is an issue that was touched at an open forum last month. While there are people who think that the Klan’s presence wouldn’t interfere with the students education, the majority of those who expressed their opinions felt the Klan’s presence be an interference.

Graham offered that, “I think [their presence] would do both, because [the students education] is already interrupted by the issue. But also, if the Klan comes, it can enlighten certain people who don’t know what [the Klan’s] philosophies are.”

“The Klan’s visit to FLC will probably make people more aware of how people feel about each other,” said Lee, “and make students more conscious of how people are perceived.”

Another concern that some people have is the effect of the Klan’s visit to Fort Lewis. “Certain students may agree with the Klan’s philosophy, and join their movement. That could be really detrimental for the minorities on this campus. But, also, some good after-affects might be that some people listen to the Klan and disagree with the Klan’s philosophy which might enrich [those students'] education here.”

“I think we will have people coming out-of-the-closet about racial issues,” offered Frank.