

Iowa State ralliers come out to support minority rights



photo by Jim Lee

Beth Repp Sarver, Undec 2, and GLSO President Heather LaRayne Thompson, Relig 3, react positively to one of the speakers during Wednesday's rally.

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"A world in which there is only one race, one sex and one affectional orientation would be a very boring one. Those who desire such a world deserve to live in such a place," according to Tony Smith, associate professor of philosophy.

Smith was one of many speakers at the Minority Rights and Funding Issues Rally held Wednesday at noon south of the campanile.

The rally was organized by the Gay/Lesbian Student Outreach and included speakers from the Progressive Action Coalition, the Latin American Solidarity Commission and Black Student Government.

"There is no beauty without diversity," Smith said. "Discriminating against blacks, women and gays in an effort to develop a superior race is hypocrisy in a big way.

"The music of America is strongly influenced by Afro-Americans, the women in history have contributed a lot to the American way of life and philosophy would not be where it is today if not for the contributions by gay men," Smith said.

Most of the speakers agreed that all minority groups must work together because each group is subject to the same discrimination and harassment that gays and lesbians have experienced during the past week.

Heather Thompson, president of GLSO, said, "We obviously have support for our issues and it is important not to target a hatred attitude to the people who oppose the funding of issue groups.

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"What has happened to us can happen to any other minority group on campus at the drop of a hat."

The vice president of Black Student Government, Edeana Rollins, agreed.

"They are focusing on gays and lesbians this week, but further on down the line they will focus on others," she said. "There is a reason for special interest groups and that is to contribute to a diverse culture by sharing our differences with other people."

Many at the rally were wearing pink felt triangles which Claire Hueholt, JIMC 4, said are a "symbol of support for gay and lesbian rights."

"It does not mean you're gay," she said, "Just that you support gay and lesbian rights."

Hueholt also commented on the actions of the past week.

"Many have said that what I did (writing a column in the *Daily* regarding gay and lesbian rights) took a lot of courage," she said. "It didn't take a lot of courage, I was just tired of apologizing for who I am."

"I'd just like to say we are here and we're not going back into the closet," she continued. "We're proud of who we are."

Gary Tartakov, associate

professor of art and design, stressed that human rights issues are happening right here at Iowa State.

"It is saddening to see that people would do such a thing (the attacks on homosexuals)," he said. "However, it is heartening to see the people who have come to defend Claire and what she stands for."

"Claire is someone we can all be proud of," Tartakov said. "The bigotry of some people cannot drive people like Claire back into the closet."

Government of the Student Body President Julianne Marley also presented her views on the issue.

"I am very angry," she said. "But we need to direct this anger constructively and let it be known that what has happened will not be tolerated."

"By supporting the rights of one minority and not another, you still support segregation and no gain is made," she said.

Marley also stressed the importance of solidarity.

"Each of us has a responsibility to ensure that the homosexuals are not repressed," she said. "I know too many people who say 'I'm not racist and I'm a good feminist, but get the gays off campus.'"