Weir knows many homosexuals and said he

does not feel uncomfortable in their presence. "I have never had a personal experience where I was uneasy because of my gay friends," Weir said. "If I do feel awkward, it's because I'm being dumb. People are made uncomfortable by straight couples all the time. I don't notice a difference in the way that (homosexuals) treat me either.'

As for the on-campus protests against the funding of homosexual organizations, Weir said he does not agree with the aggressive approach that has been taken at times.

"I can't stand the anti-homosexual signs and hate crimes. (These acts) are the anti-thesis of what needs to be done," he said.

Weir said people can feel uncomfortable because they are not used to

seeing gay couples.

A&M sociology professor Sarah Gatson said homosexuality is often seen as a threat to social boundaries that are firmly established and give people comfort.

"People frame their arguments against homosexuality as an issue of morality,' Gatson said. "Since the identity and behavior associated with it threatens the boundaries of masculine and feminine behavior.'

Gatson said the unconventional nature of gayness is often why people view it as a danger to social norms.

'Religion, morality and the law are often entangled." she said. "Homosexuality can be seen as a threat to gender

identity and macro-social institutions such as have any personal grudges against people law and family, which are generally related to

Political agendas and power struggles are also a cause for the rejection of homosexuality,

"People are worried about the loss of traditional gender roles and identities," she said. When you are talking about homosexual identities being publicly articulated, then the issue becomes political. It then becomes about power, because that's what politics are about.'

The most widely acknowledged reason for condemning homosexuality has been religion,

Gatson said.

People frame their

arguments against

homosexuality as an issue

of morality. Since the

identity and behavior

associated with it

threatens the boundaries

of masculine feminine

-Sarah Gatson

Sociology Professor

behavior.

From church groups traveling mile protest gay civil unions, to elaborate public gious sermons denouncing homosexuality, gious beliefs have been at the core of homosexual debates.

Sana Mohiuddin, a senior history m points to her religious beliefs as the reason her skepticism towards homosexuality.

"I think Islam condemns the act of homo uality, but somebody who is gay is not out of folds of the religion," she said. "If someboo gay, they have to suppress their urges."

Mohiuddin said, as with a lot of major is the opinions of how Muslims view homose ity varies.

On a personal level, Mohiuddin said w she does not condone homosexuality, prefers not to persecute others for their lifes choices. She said such severe beliefs led negative consequences.

"I don't think any o have the right to cond other people," she "That's too judgmental, e cially for somebody claims to be religious."

Mark McCaig, com cations director for YCT, the Traditional Family V Week protest was not an sonal issue, but was a fin cial one of whether or not dent funds are being mi propriated.

"Our main problem through gender issues other resources," Mo said, "the University puts nearly \$100,000 to pro this lifestyle that many pe on campus view as m objectionable."

McCaig said he does time in identify themselves as homosexual.

"I have a number of gay friends and know (it's not personal)," he said. "They aware of my position on this issue. I don't what people do inside their bedrooms. don't think that I should have to pay to pro a lifestyle that I disagree with.'

Mohiuddin said her personal experiences homosexuals have not been out of the ordin 'Usually, you can't even tell or don't

know if they are gay," she said. "Aroun people that I do know are gay, I'm not un fortable."

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## Dating

Continued from page 3A

Moore said gay, transgendered, bisexual and lesbian people live with the fear of how people around them will react to their sexual preferences, whether for religious, political or social reasons.

The reality (at A&M) is that I'm not scared to walk around campus (as a homosexual person)," he said. "I would be scared to walk around campus holding a guy's hand.

Diversity on campus has been a hot issue in recent months, but as far as tolerance of homosexuals goes, Ridgeway said she believes the University has missed

"I find it amusing that the school is pushing diversity when there is so much discrimination on cam-

pus," Ridgeway said. "We have to address the before we can seek diversity. The solution is a tion. People are just afraid.'

University President Robert M. Gates has A&M welcomes all people regardless of their gender or sexual orientation.

Ridgeway said when people get to know has person before they know she is a lesbian, they take news easier. She said she hopes when her girlfrid ready to come out to her parents, they will want

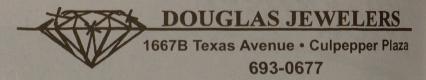
"I want them to know Debbie the person Ridgeway said. "Not Debbie the lesbian."

Battalion reporter Sarah Walch contrib



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