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REPORT OF THE GAY AND LESBIAN  
ISSUES COMMITTEE  
TO DEAN OF STUDENTS MARY ROUSE

October 1991

Both current and former members of the Gay and Lesbian Issues Committee (GLIC) contributed to the gathering of information and the writing of this report.

**GLIC members, October, 1991:**

Administrative Representatives:	Kevin McIntyre ( <i>Co-Chair</i> )
Faculty Representatives	Jim Steakley Mariamne Whatley ( <i>Co-Chair</i> )
Staff Representatives	Meg Gaines ( <i>Former Co-Chair</i> ) Tim Tillotson ( <i>Former Co-Chair</i> )
Student Representatives	Carmen Balentine Sarah Waddell
Community Representative	Darlene Kemmerer Jane Vanderbosch

**Former GLIC members:**

Rhonda Allen, Administration  
Doug Bauder, Community  
Claudia Card, Faculty (*Former Chair*)  
Demetrius Junior, Student  
John Logres, Faculty  
Michelle Melsby, Student  
Kathy Nelson, Community  
Candace Peterson, Community  
Charles Robinson, Administration

The committee extends special thanks to Joann Foss, Department of Curriculum and Instruction, School of Education, for her excellent assistance in typing and preparing this report.

## SUMMARY OF THE RECOMMENDATIONS

### Report of The Gay and Lesbian Issues Committee

July 1991

In August 1989, Dean of Students Mary Rouse established the Gay and Lesbian Issues Committee (GLIC), with the charge to examine "those aspects of the UW-Madison academic and social life which contribute positively to the experience of gay and lesbian students as well as the problems which negatively affect the recruitment and retention of gay and lesbian students." The following report was produced in response to that charge. Below is a summary of the major recommendations of GLIC.

#### Recommendations

The University of Wisconsin must create a climate in which all members of the community, including gay, lesbian and bisexual students, are able to participate and develop intellectually and emotionally, free from fear, violence and harassment. The University should pursue policy and educational efforts designed to address the causes of the negative climate that currently exists, as well as efforts to support gay, lesbian and bisexual students who are dealing with the effects of that climate. In all efforts, it is important to recognize the diversity of students who identify as gay, lesbian or bisexual. There will be students with a range of racial, ethnic, and religious identities who will also represent a broad political spectrum.

#### Dean of Students Office

1. GLIC should continue as an active committee in order to monitor the changing experiences of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students on the UW-Madison campus. Dean Rouse should reaffirm the charge to the committee to be an advocate for gay, lesbian, and bisexual students as a group, and to find ways to promote diversity on campus.

2. The Dean of Students Office should designate a staff person to serve as a liaison to the gay, lesbian and bisexual student community. This staff member should spend a minimum of half time in her/his capacity as liaison and should serve as staff to GLIC.

3. The Dean of Students and UW Police and Security should implement a policy for the reporting of homophobic assaults and incidents similar to the policy for sexual assaults. Data should be analyzed in coordination with other police agencies in Dane County and problem areas identified; prompt remedial responses should then be publicized and put into effect.

4. The Dean of Students office should provide or support gay/lesbian/bisexual identified AODA prevention, intervention, and support services.

5. The Dean of Students and staff should promote personal HIV risk assessments, and anonymous HIV counseling and testing for students at increased risk.

6. The Dean of Students and/or the University Health Service should identify existing staff to provide gay/lesbian/bisexual identified health care advocacy for students receiving care from any University health care provider. This could be accomplished within a broader advocacy program for all students covering all health care providers in the community.

7. Student Services

a. Continue to include material in new student orientation on diversity and respecting differences, including gay, lesbian and bisexual people. Information should be presented in some form of personal contact/small group discussion as opposed to solely distributing printed material. A great deal of this has already been instituted in SOAR but continued attention needs to be given to homophobia and heterosexism.

b. Require all persons involved in the delivery of student services to participate in systematic in-service programs which adequately prepare them to address the needs of the gay, lesbian and bisexual student population.

c. Make staff and supervisors available at the counseling center and at the health service who have specialized training in dealing with the special needs of gay, lesbian and bisexual students.

d. Request that each office/service/organization under the Dean of Students office umbrella prepare and submit to the DOS office a set of specific actions it will take to improve the quality of services to gay, lesbian and bisexual students. This should involve input from gay, lesbian and bisexual staff and students. Make assistance available to people as they construct and implement these plans. Evaluate the results.

#### **University Housing and residential life**

1. University Housing should continue to create/develop programs for all residence hall administrators, residents and staff on homophobia, heterosexism and other forms of discrimination. These workshops should be a requirement of employment or residence in University Housing. It is crucial that these workshops deal extensively and intensively with homophobia and related issues. A brief segment of several hours or less is not sufficient.
2. University Housing should provide adequate training for residence staff to handle conflicts, make referrals, and set and enforce anti-victimization standards.
3. University Housing should assist residence staff in developing anti-homophobia tools and strategies for the purpose of inclusion of gay, lesbian and bisexual students into residence hall programming and "community."
4. University Housing should provide and visibly promote standards of behavior regarding respecting differences. Codes of conduct should be established outlining respect for diversity in terms of behavior, including consequences for violating these behavioral codes. Issues around homophobic behavior need to be clarified and publicized.

5. University Housing should consider alternative campus housing which provides a higher level of sensitivity to gay, lesbian and bisexual students. To be considered for this housing students would be required to attend a 3-day diversity workshop.
6. The Housing Office should have a gay/lesbian/bisexual liaison to deal with complaints about homophobia or other related issues.

#### **University Health Service**

1. The University Health Service and/or the Dean of Students Office should identify existing staff to provide gay/lesbian/bisexual identified health care advocacy for students receiving care from any University health care provider. This could be accomplished within a broader advocacy program for all students covering all health care providers in the community.
2. Gynecological services of the University Health Service should be routinely evaluated to see if they are sensitive to the needs of *all* women; any reports of homophobia should be followed up immediately.
3. The University Health Service should continue to provide written information annually to all students on prevention of HIV infection, as well as other sexually transmitted diseases, and should continue to offer programs teaching the practical aspects of safer sex and helping students develop skills to communicate assertively with potential partners about sexual health and safety. Prevention programs should encourage the development of skills needed to live and love more safely (how to do it rather than what to do).
4. The Blue Bus Clinic should work to develop outreach screening sites on campus (Eagle Heights, Law School, Medical School, student unions, etc.) that would be convenient for counseling and testing students at risk without advance appointments.
5. The University Health Service should provide annual written information to all students listing information and health care resources for sexually transmitted diseases.

6. Workshops/training on homophobia should be instituted for all University providers of student health care, including University Health Service staff.

#### **Chancellor's Office**

1. The Chancellor should appoint a Task Force composed of interested faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate students to explore models for incorporating gay and lesbian studies. They should examine at least three alternative possibilities:

- a) establishing a Department of Gay and Lesbian Studies,
- b) establishing a Program in Gay and Lesbian Studies, where faculty can meet as a unit and offer courses while holding tenure homes in other departments, and
- c) establishing a Research Institute for the Study of Gay and Lesbian Issues, where faculty can come together around common research interests while holding tenure homes in academic departments.

2. The Chancellor should go on record in favor of promoting interest among faculty and graduate students for doing research and offering courses specifically on lesbian and gay themes.

3. The Chancellor should immediately stimulate gay and lesbian studies by:

- recognizing and supporting faculty who are already doing research and teaching in this area,
- encouraging the hiring of *new* faculty with scholarly interests in lesbian, gay and bisexual themes,
- earmarking funds for faculty interested in retraining in areas of special interest for gay, lesbian and bisexual studies,
- providing funds for course development in areas of special interest for gay, lesbian and bisexual studies, and for integration of this material into the already existing curriculum,
- providing funds for consultation with gay, lesbian and bisexual scholars on research, course development and faculty retraining,

-encouraging faculty to submit proposals for research support on gay and lesbian topics to the Graduate School, and

-providing support for graduate students doing research and clinical field placements on lesbian, gay and bisexual themes.

4. The Chancellor should mandate that the Affirmative Action Office institute sensitivity training for deans, department heads, faculty, lecturers, teaching assistants, and staff so that they can better meet the needs of lesbians, gays and bisexuals on campus.

5. The Chancellor should exert pressure to remove ROTC from campus if it continues to discriminate against lesbians, gay men and bisexuals. One officially homophobic program on campus can undermine positive action taken to combat homophobia.

**Overall campus efforts:**

1. Institute and continue efforts to make the entire campus "safe space" for gays, lesbians and bisexuals. Recognizing that reaching this goal will take time, the University should create a safe space for gay, lesbian and bisexual students to meet others like themselves who share their interests, history, and culture, possibly in the form of a cultural/resource/community center. The current efforts toward developing such a center should be strongly supported.

2. Issue annually through the Chancellor's and the DOS' offices strong statements against harassment or discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual people.

3. Actively include gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues and concerns in programming for the university community on diversity and creating an inclusive environment.

4. Use UW publications to educate the campus as a whole on relevant gay, lesbian and bisexual issues.

5. Provide regular funding for a yearly gay, lesbian and bisexual awareness event such as the Ten Percent Society's Out and About week. This provides a significant opportunity for all members of

the campus to see issues of concern to gay, lesbian and bisexual people and to break down the invisibility of gay, lesbian and bisexual students.

6. Provide resources for other ongoing events adapted to the specific cultural and social needs of gay, lesbian and bisexual students.

More elaboration of these recommendations and other more specific recommendations appear throughout the report.

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## Part I: Statement of the Problem

### *Introduction*

The University of Wisconsin and the surrounding city of Madison have long been recognized as positive climates for gay, lesbian and bisexual students. Madison is generally known as a liberal, tolerant midwestern city in which gays and lesbians can be public about their sexual orientation. Organizations dedicated to improving the social, emotional and physical lives of gay men and lesbians have flourished in the city. The city of Madison enacted ordinances in the late 1970s prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in employment, housing and public accommodations. Despite strong efforts to overturn these ordinances, Madison retained and strengthened them throughout the 1980s. In the early 1980s, the state of Wisconsin enacted a statute prohibiting discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation in employment, housing and public accommodations. A few years later, legislation was signed into law allowing consenting adults to engage in sexual conduct in private, thus striking down previous prohibitions on specific types of sexual conduct for both heterosexuals and homosexuals. In October 1988, the University of Wisconsin Board of Regents approved a policy on discrimination stating:

Discrimination, discriminatory attitudes, and expressions that reflect discrimination are inconsistent with the efforts of the University of Wisconsin System to foster an environment of respect for the dignity and worth of all members of the university community and to eliminate all manifestations of discrimination within the university.

The city of Madison and, more sporadically, the University of Wisconsin have funded programs, services and student organizations for gay men, lesbians, and bisexuals.

Yet despite these achievements, the particular needs and concerns of gay, lesbian and bisexual students on the University of Wisconsin-Madison campus have often been addressed in a **piecemeal fashion**. During the 1970s, the Dean of Students Office did have an advisory committee which heard complaints of discrimination and recommended policy to the Dean. That committee eventually ceased to function. For three years, the Dean of Students Office has tracked incidents

of student harassment due to sexual orientation. The Dean of Students has also assisted individual students through counseling, information and referral, and advocacy.

Recognizing the need for a comprehensive consideration of gay and lesbian issues on the UW-Madison campus, Dean of Students Mary Rouse established the Gay and Lesbian Issues Committee (GLIC) in August 1989. Dean Rouse charged the committee with examining "those aspects of the UW-Madison academic and social life which contribute positively to the experience of gay and lesbian students as well as the problems which negatively affect the recruitment and retention of gay and lesbian students."<sup>1</sup> The Dean also designated the committee as a student advocate and directed it to find ways to promote diversity on campus.

The establishment of GLIC occurred in the context of several national trends. The 1980s in general were a time of social and political conservatism, marked by a rethinking of what were perceived to be the excesses of the 1960s and '70s. One aspect of this conservative turn in American political and social life was a reaction to challenges to the traditional concept of the family. Among the specific trends, positive and negative, affecting gay men and lesbians during this period:

\* Violence and other hate crimes against gay men and lesbians appeared to climb at disturbing rates, as reported by organizations such as the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. The United, a local gay and lesbian service organization, reported the following cases of harassment and assault in the Madison area from 1988-90:

	1988	1989	1990
<b>Harassment</b>	9	7	12
<b>Assault</b>	10	21	11

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<sup>1</sup>Committee Charge to the Gay and Lesbian Issues Committee, Office of the Dean of Students, University of Wisconsin-Madison, August 1989, p. 1.

It is important to note that these figures are reported, not actual. The FBI estimates that only 10% of such cases are reported. In addition, before the hate crime laws, there was no basis for keeping such statistics.

\* The AIDS epidemic, in addition to its devastating cost to several populations including gay men, forced the reality of differing sexual orientations onto the national agenda in health care and human services. The nation's general discourse, as portrayed on television, radio and film, and in newspapers, magazines and other popular media, opened to include discussion of all types of sexual orientation.

\* Despite some setbacks, local and state governments continued to recognize the rights of gays and lesbians to be free from discrimination in employment, housing and public accommodations. Further, some cities (including San Francisco, Madison, Seattle, Ann Arbor) and counties around the country recognized the value and worth of gay, lesbian, bisexual and other domestic partnerships. In so doing, they helped to institutionalize different conceptions of family.

\* Groups such as the National Organization for Women, the American Civil Liberties Union, and others strengthened their commitment to positive social change and guaranteeing fundamental liberties for lesbians and gay men.

\* Women's Studies departments and programs, frequently recognized for their incorporation of issues relevant to lesbians in their curricula, were joined by other efforts to explicitly develop gay and lesbian studies programs, classes and course content. Such efforts proceeded at Cornell University, Yale University, the City University of New

York, the University of California-Berkeley, the City College of San Francisco, and the University of Minnesota.

\* Several universities established offices and programs to handle gay, lesbian and bisexual concerns, including the University of Massachusetts-Amherst, the University of Michigan, the University of Pennsylvania, and Mankato State University.

\* Some campuses began to reconsider their definitions of family, in keeping with the redefinition taking place in some local governments. Such reconsideration allowed gay and lesbian students, staff and faculty to participate in programs, such as housing, previously provided only to married, heterosexual families. Among the campuses changing their policies were Stanford University, Yale University, and the University of North Dakota.

\* Students, staff and faculty began to examine and challenge programs which contradicted professed nondiscrimination by universities. One such program, Reserve Officers' Training Corps (ROTC), has since become the focus of intense organizing efforts across the country.

#### *Overview of committee deliberations*

To accomplish its goal of examining gay and lesbian issues on campus, Dean Rouse gave the Gay and Lesbian Issues Committee four tasks. First, it was to report to the Dean on the status of gay and lesbian concerns at the UW-Madison. Second, it was to advise on the development, implementation and maintenance of an information campaign by the Dean of Students Office to promote the full participation of gay and lesbian students in academic and social life at the UW-Madison. Third, it was to serve as a resource for the Dean of Students Office and other campus departments on matters concerning lesbians and gay men. Finally, it was to act as a university

liaison to the Madison and Dane County gay and lesbian communities. This document fulfills the first and part of the second of these tasks.

Beginning with its first meeting in August 1989, the Gay and Lesbian Issues Committee began to outline concerns affecting gay, lesbian and bisexual students. In October 1989, the committee held two public hearings attended by over 60 students, staff and faculty. Following the public hearings and further committee deliberations, GLIC organized the list of concerns and issues into several different domains of campus life: physical, academic, emotional, social, spiritual, and those factors affecting the campus as a whole. A particular area of concern for the committee has been gay and lesbian students of color.

The committee further considered specific issues by scheduling student speakers and representatives of various campus departments and divisions. GLIC heard from representatives of departments within the Dean of Students Office, including the Center for New Student Development, Interim Multicultural Center, and the Counseling and Consultation Center. The committee also received presentations from University Housing, the Office of Affirmative Action, University News Service, University Periodicals, University Publications, the General Library System, and the Department of Police and Security.

The combination of public hearings, guest speakers and subsequent committee deliberations led the committee to identify the concerns and recommendations outlined in the following sections.

There are several general issues to keep in mind when reading this report. The first is that this report is a work in progress, not the definitive study on gay, lesbian and bisexual students' issues on campus. Changes have occurred since we drafted the first version and we expect many more before the year is over. However, the committee felt the need to produce a final version of this report to circulate on campus. Getting this information and these recommendations out to the wider campus community will stimulate discussion and action. For example, in response to an earlier draft, Don Crawford, Dean of Letters and Science, has sent a notice to all departments

calling for a committee to examine the possibility of a gay and lesbian studies program. As GLIC continues to meet, we will build on the base of information and recommendations set out in this report.

A second important issue is that the committee feels strongly that forms of oppression, such as sexism, racism, and heterosexism, are interconnected and cannot be dealt with as isolated factors. However, the mission of GLIC and the nature of the report meant we have focused on heterosexism/homophobia, without always emphasizing the intersections with other forms of oppression. It is important to emphasize, for example, that lesbian, gay and bisexual students of color will face both racism and homophobia. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual communities need to monitor internal sexism, racism, and anti-semitism. Audre Lorde has argued that there is no hierarchy of oppression; the committee supports this view that all forms of oppression must be recognized and confronted.

A third issue is that some readers of the first draft felt we painted too rosy a picture of liberal Madison. It is important to note that Madison is a better place than most for gay, lesbians and bisexuals to live, but that there is still a high level of bigotry and violence. The committee wishes to acknowledge all the achievements of the university, city and state against heterosexism and homophobia, but reemphasize that there is still a very long uphill struggle. Recognizing that efforts have been made on many levels to deal with homophobia and heterosexism, the Committee encourages linkages between university, city, county and state in order to avoid duplication of efforts **minimized** and to allow all to profit from the experience of others.

## Part II: Physical Domains

### *Safety from assault*

In testimony at public hearings and in person at committee meetings, students related personal experiences with a wide range of assaults. The most extreme incidents were cases of unprovoked battery. More commonly, students related examples of threats and intimidation, such as being chased by a gang of gay-bashers or finding "kill the fag" spray-painted on a residence door. Crimes of vandalism, theft, and phone harassment are sometimes directed against gay, lesbian and bisexual students *because of their sexual orientation*. However, the court has just declared the "hate speech" provisions of UWS 17 unconstitutional and it is unclear whether this policy may be implemented in a different form. University rules (UWS 17) prohibit verbal harassment based on sexual orientation. These assaults can also be considered hate crimes under Wisconsin law and, if prosecuted as such, additional penalties would apply upon conviction.

On University property, the most common locations of assaults are the residence halls, due primarily to the large concentration of students, many of whom are away from home for the first time. The most common types of assault are anonymous homophobic harassment and vandalism, and incidents of personal violence and physical intimidation. The physical attacks and threats often occur during evening hours while the perpetrators are intoxicated. University Residence Halls' staff may be forced into conflicting roles, trying to be advocates for the victim of an assault while at the same time preserving the rights of the assailant(s). Victims of homophobic violence have been quietly moved to different dormitories on occasions in which the perpetrators of the violence have escaped any penalties. A student who turns in a false fire alarm would be immediately dismissed from the living unit if caught. A student committing an assault or homophobic hate crime would face no penalties if the victim were not willing to pursue the case through multiple layers of disciplinary hearings.

In the wider community, assaults on gay, lesbian, and bisexual students often are committed with premeditation in public spaces such as streets and parks by small gangs who may

select victims who "look queer" or who are the same sex and holding hands. A dramatic example was the recent murder of a man solely because the assailant wanted to kill a "queer."

#### *Alcohol and other drug issues*

Research has suggested a greater prevalence of substance abuse among gays and lesbians than in the general population. In some cases, gay and lesbian student problems with substance abuse may be linked to coming out issues. Alcohol and other drug abuse (AODA) problems also can be magnified for lesbians and gay men by the central importance of the bar scene to the social lives of many.

The use of alcohol and other drugs often facilitates behaviors with a higher risk for sexually transmitted diseases including Human Immunodeficiency Virus (HIV) Disease. Sharing of IV drug needles can also transmit HIV directly from one user to another. The social isolation which our dominant culture often imposes on gay and lesbian communities can strengthen bonds between the victims of this discrimination. But the closing of ranks that results may also produce denial of the extent to which substance abuse erodes the norms of healthy behavior.

#### *Student health services*

Student health services are provided by a number of University agencies, including UW Hospital and Clinics (Teen Clinic, General Internal Medicine, Sports Medicine, Women's Health Center, Eating Disorders, etc.) Family Practice Clinics, and University Health Service (UHS). Other private (non-University) hospitals and clinics in Madison also provide health care to students. Although UHS may be the major provider of outpatient student health care in Madison, the testimony of students to this committee reflected experiences with many different providers. Some specific recommendations in this report (under the headings of **student health services** and **sexual health issues**, addressed to UHS) are intended to prevent or remedy problems which students have had with other providers.

Students testified about three major areas of concern regarding health care services provided by the University: confidentiality, professional competence, and empathy of health care workers. Students are concerned with the privacy and confidentiality of information recorded in their medical records. The process of coming out involves some progressive self-disclosure of sexual identity. If a student tells one health care provider that s/he is lesbian/gay, the student does not necessarily want to inform all future providers and insurance companies of this fact.

Students want access to providers with a high degree of professional competence. Many UHS physicians have been given high marks by their patients in this regard. Some physicians were singled out for criticism because their competence is in doubt, or because they are suspected of deep rooted homophobia. One student related being chased down a hallway by a physician at UW Hospital and Clinics who was red in the face and shouting "Are you a homosexual, Mr. Doe? You're not a homosexual, are you?"

Beyond the problem of homophobia is the concern that health care providers should be empathic to gay, lesbian, and bisexual patients. Even providers who have no active dislike or aversion to non-traditional sexualities and lifestyles are seen as intimidating and uncaring if they do not open the area of sexuality for discussion during the medical interview. Many providers are sadly ignorant of lesbian and gay lifestyles and assume that all their patients are heterosexual unless otherwise stated. Treating all people the same, regardless of sexual orientation, means that the needs of many will not be met. Gay, lesbian, and bisexual students need health care services provided to them as whole persons, sexuality included. Research has indicated that lesbians and gay men often avoid seeking health/medical services because they fear encountering homophobia. The University Health Service and all providers of health care for students must hold all staff responsible for making the Health Service and other units safe and welcoming places for all.

### *Sexual health issues*

The Blue Bus Clinic is a specialty clinic for diagnosis and treatment of sexually transmitted diseases. Some clinicians at the Blue Bus are gay, and clinic services have generally been acceptable to gay, lesbian, and bisexual students. Several University Health Service physicians are experienced in providing care for HIV disease, and a student who is past president of the Board of the Madison AIDS Support Network has characterized the quality of care here as at least equal to that provided by expert physicians in San Francisco. Blue Bus Clinic operates two programs targeted to promote early diagnosis of HIV infection. The Anonymous HIV Counseling and Testing Service provides anonymous HIV antibody testing with sensitive pre- and post-test counseling. The Outreach Screening Program conducts HIV antibody testing outside the clinic (in gay bars, and other locations convenient to persons at high risk of HIV infection).

Using national seroprevalence data for college campuses developed by the American College Health Association, Blue Bus Clinic staff estimate that in January 1991, between 80 and 90 students on this campus are infected with HIV. And yet, fewer than 20 students are currently under the care of University and other community physicians. Some additional HIV infected students may be aware of their condition through testing elsewhere, though not receiving care locally. But a problem clearly exists. Despite the availability of testing during daytime and evening clinic hours, weekends, and at multiple locations, it is very likely that the majority of HIV infected students presently on this campus remain unaware of their infections.

The students with HIV infection may not seek testing because the HIV epidemic is largely invisible among college students. Symptoms of disease may be delayed for many years after a person becomes infected. Students with HIV may look and feel healthy during their years on campus. Neither they nor their fellow students may be aware of the infection and the urgent need to take precautions with sexual activity and drug use, because the most obvious clues to the presence of HIV, obituaries and hospital admissions, will turn up years later, in other locations, after students have graduated and moved away. However, there may be other barriers to voluntary

anonymous testing by students at high risk for HIV infection which community-targeted education can overcome.

Many students already know the basic facts about HIV disease and its transmission. Yet psychological and sociological research indicates that this knowledge alone is often insufficient to produce meaningful changes in behavior, changes which will reduce the risk of disease transmission. To be successful in effecting positive change, a comprehensive AIDS education program for university students would have to adapt strategies which have been proven in other areas of health behavior change, such as smoking, substance abuse, and diet and exercise programs. Successful programs often redefine social norms to promote behavior change, give people the tools to accurately assess their personal risk or vulnerability, and teach the skills necessary to implement behavior changes that will actually reduce their risks of infection.

It is also important that lesbians receive sensitive routine gynecological care (pelvic exams, Pap smears). Research has indicated that many lesbians do not seek out routine preventive health care because of previous bad experiences. For example, lesbians have expressed their discomfort in discussing sexual activity with a provider who keeps asking what contraceptive they are using. Many lesbians also prefer having a woman gynecologist or nurse practitioner and will not schedule an appointment if only a man is available.

### **Recommendations**

#### *Safety from assault*

1. Homophobia training/workshops should be a requirement of employment or residence in University Housing. Workshops should be conducted annually. It is crucial that these workshops deal extensively and intensively with homophobia and related issues. A brief segment of several hours or less is not sufficient. One outcome should be recommendations to student Resident's Councils and to University Housing administrative staff for making and maintaining improvements in undergraduate living units. The Housing Office should have a gay/lesbian/bisexual liaison to deal with complaints about homophobia or other related issues.

Physical and mental assaults on gay/lesbian/bisexual students in their own living units can be tolerated no longer. If University Housing administrators regard these incidents as an inevitable part of the late adolescent undergraduate housing milieu, then the administrators may be part of the problem. Housing staff should be required to report all instances of homophobic assault and harassment, including anonymous graffiti, to University police.

2. The Dean of Students and UW Police and Security should implement a policy for the reporting of homophobic assaults and incidents similar to the policy for sexual assaults. Data should be analyzed in coordination with other police agencies in Dane County and problem areas identified; prompt remedial responses should then be publicized and put into effect.

3. The faculty should be encouraged to make the causes and effects of homophobia subject for interdisciplinary academic scrutiny. Discussion of this topic should be included in undergraduate course work. Research at the graduate level in a number of fields should be supported with University resources.

#### *AODA physical issues*

4. The Dean of Students office should provide or support gay/lesbian/bisexual identified AODA prevention, intervention, and support services.

#### *Student health services*

5. The University Health Service and/or the Dean of Students Office should identify existing staff to provide gay/lesbian/bisexual identified health care advocacy for students receiving care from any University health care provider. This could be accomplished within a broader advocacy program for all students covering all health care providers in the community.

6. Workshops/training on homophobia should be instituted for all University providers of student health care, including University Health Service staff.

*Sexual health issues*

7. Gynecological services of the University Health Service should be routinely evaluated to see if they are sensitive to the needs of *all* women; any reports of homophobia should be followed up immediately.

8. The Dean of Students and staff should promote **personal HIV risk assessments**, and anonymous HIV counseling and testing for students at increased risk. The Blue Bus Clinic should work to develop outreach screening sites on campus (Eagle Heights, Law School, Medical School, student unions, etc.) that would be convenient for counseling and testing students at risk without advance appointments.

9. The University Health Service should continue to provide written information annually to all students on prevention of HIV infection, as well as other sexually transmitted diseases, and should continue to offer programs teaching the practical aspects of safer sex and helping students develop skills to communicate assertively with potential partners about sexual health and safety. Prevention programs should encourage the development of skills needed to live and love more safely (how to do it rather than what to do).

10. The University Health Service should provide annual written information to all students listing information and health care resources for sexually transmitted diseases.

### Part III: Academic and Scholastic Domains

It is time come for the University of Wisconsin-Madison to promote lesbian and gay studies as an area of academic and scholarly interest. In particular, the University should take steps that will stimulate scholarship by faculty and students from across the entire University, and the development of undergraduate and graduate courses that specifically focus on gay and lesbian themes.

There are many reasons why these goals are important:

1. Wisconsin was the first of only four states that explicitly prohibit discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. It is fitting, therefore, that its progressive legal stance should be supplemented by a progressive stance with regard to study and research.

2. There is an existing body of research to be examined. During the past two decades an enormous amount of scholarship of concern to lesbians and gays has emerged. The scholarship has spanned many disciplines including the humanities (art, literature, and music), the social sciences (anthropology, history, psychology and sociology), the biological sciences, and the professions (education, law, medicine, religion, and social work). This literature needs to be given greater visibility in the curriculum.

3. As research continues to grow in this area, University of Wisconsin faculty can contribute to it through their own scholarly activities and through the training of students, that is, future researchers.

4. Faculty have a right to contribute to research on gay and lesbian issues. While discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation is forbidden at the University, lingering fears of discrimination continue to plague many faculty on campus. Many tenured and non-tenured faculty, who otherwise would be interested in teaching courses and doing research on gay and lesbian issues, feel threatened by the implications of expressing these interests. Graduate students, assistant professors, research staff, and even tenured professors continue to hide their sexual

orientation for fear that heterosexual faculty will disapprove of their scholarly interests, rate them low on merit salary increases, and possibly block their promotions.

5. Students have a right to study this scholarship. Knowledge of gay and lesbian issues is important for all students, regardless of sexual orientation. It is important not only for personal development as human beings but also for practical reasons since many will be interacting with lesbians and gays in the present and future in their work places, their communities, their churches, and even in their own homes, with parents, children, and other relatives.

6. Curriculum on gays and lesbians is inadequate at the University and thus our students are not being offered the kinds of opportunities they may wish and need. There is an excellent course, Women's Studies 442: Lesbian Culture, that is regularly offered, but it stands alone as the only permanent course on this topic. Despite its popularity, the course has been developed and offered under conditions of hardship, including the absence of funding for research and retraining, for the instructor. Content on lesbians and gays exists in many other courses, sometimes in very positive ways, but in others in ways that may not promote the well-being of gays and lesbians, or may not encourage students to treat homosexual issues as legitimate areas of scholarly interest. There is concern, for instance, that at least one course on human sexuality has presented lesbians and gays in a negative way.

7. Career opportunities are available for students who, regardless of sexual orientation, have knowledge of lesbians and gays. This is especially true for those interested in careers in the legal and helping professions where specialization is rapidly progressing. It is also true in business where analysts are beginning to deliberately develop goods for marketing among lesbians and gays. The academic opportunities are evident, for instance, in the recent development of three journals, The Journal of Gay and Lesbian Psychotherapy, The Journal of Gay and Lesbian Social Services, and The Journal of Sexual History, and in the fact that a number of academic presses, including Columbia University Press, Routledge, Indiana University Press, Minnesota University Press, and

Haworth Press, have developed special series on lesbian and gay issues in the humanities and social sciences.

8. With the exception of the few faculty sensitive to the issues, who integrate these issues into mainstream courses, the faculty at the University are not ready for teaching and doing research on lesbian and gay issues. Most have been trained in other areas and, while they may be familiar with some of the scholarly literature, they will require retraining in order to get started. Thus, it is important that the University, in addition to supporting faculty retraining, will hire faculty already trained in this area.

Other prominent Universities are supporting the growth of lesbian and gay themes. A Gay Studies department has been established at the University of Utrecht in the Netherlands. The Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies is now in place at the Graduate Center of the City University of New York. Cornell University offers a graduate minor in Lesbian and Gay Studies. The City College of San Francisco has created the nation's first Department of Gay and Lesbian Studies. The University of Massachusetts-Amherst English Department has a specialist in gay and lesbian literature. Study groups for faculty and graduate students have also been set up at Yale University and at the University of California, Santa Cruz. The Journal of Homosexuality is published through the Center for Research and Education on Sexuality (CERES) at San Francisco State University. In Fall 1990, Harvard sponsored the 4th Annual Lesbian, Bisexual & Gay Studies Conference which received national attention in the media and was attended by 1500 faculty and students from universities and colleges all over the nation. It is time for the University of Wisconsin-Madison to promote lesbian and gay studies by supporting the development of courses and the scholarly activities of faculty interested in lesbian and gay issues.

## Recommendations

1. The Chancellor should appoint a Task Force composed of interested faculty, staff, graduate and undergraduate students to explore models for incorporating gay and lesbian studies. They should examine at least three alternative possibilities:

- a) establishing a Department of Gay and Lesbian Studies,
- b) establishing a Program in Gay and Lesbian Studies, where faculty can meet as a unit and offer courses while holding tenure homes in other departments, and
- c) establishing a Research Institute for the Study of Gay and Lesbian Issues, where faculty can come together around common research interests while holding tenure homes in academic departments.

In the short run, more concrete and specific tasks need to be undertaken. We thus make the following additional recommendations:

2. The Chancellor should go on record in favor of promoting interest among faculty and graduate students for doing research and offering courses specifically on lesbian, gay and bisexual themes.

3. The Chancellor should immediately stimulate gay and lesbian studies by:

- recognizing and supporting faculty who are already doing research and teaching in this area,
- encouraging the hiring of *new* faculty with scholarly interests in lesbian, gay and bisexual themes,
- earmarking funds for faculty interested in retraining in areas of special interest for gay and lesbian studies,
- providing funds for course development in areas of special interest for gay and lesbian studies, and for the integration of this material into already existing curriculum,

-providing funds for consultation with gay, lesbian and bisexual scholars around research, course development and faculty retraining,

-encouraging faculty to submit proposals for research support to the Graduate School, and

-providing support for graduate students doing research and clinical field placements on lesbian, gay and bisexual themes.

4. The Chancellor should mandate that the Affirmative Action Office institute sensitivity training for deans, department heads, faculty, lecturers, teaching assistants, and staff so that they can better meet the needs of lesbians, gays, and bisexuals on campus.

5. The Chancellor should exert pressure to remove ROTC from campus if it continues to discriminate against lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals. One officially homophobic program on campus can undermine positive action taken to combat homophobia.

## Part IV: Emotional Domains

### *Introduction*

The educational process in its best and broadest sense includes opportunities to grow and develop socially, intellectually and emotionally. For a person to be able to grow and develop to his or her fullest potential, a safe environment needs to be provided. When the environment is hostile, demeaning or intimidating, the educational process is impeded, a point recognized in the UW's conduct codes for both staff and students.

For gay, lesbian and bisexual students, the campus climate cannot be characterized as safe, supportive or nurturing in terms of meeting emotional needs. Jokes, slurs and graffiti targeting gay, lesbian and bisexual people are common place. Name calling and verbal harassment occur with great frequency, and are directed at anyone even suspected of being gay, lesbian or bisexual. Physical safety is of constant concern, as acts of physical violence are inflicted upon gays, lesbians and bisexuals every year in Madison. There are numerous examples of abuse that gay, lesbian and bisexual students suffer on a daily basis, particularly from their peers. The result for many of these students is the internalization of a harshly negative image of themselves. Self-image and self-confidence suffer.

The university academic, housing, and student services systems contribute to an oppressive climate. Both overt and subtle forms of discrimination are present in classrooms, health services, student organizations, residential settings, counseling services, and curriculum.

In the midst of this climate, there are an estimated 4,000 gay, lesbian or bisexual students, roughly 10% of the university enrollment, who are striving to participate in their own education, while struggling with continuous environmental conflict. They are faced with the choice of "coming out" as an openly gay, lesbian or bisexual person, thereby inviting contempt, ridicule and harassment, or hiding their sexual orientation and facing internal anguish and isolation. Students of color or students with disabilities who are gay, lesbian or bisexual may endure multiple forms of harassment and discrimination.

Gay, lesbian and bisexual students are not the only persons affected by discrimination and prejudice against them. Everyone is diminished by this oppression, because it limits the ability of heterosexuals to form and maintain close relationships with gay, lesbian and bisexual people. It also serves to limit behavior for all people to narrowly and rigidly defined gender roles. Its negative effects can only be diminished by active support of the concept of the university as a place which accommodates and accepts diverse lifestyles.

### *Residential life*

To many students, the residence halls are "home" during the college years. The residence halls offer a sense of community by involving students in a variety of social, cultural, educational and athletic programs. However, for many gay, lesbian and bisexual students, the safety and support that should be inherent in "home" and "community" are destroyed by a fear of being "discovered". There are some gay, lesbian and bisexual students who are open about their lifestyles. Forum testimony addressed the reality that to be openly gay in the residence halls is to invite harassment from peers. It matters little whether students fear the discovery of their sexual orientation or are honest about it and experience the consequences. Both effectively discourage gay, lesbian and bisexual students from taking advantage of residential programming.

Many residence hall assistants are inadequately prepared to deal with concerns of gay, lesbian and bisexual students regarding residence hall life, or with conflicts that arise between residents around gay, lesbian and bisexual issues. Many may not be aware of problems until they have escalated. This could be due in part to the reluctance of gay, lesbian and bisexual students to approach residence advisors with their concerns. Reasons for this reluctance may include apprehension about how their concerns will be received, or fear that the advisor may be relatively powerless to effectively address the problem. University Housing policy has provided no alternatives for these students.

In terms of graduate student housing, in the past, by excluding unmarried domestic partners from university married housing, the University has discriminated against gay and lesbian couples. The recent decision to allow gay and lesbian couples, as well as unmarried heterosexual couples, to live in graduate student housing is an important step in rectifying these inequities.

#### *Student services*

University personnel in student services such as health care, counseling services, career counseling, placement, student organizations, and others are often not adequately trained to be sensitive to or effectively address the special needs of gay, lesbian and bisexual students. Sexual orientation is not just about being sexual - the entire spectrum of life experience is colored by sexual orientation. This means that not only personnel who provide physical or emotional care or guidance but also those who assist the student in life choices need to be well-informed about and sensitive to the needs of gay, lesbian and bisexual persons. Because there are no systems or policies in place to ensure staff sensitivity, there is no guarantee that a gay, lesbian or bisexual seeking services will get his/her needs met.

#### *Safe space*

There is virtually no place on the university campus that is free from possible harassment or hostility for gay, lesbian and bisexual students. There is no designated space where these students and their friends can interact and develop a supportive community. The lack of such space contributes to the sense of isolation, alienation and anxiety a gay, lesbian or bisexual may develop through constantly responding to environmental conflict with no respite. A gay, lesbian, and bisexual center would be one way to remedy this situation.

### *Overall campus atmosphere*

For many gay, lesbian and bisexual students, the campus environment is one of **fear, invisibility and harassment**. The problems gay, lesbian and bisexual students face in housing, student services, and academic and extracurricular arenas are reflections of this. These students spend a good deal of energy, on a day-to-day basis, engaged in constant assessment of their environment. This environmental monitoring is necessary for their physical and emotional safety. Because such monitoring is necessary, there is considerably less emotional energy available to devote to intellectual and social growth.

### **Initiatives on Other Campuses**

#### *Residential life*

The University of Massachusetts at Amherst has three funded positions to do residential education for the purpose of increasing awareness of and sensitivity to issues of gay, lesbian and bisexual students. They provide educational programs for all students in the residence halls, support for gay, lesbian and bisexual students' needs, liaisons with other campus efforts on behalf of this population, support to student groups working with gay, lesbian and bisexual issues, and outreach to gay, lesbian and bisexual students living off campus.

Rutgers has offered the following on their campuses:

- videos and discussion groups for incoming students on safe sex, sexual health, and anti-gay prejudice;
- workshops for new students on homophobia and heterosexism;
- student leadership training which includes a major emphasis on the development of community, with topics including homophobia, racism and sexism;
- workshops for residence hall staff designed to explore methods for addressing homophobia in residence halls and on campus;

-5-day workshops for residence hall staff on race, gender, and sexual orientation, including tools and strategies for promoting a general appreciation for differences, how to make referrals and obtain counseling, and other specialized support services.

Stanford University actively recruits openly gay men and lesbians to be residence hall staff. All residence staff receive an entire day of training to sensitize them to sexuality and alternative lifestyle issues.

Columbia University Teachers College, New York University Law School, Stanford University, The University of California-Berkeley, Yale University, and the University of North Dakota all have written policies providing for same sex couples to share university housing.

Harvard University, MIT, Miami University (Ohio), the University of California-Irvine, and the University of Oregon all provide housing for same sex couples but have no written policy on this issue yet.

#### *Student services*

Rutgers University's initiatives in this area include:

- designation of a police liaison to the gay, lesbian and bisexual community;
- sensitivity training for university police officers;
- the creation of the position of Assistant Dean for special populations, whose job is to address the needs, concerns and leadership of various diverse communities of the colleges, including developing programs and services for gay, lesbian and bisexual students. This person also coordinates education of Dean of Students' staff concerning issues of bias and discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual students.

The University of Massachusetts-Amherst, the University of Michigan, the University of North Dakota, The University of Pennsylvania, and Mankato State University have all initiated

offices and/or programs to educate students and staff from residence halls, student health services, mental health services and police with the intent of increasing understanding of gay, lesbian and bisexual people.

#### *Safe space*

-Stanford University established a 950 sq. ft. Gay, Lesbian and Bisexual Community Center in 1988. The center is funded by the office of the Dean of Students.

-Rutgers University's President's Select Committee of Lesbian and Gay Concerns recommended in 1989 that Rutgers create a safe public space for gay, lesbian and bisexual students on campus in the form of a cultural/resource center, coffeehouse or lounge.

-Mankato State University has provided campus space for a gay, lesbian and bisexual student lounge.

#### *Overall campus atmosphere*

-New students orientation, which includes educational efforts on homophobia, heterosexism and discrimination, has been established at Rutgers, University of Massachusetts-Amherst, Stanford, and the University of Michigan.

-The University of Massachusetts-Amherst, the University of Michigan, the University of Pennsylvania, and Mankato State University have all established programs or offices for gay, lesbian and bisexual concerns.

-California State University-Northridge Student Union and the University of North Dakota Student Union have policies extending rights to significant others of gay, lesbian and bisexual students in the areas of health leave and access to university facilities, respectively.

-The University of California system, the New York University system, and five of the Big Ten schools (including the Wisconsin system) have institutional policies prohibiting

discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation. Cornell and the University of Michigan have Presidential statements that have the force of institutional policy.

-Rutgers has a representative from each Dean's staff who is a liaison for gay, lesbian and bisexual concerns. These representatives serve as contact persons for resolving problems, promoting general awareness, sponsoring programs to reduce homophobia, and making appropriate referrals.

### **Recommendations**

The University of Wisconsin must create a climate in which all members of the community, including gay, lesbian and bisexual students are able to participate and develop intellectually and emotionally free from fear, violence and harassment. The University should pursue policy and educational efforts designed to address the *causes* of the negative climate that currently exists, as well as efforts to support gay, lesbian and bisexual students who are dealing with the *effects* of that climate.

#### *Residential life*

While University Housing has made progress in implementing programs that address these issues, an enormous challenge remains, particularly because of frequent staff turnover and the high concentration of young students (away from home for the first time).

1. Continue to create/develop programs for all residence hall administrators, residents and staff on homophobia, heterosexism and other forms of discrimination.
2. Provide adequate training for residence staff to handle conflicts, make referrals, and set and enforce anti-victimization standards.
3. Assist residence staff in developing anti-homophobia tools and strategies for the purpose of inclusion of gay, lesbian and bisexual students into residence hall programming and "community".

4. Provide and visibly promote standards of behavior regarding respecting differences. Codes of conduct should be established outlining respect for diversity in terms of behavior, including consequences for violating these behavioral codes. Issues around homophobic behavior need to be clarified and publicized.
5. Consider providing alternative campus housing which provides a higher level of sensitivity to gay, lesbian and bisexual students. To be considered for this housing students would be required to attend a 3-day diversity workshop.

*Student services*

6. GLIC should continue as an active committee in order to monitor the changing experiences of gay, lesbian, and bisexual students on the UW-Madison campus. Dean Rouse should reaffirm the charge to the committee to be an advocate for gay, lesbian, and bisexual students as a group, and to find ways to promote diversity on campus.
7. The Dean of Students Office should designate a staff person to serve as a liaison to the gay, lesbian and bisexual student community. This staff member should spend a minimum of half time in her/his capacity as liaison and should serve as staff to GLIC.
8. Continue to include material in new student orientation on diversity and respecting differences, including gay, lesbian and bisexual people. Information should be presented in some form of personal contact/small group discussion as opposed to only distributing printed material. A great deal of this has already been instituted in SOAR but continued attention needs to be given to homophobia and heterosexism.
9. Require all persons involved in the delivery of student services to participate in systematic in-service programs which adequately prepare them to better address the needs of the gay, lesbian and bisexual student population.

10. Make staff and adequate supervision available at the counseling center and at the health service who have specialized training in dealing with the special needs of gay, lesbian and bisexual students.

11. Request that each office/service/organization under the Dean of Students office umbrella prepare and submit to the DOS office a set of specific actions it will take to improve the quality of services to gay, lesbian and bisexual students. This should involve input from gay, lesbian and bisexual staff and students. Make assistance available to people as they construct and implement these plans. Evaluate the results.

#### *Safe space*

12. Institute and continue efforts to make the entire campus "safe space" for gays, lesbians and bisexuals. Recognizing that reaching this goal will take time, the University should create a safe space for gay, lesbian and bisexual students to meet others like themselves who share their interests, history, and culture, possibly in the form of a cultural/resource/community center. The current efforts toward developing such a center should be strongly supported.

#### *Overall campus atmosphere*

13. Issue annually through the Chancellor's and the DOS offices strong statements against harassment or discrimination against gay, lesbian and bisexual people.

14. Actively include gay, lesbian, and bisexual issues and concerns in programming for the university community on diversity and creating an inclusive environment.

15. Use UW publications to educate the campus as a whole on relevant gay, lesbian and bisexual issues.

16. Provide regular funding for a yearly gay, lesbian and bisexual awareness event such as the Ten Percent Society's Out and About week. This provides a significant opportunity

for all members of the campus to see issues of concern to gay, lesbian and bisexual people and to break down the invisibility of gay, lesbian and bisexual students.

17. Provide resources for other ongoing events adapted to the specific cultural and social needs of gay, lesbian and bisexual students.

## Part V: Social Domains

### *Introduction*

Gays, lesbians, and bisexuals on the Madison campus, as in the larger community, are a diverse group of people. Racial, gender, class, disability, and cultural issues, among others, act to divide the gay and lesbian population, and are thus of importance in any discussion of the social concerns of lesbians and gays. This is not to suggest that there are not common problems that face all lesbians and gays. Homophobia, both institutional and individual, and the apparent invisibility of lesbians and gays to the framers of university policy have the same harmful effects on all lesbians and gays.

The Ten Percent Society became a registered gay and lesbian student organization in 1983. Membership in the Ten Percent Society is not limited to students; faculty, staff, and the community at large are welcome to attend meetings, be "card carrying" members, and to participate in all aspects of the organization, to the extent University regulations allow. The primary purposes of the Ten Percent Society are to provide an informal social setting for lesbians and gays to meet and interact with one another, and to educate all people about the issues and concerns of lesbians and gays.

Periodically, Ten Percent sponsors dances in the Memorial Union which attract both students and city residents. Less frequently the organization sponsors educational events (Out and About, Coming Out Week) which consist of speakers, presentations, and workshops. Recent programs have included national figures such as Vito Russo (portrayals of gays and lesbians in the movies) and Allen Berube (gays and lesbians in the military). Workshop topics cover a wide range of issues, from dealing with homophobia to religion and homosexuality.

Ten Percent receives support from the University each academic year through the provision of office space. It raises funds from dance revenues, grants and donations. Ten Percent receives additional funding for special programs (Out and About, etc.) from WSA, university departments, and other community organizations.

In the years since Ten Percent was established, other groups have formed to address the needs of specific communities. Examples include: BAGELS, a gay and lesbian organization for graduate students, formed in 1989, but now defunct; the Lesbian and Gay Law Students Association formed in 1990; four new organizations formed in 1991, including the Gay and Lesbian Ethnic Minority Association, Delta Lambda Phi (a gay fraternity), Yikes Dykes, and Lesbians in Science.

*Problem areas*

One of the basic problems facing Ten Percent, the primary lesbian and gay organization on campus, is its inability to address adequately the concerns of lesbians and gays of color, and lesbians in general. This problem may be beyond the University's power to address, but it is noted because it is a serious issue. As a result of this, lesbians and gays of color who have experienced what they feel is a lack of commitment to their issues in Ten Percent have already formed their own organization (the above-mentioned Gay/Lesbian Ethnic Minority Association). Similarly, in reaction to the feeling that women's concerns are given short shrift by Ten Percent, a group of lesbians formed Yikes Dykes.

Another concern expressed by some lesbians and gays on campus has to do with the scheduling of gay/lesbian events in campus facilities, particularly the Memorial Union. Specific concerns involve scheduling/reserving space for dances and regular meetings of the Ten Percent Society. The suspicion of homophobia merits some consideration on the part of the administration.

A related problem concerns the lack of institutional support for programming that has the potential to benefit and educate a broad cross-section of the campus community. For example, the Ten Percent Society's Out and About and Coming Out Week programs could be bigger and better events if the university supported those endeavors in the same way that it has committed itself to other programs promoting multiculturalism and diversity.

Another issue which has arisen in the minds of some lesbian and gay students is the apparent dismissal of inquiries for a space in the Red Gym after the proposed renovations are completed. Again, lesbian and gay students expect their issues to be given the same consideration as those of other minority students. Currently, there are student efforts and plans toward the development of a Gay and Lesbian Center.

Finally, some students have expressed a general concern with university policies that act to discriminate against lesbians and gays. Of primary interest are policies that bestow benefits on the "spouses" of those affiliated with the university. Of course, any non-traditional family unit is affected by such rules, but same-sex couples are completely excluded because of the dominant notions of marriage (Same-sex couples cannot marry because a marriage is defined as the union of opposite sexes). The use of university facilities ranging from gyms to the Unions are all implicated, and if the university is truly committed to progressive and enlightened thinking, it must seriously consider the discriminatory effects of such policies.

#### **Recommendations**

The initial problem discussed, that of insensitivity to issues of diversity within Ten Percent (and the lesbian and gay community in general), is one that the affected parties have decided to address themselves. The formation of groups to focus on the concerns of people of color and women is definitely a positive step, and is probably the best response possible now. However, it is incumbent on the university to recognize that the issue exists as it considers solutions to the broader problems facing lesbians and gays. Students' multiple identities need to be recognized in all areas so that false assumptions, such as all gays are white, do not undermine the intent or effectiveness of programs.

One of the first major steps the university could take in addressing not only the social concerns of lesbians and gays, but all of the issues raised in this report is the establishment of an office for lesbian and gay concerns. Again, this is a move that was seen as necessary in dealing

with the concerns of other minority students, and surely the same benefits could be realized by applying this approach to lesbian and gay concerns. Such an office would be invaluable as a way of 1) demonstrating administrative concern, and 2) coordinating the university's responses to problems that are often interrelated.

Turning to the remainder of the specific issues raised, there are concrete solutions possible to all of them:

#### *Scheduling of events*

Whether or not the underlying cause of the perceived discrimination is homophobia or not, it should be possible to avoid problems by establishing clear policies that would govern the assignment of union space. The perception of discrimination was caused in large part by the apparent absence of any set policy for assigning space, which gave the impression that assignments were to some extent arbitrary. Consistent application of assignment policy would also do much to avoid such problems in the future.

#### *Lack of institutional support*

The only true solution to this problem is the commitment of time and resources by the university to gay and lesbian concerns. The support could take various forms. A prime example of what a university *can* do if it is determined is evident in the Rutgers report obtained by the committee to serve as a guide/model. Rutgers University basically had to start from scratch in developing lesbian and gay programming. It is likely that much more could be accomplished here where the programming ideas already exist, but simply lack adequate funding. Co-sponsorship of lectures, presentations, and support and recognition for events such as National Coming Out Day are only some ways in which the university can demonstrate its commitment to lesbian and gay students.

### *Space in the Red Gym*

Obviously, the space in the Red Gym is prime and allocation is a competitive process. Even if space in the Gym is impossible, it would be a positive act for the university to move toward establishing a gay/lesbian center somewhere on campus and to encourage the various groups who have been mentioned in this section to use that space. There are current efforts by student groups for the development of such a center; those efforts should be strongly supported by the administration. Simply the recognition by the university that gays and lesbians do need "safe" space, as do other minorities, would go a long way toward proving a serious commitment on its part. It is clear that lesbians and gays have the same need for a refuge, a haven, from the pressures of living as a minority in society, that prompted the establishment of the Interim Multicultural Center.

### *University policies*

What is called for is serious reflection on the university's part as to the depth of its commitment to nondiscrimination. It has paid lip service to high ideals in its statement of nondiscrimination, but the inconsistencies in its regulations raise troubling questions. It is indeed strange that the university declares its abhorrence of discriminatory military regulations, vows to fight for change, and then proceeds to do basically the same thing through policies that are apparently within its power to change.

## Part VI: Spiritual Domains

One of the essential components of life is that which has been called the spiritual - a nebulous term, at best, but a side that can find expression in a wide variety of ways. University students are often faced, for the first time in their lives, with the opportunity to examine their own spirituality or, at least, to question the religious values with which they have been familiar during their early years. More often than not, however, it is this aspect of life which is the least examined during one's years in an institution of higher learning. This can be particularly problematic for lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals who are just coming to terms with their own sexuality, because issues of self-worth and identity are closely tied to one's sense of the spiritual. To bring sexuality and spirituality together - to integrate those dynamics in a meaningful way in one's life - often seems an impossible task, especially for many gay men, lesbians or bisexuals, but resources do exist for that to happen and need to be more readily available.

In the past ten years, this aspect of life for lesbians and gay men has taken on a new level of energy as dozens of books have been written, workshops held, and support groups formed to assist people in the process of integrating spirituality and their same-sex orientation. Here in Madison a variety of resources exist in this regard, but discovering those resources is often a difficult task.

On campus, discussion groups, lectures, and workshops have been held and sponsored by Pres House, the Lutheran Campus Center, University United Methodist church, St. Paul's Catholic Center, St. Francis House and Hillel Foundation. In addition, a variety of informal support/discussion groups meet on a regular basis in the vicinity of the campus. Those groups include Affirmation, Integrity/Dignity, and Friends for Lesbian & Gay Concerns. Likewise, in recent years, groups and individuals representing other religious traditions have been organized nationally and locally. Those groups include Fryia's First Friday, Gay Pagan Men, and The Reformed Congregation of the Goddess. Organizations such as these give students the opportunity to

discuss and reflect upon their own sense of the holy and how that has an impact on their lives as lesbians or gay men. These groups need greater visibility.

While some individuals choose to develop their spirituality in relation to a community, others find more personal or private ways to attune themselves to spiritual things. Many books have been written in the past decade which challenge traditional religious approaches to homosexuality, offering new insights about biblical interpretation or information about cultures which affirm various types of sexual expression. Bibliographies are available at Room of One's Own (317 W. Johnson St.) or in the offices of The United (310 E. Wilson St.) and could be consulted in ordering books for UW libraries or in providing readings in courses related to sociology, anthropology, or religious studies. Many new books approach the topic of gay/ lesbian spirituality in academic and devotional ways.

#### **Recommendations**

As the Ten Percent Society and other gay, lesbian and bisexual groups continue to develop their programs, we encourage regular opportunities for members to hear from individuals whose spirituality is important to them as lesbians, gay men, and bisexuals so that students can consider the need for developing a sense of the spiritual in their own lives. Perhaps a joint program for the Out and About series with the Interim Multi-Cultural Center could examine how gay men and lesbians from a variety of cultures and religions have integrated their sexuality and spirituality.

Other suggestions for increased visibility include:

1. Displays of books on gay/lesbian spiritual issues in the University Book Store during Coming Out Week (October) in the Fall or during the Out and About series in the Spring.
2. Brochures on "Homophobia," as well as bibliographies on gay/lesbian spiritual issues, distributed to various campus religious centers.
3. Articles in campus newspapers about various spiritual support groups.

4. Prepared bibliographies for professors seeking to integrate lesbian or gay spiritual issues into the classroom.

5. Use of the video "Being Gay in the Church," available from the Wisconsin Conference of Churches, 1955 W. Broadway, Suite 104, Madison, WI 53713.

University students, particularly those who are lesbian or gay, are often struggling with some of life's most important questions, questions such as: Who am I? Is there a place for me in this world? Will I know love? One approach to dealing with these questions is in the whole realm of spirituality. Resources for pursuing this quest need to be more readily available.