

Scarlet and Black

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Students Call for Gay Resource Center: Tederman's Proposal Draws Criticism

by John Harrison

On Tuesday, about 100 Grinnell College students staged a rally at Fell House demanding that the Dean of Student Affairs, Jim Tederman, and the college administration create a Gay Resource Center on the college campus.

Standing in the near-freezing rain, the protestors sang songs and chanted for an hour until Tederman came outside to speak to the demonstrators.

The plans for a Gay Resource Center were presented to the college administration in February after SGA publicly stated that a Gay Resource Center was needed on campus. The proposed center is to include a library and other materials on homosexuality as well as meeting place for students to gather and discuss issues concerning their community. In the proposal, it is made clear that the gay resource center is intended for the use of the entire campus community. In recent months, a number of acts of vandalism and anti-homosexual graffiti have been seen on campus and members of the gay community along with non-gays have called for a campus-wide public education program on homosexuality.

Tederman has said that the administration strongly agrees on the need for a gay resource center. Yet the current controversy has arisen over the creation of a human resource center that would house the gay resource center along with a resource center for women, blacks, and minority groups. Tederman said, "We agree gay students do have some very special needs." But he added that the gay community's needs would be better met within the context of a human resource center.

Tederman said that primarily four groups would use a gay resource center. Tederman described these groups "gays



Supporters of a gay resource center demonstrate outside Fell House. Photo by Mike Polk.

who are in the closet about their sexuality, heterosexual students seeking information, students who are uncertain about their sexuality, and gays who are open about their sexuality." Tederman said in relation to these four groups, "I believe most of these students would not go to a gay resource center." Tederman added, "We don't want to set up an ineffective program."

Tederman said that naming the center a "human" resource center rather than "gay" resource center would attract both homosexual and heterosexual students. Tederman said, "We feel more students on

campus would take advantage of such a center if they didn't have the fear of being stigmatized."

Yet many of the students protesting at Fell House openly disagreed with Tederman's desire to place the gay resource center within the confines of the human resource center.

Jim Fitzgerald, who had been talking with the administration on the resource center issue said, "By not using the name 'gay', the administration is diluting the purpose of a gay resource center. Fitzgerald said that there seems to "be a stigma attached to the word 'gay' and the

resource center is trying to overcome this problem."

Angie Hugen, who also has been involved in the resource center negotiations, said that with the gay resource center, the college "has shown its reluctance to make a formal commitment to addressing the civil and human rights of gays." Hugen said, "The college's non-discriminatory policy means nothing without a commitment to gays." Hugen said, "We want the college to make a political statement saying it's okay to be gay."

Tederman defends the college's non-discriminatory policy by pointing out that Grinnell is one of the few colleges that even has a non-discriminatory policy including sexual or affectional preference. Tederman said, "The college does enforce its discrimination policy and is in the process of writing an harassment policy to deal with all forms of sexual or racial harassment."

As to the question of the placement of the gay or human resource center, Tederman originally proposed that the center be housed in the forum. Yet Tederman said that the space requested by the gay students was too large for the forum and the Health Center was suggested as an alternative.

In a flier circulated on campus this week, the gay community contended that to put the gay resource center in the Health Center "is to equate it with illness!" Tederman said, "It is not my intention to equate homosexuality with illness and I believe this accusation is nothing but a cheap shot."

Currently, there has been the suggestion to put the gay resource center in Fell House when student affairs offices move to the forum next year. Yet as of now the debate over the naming of the resource center remains undecided. Jim Tederman, representatives from the gay community, and President Drake are scheduled to meet Friday afternoon to discuss the issue further.

Balloons released in peace protest



A Grinnell student writes a message for his balloon in preparation for the balloon launching protest against the U.S. bombing of Libya. Photo by Stephen Hardwick.

Babener and Rupp Resign

by Jill Ellis and John Harrison

Both the American Studies and the Spanish Departments will be losing professors next year as Lianha Babener in the American Studies department and Stephen Rupp in the Spanish department both plan to seek professorship at other institutions.

Stephen Rupp, Assistant Professor of Spanish, is resigning his position at Grinnell and has accepted a job offer starting next fall at the University of Toronto in Ontario. Lianha Babener, Associate Professor of American Studies and English is resigning to accept a position as the head of the English department at Montana State University in Bozeman, Montana.

Rupp, who has been a member of the Grinnell faculty since fall of 1983, explains that his reasons for leaving Grinnell are threefold.

First, Rupp is originally from Canada, and is excited at the prospect of returning to his home country. Toronto is a particularly wonderful and beautiful city in which to live.

Secondly, for a single man such as Rupp, living in Grinnell is "a little difficult" when it comes to establishing and maintaining an active social life. In Toronto, Rupp can enjoy all the culture a major city has to offer.

Rupp's third reason for leaving Grinnell is his preference for working at a large university institution rather than a small liberal arts college. Although Rupp believes that "the students at Grinnell are good," he wants to work more with graduate students, with whom he can pursue more research in his specific field of interest.

In general, Rupp says, "a university is more academically stimulating" than a small college. Rupp spent his undergraduate days at a large university, and looks forward to returning to a big university where greater emphasis is placed on research.

Babener, a tenured professor who has been at Grinnell for nine years said the reason she was leaving was because Montana State provides a "wonderful profes-

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