Volunteers Role Play A Coming Out Scene

Homophobia, from Page 1

on his sexual orientation to his family, with his lover present.
He asked the audience to "be conscious of what you're feeling during this experience," and to "see how homophobia not only affects the parents coming out and his lover, but how it affects the entire family."

Brian S. Gladstein '96 played a conservative and disbelieving father, who insisted it was all a joke, and that "no son of mine" would be gay. The son, Jeffrey A. Guertin '93, said that it was neverwronging to confront his parents.

While some might point to homosexuality as the cause of the family's conflict, Blumenfield said, "It is homophobia that we need to guard against so that this kind of scenario doesn't happen."

Shock therapy posters debated

Following Blumenfield's presentation, the audience asked Blumenfield and members of GAMIT about homophobia-related issues.

IFC President Prashant B. Doshi '94 began a discussion about the gay awareness posters put up by GAMIT. "Why the shock therapy?" he asked, referring to several GAMIT posters including one depicting partially nude men holding up signs.

One of the reasons why it's so difficult for people to accept Margaret displays of homosexual behavior is that they have become used to violent displays of heterosexual behavior," said Travis R. Merritt, dean for undergraduate academic affairs.

Blumenfield said that the posters could be a "form of desensitization" to bombard people with images of homosexual lifestyles, and might also result from a sense of anger with a community trying to keep homophobes back.

Another audience member said that "heterosexuals don't need to defend their actions" but homosexuals do, including the extreme cases.

"Instead of looking at each other as GAMIT members and fraternity members" the students should see themselves as members of the same group who have differences, Doshi said.

Doshi invited the leaders of GAMIT to a forum of student leaders to discuss homophobia on Mar. 31.

15 Ways to Combat Homophobia

According to Warren J. Blumenfield

1. Be aware of the generalizations you make. Assume there are lesbian/homosexual people where you go to school, where you work, etc. Don't assume that everyone is heterosexual.
2. Notice the times you disclose your heterosexuality.
3. For sensitization, hold hands with someone of the same sex in a public space.
4. Read positive lesbian gay books and periodicals.
5. Wear pro-lesbian T-shirts and buttons to show solidarity.
6. Attend lesbian cultural and community events.
7. Challenge homophobic jokes and epithets.
8. Use inclusive and affirming or gender-neutral language when referring to sexuality or human relationships in everyday speech, on written forms, etc.
9. Include sexual orientation as a protected category in your anti-discrimination policies in school and at work.
10. Extend spousal equivalency benefits to lesbian gay employees on par with heterosexual employees.
11. Monitor politicians, the media, and organizations to ensure accurate coverage of lesbians.
12. Work and vote for candidates taking pro-lesbian stands.
13. Initiate discussion, coordinate workshops, and include material in education curricula on the topic of homophobia and the lesbian experience.
14. Develop support groups for lesbian gay people and their heterosexual allies.
15. Implement and participate in a safe space program in your school or workplace.

IFC Charges ILGs with Community Violations

Violations, from Page 13

groups at other universities are not allowed to regulate themselves because their administrations do not trust them, and they have no basis of support to take disciplinary action.

Dunn said he is confident that IFC JudComm is capable and should handle these cases.

IFC's jurisdiction includes violations pertaining to Rush parties, and community relations. IFC JudComm can also act on MIT policy, but it rarely comes up, Dunn said.

The board used to only handle Rush violations, but now it is active year-round, he said.

In contrast to other schools, MIT's IFC JudComm could theoretically recommend to remove freshman housing status from a fraternity as a severe punishment, Dunn said. Even if the committee never does this, the fraternities listen to us, he said.

MIT's IFC has two separate boards, one for judicial review, and one for investigation. Most schools only have a judging board, according to Dunn. In addition, most schools keep violations confidential.

But Dunn believes that the board can "be more effective if people know what we're doing."

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