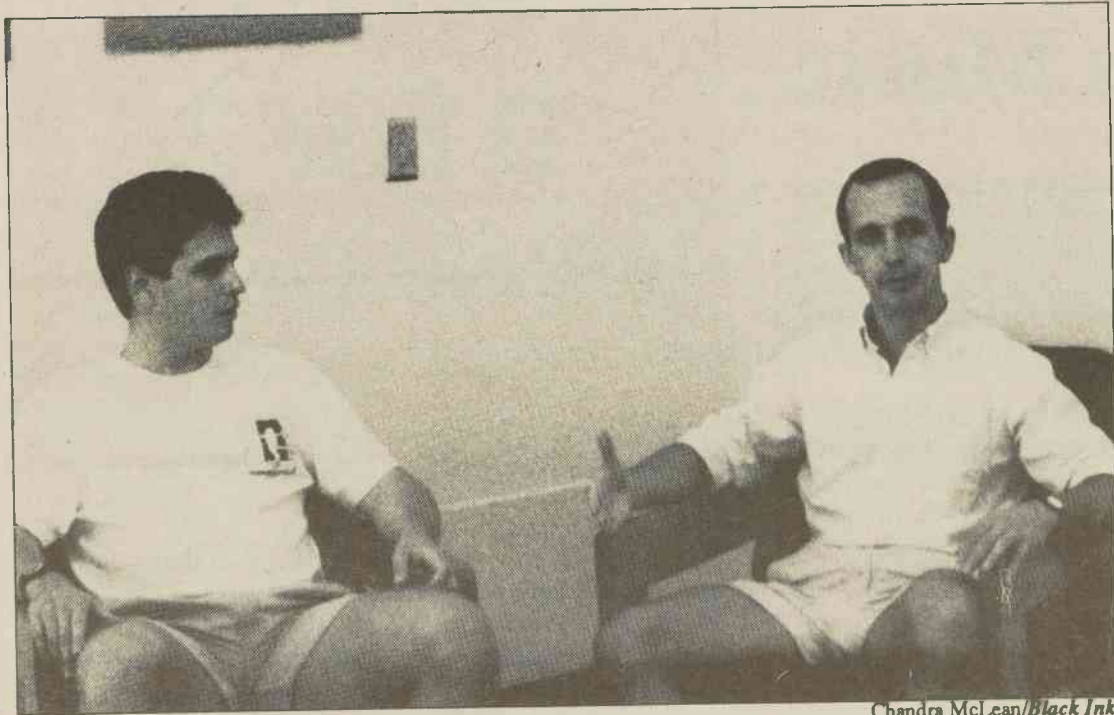


Three CGLA Members Respond to Speaker Moore



Chandra McLean/Black Ink

Mike Holland, left, and Bob Garris said CGLA does not sponsor illegal activity.

Last week, Speaker of the Student Congress Tim Moore spoke to *Black Ink* on his reasoning for wanting to deny student funds from the Carolina Gay and Lesbian Association. He said many students do not see the CGLA as a minority group on campus, and that the organization advocates a sexual lifestyle that is inconsistent with the rules and regulations of University and North Carolina laws.

Another issue that sent ripples through the University's gay community was the furor initiated by a letter to *The Daily Tar Heel* written by Chris Osborne, who said homosexuality was unnatural. Osborne said the physiology of the rectum, which makes it ill-suited for homosexual intercourse, proved that this form of sex was unnatural.

This week, we were able to hear what three CGLA members thought about Moore's push for defunding the organization, as well as their feelings regarding a wide variety of campus issues affecting gays and lesbians. They were Hugh Singerline, the editor of *Lambda*, the CGLA newsletter, Mike Holland, the organizer of a gay studies group, and Bob Garris, CGLA Office Manager. Ink Staff Writer Chandra McLean conducted the interview.

BLACK INK: How do you feel about Tim Moore and his reasoning for wanting to defund the CGLA?
SINGERLINE: I find Mr. Moore somewhat annoying because when

you counter his allegations, he doesn't respond. He simply repeats them in a different form. I don't know the man personally. I just wonder if he operates on the school of thought that if you repeat something often enough, it's true.

I don't know what he means by us being a "legal organization." I think that was shown in the last Student Congress meeting because they found no grounds to defund the CGLA. Do we support or organize illegal activity? No. Even in this state of North Carolina with Jesse Helms, gays and lesbians are not illegal by definition, we are simply an organization that caters mostly to gays and lesbians.

I think what Mr. Moore is getting at are the so-called "crime against nature" laws. Basically, the state has declared that certain sexual activity is illegal, which is different than saying that people are illegal, then saying certain actions are illegal. These are actions that others besides gay and lesbians engage in, so if they are supposed to be illegal for some, they must be illegal for all.

Does the CGLA sponsor such illegal activity in its offices? No! Do we do it at our meetings? No! If Mr. Moore has trouble with anything, he must go on and have some fraternities and sororities kicked off campus because some of their members go out drinking and then driving which we know is an illegal activity. If you want to play that,

you have to play fairly. You have to bump off some of the Christian groups on campus because no doubt, their students do the same thing.

INK: Do you feel that Moore is being unreasonable in the way that he is looking at the whole situation regarding the CGLA?

GARRIS: That would be my personal viewpoint. It's the classic example of someone having a bias and then trying to find a reason to justify it. He's not applying his logic to all student organizations on campus...

HOLLAND: The fact that he is trying to say that they can't fund illegal activities may be true, and we don't encourage them to fund illegal activities. We give out information to people, we refer them to the National AIDS Hotline if they have questions about AIDS, the Student Psychological Services if they have problems coming out and they want to discuss that with someone.

We have a study group where we talk current issues in the academic setting about the history of homosexual relations and the way different cultures view homosexuality. There is a lesbian lunch where a bunch of women get together and eat food, like sandwiches. Nowhere in any statute is it illegal to read information, is it illegal to eat food, nowhere is it illegal to meet and talk. That's what this group does. We're not a sex club. We're not having orgies at our meetings.

GARRIS: The University funds classes in which the study of homosexuality is the topic in the class. The state of North Carolina funds AIDS education and safer sex education. The CGLA is not doing anything that conflicts with other things the University funds or with other things the state funds. We are doing it merely with a focus on students, and the student population here at Carolina.

INK: Are there many heterosexuals who support the CGLA and what you are trying to do on campus?

GARRIS: We have a lot of heterosexual members in the CGLA who support us and our "little button culture" where you express everything through little metal pieces on your backpack. We have several heterosexual members who are happily heterosexual.

HOLLAND: The University saw fit last year after being pestered for a while to include sexual orientation as a nondiscrimination policy. It was pointed out that because none of the other reasoning seems to hold in this push to defund the CGLA, what appears to be the only difference for this organization is sexual orientation, and to defund a group on that would go against university policy, so, I mean the University is officially behind us.

INK: Do you think that the movie *Paris is Burning* (a recent documentary about Harlem drag balls) had a positive impact on both the gay and heterosexual communities?
SINGERLINE: It is good sometimes to see movies like "Paris is Burning" because that experience is so different from us and our usual world.

HOLLAND: We're middle class white men and that movie was about poor, black gays. They are a part of our community but that is something we don't experience directly. It is just as important for us to learn about the variety within the gay and lesbian community as it is for the heterosexual community to learn about the gay community.

INK: How did you feel about the article in the *Omnibus* (an entertainment supplement in *The Daily Tar Heel*) about the movie "Paris is Burning"?

HOLLAND: It was some of the phrasing they used that we didn't like. It was said the movie provided homosexuals with the opportunity to come out under the bright lights

of Franklin Street. We're out there under the bright lights of Franklin Street every night. We're on Franklin Street, we're in the bakery at Columbia Street, we're in Pepper's, we're everywhere, and we don't need a movie to bring us out onto the street.

We watch movies about queers, we watch movies about heterosexuals. Most of the movies we see are about straight people. Then here, one movie comes along and they act like all of a sudden, gays have appeared because there's this movie. We've been here all along. It's like when people used to talk about deepest, darkest Africa, you know, the land of mystery. What is in this place but savages or jungle beasts, or the unknown? Well, when they started to write about gays and lesbians, they got that same tone, and you want to say, well the streets are paved and the natives here speak English, and we've been here all along.

GARRIS: That is the point of National Coming Out Day, to say, "You already know me, you just didn't know I was gay".

HOLLAND: The problem about the article in the *Omnibus* is that if you are gay, you drag, and that's not true. That is in a similar way the same sort of prejudice about black people that white people hold, and the black community is not this monolithic group of people who are all poor and living in inner cities, and the gay community is not all voguing drag queens.

You need to have an appreciation for all the different parts of a community, and when people begin to think that this one part is all there is, that's kind of annoying. The *Omnibus* had that tone.

INK: How do you feel about Chris Osborne's "The physiology of the rectum" argument?

GARRIS: His conclusions about the physiology of the rectum are shaped by his prejudices about gays.
HOLLAND: The only ones who are healthy would be lesbians. If women really want to have safe sex, they'll have it with another woman and not with a man because the transmission of AIDS between two women is extraordinarily difficult, and incidents of virtually all sexual diseases is much lower between lesbians than any other group at all.