Lesbians, gays face problems

I would like to state for the record that I agree with Robert L. Satcher's letter (Feedback, Jan. 12) that the harassment of lesbians and gay men is in some ways quite different from the maltreatment of women, blacks and other groups. I am glad to read that Satcher understands that "discrimination against gays is unfair."

Clearly, the issue of viability is vital in characterizing the unique oppression of lesbians and gay men. The sexual orientation of the harasser, however, reduces the scope of our oppression. In fact, the choice to remain invisible often results in continuing oppression.

Women and blacks who become successful must, as a result of their physical attributes, be visible in their success. (Black women who are successful are even more terrifying.) Lesbians and gay men have few role model on which to base their hopes for future prosperity and achievement, aside from the stereotyped hairdresser and florist occupations. We do not have women or families who we can imagine as 'shortcomings' as easily, because heterosexual or "closeted" parents do not understand and cannot easily express empathy toward the situation.

The more lesbians or gay men remain "closeted," the more we face continuous fear of discovery, of developing open relationships, and of the maltreatment of our lesbian sisters and gay brothers of other races.

When we "come out," we face not only the removal of discrimination and harassment in housing and employment, but, also the retrieval of their homes.

Satcher realizes that "women and other minorities have had histories of oppression."

When we tabulate this wrongdoings, we must forget the extermination of tens of thousands of gays in the camps of Nazi Germany; we must forget the persecution of Jews, gypsies and criminals were released during the Allied victory; the assassination of San Francisco City Super-

Harvey Milk; the Twin Peaks (Police) should let former Supervisors Dan White off easy from two counts of murder; and the current ridicule, imprisonment and legal action against gays who are beaten or arrested each week in Boston. This is miniscule compared to the actual volume of history of gay oppression.

Last month the President's Office informed me of reported "utter-bashings" which occurred in front of the Massachusetts Hall but only 2% blocks from Lobby 7. Then, please remember the firebombing of our home, the Harvard News, Gay Rag, and the Glad Tidings.

Within this framework, it is all that hard to understand why we are angry about the homophobia and vandalism of our office and the changes here in MIT? These indicators urge all lesbians and gay men to be wary of a renewed asbestos and threat. If an asbestos and our losses happen, we may not survive. Thank you, Robert Satcher, for recognizing the threat. There are vari- ous guides under which discrimi- nation and harassment can appear in the MIT community.

I hope we all are just as aware of the similarities as of the differences inherent in these oppressive attitudes and actions.

If this harassment and maltreatment is ever to end, we must understand the attitudes and actions each and every time we encounters them.

Consider their making whole families farm to 90 hours a day, in their normal lifestyle, as usual, as possible, but we can be so naive as to imagine that we would breed them rather than attempt to convince others to live here! While our rush this year may not have been our best ever, many people worked damn hard to give freshmen a good impression of this place, and that we serve more credit than an accusa-

Column/Will Doherty

Cambondian news distorted

Mark Temple's column on Cambodian (Jan. 26) reveals more about the events and press than about its topic.

Templer describes the horrors of Cambodia during the Khmer Rouge (Pol Pot's) Commutists' evacuation of the cities, they say, and sent the people to work camps. Their possessions were removed, and they were given little food, shelter, and medicine. Execution were commonplace, and disease, insanity, and malnourishment took the lives of many others. An estimated one to three million people died out of a population of seven million. A refugee friend sums up the moral of Cambodia. That is better. Further, he finds that the American media said almost nothing the whole time.

The picture above is the standard fare of the mass media. However, it is a distortion even of its own selective evidence, and is taken out of context.

Some sense of the report of the news reports was the testimony of refugees from camps in Thailand, who described to us the violence, chosen by him and interviewed in the presence of DC government officials. Such of the evidence was overt fabrication. The Ameri- can press ignored other sources, including Western reporters, offi- cial Western delegations, and cer- tain refugees, whose statements contradicted the horror stories and were more favorable to the Khmer Rouge.

As for the number who died, some demographers are estimating tens or hundreds of thousands, orders of magnitude lower than the numbers usually cited and as- sertially. The importance of num- bers is not just how many happened, but in evaluating the reliability of re- ports.

Sense can be made of the con- tradictory evidence by noting that the USA has been the most important aid source to Cambodia from northwestern Cambodia. The north- west experienced the greatest re- pression by the previous govern- ment and the least control by the Khmer Rouge. Most likely, the violence was not a central planning issue between Cambodia, but rather the result of undisguised troops and peasant revenge.

The Cambodian civil war ex- ploits the treatment of city-dwellers better than it explains Com- munist ideology. The revolution was carried out by Khmer peas- ants and the urban elite. Also, the peasants probably did not consider their own activities and press than about its topic.

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