

BGLAD rally becomes dialogue on gay rights

YAF uses sheep to show 'sexual perversion' at rally

4-1-91 JWP

by JENNIFER WILSON

Daily Staff Writer

22/4/01

Although the annual rally for Iowa State Bisexual, Gay and Lesbian Awareness Days (BGLAD) was intended to support multicultural rights, gay rights were the hot topic among a crowd of emotional supporters and protesters.

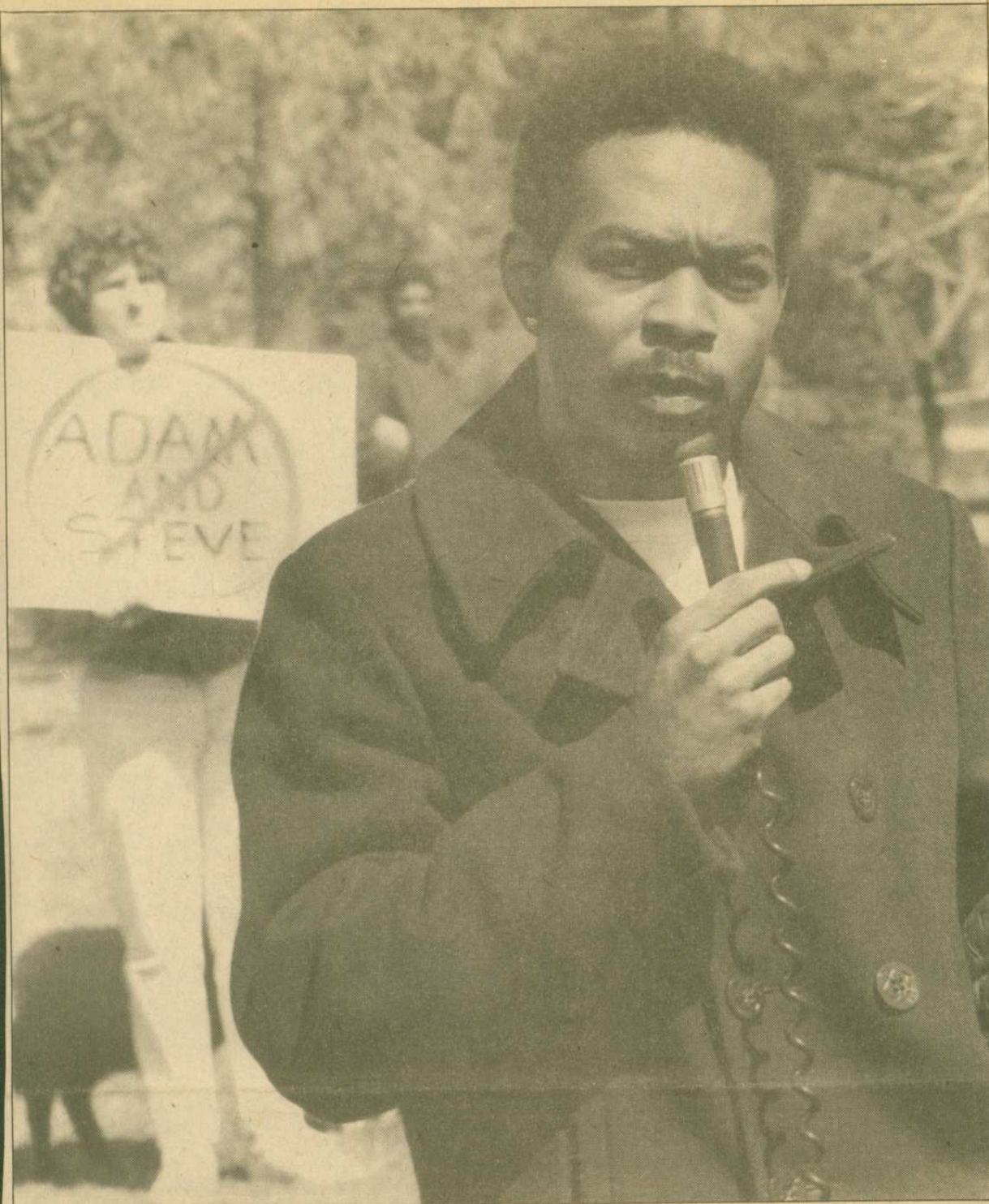
"The intention of the rally is to bring a lot of different issues out, not just gay rights," said James Schafer, president of the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual Alliance (LGBA).

Thomas Thielen, vice president for student affairs, said before the rally, "If we can't have a dialogue on differences in social issues at a university like this, there's no hope anywhere."

Issues such as improving the environment and eliminating discrimination against the disabled were brought up, but protesters at the rally made gay rights the central topic.

A group of about seven individuals, mainly of members of the Young Americans for Freedom (YAF) and the now-defunct Heterosexual Society, led two lambs onto the campanile lawn, one black and one white, to represent "the perversion that they're exhibiting," said YAF President Greg Fetterman.

Small crosses were also displayed on the campanile lawn, to both observe Good Friday and because "it's a memorial for gerbils who were used against their will for immoral, sexual deviant purposes," said Frank Sebestyen IV, spokesman for Allied Students Against Sexual Perversion (ASAP), formerly the



Daily photo by CHRIS MORRIS

Darius Jackson speaks at a Friday rally for diversity while Rod Williams, of the ISU Skeptics and the Heterosexual Society, counterprotests in the background. He brings with him two sheep and a sign protesting the homosexual

GSB Vice President Noth: 'Live and let live'

4-1-91 EJD

• from page 1 / RALLY

22/4/01

Heterosexual Society.

Protesters interrupted Thielen several times during his address to the crowd. Fetterman called out about morality and Judeo-Christian ethics.

Kris Burrows, a graduate student in sociology, responded by saying, "You're citing Judeo-Christian ethics, yet I don't think Christ would have stood among you."

Thielen said, "If we cannot, at an educational institution, have a dialogue where people listen, then where else can you have one?"

"We're not telling people how to think and what to think, we're saying think about it. And there's just enough of us around here that are not thinking about it at all.

"Even bigots have a place in a pluralistic society," he said, gesturing toward the crowd.

Andrea Linville, a second year student in animal ecology, said, "Humans have a habit of taking people the minute they see them ... and put them in a pigeon-hole."

Other onlookers had a variety of reactions.

"I think it's (the rally) appalling," said Gary Braden, a second year student in architecture. "It makes me sick to be a student here."

David Benetel, a sophomore in finance and hotel restaurant management, said, "I'm not apalled by what's going on here. I'm apalled by the way that they make just the gays the top minority and the only minority."

Bob Foster, a junior in political science, said "They have a right to speak and everything, but no group should try to force their beliefs on anyone else, no matter what it is."

Steve Noth, Government of the Student Body vice president, said, "I don't understand why people have to go back and forth like this. I don't necessarily understand or agree with homosexuality, but they have every right to live their lives the way they want to live their lives. And I can't understand people trying to make these kind of moral judgements on each other. Live and

let live is the way everything should be."

As the rally drew to a close, both sides began to speak more rationally to one another.

When Fetterman took the microphone, he said, "When you're in the majority, you do have apathy ... we're not out here to make you mad or put you down, and it's not that I hate any of you. ... believe it or not, you like your big word, I love you all ... The only problem that I have is that I don't agree with your lifestyle, and you don't agree with my thoughts on what I think about it."

Tamela Fish, a third year student in speech communication, said at the rally that she was in the majority, because she understood both sides of the issue. "I hope there's enough of us people in between, have friends both ways, and can keep these people from killing each other out here on campus."

Buckle Up