



Ask Louanne

The Collegian Advice Column
by Dr. Louanne Barton,
Personal Counselor

Student encounters prejudice towards homosexuality

Dear Louanne,

I am a freshman here at Penn State-Behrend. I have encountered prejudice dealing with homosexuality. I feel out of place because homosexuality is looked down upon. I feel I should be able to express my true feelings of sexuality with a consenting significant other as long as there is no infringement on others rights. Therefore I feel homosexuality should be discussed openly to alleviate the friction

that exists between homosexuals and heterosexuals. I feel that people automatically assume that if you are homosexual, you are infested with AIDS. Most homosexuals use devices to demote the chance of pregnancy. Back in 1960's with the sexual revolution, our parents were more aware and more accepting of people with alternative lifestyles. With the issuance of 1980's, I feel that sexuality should not be a factor with one's life. Considering this is supposed to be the decade of higher enlightenment.

AIDS scares homosexuals as well as heterosexuals. At this junction, we should be looking towards a cure rather than condemning the source of the problem, because not only homosexuals give AIDS, but also heterosexuals, hemophiliacs, IV drug users and the list goes on. There is no one group to place the blame upon.

My suggestion is that we accept people for who and what they are. I don't condemn people for being heterosexuals so why should anyone condemn me for what kind of life I choose? We have a host of different groups, groups including those for non-traditional students, women, blacks, and even for Eating Disorders. Why is there no support group for people who have chosen alternative lifestyles?

Signed,
Disgusted and Trying to Survive

Dear Survivor,

Thank you for having the courage to share your feelings. They are certainly valid. It must be very lonely and difficult being a member of a group so discriminated against, and the AIDS scare certainly hasn't helped. I think your idea of a support group is a good one.

At a national college counselors conference this past spring I learned about a successful support group at Ohio State called "New Beginnings." It is advertised as:

"a confidential support group for men and women exploring feelings of same-sex attraction. Safe supportive atmosphere considering many components of how people are attracted to and relate to others, including emotional closeness, socializing, dreams and fantasies, as well as sexual feelings and relationships."

Anyone who is interested in starting a group for Behrend students, call and ask for "Louanne" in the counseling center (x 6164). Your call will be handled confidentially.

For phone counseling you can call the Gay/Lesbian Switchboard at University Park between 6:00 and 9:00 PM at (814)237-1950. If you are interested in taking a more active role, contact the Lesbian and Gay Student Alliance at University Park (814)865-3327.

Thank you for writing.

HUMAN RELATIONS PROGRAMMING COUNCIL PRESENTS:

AN OPEN DISCUSSION ON RACIAL PREJUDICE

DIVERSITY: WHITE-BASHING* AT BEHREND?

- Is "diversity" being crammed down your throat?
- Are you sick of hearing about cultural diversity and affirmative action?
- Does prejudice go both ways?
- Is there tension among Blacks and Hispanics and Asians?
- Do people try to lay all the blame on whites?

*White-bashing: Noun. Blaming white people for the problems of minorities.

Monday, October 1, 1990, 8:00 p.m.
Reed Lecture Hall

Facilitators: Dr. Diana Hume George, Professor of English
Ms. Lillie Wiley, Student Services Assistant