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LG MS 020 Equal Protection/Portland Archives Finding Aid

Maeve Wachowicz

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**JEAN BYERS SAMPSON CENTER FOR DIVERSITY IN MAINE
LESBIAN, GAY, BISEXUAL, TRANSGENDER, QUEER+ COLLECTION**

**EQUAL PROTECTION/PORTLAND ARCHIVES
LG MS 20**

**Total Boxes: 3
Mapcase Drawers: 1
Linear Feet: 6**

**By
Maeve Wachowicz**

**Portland, Maine
November 2011**

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Administrative Information

Provenance: Equal Protection/Portland Archives was donated in 2010 by Bob Gordon, the canvassing coordinator of EP/P. The Bus banner (Series 2) was given by Mike Blanchard.

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Cite as: Equal Protection/Portland Archives, Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer+ Collection, Jean Byers Sampson Center for Diversity in Maine, University of Southern Maine Libraries.

Restrictions on Access: The bulk of this collection is open for research. Some material has been restricted until 2042 to protect privacy rights.

Historical Note

Equal Protection/Portland (EP/P) was a volunteer organization formed in Portland, Maine in 1992 that campaigned to uphold a Human Rights Ordinance passed by Portland's City Council.

The Human Rights Ordinance was drafted and introduced by Portland City Councilor Peter O'Donnell in April of 1992 after 10 hate crimes were perpetrated against homosexuals in Portland in the space of a year. The City Council passed the Human Rights Ordinance on May 12, 1992 by a 7-1 vote, however conservative groups in Portland petitioned to bring the ordinance to a referendum vote in the November 1992 election. Led by James Duran, a member of the Christian Civic League of Maine, the petition drive began hours after the ordinance passed. A group calling itself Concerned Citizens of Portland took up the "Vote Yes" to overturn the ordinance campaign, while EP/P championed the "Vote No" campaign. The two groups held three heated public debates over the issue. Ultimately the ordinance was upheld with a 19,643 to 14,770 vote on November 3, 1992.

The Portland campaign garnered national attention from publications such as the New York Times and Newsweek magazine, in a year that was contentious for LGBT issues around the country. Gay rights figured prominently in a presidential election for the first time in the 1992 race between Bill Clinton and George Bush, and the election of Bill Clinton, who advocated for gay rights during his campaign, was seen as a victory by gay rights advocates.

At the same time in Tampa, Florida, voters approved a referendum that repealed the city's gay rights ordinance, while in Colorado, "Amendment 2" was proposed and approved, which prohibited any community in the state from passing laws protecting the civil rights of homosexuals. The amendment was eventually overturned by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Information about the Florida and Colorado campaigns helped inform EP/P's campaign, as did a campaign in the state of Oregon, where a conservative group, the Oregon Citizen's Alliance

(OCA) proposed a state constitutional amendment opposing LGBT rights, known as Ballot Measure 9. The proposed amendment sought to add exclusionary language (a first for state constitutional amendments since the Civil War) disallowing sexual orientation from having civil rights protection. It also aimed to require government agencies and schools to set a standard that homosexuality is “abnormal, wrong, unnatural, and perverse,” which would have applied to educational institutions from kindergarten through colleges, and censored content in public libraries. The amendment was rejected by voters.

Description of the Archives

The majority of the materials in this collection pertain to the Human Rights Ordinance campaign in Portland, Maine in 1992. These materials include articles, flyers and brochures from Equal Protection/Portland.

The collection also contains information pertaining to Ballot Measure Number 9 in Oregon, including articles, brochures, opposition materials, and tips and tools from the No on 9 campaign.

The Archives is organized into four series:

Series 1. Equal Protection/Portland Administrative Files

This series contains information about the structure and meetings of EP/P, as well as letterhead, invoices and cost estimates, and handwritten notes, as well as materials produced by EP/P.

Series 2. 1992 Portland, ME Human Rights Ordinance

This series contains information about the Human Rights Ordinance and campaign in Portland, ME in 1992. Materials include local and national articles about campaigns in Maine, Florida, Colorado, and Oregon, brochures and pamphlets from opposition groups.

Series 3. Resources

These resources include an election guide, Maine LGBT newsletters and newspapers, memos, stickers and posters, and a list of municipality laws.

Series 4. 1992 Oregon Ballot Measure Number 9

This series contains information about the Ballot Measure 9 campaign in Oregon. Materials include articles, brochures and pamphlets, and tips and strategies

Series 5. Restricted

This series consists of materials restricted from public access to guard the privacy of individuals. Listed within their regular series, they are included here to give their physical location.

Series 6. Oversize

This series contains materials too large or bulky to fit into regular boxes. Listed within their regular series, they are included here to give their physical location.

Box	Folder	Folder Title	Date(s)
Series 1. Equal Protection/Portland Administrative Files			
1	1	Structures and Committees Some materials are RESTRICTED	1992 Jun-Aug, [1992]
1	2	Agendas	1992 Aug
1	3	Letterhead and envelopes	[1992]
1	4	Advertising invoices and estimates	1992 Oct-Nov
1	5	Handwritten notes	1992 Sep 24, [1992]
1	6	Bob Gordon's notes in press packet	1985 Apr - 1992 Nov, [1992]
1	7	Correspondence	1992 May-Aug, [1992]
1	8	Flyers, brochures, stickers	1992 Apr-Nov
1	9	"Newsflash" press releases	1992 Oct-Nov, [1992]
1	10	Endorsement and donation pledges	[1992]
1	11	Volunteer information and instructions	1992 Jun 9, [1992]
1	12	Portland canvassing notes and maps Some materials are RESTRICTED	[1992]
		Canvassing contact lists RESTRICTED	1992 Sep-Oct, [1992]
		Miscellaneous contact lists RESTRICTED	1991-1992, undated
1	13	Survey results	1992 Sep 1
1	14	Post-election analysis project Some materials are RESTRICTED	1992 Nov-Dec, undated
1	15	Photographs	[1992]
1	16	Audio, "Equal Protection/Portland - Vote 'No' Referendum" (audio reel and audio cassette)	1992 Nov 2
Series 2. 1992 Portland, ME Human Rights Ordinance			
1	17	Portland City Council agenda	1992 Apr 22
1	18	Human Rights Ordinance	1992 Apr 10
1	19	Articles and clippings	1992 Apr-Oct
1	20	Photocopied articles, gathered in 3-ring binder	1992 Apr-Oct
1	21	Photocopied articles, gathered in 3-ring binder	1992 Oct-Nov
2	22	Photocopied articles, gathered in 3-ring binder	1992 Nov-Dec
2	23	"Vote No!" newspaper ads	1992 Nov 3, [1992]

		"Vote No!" bus banner, 60" x 21"	[1992]
		"Vote No! To End Discrimination in Portland" poster See Oversize	[1992]
2	24	Opposition flyers and brochures	[1992]
2	25	Second Parish Orthodox Presbyterian Church service program	1992 Oct 4
2	26	Correspondence	1992 Sep-Nov, undated
2	27	City of Portland Special Municipal Election ballot	1992 Nov 3
2	28	Audio cassette, "News Wrap" from This Way Out program #216	1992 May 18
Box	Folder	Folder Title	Date(s)
Series 3. Resources			
2	29	Maine Lesbian/Gay Political Alliance Election Guide	1992
2	30	LGBT newsletters and newspapers	1992 Aug-Nov
2	31	Articles	1991 Feb-Mar
2	32	ACT UP! Poster	1992
2	33	UNUM Memoranda	1990 Aug 30
2	34	List of municipality laws	[1992]
2	35	Clinton/Gore campaign stickers	[1992]
Series 4. 1992 Oregon Ballot Measure Number 9			
2	36	Oregon Citizen's Alliance Timeline	[1992]
2	37	Press releases and articles	1992 Sep-Nov, undated
2	38	"Vote No" brochures and pamphlets	[1992]
2	39	Ballot Measure and the No on 9 Campaign	1992 Sep-Nov, [1992]
2	40	Oregon Citizen's Alliance and the far right	1989 Dec-1992 Oct, undated
2	41	OCA Propaganda	1992 Oct 8, [1992]
2	42	Tips and Tools	1992 Sep-Oct, undated
Series 5. Restricted			
3	43	Item removed from Structure and Committees (Series 1, Folder 1)	1992 Jul 29
3	44	Items removed from Portland canvassing notes and Maps (Series 1, Folder 12)	[1992] Aug 10
3	45	Canvassing contact lists (Series 1)	1992 Sep-Oct, [1992]
3	46	Miscellaneous contact lists (Series 1)	1991-1992, undated
3	47	Item removed from Post-election analysis project	undated

(Series 1, Folder 14)

Series 6. Oversize

Mpcs3 Dr1 "Vote No!" bus banner [1992]

Mpcs3 Dr1 "Vote No! To End Discrimination in Portland" poster [1992]