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[Harambe Curriculum Proposal to the Curriculum Committee and President Alice Ilchman, October 1987]

Harambe, Sarah Lawrence College

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HARAMBE CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

TO

THE CURRICULUM COMMITTEE

AND

PRESIDENT ALICE ILCHMAN

OCTOBER, 1987

SUBMITTED BY THE HARAMBE COMMITTEE FOR CURRICULUM CHANGE

HARAMBE CURRICULUM PROPOSAL

OCTOBER, 1987

The views stated in the following proposal are a response to the lack of black and minority representation in the Sarah Lawrence College community. This problem is not limited to the College alone. It is a reflection of conservative U.S. politics under the current administration: Policy aimed at reversing the gains of the civil rights movement through efforts to eliminate Affirmative Action and federally funded programs for blacks and minorities. The effects of these policies on campuses across the country can be seen in the steady decline of black and minority enrollment over the past five years.

We recognize recent attempts made by the College to address the needs of students whose unique backgrounds might otherwise exclude them from the benefit of a four-year college experience. However, we feel these efforts must be integrated with a curriculum designed to address the needs of these students, as well as the College's black and minority population. Changes in the curriculum should consist of the following:

- (1) A substantial increase in the number of black and minority faculty. The three black faculty do not adequately represent the group of people comprising the population in the region, the country or the world. There is a sizable pool of black and minority faculty in the New York area from which to choose.
- (2) A substantial increase in the number of courses dealing specifically with black and minority issues. The overwhelming student interest in the semester course "Racism and discrimination", taught by Mr. Horne, and "Women in Cross-Cultural Perspectives", taught by Ms. Oldenburg, clearly indicate that these issues

not only pertain to black and minority students, but are relevant in the lives of the majority of the student body as well. Courses in the Literature, Sociology, History and Political Science Department are especially needed.

- (3) A full or part-time advisor specifically to address the needs and concerns of black and minority students. The creation of such a position would alleviate the pressure on the few black faculty and staff, who are often thrust into this position due to the lack of available support systems in the College.
- (4) A substantial increase of black and minority representation in the College's two libraries. This includes additions to the library staff and an increase in the available resource materials. The Music Library in particular, should represent a wider range of black and minority music.

Please consider the following proposals as you prepare the agenda for the coming year. We are more than willing to work with you to see these changes come about.

-- Harambe Committee For Curriculum Change

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