

Homosexuality 'not simply sexual'

I read that Student Council voted to approve the Gay Student Union's (GSU) educational activities during Gay Celebration Week, April 1-5. It's important.

Because someone you know is gay. Homosexuals are "an American minority of ten to 25 million people, about as large as blacks and twice as large as Jews." Twenty percent of the population has homosexual tendencies and experiences and 10 percent are gay, according to sociologists.

Translated, more than one in ten people you walk by on your way to class are gay. They are your roommates, your professors, your fraternity and sorority mates.

Chances are, they do not yet realize they are gay. It is not easy to understand and accept it in oneself. They may even get married — the traditional road to affection and support. Then they wake up one day and realize it's all wrong.

I know, because I was married to a man who realized halfway through nine years of marriage that he was predominantly gay. We were *not* one, but two victims of straight society.

You cannot tell a homosexual by the way he or she looks, walks, or talks. Many gays for a time do not admit their homosexuality; they may go to bed with members of the opposite sex to "reassure" themselves and others.

Bisexuals enjoy and need both men and women in all the ways an individual can need another. These facts are confusing, both for a gay or

bisexual person trying to fathom his or her own sexual identity and for those who care about that individual.

I cannot imagine a more traumatic identity crisis than the realization that you are gay. You do not choose to be homosexual. Sexual identity is laid down at the same time language is learned — by the age of four. You choose only whether to smother and contain this force at the core of your humanity, fragmenting your life, or to accept yourself, and damn straight people's prejudices.

The University is a terrible context in which to confront one's homosexuality — here in the desperate playing field where girls and boys strive so mightily to demonstrate their femininity and masculinity. That is why the GSU is necessary, to support those few students who are self-perceptive and brave enough to identify themselves with it.

As an undergraduate, I used to think college was where you became an adult. I was wrong. Becoming a mature, self-aware adult only begins there. Yet it's at this beginning that the screws are put on to force people to choose traditional sex roles, and worse, to make life commitments based on those roles.

Maybe Gay Celebration Week will counteract some of this pressure. I hope it is treated with seriousness and maturity on all sides. We need to make a dent in our abysmal ignorance about homosexuality, for the sake of the gays who are among our friends



CD/ Gary H

and families, and for the greater understanding and acceptance of all our individual sexualities.

I may be overly vehement. But I have lived these facts. I have loved a gay person and been hurt by the ricochet of society's repression. I have seen him grow, and grown myself, in spite of the hardships.

Homosexuality is a deeply emotional and threatening issue. I do not expect my comments to dislodge anyone's deepseated homophobia. But I have to speak in support of this week of education, and yes, of celebration.

For being gay is not simply a sexual need. It is a constellation of the heart and soul, a reaching out for the affection, affirmation, and companionship as well as the sexual fulfillment offered by a human being of one's own gender.

It requires an incredible struggle to

allow one's homosexual self and breathe. To lose the struggle partial suicide. Any gay person has the integrity to assert his need and right to love the same. The exactness of the penalties society exact, deserves to celebrate.

Name withheld upon

Kennedy 'stands o'

I applaud The Cavalier series on the "Black Experience" at the University. This subject has often been neglected in recent years. Covert racism, as practiced by students and faculty alike, can no longer be condoned or swept under the rug.