

## Homophobia: college should address issue

Kirstin Stump  
The Pendulum

Homophobia, the fear of homosexuals, is an irrational fear found on all college campuses, including Elon's.

Heterosexism is a term more frequently used. Heterosexism is the behavior which makes individuals the target of oppression, harassment or discrimination based upon their homosexual or bisexual orientation.

David Atkins, dean of student affairs, said heterosexual students feel threatened by homosexual and bisexual students. "The fear has a lot to do with family upbringing and environment. We are taught at an early age who to love and who to hate," Atkins said.

The fear of AIDS has increased negative attitudes toward gay and bisexual communities. "AIDS is not a gay disease. It originated in a heterosexual community in Africa. As a result of homophobic attitudes, AIDS has filtrated the entire population," Atkins said.

Atkins said education is the key to understanding and preventing the spread of AIDS.

Ten percent of the American population are homosexual and 24-26 percent are bisexual. Atkins said the percentage of homosexual students at Elon is equal to the national level. Atkins is aware of only two AIDS cases that have occurred at Elon in the past.

The issue of homosexuality is so wide spread that it affects all aspects of college life. Atkins said

**"When you're straight, affairs in the bedroom are kept private. But when you're gay, everyone wants to know what is going on."**

the Greek community as a whole is homophobic.

"At one point in time, I knew of at least one gay or lesbian person in each sorority and fraternity," he said.

Atkins said Elon needs to address the issues of homosexuality and bisexuality through support/networks, changing the Mission of the College statement to include cultural diversity among people, changing Elon's Equal Employment Opportunity statement to include sexual orientation, and most importantly, educational programming for all students.

"Lisa," a former student and lesbian, said she had dated males from high school through her junior year at Elon. She then became involved in a two and a half year relationship with another female and realized she was gay.

At first she only told other homosexuals about her sexual orientation because she was afraid to lose the support of her friends.

"When you're straight, affairs in the bedroom are kept private. But when you're gay, everyone wants to know what is going on," Lisa said.

Today, only three straight people know she is gay.

Lisa said the stereotypes about homosexuals run rampant. She said gay males are expected to be feminine and females are expected to be more masculine, but the stereotypes are false.

Lisa is waiting a while before telling her family about her sexual orientation. When she was a junior, she found out her twin sister was gay. She wants to make sure she can come to terms with the denial and rejection her sister experienced before telling her parents.

Lisa said Elon needs to address the issues of homosexuality and bisexuality through education. She said Elon 101 classes and campus-wide programs would be a good place to start.

"Support groups wouldn't help because Elon is so small and everyone (who is homosexual) is afraid of being threatened."

She said as she has gotten older, accepting her sexual orientation has become easier but the stakes have become higher. "I've been through the 'coming out' stage and I feel comfortable with my sexuality but in the real world you need to watch your step because you could lose your job," Lisa said.

"The advice I would give to someone who is 'coming out' is to know what you are getting into; friends by day, lovers by night. Know that what you are about to do is completely against what society believes in. Think about the things it is going to cost because it will cost you a lot," she said.

Awards Day is an annual event sponsored by Omicron Delta Kappa. This year it will be held immediately after the final faculty meeting of the year in the Yeager Recital hall at the Fine Arts Building at 4 p.m. on Friday, May 3, 1991. Everyone is invited to attend this event. Refreshments will be served after the ceremony. For more information call X2219 or visit Alamance 118.

You're invited to an  
open house at  
Holland House.

Thursday, May 2  
9:30 - 10:00 a.m.

The College Coffee will  
move to the front lawn of  
Holland House at the corner  
of O'Kelly and Haggard.

Come visit the new home for  
the Development Office.

### UNLIMITED INCOME AMERICA'S PREMIER IMAGE CO.

In 10 short years Beauticontrol has become the World's Premiere Image Company and we've only just begun! For a limited time you can receive a free image training, valued at \$1500. You will market fashion, corporate workshops, head to toe image consultations, color coded cosmetics and more for groups or individuals. For an interview, call Cheryl Ashworth at (804) 685-3794.

Andrews  
Auto  
Service



COMPLETE  
REPAIR  
SERVICE

#### MAJOR & MINOR REPAIRS

- TUNE-UPS
- BRAKE WORK
- BATTERIES
- LUBRICATION

NC INSPECTION STATION

10% STUDENT DISCOUNT ON MAINTENANCE & REPAIR  
WITH ELON ID

**U-HAUL®**

*Moving Made Easier®*

704 W. Haggard Ave.  
Elon College, N.C. 27244

449-0101