

COLUMBIA SPECTATOR ARCHIVE

Columbia Daily Spectator, Volume CXVII, Number 129, 2 December 1993 — Letters to the Editor AIDS awareness [ARTICLE]

Letters to the Editor

AIDS awareness

Editor:

Yesterday was World AIDS Day. For one day, around the world, we focused our attention on a disease that has ravaged communities internationally. Right now there have been over 1.5 million people diagnosed with AIDS worldwide. No

one knows how many people have HIV, the virus that is believed to cause AIDS, but estimates place the figure at anywhere from five to 10 times that number. In the U.S., over 200,000 people have been diagnosed with the disease, and there are more people living with and dying from HIV-related illnesses in New York than in any other single place in America.

Despite the fact that New York is at the center of this epidemic, most members of the Columbia community don't see HIV as their problem. Certainly, a lot of students, faculty, and staff get tested for HIV antibodies, talk abstractly (and even earnestly) about safer sex or, less specifically, "care" about people with AIDS, but World AIDS Days have come and gone on this campus with very little fanfare.

Ignoring HIV on campus won't make it go away. That's not only because this university sits in the middle of a neighborhood—Harlem—that has been devastated by HIV, but because people with AIDS are members of this community. In the past two years alone, over 30 Columbia-affiliated people have died of HIV-related illnesses, and more people are diagnosed HIV-positive every semester.

But we can't feel paralyzed by these numbers—instead we must feel moved to action. First, we need to prevent further HIV infection by using condoms for sexual intercourse EVERY TIME! We also need to avoid sharing needles and need to

use clean needles during drug use—putting someone else’s blood in your body is the best way to get HIV. Second, we need to look outside ourselves, towards people with HIV and AIDS, and work toward eradicating the fear and hatred that constitute AIDS-phobia in ourselves and others. Finally, we have to channel our feelings of grief, anger, and urgency to fight AIDS at Columbia and in larger communities in whatever ways we can: challenging the ignorance of our friends and relatives; working against AIDS discrimination; struggling for quality health care for all Americans; and honoring the work of those people who fought long before AIDS became a red ribbon that can be worn one day and taken off the next.

Sarah Chinn

**Columbia Gay Health Advocacy
Project**

**Conor Kennedy Ryan
Co-Chair, Lesbian Bisexual Gay
Coalition**

Campbell unfair

Editor:

The talk given by Ms. Cade Campbell, identified solely as “scholar of African Studies,” is an example of the propaganda that is being offered to African American students by politically-motivated individuals using academic forums to advance their personal agendas while exhibiting contempt for true scholarship.

Apart from the fact that such people never address the question as to why the claim that the Egyptians were black

that the Egyptians were black is coming primarily from Temple University and CUNY rather than from the University of Cairo, Ms. Campbell is credited with the description of Americans as "vicious, greedy, money-grabbing people that had no culture." One wonders how Ms. Campbell can justify categorizing an entire nation in such sweeping terms when African Americans are the first to reject any such stereotyping of their own people. If I were to describe African Americans as being this, that or the other thing, I would be immediately denounced—and rightfully so—as being guilty of stereotyping at best and as being racist at worse.

While there is no doubt that Egypt (as well as other early civilizations) influenced Western civilization, I wonder if Ms. Campbell can find any trained Egyptologist who supports the theory that Western civilization originated totally in ancient Egypt, or any native Egyptian who regards himself as "black" in the Af-

rican American sense of the term.

Dr. Robert Hewson
Adjunct Lecturer, History

A lion at last

Editor:

I would like to thank the *Spectator* for making me a bona fide Columbia student. By being misinterpreted in a *Spectator* article, "Students discuss campus segregation" (Oct. 28, 1993), it seems that I have fulfilled a requirement for graduation. In the article, I was correctly quoted as saying, "Social segregation is not something all students are subject to." However, this quote was preceded by an incorrect statement: "Jajoo, however, disagreed with the notion that Columbia is segregated." My statement was

obviously a qualifying one. I had agreed that social segregation exists at Columbia, but added that not all students fall subject to it.

I hope that the *Spectator* editorial staff will be more conscious of accuracy in the articles that they print.

**Kunal Jajoo, CC'96,
Representative-at-
Large, Club Zamana**

Kudos for column

Editor:

I write to commend Ms. Kim Worobec on her "Counterpoint" in the Nov. 23 issue of *Spectator*. The facts were clearly and fully presented and helped to educate—particularly appropriate in a school newspaper.

Ireene Deninno