

A&M crowd calls drug tests 'an unwarranted invasion'

Narrow debate vote considers privacy issues

By Melanie Perkins
Staff Writer

Though the vote was close, audience members at the last and possibly most hotly debated Texas A&M Forum of the semester decided Wednesday that drug testing is an unwarranted invasion of privacy.

The parliamentary debate, sponsored by the Texas A&M Debate Society, the Department of Speech Communication and Theatre Arts and the Office of Student Activities, drew a vote of 158 who believe drug testing is an unwarranted invasion of privacy and 155 who believe it is not.

Michele Davies, a senior computer science major from Houston, spoke against drug testing, calling the sudden upsurge in drug testing a "knee-jerk reaction to the American drug problem."

"Reagan's executive order last September called for a drug-free workplace at all costs," Davies said. "Unfortunately, it may cost us our freedom."

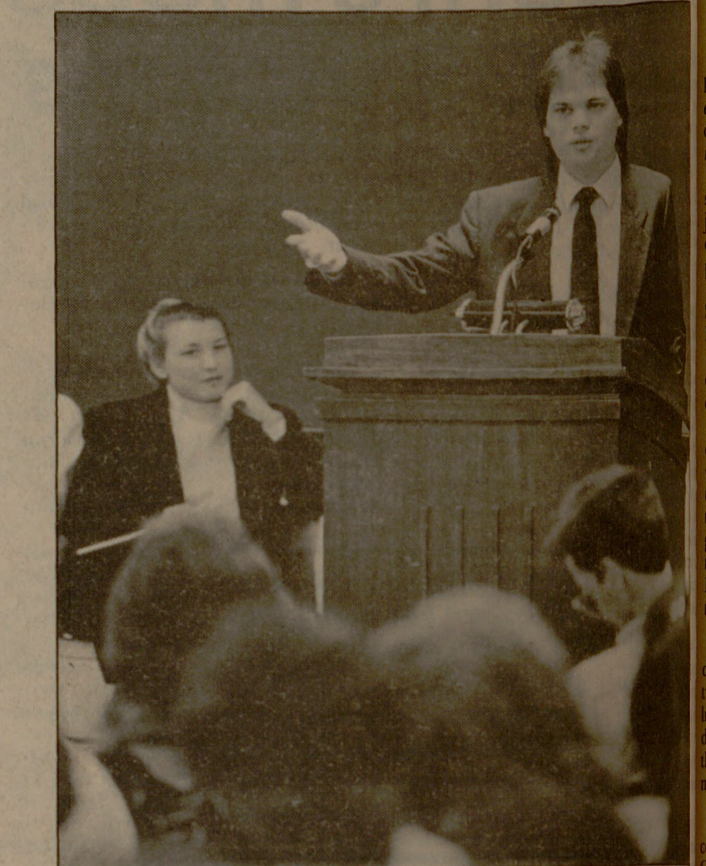
She said random drug testing is unwarranted because an employer or supervisor will notice when the employee is slacking off and has a problem. An employer must have reasonable suspicion before asking an employee to take a drug test, or the employee is, in effect, being considered guilty until the test proves his innocence, Davies said.

She said drug testing is unreliable because the rate of false positive tests is high — one study found a false positive rate of 66 percent and a military study found a 97 percent false positive rate. Guessing is 50 percent correct, she said.

She also pointed out that drug-free urine can be purchased and that certain foods, like poppy-seed bagels and herbal tea, could cause a positive drug test result.

She asked the audience if anyone would be willing to urinate in a cup in front of everyone in the room. She had no volunteers, and she said this helped prove her point that drug testing is an invasion of privacy.

Erik Mulloy, a senior computer science major from San Antonio, supported drug testing, saying that although drug testing may be a little bit of an invasion of privacy, it is not unwarranted, and that there must be a balance between invasion of pri-



Eric William Mulloy a senior computer science major from San Antonio, presents his case during a debate on the ethics of drug testing.

vacancy and the goal of having a safe, drug-free work environment.

Mulloy said that about 87 percent of the audience had used marijuana or cocaine because it has been accepted in American society as the thing to do.

"There is no way to enforce a 55 or 65-mph speed limit — we all speed," he said. "But that's not the same thing as speeding on crack. There is a difference."

He said he agreed drug tests have not yet been perfected, but the issue is whether or not they are an invasion of privacy, which they are not.

He said most of the time, when an employee is found to have a drug problem, he receives treatment for his problem and is not fired.

"What we are trying to do is find out who is using drugs; we are trying

to stop them from using them. We are trying to help the people who are using them," Mulloy said. "We do that if you pile up all these tests that don't allow tests for drugs — we're trying to do is clean up the mess."

The audience members thought drug testing is an unwarranted invasion of privacy and they agree that work time and free time are two different things — work time is not affected by what an employee does in his free time, not an employer's business, free time is spent.

Those who voted for drug testing seemed most worried about productivity in the workplace.

"The employer has the right to hire the most productive employee he can," one speaker said.

GSS explores Biblical references to occurrences of homosexuality

By Shannon Boysen
Reporter

"To know." These words fell under fire at the discussion of homosexuality in the Bible at the Gay Student Services meeting Wednesday.

In a videotape shown at the meeting, the Rev. Ken Martin of the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches in Santa Monica, Calif., discussed the ambiguity of the words "to know" as translated from the Hebrew word "yadha."

Martin argued that in more than 900 uses of the words "to know" in the Bible, only in 10 cases did they actually refer to a sexual act. He referred to the destruction of the city of Sodom in Genesis 19, and quoted one of these uses:

"And they (the men of Sodom who had gathered around the house) called unto Lot, and said

unto him, 'Where are the men which came unto thee this night? bring them out unto us, that we may know them.'"

Martin said there are definite sexual connotations to this passage because Lot offered to give his two daughters to the men, using the words in the same way.

Christians have denied the possibility of homosexuality throughout history, even in the Bible, he said.

Martin said the main reason the Biblical figures, including Jesus, gave for the destruction of the Sodomites was their inhospitality at not taking travelers in, which was a bigger sin, he said, than sex.

The first attribution of the sexual sin in the Bible was the Palestinian Pseudopigrapha, a document written in the mid-1800s. The document said, however, that the sin com-

mitted in Sodom was heterosexual.

"I don't feel there was condemnation of homosexuality (in Sodom) but if so, it was rape," he said. "More can we relate that with sexual love than we can relate heterosexual love."

The Rev. Ronald Grant of Metropolitan Community Church of Bryan moderated the meeting. He also said that it was hard to translate the Bible, especially the people translating it are typically against homosexuality.

"Sex is often seen as a play," he said, "which is shown in scriptures about Sodom. Male homosexuality is seen as a tool of power, only women should submit, but (gays) don't see it as submission."

"Love is not something that tends below the belt, it's something that is here, in the heart."

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