



Maine Gay Task Force NEWSLETTER

Vol 1 #1

[Aug, 1974?]

NATIONWIDE PROTEST AGAINST ABC TV

A PROPOSED MARCUS WELBY SCRIPT, ENTITLED "THE OUTRAGE", CONCERNS THE RAPE OF A 14 YEAR OLD BOY BY HIS MALE SCIENCE TEACHER AND WILL SERVE AS A MASSIVE PSYCHOLOGICAL INCENTIVE FOR HOMOPHOBIC HETEROSEXUALS TO REDOUBLE THEIR OPPOSITION TO BASIC CIVIL RIGHTS OF ALL GAY PEOPLE. THE SCREENPLAY IS INDEED OUTRAGEOUS AND MUST BE STOPPED!

The national protest of the Welby script is being coordinated by Loretta Lotman of Gay Media Action in Boston. Peter Prizer, Media Director of MGTF, has been in contact with her, and together they urge that letters, lots of letters, be sent to the people listed below, stating your objections, demanding the screenplay be banned from television as blatantly prejudicial to our rights as Gay people.

We can not allow ourselves to be exploited by basically anti-gay commercial interests out for their profits at the expense of our freedom. Every letter counts, as they are working on a tally of complaints, and at least so far, letters have been answered. Write as individuals, on behalf of groups. Write several times and change your names. We need to show that this is indeed a NATIONAL protest. Other states are already working hard. Boston's affiliate station has just about agreed to black the show out locally. We can do the same, if we act now. ABC TV network may think they're not going to have to listen to these faggots and dykes protesting some script. Well, they haven't met with gay anger and gay pride yet. Remember, we so not have to take shit from anyone any more.

There is no way the script can be altered to make it acceptable to us. Psychologists media people, actors and others who have read it agree--Middle America will view it as an expose about homosexuality and the "truth" about our lives. We must stop this show, and we are not powerless. Quite the contrary. Here's what we can do.

Write those letters to:

Jack Flynn, Gen. Mgr.
WMTW-TV
638 Congress St.
Portland, ME 04101
(Phone: 773-5664)

and

Robert Gilbertson, Gen Mgr.
WEMT-TV
Bangor, ME 04401
(Phone: 945-6457)

(cont. on back page)

ALSO:

James Duffy, President
American Broadcasting Co.
1330 Avenue of the Americas
New York, N.Y. 10019

and

Anthony Thomopoulos
Network Programming, V.P.
American Broadcasting Co.
1330 Avenue of the Americas
New York, N Y 10019

Contact the local ABC affiliate and talk with the General Manager. Tell him about the script, the growing protest, the coordinated action of the local gay movement. Tell him that even though he may not have any input to national programming, if the show is aired on his station, militant action will be taken against his station. Tell him to contact the ABC affiliate person, Richard Beesmeyer in NYC. Request a meeting in the future. Be cool and businesslike, but don't back down. The FCC states that broadcast stations must operate "in the public interest, convenience and necessity" -- this program is not in our interest and will severely damage our movement toward personal freedom and civil rights.

Next, contact your local media. Get people on talk shows, feed information to newspaper columnists, TV columnists, etc. Contact the daily papers and the weekly undergrounders. Let the general public know. Make yourselves available if you can, and try to contact any gay people currently working in mass media. Ask them for suggestions and help. They may be able to influence their media place to run stories or cover the issue.

If the ABC affiliate will not grant a meeting, get back on the phone and push for one. If there is still no cooperation, pick a pre-arranged time and JAM THEIR PHONE LINES. As few as 15 people, all calling and recalling at once, can cripple a media organization. Always ask for the GM or Program Director, always say the

WHAT THE FUCK IS UNITY?

Sometimes it just tears my heart out to see us squabbling among ourselves, wrestling over tidbits of token power, turning into tragic little critters jealously exercising our accursed right to step on each other's dreams and fingers. So I ask myself what separates us? Here's the bitter list: Competition--always at the top with its--struggle for power and leadership; the need to have one's own ideas adopted by the many, geography, experiences, lack of well-formulated principles and sound goals based on those principles; class conditioning, sexism, confusion over structural images (vertical, horizontal, spiral); that oh-so-ingrained work ethic vs. lack of action, producing guilt and jealousy of those more productive; lack of frequent, honest, critical exchange of ideas and problems; conflict between revolutionary ideal or "purity" and our many compromises (justified or unjustified); vision, differences in environmental factors, such as degree of oppression; economic conditioning vs. realities; education and training, talent, determination, imagination and other human factors; differences in spiritual ideals, priorities, willingness to sacrifice, lack of firm belief in our cause, courage (relative levels of fear), racism, individualism, ethics, and probably more, but it's too scary to think about any longer. So I ask myself-- what the fuck is unity?

Some time passes. I watch David Bowie grind his groin in the face of Amerika, mirroring its contradictions, thumbing his cock at tradition, himself a living irony, and I finally understand our common rhythm. To create a positive reality, we must destroy the sham and bullshit which assault our senses with their disgusting perversions. Like the Ring-tailed Mocking Bird, all decked out in its finest feathers, Bowie struts into our lavender vision and flutters his browless eyes in ever-so-sweet satire.

Alas, brave Mocker--a game bird in the end. We all face your certain peril, locked into a life/death struggle with an enemy as elusive and powerful as an idea. Yet, who's to say that in sharing our mutual destiny we are not united by a strength far more persistent than all our doubts? A strength which commands the heights of our vision, born of a principle which has endured thousands of years of the most pervasive, insidious and terroristic oppression the imagination of Man could contrive, must be very dangerous, indeed! Yet, we risk even our lives to harbor and teach its rhythms because it feels right to us as our senses and instincts are deftly teased into gentle harmony.

We know together our strength is "feminine" by nature too, too long denounced, buried underground, in the Earth, gathering momentum. Somewhere she must emerge, our single most valid challenge to this masculine tyranny. Where better than in us, her most compassionate children, and her most despised.

In a bombed-out dream I see the energy erupt out of a vortex of primordial passion to charge us with the singular task of effecting a balance in this world of stinking chaos, with its almighty phallus in the sky, whipping us into shape, the only shape or you don't skate on this lake, Mate!

Fear unites us too--some of our's but mostly their's. It's those little, secret smiles we run around with, drives them crazy. They even try to kick and rape it out of us in the streets and in our hopes. But it's still our's to give and give we must. That's the tragedy of our destiny and its honor too. Our's is a gift of knowledge we alone have been entrusted with, to share, or lose our magic.

But to give we must live, and if that means fighting to be free, then fight we must. Win or die. Fortunately, we are instinctively aware that standing on the edge of Death is like buying into Life's ecstasies. It makes us extremely high and awfully vulnerable. But all is not lost. We have good luck on our side. Oh, yes, never underestimate her. She likes our sense of humor.

Most of all, we are united in our simple love for each other--our greatest gift generating wholesale terror. It's ironic, yes? No matter. Persistently defying history, wonderfully ancient, the principle of gay love is nothing less than inevitable.

August 1974

Sandra Swain

NOTES FROM THE
BANGOR UNITARIAN GAY CAUCUS

The Bangor Unitarian Gay Caucus developed during the Spring of 1974. The group by choice does not hold regular meetings. It's purpose is to represent the interests of the local Unitarian gay community within the church and to affiliate with the National Unitarian Universalist Gay Caucus.

The ministers of the Bangor Unitarian Church have been out-spoken in support of our effort and have lent the facilities of the church for gay meetings and dances.

This summer the nations church organization voted to fund an office of Gay concerns. A Director presently is being sought and will establish an office at the UU Headquarters in Boston.

Chairperson Danny Estes of the Bangor Unitarian Gay Caucus wrote an article for the National UU Gay Caucus newsletter.

Sturgis Haskins, Secretary
Bangor Unitarian Gay Caucus
Box 1046
Bangor, Me. 04401

GAY COUNSELING SERVICE
NOW AVAILABLE

MGTF has recently laid the groundwork necessary to establish a state-wide counseling service to be at the disposal of individuals as well as groups and organizations.

To this date all of the volunteers are untrained but at least they are Gay! It is hoped that some of them will be trained as para-professionals and if called in by a funded agency, may be paid for services rendered.

For further information and the names of the counselors, contact MGTF, Box 4542, Portland, Me. 04112.

THE MAINE GAY TASK FORCE
POSITION PAPER

The Maine Gay Task Force, created in 1974, is a coalition of various homosexual organizations in the state. The goals of MGTF are fourfold: political, educational, legal and social.

The purposes of the organization are:

- 1) to serve as a clearinghouse of information for the Maine Gay Community;
- 2) to coordinate statewide action in working for the repeal of discriminatory laws and for the enactment of protective legislation;
- 3) to act as a liason between member groups and state agencies; and
- 4) to change current social attitudes and to eliminate discrimination and oppression where it exists.

Our goals are as diverse as the individuals working for them. We are Maine residents who feel the time is overdue for this state and its people to recognize the existence of homosexuality and to acknowledge the inherent civil rights belonging to Gay people.

Member Organizations:

Bangor Unitarian Gay Caucus
Box 1046
Bangor 04401

Gay Rights Organization
Box 4542
Portland 04112

Brunswick Gay Womens Group
Brunswick Women's Center
136 Maine St.
Brunswick 04011

Gay Support & Action
c/o Unitarian Parish House
183 Main St
Bangor 04401

Hancock County Gays
Box 275
Ellsworth 04605

The Bridge
Colby College
Box 901 - Roberts Union
Waterville 04901

The Wilde-Stein Club
c/o Memorial Union
University of Maine
Orono 04473

LAMBDA
7 Nancy Road
Brunswick 04011

Gay Rights Organization
Box 1163
Lewiston 04240

GAY
COUNCIL

This spring was witness to two state-wide political events involving Gay Rights as well as many less spectacular but no less important activities. Maine's first Gay Symposium and the adoption of a homosexual anti-discrimination platform plank by the Democratic Party constituted not only a major public acknowledgement of our rights but also provided a state-wide focal point for the newly visible theme of Gay Consciousness.

The announcement of an April state-wide conference on homosexuality under the sponsorship of the University's Wilde-Stein Club initiated a tempestuous controversy which left few opinions unheard. Lewiston Rep. Louis Jalbert along with a determined legislative minority threatened to withhold \$1 million from the University's budget. A proclaimed \$2000 newspaper ad campaign by a hyper-homophobic fundamentalist warned of what was described as a potential "conclave of perverts" and stated: "Please believe me when I say that we are in a life or death struggle." In the end, to nobody's great surprise, the intended 'ransom' of a portion of the University's budget was defeated by House vote, and the costly ad campaign - rather generously described by Portland Rep. Gerald Talbot as "pious and narrow-minded" - failed to arouse the people. Indeed, many of the same newspapers that printed the ad contered with editorials supporting the right of assembly.

The Symposium consisting of workshops dealing with individual, social and political themes convened quietly in Orono as scheduled. Impressively organized, the three day conference was overwhelmingly hailed by participants as an unusually positive experience and characterized by some as "a 250 member gay consciousness-raising session." The weekend gathering also provided an opportunity for greater intergroup coordination, with the creation of the Maine Gay Task Force a primary consequence.

The May adoption by the Maine Democratic Party of a platform plank advocating that the state Human Rights Act be amended to forbid discrimination on the basis of homosexuality may be attributed, in part, to the affirmative testimony by gay people at the party's public hearings two months prior to the actual state convention.

Sturgis Haskins of Hancock County Gays and a member of the Justice and Equal Rights subcommittee had advised the various organizations of the hearings. Three members of Gay Rights Organization spent virtually the entire opening sub-committee session in Portland discussing 'legal discrimination' and the suggested remedies. While this session was friendly and basically constructive, both sides were uneasy with each other, but this

uptightness passed in the following hearings as first names and proposed specifics gradually gained inclusion into the conversation. Other groups involved in the Bangor, Lewiston and Augusta testimony were from Gay Support & Action, Wilde-Stein, Hancock County Gays and LAMBDA.

On May 18, 2000 delegates to the State Democratic Convention in Bangor met to consider among other things the gay rights proposal as party policy. Dan Estes, a delegate and member of GS&A made a well-received floor-call supporting the measure.

A memorable moment occurred when the chairperson ordered that the floor microphone of Rep. Louis Jalbert be 'killed' following repeated out-of-order procedural tactics by the Androscoggin County delegate to throw out the controversial decision. Mr. Jalbert, remembered by several gay activists as the author of the phrase "fucking asshole" to describe a Gay brother during an earlier hearing, became visibly disappointed and left the hall.

When the vote was announced non-delegate supporters in the balconies conducted an impromptu confetti explosion. The positive action of the convention delegates was seen by the supportive gay and non-gay involved as satisfactory conclusion to a long struggle and a serious appreciation of a concerted educational program.

With the exception of the Bangor Daily News, the Maine daily print media was generally supportive of the proposed amendment with the strongest endorsements from the Maine Times, the Kennebec Journal and the Portland Press Herald, the latter using the word 'guts' in an editorial to describe the Party's call for non-discrimination.

Other gay-related Spring events of which I am aware include the regular dances of GS&A in Bangor and by LAMBDA in Brunswick. People from GRO were in contact with area media discussing insensitivity towards gay people and in one instance successfully zapped a radio station. LAMBDA initiated dialogue with an area paper following a gross instance of bigotry by a regular columnist. Wilde-Stein, Gay Support and Action, Hancock County Gays, LAMBDA and the Maine Group Gay Task Force participated in the New England Gay Pride Parade in Boston in June. All of these events highlighted a memorable Spring for one and all.

IMPRESSIONS

Juniper East, C3
Yarmouth, Me. 04096
June 1, 1974

Genesis
Live & others

Dear MGTF,

When I read the article about the formation of your group in the Sunday Telegram a few weeks ago, my initial response was to write and say I think you're doing a tremendously positive thing.

Then I realized that would make for a very brief letter, and have since then, tried to think of a way to elaborate on my initial response. Nothing particularly eloquent came to me, but I did expand a little on my original notion.

That is, I would imagine that the gay life style would be pretty heavy to cope with in Maine. And the only way to lighten it seems to be for people like you to take on some extra weight until the super-straight gets a little more accustomed to seeing, hearing, reading about and being and socializing with people who've taken themselves out of the closet.

So I think organizations like the MGTF make positive steps in that direction...and in another, at least equally important, one. That is, at the same time you're making yourselves known to the straights, you're turning on the lights for a lot of people who have been in the closets for years, and showing them that they aren't alone--that there have been people in the closet with them all the time, and that those people are now saying, "It's time to get some fresh air."

Re-reading this, I wonder if perhaps it would have been more coherent just to have put down my first thought and left it at that. Because that's basically what I wanted to say: I think you're doing a tremendously positive thing.

I wish you much good fortune.

Sincerely,
Meg Macmillan

I've never heard music quite like this before and I can't easily compare it to any other nor do I know much about the band and so I can't give you "facts" but I want to tell you how I feel, some impressions, of the music et al. of Genesis.

I feel very good when I hear it. I love music. I love to play and to listen to music and I enjoy their music more than any other at this point. I can relate to it on many different levels, up or down or just around./Genesis is/a series of mood-poems in sound and visuals/Nordic-Classical-Jazz-Rock-Theater/ The English/Life in England/Death in England/Selling England by the Pound/Get 'em Out by Friday/The Return of the Giant Hogweed/Peter Gabriel/Tony Banks/Mellotrons/Accoustics/Voices/Live/& others/.

The tone is specialized (I do believe that everything has become specialized, a situation which certainly has its pros and cons, but that's too much to get into at the moment except to say that I feel that somehow Genesis is both.) They are a cult band with a following that is a cult. They have their shit together as musicians and performers and as people they are not intirely without conscience and consciousness. They're so bloody English, and they're selling it By The Pound.

Richard Jude

WRITING S ON BIRCH

In the Sunshine
I see your Smile,
In the Rain
I feel your Tears,
In the Wind
I hear your Cries,
At Sunset, I wish each Star
were a kiss
Until Sunrise peaks over
your breasts.

ROOMMATE

I'm looking for a vegetarian, non-smoking, Feminist to share an apartment near Bowdoin College in Brunswick. Your share of rent is \$95 (includes heat. Call Karyn Frank 725-2784.

PERSONAL

To the fat woman
with the rainbow on her chest
and two clouds Thursday nite
who sat across from me
in the Hollow Reed
and drank beer in the corner
alone I almost
walked over and said anything
You had a copy of WOMEN & MADNESS
I was with a man in a pink shirt
I had short dark hair and an amythest

a peony of a face sadness pendant
overblown
innocence
I could have dived into your breasts
like angelfish into sea anemones
like the moon into the sea...
Write care of this paper
or call any Operator in the afternoon.

Miriam Dyak
Brunswick

Gay Rights Organization (GRO) needs a permanent place to meet in Portland. If you have any leads, write Peter, Box 4542, Portland, ME 04112.

LAMBDA of Brunswick is going to need a new place to hold its dances. If you know of some place large enough in the area, please let us know. Call 725-8510. Thanks.

Wendy will do astrological charts with excellent interpretation for reasonable fee or barter. Call 725-6507.

Classified ads are free. They must be in
to us by the 21st of each month. Act now.

Call Richard 725-8510

For our own safety, let us not ignore the inevitable. There will be a depression. Prepare your head accordingly, don't stick it in the sand!

SANDY NEEDS TRANSPORTATION WEST AFTER
CHRISTMAS° CALL 737-2895

GREED BREEDS NEED

(Stan loves Steven)

(who said that?)

There were ten, now only six purebred Labrador puppies for sale, all males (the females went first) going fast. Call THE FARM 737-2895

MGTF NEWSLETTER needs articles (original or reprints), a good metric ruler, stencils paper, and anyother little thing that might make the editors high.

COME OUT!

Support the UNITED FARM WORKERS. Boycott all grapes, Gallo wines, in fact any wine produced in Modesto, Cal and all nonunion lettuce. unless locally grown.

HANCOCK COUNTY GAYS

Hancock County Gays haven't scheduled any organized activities this summer, but a little historical background might be of interest. HCG was first conceived in mid autumn of 1970. While on an afternoon sail in Frenchman's Bay, a few of us decided our social life was in some ways wanting; we needed to bring other Gay people together. Not until the Spring of 1971 did the first meeting happen in Ellsworth.

Calls to everyone we knew brought around ten people, a respectable turnout, given the limited number of Gays we knew and the general paranoia many rural homosexuals suffer. We decided to have a picnic. We would advertise it in the Boston Phoenix and Maine Times. We would also talk with the Maine Times editors about doing a story on the 'plight' of homosexuals and attempt to advertise for members in that publication. While the classified as was accepted without problem and, indeed, elicited nearly forty letters, the Times did not respond with interest about an article until we buttonholed one of its staff reporters at a conference. Arrangements for the interview were made with the greatest secrecy. All of us were unwilling to use our names. We were interviewed in Ellsworth after office hours with both doors locked. We were that afraid!

The resultant article was well done but we had neglected to include any women in the interview. The error, if it may be called that, was an innocent one, for, in fact, we did not know any Gay women in the area. Fortunately that has changed.

A modest number of people attended the "State-wide Gay Picnic", as we billed it. But it was enormous fun and brought out people we hadn't previously known. From that time on we decided to hold regular weekly meetings which would be in the form of consciousness-raising sessions to be held in different homes. This was successful as far as it went. But as is common to many efforts of this type, a time comes when the impetus begins to wane and fresh directions must be found to keep the group viable.

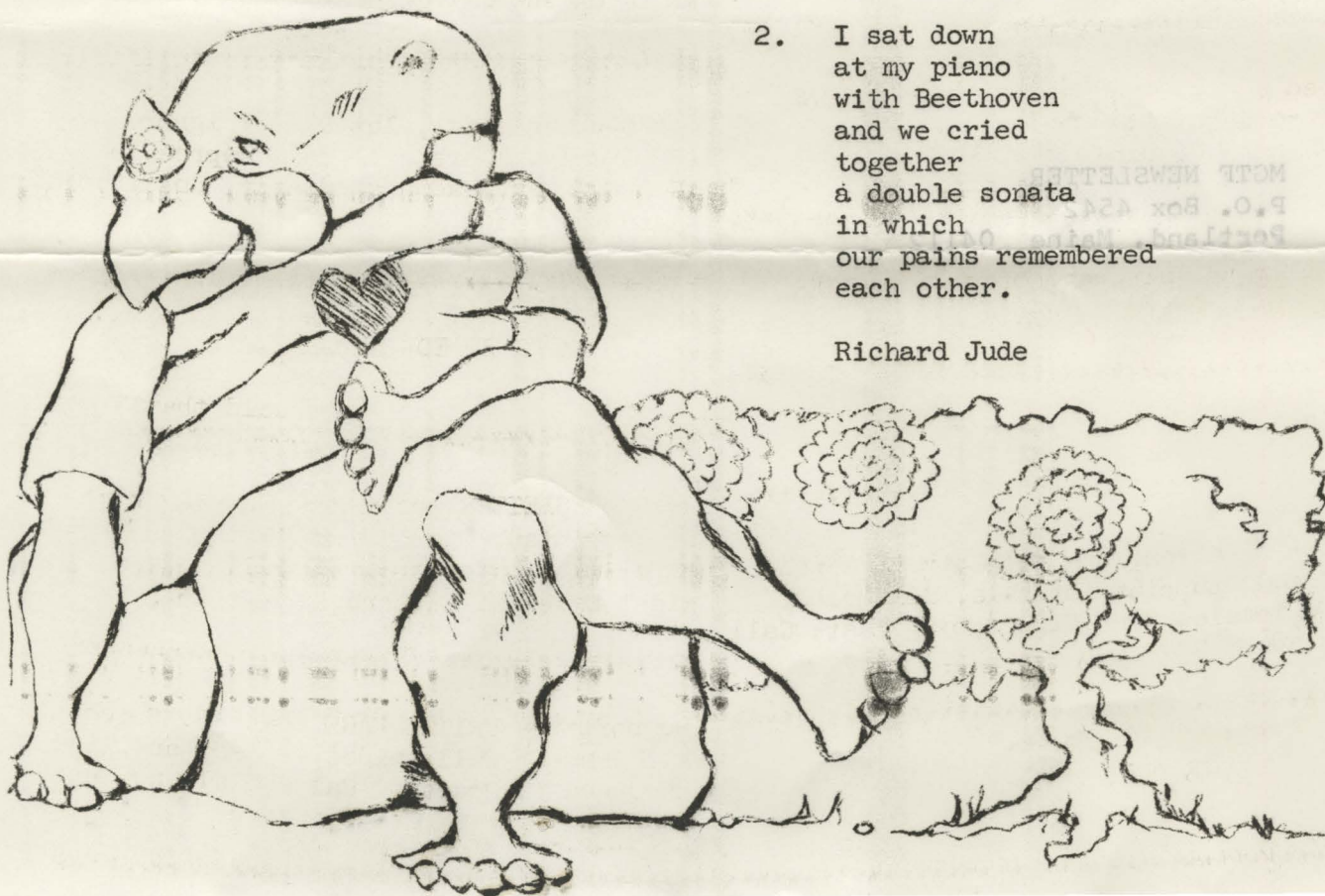
Then we learned of a new group forming under the auspices of Abenaki College at UMO, and we decided to join en masse, still retaining our identity as an independent group. From that meager beginning developed the Gay Support and Action group of Bangor, the Wilde-Stein Club of UMO and the Maine Gay Task Force.

Sturgis Haskins
Hancock County Gays
Box 275
Ellsworth, Me. 04605

Bits

- 1a. I thought
of you at long days' end
while sitting
in a vibrant cloud
I felt
that I had gone insane
I hadn't
but it seemed that way
I was
a lot of music that day
- 1b. And oh to capture just one note
of all the notes
that washed me
in that symphony
I'd sing it
loud enough
to set us free
2. I sat down
at my piano
with Beethoven
and we cried
together
a double sonata
in which
our pains remembered
each other.

Richard Jude



NATIONWIDE PROTEST OF ABC - TV Cont.

the same thing: "I'm gay, the Welby script is detrimental to my freedom, we demand a meeting with your management to discuss this script." Don't get off that phone! If they put you on hold, stay there. A particularly good place to call is the newsroom -- they will hemorrhage if they don't have open phone lines. With that sort of pressure, we are sure to get a meeting. (Oh yes, and conveniently feed the phone jamming story to the press.)

Never show inter-group divisiveness to mass media. It's the old "divide and conquer" routine. We're not strong unless we're united -- even if we hate each other's personal guts. It is politically expedient to stand together, so PLAY POLITICS WHEN DEALING WITH THE MEDIA.

ALWAYS make sure your group is balanced between men and women. If you want to alienate Lesbians, ignore their input or close them out of important meetings. The same is true for appearances on programs. WORK TOGETHER.

Do your own PR. Let other media know what's happening; give information about your activities freely. Develop press contact people, gay or straight. If someone writes something fair or pro-gay, send that person some acknowledgement and press releases and information in the future. Media people are always looking for a story. We've got some good ones floating around that deserve to be in print and on the air.

If you need further media information, contact Loretta Lotman, Chairperson, Gay Media Action, Box 5000, GCN, 22 Bromfield St. Boston, Mass 02108 (617) 868-5729.

PORTRAIT

The strange harlequin mouth
the effeminate face set
in a swirl of browns
no chest or shoulders no bone
they can hang their faith on
and feel less afraid
Even your father who kept it
when you died
could not hide his distaste
The Whole Family is relieved
that I will take it away saying:
"How nice someone cares" and:
"It's worth something, you know"
I remember your defense of it
You with Artistic Authority
and all your years in 1st Place
No one argued back out of
simple nervousness or dared
say it looked queer
But the face left now
is the one thing
I like best about you
"It would make him feel good to know"

PAT DANCING

The toe down first then the heel
solid so that each step
marks a territory conquered
And all the while hips in circles
fingers snapping arms
a fluid celebration She has made
the air around us crackle
with sensual messages
electric flowers of the dance

Miriam Dyak

MGTF NEWSLETTER
P.O. Box 4542
Portland, Maine 04112

