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Letters

Griff on AIDS

To the Editor:

Although there exists no written transcript or testament of Professor Griff's speech last Sunday, we were alarmed by several statements that he made about AIDS, as reported by the Spectator of Monday, February 12. Griff is working from an outdated myth about the origin of AIDS, where the disease is thought to have spread from the black population to the white. This is not only medically and scientifically inappropriate, but is entirely contrary to many of the AIDS education efforts being made in this country. The question of origin is irrelevant, as it has been tragically shown that this disease affects people of every race, class, gender, and sexual orientation. We cannot emphasize enough that AIDS must not be associated with certain groups of people. These biases not only stigmatize the people in these groups, but also lead others to falsely believe that they are somehow safe from this disease, based on the demographic group they are in.

As far as Professor Griff's statements on the efficacy—or lack thereof—of condoms, it is appalling to think that someone might actually heed this irresponsible advice. Condoms remain the most reliable means of preventing sexual transmission of HIV other than abstinence. The idea that condoms do not work is both untrue and entirely regressive to the efforts of AIDS educators, and to public health as a whole.

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AIDS Peer Educators