

OPINIONS

Too much emphasis is too bad



DOUG HUGHES
Opinions Editor

The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual Association has been in the spotlight recently. The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transsexual, Transgendered Conference aroused the protesting passions of two people. This paper ran a few stories on the conference, and many people discussed sexual politics over coffee in local coffee shops. A few people wrote letters to The Summer Evergreen on this topic. Last year, the committee status of the GLBA sparked yelling sessions and discussions all over campus. After a few months, tensions have cooled. Anti-GLBA people have accepted the existence of the GLBA while they still want to get rid of it. GLBA people are happy to be in existence, but they don't exactly feel like family yet. The problem is one of over definition. Gays, lesbians and bisexuals are humans.

They have two eyes, two legs and the same internal organs as the rest of us. This follows for Blacks, Whites, Native Americans and all other Homo Sapiens. We are all the same. Same souls, same everything. While we are the same, however, we are visibly, and internally different. Some of us like rap while others like rock. Some of us like burgers while others prefer chicken. Some of us want to have sex with the opposite sex while some want to have sex with anyone. Some people are from the West side of the state while some are from the East side, or California. Discrimination often occurs because of visible signs of difference, skin color for example, or because of internal difference, sexual preference or political orientation for example. These differences, whether visible or internal, are not a persons entire being. This is why discrimination is so detestable. People may like rock music or vote Peace and Freedom, but that is their entire person. We have not yet found out what makes up a person. Many people argue that a soul is a series of experiences, while others argue that it is the creation of a higher being. Whatever people are, they are not one individual thing. This is, I feel, the basic resistance

factor for the GLBA in the Pullman area. Sure, many of the people who don't want to accept the GLBA cite religious reasons, but most do not. Most people just disagree with single aspect labeling. Gays, it seems, are just gays. Homosexuality is, seemingly, the single defining characteristic of their existence. It may not be, but this is the impression that is conveyed by having a GLBTT conference or a GLBA organization. Members of the Marketing Club are marketing majors. Members of the Films Committee are people interested in Films. Neither are just marketers or film people. Members of the GLBA demand for acceptance, and with good reason. There should be no discrimination on this campus of any kind and it should not be tolerated at any level. Defining oneself with one single criteria should not be encouraged by any group at any level. A person may be gay, or Black or a film buff. First and foremost, they are people, humans, Homo Sapiens, equals. This whole situation gets sticky when it comes to PDAs—Public Display of Affection. If a man and a woman are holding hands, no one will bat an eye. If a woman and a woman are holding hands, however, there will be side-

ways glances and perhaps a physical or verbal attack. The human mind works on the basis of patterns. Over a long period of time, we learn what a chair looks like. Four legs, a seat, a back and wheels, perhaps. Each time we see a chair, we recall the pattern, legs, seat, back and measure the current chair against what we think is a chair. Most of the time, we don't have many problems with identifying a chair because all chairs look pretty much the same. Every once in a while, though, we come across one of those architecture stool things with you kneel in to keep your back straight. We wonder about it for a while, and then decide that it is a chair. Most people in the WSU/Pullman community were brought up in White heterosexual communities. They have patterns for what couples, families and acceptable PDAs look like. When they see a homosexual couple, it goes against their mental picture and they are confused. Whatever biological or religious arguments there may be against homosexuality, it is different. Homosexual couple look different than heterosexual ones. We should accept this difference for what it is, just a difference, and go on with our lives. What someone else decides to do with their sexual organs and pas-

sions is not the business of anyone else. This is the first and foremost hurdle for the GLBA to overcome. After the WSU/Pullman community accepts the GLBA as different Homo Sapiens, then other goals and problems can be discussed, such as adoption, legal marriage and the like. It was about 100 years after the Civil War, and the official freeing of the slaves, that civil rights were enacted for all races. Even now, full equality does not exist for all races. Full equality for all differences, whether it be political orientation or sexual preference, should proceed post haste without delay. Progress, however, is not without its bumps. It is likely that the GLBA will encounter rough sailing for the next decade or so, but after that it should all be OK. It seems that people are putting too much emphasis on many things, GLBA people on being GLBA people, anti-GLBA people on being anti-GLBA people. Geez, can't we all just get along? Doug Hughes will return your call if you leave a message at 335-4576.

LETTERS

Administration not GLBA friendly

Editor,
It was with great disappointment and concern that I read of bobbi bonace's [sic] resignation as director of the fledgling GLBA Center. That she is leaving underscores a chronic problem here at WSU—discrimination and exclusivity. This institution has not successfully created an environment that supports diversity, even though we continually advertise ourselves as having accomplished this goal. After reading seven years of ignorant, rabidly dogmatic, bigotted, and mean-spirited letters to the editor in this paper, I suppose I should not be surprised. Administrators cloak their unwillingness to include all people as equal partners in this land grant university ("land grant" loses its democratic connotation in this instance) with more finesse than do the students who write such letters. Nonetheless, the effect is the same alienation of faculty, staff, and students who do not fit traditional race, class, and gender roles. I know I am not alone in my sincere good wishes to bobbi bonace. Her dedication, integrity, optimism, compassion, commonsense and energy will be sorely missed. I recently heard someone describe truly successful leaders as having one characteristic in common—honesty. If only this characteristic could be broadly applied to WSU Administrators and their policies. It easily applies to the bobbi bonaces of this world. Goodbye and good luck, bobbi.

Liza R. Rognas

Quote of the day:

"If we were to wake up some morning and find that everyone was the same race, creed and color, we would find some other causes for prejudice by noon."

-George Aiken

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