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HOMOPHOBIA:

Attached is a copy of an article which appeared in the PARADE MAGAZINE section of the BOSTON SUNDAY GLOBE (19 Jan 92). The brief interview with a group of adolescents reflects the homophobia which prevails on this campus.

Witness to such attitudes are graffiti on virtually every bathroom wall, in elevators and on sidewalks throughout the campus.

Just a sample:

In front of the library school several months ago, in chalk:
"Aids = Death; Gay = Aids; Gay = Death"

From several bathrooms in the library: "Kill Gays"
underneath which is written, "Why" and underneath that in another handwriting: "Because they're not human"

Examples of WHAT A UNIVERSITY COMMUNITY WOULD LOOK LIKE:

Acceptance of Lesbians, Gay men and Bisexuals as a matter of course so that they might live their lives as they wish and unself-consciously.

MINN MINTON REPORTS:

Fresh Voices

Do you have gay friends?



Billy



Renato



Linda



Chris

During a recent conversation at Connetquot High School in Bohemia, N.Y., we talked with Billy Walker, 17, Renato Migliozi, 18, Linda Quaglio, 17, and Chris Angelo, 17, about this:

Billy: I wouldn't. I don't like them. If one of my friends told me he was gay, I would still be friends with him, but I wouldn't just go up to someone who was gay and be friends with him. I don't know if I could respect him.

Renato: You'd have to watch out.

Linda: If your friend was gay, I don't think he would hit on you, because he knows that you're not.

Billy: But he might try to turn you.

Renato: Yeah. And you might not want to hurt his feelings. But you'd have to. Because that's not the way you feel.

Chris: People are people, one way or another. What they do on their own, sexually, that's their own business. But I'm sure you could still have conversations and do normal things. I don't think you should turn them away.

Billy: But you feel weird if you're alone with them.

Linda: You feel uncomfortable, probably. Like, "What is this guy thinking about me?"

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sister was a friend who's gay. A guy, 26 years old. He's spent time at the house. And we're not like, "Oh, I'm not going to drink out of that glass because he drank out of it" or anything like that. I've been alone with him, talked with him, and it's not like I'm sitting there thinking, "Well, is he looking at me or something?"

Billy: At first, did you?

Chris: At first, not even. No. Because I've known him all my life. And then, when he said he was gay, you accept it. Of course, it's *not* like, "No big deal." It's a shock. But you accept it.

Billy: I'd have to have it happen first, to really know.

Chris: I can't even remember how I felt about the issue before I knew he was gay. I was probably the same way as you. Like, you don't know. But now, I don't think twice about it.

Billy: I don't hate them. My mom has one friend who's come over once or twice, and I talked to him. But I'd have to have a gay friend to really say

Renato: I agree. If you've known someone so long, like Chris has, I guess you'd still accept him. But I'd feel a little uncomfortable with him. Like we're driving around in the car, you're looking over, you're like, whoa, you know?

Billy: At first. But after that, you don't know. You can't tell.

Linda: Once you know a person, then you know them for the way they are. If they never, like, hit on you before you knew they were gay, I don't think they're going to hit on you after you know.

Chris: That's what I mean. You don't feel uncomfortable being alone with him then. You know the person. It's not like he's going to turn around and say something to you or hit on you. That's just not happening. Why? Because it's a friend I've known all my life. He's known me since I was this big, and it's just not even a thought. I've gone places with him, been in cars... You don't think about it. He's just a friend.

TEENAGERS: WHAT DO YOU THINK? Write to Lynn Minton, Box 4166, Grand Central Station, New York, N.Y. 10163-4166, and please include daytime phone number. Every letter is read but, because of volume of mail, personal replies regrettably are not possible.

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