

# Maine Gay Task Force NEWSLETTER

VOL. 3 No. 4

April 1976

## SYMPOSIUM BLOOMS...

Gay people from all over Maine and other parts of New England are planning to attend the Maine Gay Symposium, to be held Friday to Sunday, April 23-25, on the campus of the University of Maine at Portland. Keynote speeches by Dolores Klaich, author of Woman Plus Woman, and Richard Steinman, associate professor of Human Services at the University, and a Saturday night dance with music by Liberty Standing, will highlight this third statewide Gay gathering.

Registration will begin at 6 p.m. on Friday night at Payson Smith Hall, location of most of the Symposium activities. The evening will feature a massage workshop, some Gay films, and refreshments.

On Saturday registration continues from 9 to 10 a.m. and coffee and doughnuts will be served during this hour. An art show will run all day long. The keynote speeches are scheduled from 10 to 11:30, followed by the first workshop period. 1:30 to 3 is the bring-your-own lunch hour, 3 to 5 the second workshop period, and a dinner will be served on campus from 5 to 7. The day will conclude with the dance, from 8 to midnight.

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## ... & KENNEBEC GROUP BLOSSOMS

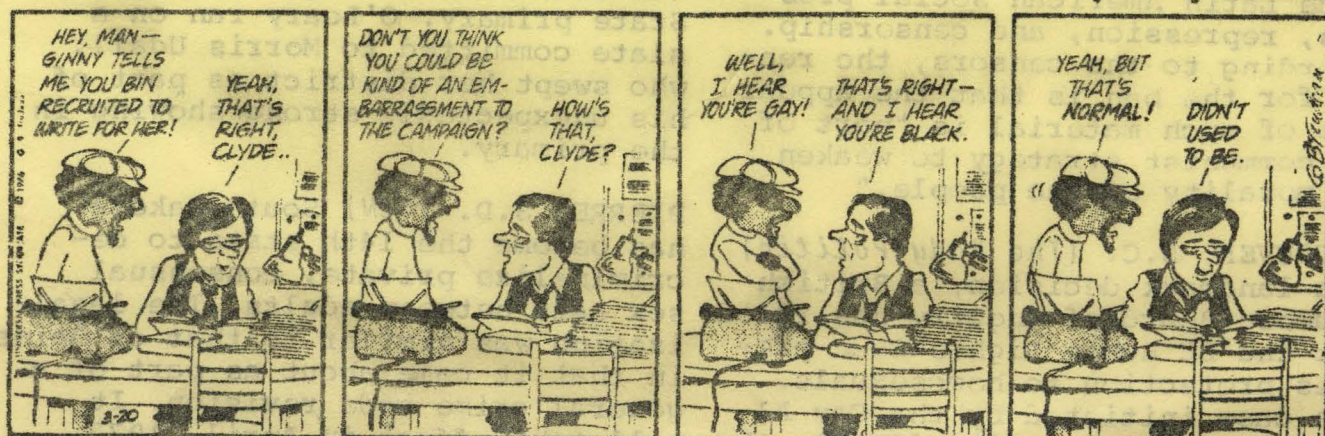
There has been a need for a Gay group/organization in central Maine for some time, but it seems that the social and political climate had previously inhibited its development. Several weeks ago, however, some interested people got together--others from the Kennebec County area joined in--and the Central Maine Gay Alliance was born. Our goals and efforts will be determined by us. (Us - as in you, me, and anyone else who's interested.)

CMGA is just getting under way and is in need of ideas, questions, complaints, funds and friendly hellos. If you have any of the above to offer, why not come to the next meeting or drop us a line. CMGA meets Wednesday evenings at 7:30 in the United Low Income office on the third floor at 183 1/2 Water Street in Augusta. (Above Nap's Trading Post.) The mailing address is C.M.G.A., P.O. Box 2242, Augusta, Maine 04330.

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## DOONESBURY

by Garry Trudeau





## RECENT EVENTS & HAPPENINGS (NOTABLE OR UNUSUAL)

**SAN FRANCISCO (GCN)** The first openly Gay deputy sheriff has been appointed in this city. Rudi Cox, who is now working as a jailer in the men's section at the Hall of Justice county jail, was appointed as deputy sheriff after the personal intervention of S.F. Sheriff Richard Hongisto. In addition to making sure that Cox was hired, Hongisto recently signed a National Gay Task Force appeal for funds.

**PHOENIX, ARIZONA (Sexual Law Reporter)** Holding that "the right of sexual privacy between consenting adults is fundamental", the Arizona Court of Appeals for District 2 has reversed convictions of sodomy and lewd and lascivious acts in an unnatural manner. The Courts Division 1 has found the same statutes unenforceable against married couples.

**PEORIA, ILLINOIS (Chicago Gay Life)** President Ford has finally commented on Gay liberation and Gay civil rights. Responding to a question on the subject while campaigning for the state primary at Bradley University he replied: "I recognize that this is a very new and serious problem in our society. I have always tried to be an understanding person as far as people are concerned who are different than myself....I would just be dishonest to say there is a pat answer under these very difficult circumstances." Political observers in the Gay community were left with only one question: "What did he say??"

**ADELAIDE, SOUTH AUSTRALIA (MCC-D.C. Newsletter: 'Gays on the Hill')** South Australia has become the first of that country's six states to legalize consensual adult sex. Mark Oliphant, Governor of So. Australia, approved the bill in September, '75.

**RIO DE JANEIRO (NewsWest)** The right-wing military government of Brazil has recently tightened censorship regulations. Censors have now informed editors that any discussion of homosexuality is forbidden in the press. Other taboo subjects include Latin American social problems, repression, and censorship. According to the censors, the reason for the ban is that the appearance of such material is "part of the communist strategy to weaken the morality of the people."

**VANCOUVER, B.C. (The Body Politic)** In a landmark decision, a British Columbia Board of Inquiry has ruled that the BC Human Rights Code provides protection to homosexuals. In a case initiated by the Gay Alliance Towards Equality [GATE], the Board has ruled that the Vancouver Sun, Canada's third largest daily

newspaper, has discriminated against GATE in refusing a classified advertisement for its paper *Gay Tide*. The Sun was ordered to pay GATE \$500 in costs and "to refrain from committing the same or similar contraventions of the Code in the future."

**WASHINGTON, D.C. (Gay Life)** After many protests--principally from the National Gay Task Force [NGTF], the Job Corps has agreed to stop using a manual entitled "Sexual Deviation" which contains much anti-Gay material. Director John Stetson, after a meeting with NGTF Director Bruce Voeller, also promised to issue a directive ordering Job Corps administrators and staff to treat enrollees--either Gay or non-Gay--equally.

**WARSAW, POLAND (The Body Politic, from Gay News Germany)** There are signs of change in the public's attitude toward homosexuality in Poland. This has been revealed by the literary monthly *Kultura*, reporting on a recent round-table discussion held in Warsaw. Participants included sexologists, doctors, philosophers, educators, writers, scientists, psychiatrists and neurologists. All agreed that homosexuality is "in no way contradictory to our moral standards." Educator and Polish Academy of Sciences member Nikolai Kozakiewicz said, "A homosexual is no closer to moral turpitude than, say, a left-handed person. Intolerance displayed against him or her is no more than a sign of ignorance."

**LANSING, MICHIGAN (Gay Life)** William G. Milliken, Governor of Michigan, recently stated that he can not endorse a Gay rights bill because other groups such as women and the handicapped do not have full civil rights.

**NEW YORK (GCN)** Lesbian Feminist Jean O'Leary, legislative director of the National Gay Task Force, was elected as an openly Gay delegate to the Democratic Party's national convention in the April 6 New York State primary. O'Leary ran on a slate committed to Morris Udall, who swept her district as part of his unexpectedly strong showing in the primary.

**PIERRE, S.D. (GCN)** South Dakota has become the 14th state to decriminalize private, consensual sex acts between adults. The legalization was similar to that of Maine in that it came about as part of a general crime code revision. It will take effect in April, 1977. As with Maine, the bill met no opposition on its sex reforms.



THE RIPENING FIG

By Martha and Lucy Van Felix-  
Wilde (aka Martha Wallace and  
Lucille Scheiner), Porpoise  
Press, West Hempstead, New York,  
\$4.95

"DON'T BE AFRAID TO READ THIS BOOK!" the back cover blurb says reassuringly. "IF YOU HAVE NO LESBIAN TENDENCIES, IT WON'T GIVE YOU ANY!" Now, I have read that last sentence so many times the type is nearly worn off the page, and it still doesn't make any sense to me. I know what they're trying to say, but like too many other sentences in the book, it flies like a styrofoam baseball.

The Van Felix-Wildes describe this collection of their short stories as "solidly Lesbian and Feminist." I beg to differ, on the grounds that what I understand of both movements has to do with the inclusion, acceptance, support and loving of women. Martha and Lucy VF-W leave me with the impression that the Lesbian/Feminist movement(s) they are promoting are exclusive, intolerant, and based heavily on the prejudices the rest of us are trying to erase.

The First Commandment for acceptability in Martha's and Lucy's eyes seems to be that if you're fat, forget it.

"...a fat women who was lying on the floor looking like a blow fish...a fat slob who was senior clerk...seemed like a jolly, self-assured person, despite his considerable paunch...Just look at all the fat people in this country. Are they ready for a revolution which bans potato chips?...I was always revulsed by very fat people...My mother used to say, 'I can't stand fat people; they make my stomach turn and my skin crawl.'"

Throughout the eight pieces, you will find no people who are fat and attractive. These are mutually exclusive states of being for the authors. Thin is In, but that alone is not enough. You've got to be clean. That is, Clean. Clean enough, preferably, to do surgery without needing to freshen up first. In one of the stories our heroines slosh in and out of the shower five times in less than five minutes' reading. My fingers began to get parboiled just holding the book. And bodily cleanliness is not enough.

"...Since she was always clean and well groomed...very clean shoulder length hair...They washed and used Alexis' Water Pik...Violet had taught her friend how to mop a disgusting floor and how to keep a toilet clean...drank beer until they had to go home to pee. Neither could stand the filthy bar toilet."

And so on. So let's say you're thin enough, and let's assume you're clean enough. If you want to jump on the produce truck with the rest of the figs, there are other qualifications. Lucy and Martha are promoting strict monogamy, Japanese food, short hair, couples (preferably those who dress and think alike), life after death, fresh fruit drinks, perfect love, de-caFFEinated coffee, non-parenthood, college, and this book.

I object to being preached at when I am led into believing I'm going to be entertained or enlightened or both. And I especially object when I read a book and I am neither of the latter, and insulted to boot. The VF-W's would seem to find feminism both beneath them and something they would expect from the likes of me, wallowing in my obesity and at least a day away from a good, scalding shower.

"Caroline had always been assertive but feminism added fuel to the fire. To more conventional people Caroline appeared to be a shrew, a demanding, castrating bitch...We have the sisterhood which the women's movement talked about but couldn't produce...My mom was a founder of the women's movement in the mid-sixties in America. Many of her acquaintances went insane, or gave up the quest...They...entertained family and attempted to participate in their local Women's Center. They found they couldn't relate to the feminists. Most looked and sounded grotesque and alien. They either painted their faces and nails, wore

(Continued on Page 4)



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jewelry or clothes which seemed obsolete to Alicia and Verinia who always wore matching tops, pants and workboots."

Where do you start to explain to these women the harm they are doing? I want to sit them down and talk about avoiding the use of the words "shrew" and "bitch" to describe women; how they're carrying on linguistic traditions that need to be strangled. I want them to name me a dozen or so women in the mid-sixties who went insane because of the women's movement, and I want them to think about whether it was the movement at fault or the fucked-up lives they found themselves aware of that did it.

On top of all that, I want to know how they can call themselves feminists in one sentence and Lesbians in another and find women "grotesque and alien." *Grotesque!* These women, we read, painted their faces and nails. The characters in the story don't find the paint grotesque. They find the women grotesque. Moreover, these grotesque women have the gall to wear jewelry and clothes which seem obsolete to dear Alicia and Verinia. Some nerve those painted ladies have.

And the style of the writing? Well, it's equal to the content, I suppose. They are not good writers. There is nothing wrong with not being a good writer; it is something many of us have to face, and the sooner the better. Their sentences shuffle stiffly across the pages like so many Tootsie Toys. The labor of their construction is most painfully obvious in dialogue, but the awkwardness sits heavily throughout the text. Oddly formal, pieced-together sentences mingle with first-grade reader chopiness.

"He gallantly rose to assist her, thereby necessitating a series of polite interchanges...There was a faint touch of blood on his pale blue turtle neck, where he had neglected to put a tiny piece of toilet paper ...to interview a man who tore his medial cartilage...They had a lovely small house. The group met in the living room. The fireplace was going. The women drank coffee. A light snow was falling. Only Caroline was twenty-four...In Munich they parked near a van with a tape deck and five men...

"Marie riveted her eyes on Leah's and carefully lifted her naked breast out of her neckline...A bowl came, artistically decorated with its contents...She declared she was enjoying herself immensely and entreated her to continue in a serious manner...They exchanged 'hellos' loudly for it had been many years since they had seen their niece and besides they didn't hear too well...She and Lyle held hands as they ate with the one which was free."

As to the nuances of vocabulary, I roll my eyes up (as they might say.) Read, "...eager young business mongers...the door shut closed...they could all meet together...a cubic square of oxygen..." To say nothing of this passage, the meaning of which totally eludes me: "The ghost chose to reveal itself. It was the young woman who had been hocking her friends in chinik." Almost as curious as that sentence, Lucy and Martha have chosen to include in the book several photos of themselves. At the front, there's a snapshot of them squatting before a building that seems to be under construction. Lucy holds a hammer; in front of her is a saw. Martha is to her left, and in the foreground is a glass containing, one must assume, a frothy fruit drink. The caption says, "Lucy and Martha." At the back of the book, we have a shot of two children and two women sitting on what appears to be a beach of petrified pancakes. The identification reads: Mimi, Norma, Kate & Lucy. Lucy is nearest to the camera, with her head turned away. Do you know who the others are? Neither do I. On the following page there is a snapshot of Lucy on a bed with a child on her stomach. Underneath that is a photo of Martha sitting on a woven plastic lawn chair with the same child sitting between her legs. This, we learn, is Lucy, Martha and Kate.

And lastly, a "studio" photograph of the authors, Martha standing behind a seated Lucy. Martha is ducking her head shyly towards us, smiling as though she knows something we don't. Lucy is holding a copy of their book open before her, and seems to be snoozing. The caption--a trifle unnecessary at this point--says: Martha and Lucy.

I wish them well. I wish for them the "perfection and peace" they

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# EW'S LETTER, ETC.

March 10, 1976

Dear Friends,

Yes, do renew our MGTFN subscription before it's too late! Our unkempt, unemployable, megalomaniacal cat won't have any other lining in his litter box! What is really worrying us is his recently delivered ultimatum: if the article, editorial, and letter writers don't tone down their attacks on fellow Gay persons, he may refuse to shit on such catty copy. He, after all, is a dignified neutered fur person and a cat of peace--or so he claims to be.

Personally, we don't know why he thinks Gay people's squabbles are any of his concerns, but he insists on reading the Newsletter before he uses it (he calls that recycling, as he is also concerned with ecology.) He even claims that the Newsletter is helping him to educate himself about our culture...yesterday we overheard him say to our neighbor's cat that he is a World Citizen, and something about in-fighting being "out." He also mentioned organizing a feline boycott of catty litter box liners. Today when he delivered the above-mentioned ultimatum, we learned that MGTFN is on the list of catty liners along with the Advocate.

Cat-owners and Newsletter staff, be warned: I guess this is what comes from overeducating our cats!

In Gay Fun,

Belfast

Ev Stevens

P.S. The Fur Person knows we are writing this letter (it was part of his ultimatum,) and hopes that future issues will once again be suitable for liners (he ripped March to shreds and carried it, bit by bit, to the compost heap.) He did make one conciliatory remark: "Up until March, 1976, the MGTFN was the best litter-liner I ever used, and I sincerely hope to shit on it in the future."

[With apologies to the Cumberland County Curmudgeon who will realize, anyway, that this is truly all in fun.]

\* \* \* \* \*

## SOCIAL NOTES

Saturday, March 22 was the time and the Unitarian-Universalist Church in Brunswick was the place (con't next column)

as LAMBDA sponsored the area's first Gay Flea Market/Dance. From 11am to well past 4pm six tables offered various items (jewelry, antiques, bread loaves, literature, sporting gear, calendars, articles of clothing, plus numerous and sundry curios) and provided inexpensive, casual shopping as well as fine bargains on several retail items not generally associated with counter-culture flea markets.

One of the many satisfied customers was Stan Fortuna of Portland who shrewdly negotiated the purchase of a lavender necklace, which later drew much comment from fashion-conscious patrons at MacLean's Truck Stop on Pleasant St. The flea market and dance, which received extensive publicity in the southern Maine media, took in around \$100 for LAMBDA and support of Gay-related functions.

-MGTF News...a year ago

\* \* \* \* \*  
Dear Abby:  
'Proper' Life Not For All

DEAR ABBY: Your answer to TORN [MGTF Newsletter, Feb. 1976] was perfect. If those parents really love their tall, handsome, athletic son, the best way to show it is to allow him to be himself, even if his choice of a life's companion is another man, and not the woman of their dreams.

I speak out of agonizing years of personal experience. I made my personal decisions on the basis of what would please my parents, my friends and society in general. I have tried to live a straight life in a straight world and have been relatively successful. But each day is an inner struggle. I have conformed to a way of life that is 'proper,' but it's unnatural for me. My life has been one long succession of unfulfilled yearnings.

I would advise any young person who is struggling with homosexual feelings to be true to [her] himself. Thank God for the openness society is developing. Had

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By Susan Breeding

Well, well, well...it seems as if all things do finally come to Maine. The two latest imports--and they have had a strikingly similar effect on me--are the A-Victoria flu and a new disco/bar/nightclub on Middle St. in Portland, the Oasis. As to the former, I can only say I hope you do not experience it; and although I could say exactly the same thing with equal fervor about the latter and end this article right here, the Oasis unfortunately warrants a little more of our attention, mostly because so many of its patrons are Gay, and partly because I suspect it is a phenomenon which the Gay movement in Maine will have to increasingly deal with.

The Oasis is the sort of mixed Gay-non-Gay disco which sprang up in New York City and San Francisco about five years ago when bisexuality was "discovered." It has a pleasing interior, excellent drinks, a wonderfully large dance floor, good-to-excellent live bands, and fair-to-good disco music. Its non-Gay patrons are mostly white, young, middle-class, sophisticated, cool, semi-freaks; "liberated" enough not to flee in outright disgust, terror, and outrage when they see two men or two women dancing together. The ratio of heterosexuals to homosexuals is roughly even, with perhaps slightly more non-Gay than Gay people on weekends.

I have tried to like the Oasis; tried to the point of going there five times in radically different moods--tried to the point of tolerating the classism, racism, and sexism inherent in most bars in our culture. It seemed that a disco offering good dance music and a relaxed atmosphere had finally come to Portland; a place where we could at long last claim our right to mingle and dance and celebrate in the "real" world instead of the Gay Ghetto nightclubs, which are all too often dingy, depressing, limited to beer and jukeboxes, and very expensive. I particularly looked forward to escaping the "meat-rack" heavy male cruising scene which dominates so many Gay bars.

Well, folks, off the meat-rack and into the fire. At the Oasis all Gay people are on the rack for the endless titillation and entertainment of the non-Gay patrons. On every occasion I have been there I have seen homosexuals subjected to continual ridicule and curiosity; we are the safe, easy target of every drunken slur, the butt for all those so-familiar jokes of every straight man trying to exhibit both his masculinity and his chic to his latest woman. One has only to watch the reactions of many patrons to Gay people slow-dancing together; giggling, whispering, much elbowing in the side, and those constant, rapacious, devouring stares. ("Oh look, George, they're actually dancing together!" ...and that's not all they do together, honey...heh,heh,heh...")

We are not blatantly being denied our civil rights at the Oasis; make no mistake, the oppression is much more subtle than that. We are not being thrown out because we might interfere with the non-Gay patrons' enjoyment of the show--we are the show. We will not be asked to leave because we are destroying the atmosphere--we are the atmosphere. (Co-opted again, you see...) At its worst moments the Oasis reminds me of the nightclub scenes in the movie "Cabaret," the same aura of divine decadence, except it is not Joel Gray and Liza Minelli but us--by being our natural selves!--who provide the jaded, thrill-seeking, parasitic clientele with new vicarious highs in sophisticated, naughty sexuality.

I have not been fighting the Revolution to become a spectacle for straight America's entertainment. And I refuse to become the Oasis' drawing-card and floor show unless I'm paid for it--about \$30 an hour would be pretty fair. My old consciousness-raising group used to have an on-going joke about how, when homosexuality became "in" with the radical chic, we would start a Rent-A-Dyke business so that the most fashionable parties could be sure of having the very latest "thing" present.

The joke has become a reality. I strongly suggest that the Oasis regularly turn over part of its profits to the Maine Gay Task Force.

\* \* \* \* \*



By Peter Prizer

ABOUT 900 PEOPLE PAID either \$1 or 50¢ to hear Angela Davis speak at UMPG the other week. At times her logic was less impressive than her stage presence, which alone was worth admission. During the question and answer period there was the ubiquitous questioner Pursuing The Lost Advantage, and (natch) the Portland Evening Express ran one of those editorials written only by someone who couldn't have been in the audience...the "Firebrand Black Revolutionary" (as she's known in the overground press) really impressed me by resorting to the word "hell" once during 2 hours to make her point...

WHAT A DIFFERENCE TWO YEARS MAKE!  
Louis Jalbert, Lewiston Democrat  
and Wordsmith Extraordinaire ("You  
are a fucking asshole," he told me  
once at a Party platform hearing),  
has lately come around as one of  
the staunchest supporters of state  
aid to higher education. This is  
the same Jalbert who, two years ago  
in a heated debate on the House  
floor, threatened to withhold \$1  
million from the University for al-  
lowing "the pack of queers" to meet  
at Orono for Symposium I...Right  
On, Louis!!

[illegible]

HOW EMBARRASSING TO SEE GOV. LONGLEY uttering such foolish comments as, "I'd like to see prayer restored to the public schools," and other similar comments. I can remember reciting the Lord's Prayer (and the Pledge of Allegiance...to the flag) for 10 years in school and look what happened! But the whole controversy surrounding "Prayer in the Schools" is really unneeded: Gov. Longley and his ilk should take some time out from politicing and better acquaint themselves with the U.S. Constitution before they trip out on media gestures to confused constituents...

QUESTION: What has 41 front organizations, a \$620,000 estate in Irvington, N.Y., contacts with the CIA in Korea, 30,000 smiling members hawking candy, candles and flowers, and a scheme to convert all 100 U.S. Senators by sending three women members of the cult to each? Give up? It's none other than the Unification Church, headed by the Rev. Sun Myung Moon (Sun/Moon, get it?) a.k.a. the New Messiah. Relatively harmless in its early years, the Unification Church rocketed to fame and amusement in Dec., '73, with the declaration of a "National Prayer and Fast" for Watergater Richard Nixon, whom Mr. Moon has described as our "divine President." At least that's what he got from a vision a few years ago in Korea. Moon has said, "I will conquer and subjugate the world; I am your brain." Staunchedly anti-socialist, anti-Gay (thank God!) the Church supports all the goals of the CIA in Korea and the Park dictatorship there. Moon, married and divorced three times, served three months in jail in '55 for promoting sex orgies. ...next time you get approached on the street by one of these little Hitlers (excuse me, conser-



## TASK FORCE ON WEST COAST PLAYS VITAL MEDIA ROLE

By Dr. Newton Deiter

[Editor's Note: The following article is reprinted from the April edition of IT'S TIME, the publication of The National Gay Task Force, Room 506, 80 Fifth Avenue, New York, N.Y. 10011. In 1972, NGTF helped to create the Gay Media Task Force. Since then, the GMTF has kept close ties with NGTF, and has helped to coordinate east and west coast Gay media concerns and struggles. Dr. Deiter is the Coordinator of GMTF, in Los Angeles.]

In order to explain what the Gay Media Task Force is all about, it seems appropriate to start with what we are not. The Gay Media Task Force is not a political action group. It was, and is our feeling that there are other organizations within the Gay community who can do a far better job of political lobbying than we can.

The Gay Media Task Force is not a censorship group. All three networks operate large departments of censorship under various names. Their policy in the past has been that the best way to handle the concerns of Gay women and men is by not dealing with them [us] at all, and it's our feeling that, if GMTF people censored, we would simply limit the visibility of Gay characters on television.

The Gay Media Task Force, first and foremost, is a resource organization. We started by developing slow relationships with closeted Gay people within the networks, studios, and production companies. Our major sources of information to this day are these people actively employed within the industry and closeted about their own Gayness, who provide us with the overwhelming majority of the confidential information we receive.

It continually amazes network and production executives when we walk into meetings with details of decisions that were arrived at earlier that same day in very confidential meetings. It amazes them even more when we come into script conferences with advance copies of the very script they were about to present us.

Much of our work never creates a ripple within the community, since many questions of taste and balanced presentation are resolved in discussion before the product even gets to the production stage. In this function, this organization

provided major input at NBC that led to a policy decision covering the exclusion of "Brucey" jokes from the Tonight Show. Another example at the network was the decision to remove a 15 minute comedy segment from the Midnight Special because it dealt in Gay stereotypes.

A major thrust of our efforts has been in the area of consciousness-raising sessions for network program practices people, giving them some perspective on Gay concerns and on what it means to be Gay. Interestingly enough, at one of the networks, with the exception of the chief of the department, the entire program practices staff is Gay. Contrary to what one might assume, this network has not been amazingly cooperative. The reason is that men and women in this department are so afraid of their jobs they will not take a stand on Gay issues. Our greatest help here has come from the non-Gay department head who is not afraid for his job.

At another network, published policy is that producers wanting to deal with Gay issues in any way will first be put in touch with us for consultative purposes prior to any story, idea, or scripts being submitted for approval. Another network has a similar policy, but it is optional rather than mandatory.

Interestingly enough, all three networks have, in the past, given lip service to cooperating, but each one has had to have a major flap created and fueled by NGTF and other organizations in order for the networks to sit down and accept our expertise. Nationwide protests have been launched over NBC's *Police Woman*, "Flowers of Evil," ABC's *Marcus Welby, M.D.*, "The Other Martin Loring," and "The Outrage"; and CBS's *BRONK*. Our initial relationships with the networks have been almost a classic case of "mule psychology": first you have to hit them in the head to get their attention. After that, cooperation occurs.

After nearly four years of work, our credibility within the industry is very high. Producers have discovered that because of our involvement, their product has been better, and we have helped them steer through the censorship shoals of the networks. We have been successful in assisting the producers in their network discussions to bring Gay characters to television and in creating balance. We insist that where a stereotype may be necessary to establish a character quickly, there be an offsetting

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# THE CUMBERLAND COUNTY CURMUDGEON

By Susan W. Henderson

## VOLTAIRE AND HOMOSEXUALITY

Those of you who have read Voltaire's *Candide* may or may not remember that every German and Jesuit in it was a fag. This was not intended as a positive statement. Voltaire did not like Germans and he hated the Church--in fact, he and the other *philosophes*, the progressives of the eighteenth century, habitually accused the Jesuits (a teaching order, be it noted) of pederasty, so much so that it became a literary convention with them.

Voltaire's attitude toward the gentle art of Greek love was not as totally negative as this example may suggest, however. He was a good friend of several Gay people, among them Francesco, Count Algarotti, a lesser-known Italian *philosophe* and popular writer, and especially Frederick the Great of Prussia. Voltaire practically carried on a flirtation with Frederick, calling him "coquette," "mistress," and, on one occasion, referring to him as "a respectable, singular, and lovable whore." It is unknown whether Voltaire himself was Gay. He said that he tried it once, but refused a second invitation, saying, "if you try it once, you're a philosopher, but if you try it twice, you're a sodomite." He certainly played up to Frederick, however, as witness the following excerpt from a letter of 15 December 1740:

Great king, I predicted to you that Berlin would become Athens for pleasures and the mind; the prophecy was certain. But when, at fat Valory's, I see the tender Algarotti press with lively embrace the handsome Lugeac, his young friend, I believe I see Socrates fastened to the rump of Alcibiades...

Charles-Antoine de Guérin, Marquis de Lugeac, was secretary to the Marquis de Valory, the French ambassador to Berlin. Alcibiades was famous in Classical literature as the lover of Socrates.

Voltaire could enjoy a Gay story, but he could also use homosexuality as a weapon. *Candide* is one example. He never ranted and raved about it, but he ridiculed with a light touch which made the mockery all the more cutting. Perhaps the best specimen of this is a poem he wrote about the Abbé Desfontaines, a French cleric and amateur author. Voltaire got Desfontaines off when the latter was arrested on a sodomy charge--it seems he went in for chimney sweeps' apprentices. Sodomy was a capital offense in France at the time, so this was a big favor. Desfontaines, in order to get back into the good graces of the authorities, to whom Voltaire was a dangerous radical, subsequently began to libel Voltaire in his writings. Voltaire, justly enraged, decided to hit Desfontaines where it would hurt most--to ridicule his sexuality and his competence as an author. Here is the result:

[in prose translation]

### Abbé Desfontaines and the Chimney Sweep

A chimney sweep, with sooty face, iron pole in hand and eyes bandaged, was slithering into a chimney; when an antiquated beadle of Sodom, who mistook the youth for Cupid, tried to mount up his bent back. Cupid cried out; the neighborhood assembled; they drew up an affidavit, and the rutting Desfontaines was thrown into Bicêtre prison. They tied him up and stripped him, and a strong arm was pleased to tan the fat ass of the Sodomite priest. The girls all giggled, and the skinned pedant cried, "Monsieur, for God's sake, have a heart! Read, by your grace, my verses and my prose." The executioner read, leaped up, more annoyed than ever, and redoubled the sentence of the renegade. "Twenty lashes for his villainous sin, and thirty more for the boredom that he causes us."

There's your history lesson, folks, and a little light S and M to start your day off right. Where else but in the MGTFF Newsletter could you get all this cult-chah for a mere four bucks a year?

[All the above quotes are to be found in the published works of Voltaire. See also the article on Lord Hervey by John Dubras in the April, 1976 edition of *The Body Politic*.]



## DISTANCES PEOPLE KEEP

When psychologist Stephen F. Morin announced publicly that he was homosexual, he noted that people began to treat him more cautiously. Verbally, they supported him; nonverbally, they told him they were self-conscious. At a urinal one afternoon, a colleague moved progressively farther away from Morin, eventually barricading himself behind a stall.

This experience led Morin, in collaboration with Kathleen E. Taylor and Stanley J. Kielman, to design a simple study of social distance between Gays and non-Gays. They told 80 college students, 40 male and 40 female, that they would each be interviewed briefly about their attitudes toward homosexuality. Half of the time the experimenter wore a "Gay and Proud" button and was introduced as working for the Association of Gay Psychologists; half of the time the experimenter wore no button and was introduced as a graduate student working on a thesis.

The researchers were interested in how close each undergraduate placed his or her chair to the experimenter. This little measure of social distance, they reasoned, would tap unconscious attitudes about homosexuality.

When the experimenter and the student were of the opposite sex, it didn't matter that one was presumably homosexual. Students sat an average of 28 inches away from interviewers wearing the "Gay and Proud" button, and 25 inches away from the interviewers without the button.

But the students got worried when they had to sit next to an experimenter of the same sex who they thought was Gay. Now the difference markedly increased, as if they feared, as did Morin's colleague at the urinal, that a known homosexual would attack them at any moment. The males were especially nervous about being interviewed by a homosexual man. When they thought the experimenter was straight, they sat an average of 22 inches from him. When they thought he was Gay, they moved their chairs 32 inches away. Most of these students expressed tolerant attitudes toward homosexuals, but their unconscious apprehensions gave them away.

--Carol Travis in the January issue of *Psychology Today*.

OK, ALL YOU OUTDOOR PEOPLE...HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO SHARE FRESH AIR...

Anyone interested in hikes, picnics or canoe trips? With the advent of good weather, several people have indicated an interest in organizing some Gay recreational activities for Maine Vacationland.

Whether or not we'll be successful in arranging any activities will depend on your response. If you're interested in getting together for some outdoor vigor this summer, drop us a line at MGTF. Please indicate what types of activities you're interested in and whether you're willing to participate in mixed or in separate men's and women's activities, or both.

These alfresco activities are intended for fun and for amateurs. We're planning an inaugural hike up Mount Cutler in Hiram on May 15th. This is an easy hike with one steep section. It takes about one hour to reach the summit...

Further details will be in next month's Newsletter--that's assuming enough of us show some interest.

Please get in touch!

[PO BOX 4542, Portland 04112 or by phone: 773-5530]

## NEW MAGAZINE FOR LESBIANS

In January, 1975, Liza Cowan and Penny House, two New York Dykes, decided that the time was right for a beautiful, exciting, provocative, stimulating Lesbian magazine. They began to work immediately, and ten months later the first issue of *DYKE, A Quarterly*, came out.

Cowan and House, both of Tomato Publications, said in Vol. One, Number One, We want to publish a magazine that fulfills our need for analysis, communication and news of our lesbian culture. We believe that Lesbian Culture presumes a separate analysis. If Lesbian culture is intermixed with straight culture, it is no longer Lesbian, it is heterosexual or heterosocial, because energy and time are going to men. Lesbian community, Lesbian culture...means Lesbian only. *DYKE* is a magazine for Dykes only!

Subscriptions are \$8/year. Sample copies: #1, \$2.00 #2 \$3.50. Checks to: Tomato Publications, 70 Barrow St., New York, NY 10014 Dept.M



## REPORT FROM THE MAINE STATE PRISON

Several people in MGTf have organized a Gay Prisoner's Project. The goals of the Project are, in part, to end obvious Gay oppression at Thomaston and, eventually, to work for prison conditions supportive of a person's human right to live, unharassed, his or her own life style. Up to this point, people from MGTf and Gay prisoners have collectively spent much time and effort getting to know one another and gaining a better perspective (for MGTf people) of what it is, in this Bicentennial year, to be Gay and exist at M.S.P.

Gay prisoners, including David Harris, are currently building a day-by-day documented case demonstrating the discrimination towards them by both the prison hierarchy and individual guards. When the state's new criminal code takes effect on May 1st, David and his friends at M.S.P. and people in MGTf will move together against the Department of Mental Health and Corrections, which condones discrimination facing homosexuals at the State Prison at Thomaston.

Below are two letters; one from Dave Harris to the Newsletter and the other by Governor James B. Longley with his personal comments on the conditions at Thomaston.

March 14, 1976

I'll keep you informed on any and all events as they occur.

Dear MGTf,

In Gay Pride,

David P. Harris

Please find enclosed three letters I've received from various people I've written to about the harassment and discrimination here at Maine State Prison. Please note the letter I received from Gov. James Longley--I would like the Newsletter to publish the contents of this letter...I found it to be most interesting, and it was such a straight letter it almost made me sick. The letter I received from Sen. Hathaway tells me he's referred me to the Bureau of Corrections. I have forwarded copies of these letters to Ward Murphy, our new warden. I might add that she hasn't been all that cooperative with us Gays here at the Maine State Prison.

You will be pleased to know that I've gathered a rather large amount of statements from various individuals here concerning events of the past several months. I'm sure this information can be used to our favor in the months ahead. It certainly has been difficult keeping on top of everything in this place, but I am putting my best efforts into it.

During the past two or three weeks, several instances of discrimination towards us Gay prisoners has occurred. Each time, I wrote a letter to Gov. Longley, among others. Several administrative staff members discovered my writing, and some of the smaller instances of harassment ceased, temporarily.

I appreciate everything you people in the Task Force are doing and

The following letter to David Harris from Gov. James Longley is dated March 8, 1976:

Dear David Harris:

I am referring your correspondence of February 18 to Mr. Robert Carlson. I don't want to judge another human being, but very frequently when an individual feels he is discriminated against, it is more often the imagination or a matter of introspection that results from an individual being much more self-critical of himself than others are really in fact critical of him.

Frankly, while the Governor's job is a difficult and lonely job, I am also finding that moments of discouragement are frequently situations in which on reflection I found that I had thought I was better than I was and underestimated the problem of the individual(s) with whom I was dealing and their motivations. In addition, the challenge of reflection is to recognize whether or not one might be wrong or become a better person by change, or at the very least, if an individual is honest with himself, it will allow the individual to determine whether he is moving in the right way and doing what is right, or serving a proper

(Continued on Page 14)



## SOME FACTS ON VENEREAL DISEASE

In many communities around the country, 10% to 20% of the young people have some form of venereal disease, and it is the fortunate individual who has several lovers without catching gonorrhea or syphilis from one of them. According to Roy Tripp, the Communicable Disease Control Representative for Maine (with his office at Portland City Hall), "Gonorrhea is epidemic in Maine." The situation has indeed reached a critical point and requires immediate action, for VD is not only an unpleasant hindrance to the free expression of human sexuality, it is also a significant drain on the health of many people.

To date, action against VD by various organizations, from government to free clinics, has concentrated on detection and treatment of existing cases. But VD is a social disease, spread by person-to-person sexual contact and therefore greatly influenced by social factors which affect the nature of human relationships. Many human relationships in our society are based on exploitation and not on mutual respect and responsibility. Therefore, it is not surprising to find that many people who have venereal disease fail to inform their lovers of their common infection. Most of the diseases described herein produce early and obvious symptoms in men, while in women, they may continue undetected for long periods of time.

What is VD? In Maine, VD means gonorrhea or syphilis, although the more exotic diseases are not unheard of. According to Roy Tripp, "The lack of knowledge about the way venereal disease is transmitted," is one of the biggest obstacles he faces in his daily war against VD. Basically, said Tripp, VD can be exchanged on any part of the body where there are mucous membranes--especially in dark areas. To illustrate, a deep kiss between two people may provide the necessary ingredients for transmission: moist skin areas and darkness.

**SYPHILIS** Syphilis is caused by a germ that cannot live in dryness or sunlight; therefore it is caught only by intimate sexual contact. The first symptom of syphilis is a sore that usually develops on the penis, anus, or vagina about a week after sexual contact.

This sore is called a chancre. It is sometimes difficult to recognize because it is usually not painful, may be very small or hidden within the vagina or anus. The chancre will heal by itself, but this does not indicate a cure. The syphilis germs may spread through the body and attack the heart valves and the nervous system. Symptoms may develop slowly, over a period of years, but may eventually cause serious illness. A blood test is used to diagnose syphilis. Penicillin is the best treatment for syphilis.

**GONORRHEA** Gonorrhea is caused by a bacteria, which lives in the sexual organs (urinary tract, rectum, vagina and sometimes in the throat), but dies quickly if exposed to air. You may notice painful, burning urination or itching around the rectum. Whitish pus comes from the penis or vagina and may stain your underwear. Untreated gonorrhea spreads to other parts of the body. Women may have few or no symptoms and may be unknowing carriers. There is no blood test for gonorrhea; it is diagnosed by taking a sample of the pus and looking for bacteria under a microscope. Treatment is by penicillin or other antibody.

If you think you have VD--Go to a clinic, your doctor (if non-homophobic), or a hospital. In the Portland area, persons should visit the health clinic at Portland City Hall. Hours are Monday, Tuesday, Friday, 11:30-12:30--Thursday, 4-6 PM-- on the third floor. In the Bangor area, St. Joseph's Hospital gives free VD diagnosis and treatment.

More than another human disease, VD has been mystified, misunderstood and exaggerated. Even when the symptoms are obvious many people are not aware of their significance, and even when infection is realized many are afraid to go for treatment. And so the disease spreads.

In addition to obtaining factual information about VD, it would seem that we must educate ourselves to accept our human responsibilities to our lovers. People who have VD must immediately inform all recent sexual partners. We should not leave such responsibilities to the social health nurses. Why not create a new morality based on mutual respect and concern rather than on monogamous relationships and "benign neglect".



## SYMPOSIUM (Cont.'d from page 1)

On Sunday the Symposium will continue with the third workshop period from 10 to 12 a.m. (with coffee and doughnuts available) and close with a general session from 12 to 1 p.m.

Symposium III features a larger number of workshop topics than ever before. The list includes: Gays and Children; Male Health (men only); Sexual Others; Rural Gay People; Ageing and Ageism Among Gay Men (men only); Spirituality; Feminist Health (women only); Lesbians and Feminists (women only); Gays and Alcoholism; Issues in Lesbian Relationships (women only); Coming Out; Male Sensuality (men only); Religion; Gay Men and Lesbians; Lesbians Growing Older (women only); Gay People, the Law and Civil Liberties; Establishing a Lesbian Feminist Organization in Maine (women only); Women and Drugs: "A Modern Method of Slavery" (women only). Many of these workshops will be scheduled twice, and there will be opportunities for people to hold workshops on other topics as well.

Volunteers from among the participants will provide childcare throughout the Symposium. The registration fee is five dollars, and includes the Saturday night dinner; suggested ticket donations for the dance are one dollar for Symposium registrants, two dollars for non-registrants. People who haven't already received a pre-registration form can obtain one from the MGTf office.

Symposium III is sponsored by the Gay People's Alliance of the University of Maine at Portland-Gorham, in conjunction with the Maine Gay Task Force, the Wilde-Stein Club of the University of Maine at Orono, and the Southern Maine Lesbian Caucus.

## CMGA (Cont.'d from page 1)

The primary concern of CMGA is collectively recognizing and dealing with the hassles encountered by Gay people in Maine and maintaining a common ground on which to meet each other and celebrate the good things as well. CMGA might be of particular interest to those who prefer not to go to bars or dances and would like to be involved - actively or quietly. Also, it's a good chance to meet your neighbors in the Gay community. We're currently working on participation in Symposium III--we'll have an information table--carpools there and back (see BITS page) and lodging. If you have questions, comments or whatever, stop in Wednesday night or write to the above address.

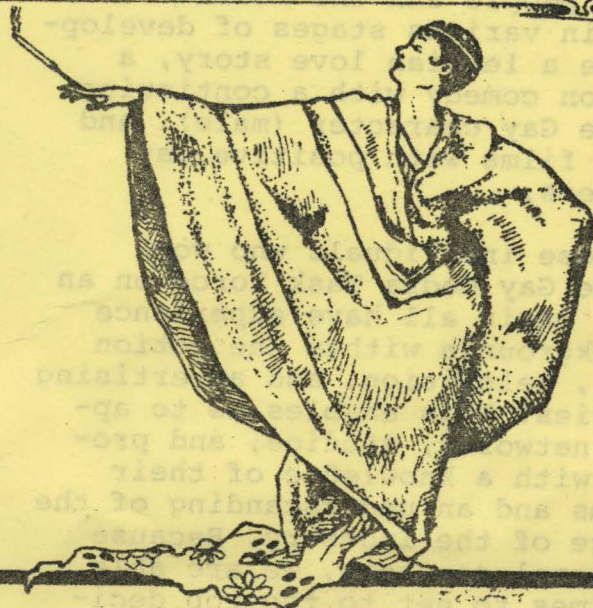
### **GAIA'S GUIDE, 1976** for Gay Women

Annual pocket size international bar guide and complete directory. All U. S. A. plus 40 other countries. 2000 listings: restaurants, resorts, bookstores, mail order and publishing houses, resources and services. \$5.00 only from:

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## RIPENING FIG (Cont.'d from page 4)

ardently strive for, and the "depth and truth and sensuality in the context of lasting love" they seek. And I most ardently wish that with time, or reflection, they may grow into the tolerance, acceptance, and sisterhood that the women's movement can produce.

-Meg McMullen

## DEAR ABBY (Cont.'d from page 5)

I known 25 years ago that there could possibly be an alternative, I would have taken a different course.

Now, in my 40s, I still wear a mask and am more miserable than ever. Surely those parents wouldn't want that kind of misery for their son.

Abby, please continue to tell parents that the opinions of their friends and relatives are not as important as their children's right to be themselves. -UNHAPPY

CONFORMIST

DEAR UNHAPPY: I could not have said it better than you did.

## GMTE (Cont.'d from page 8)

positive Gay character; or where a character makes a negative remark in re the Gay life style, that this remark come from a "villian" who is then excoriated for the negative remark.

1976 looks like a banner year for Gay people and the media. Currently in various stages of development are a lesbian love story, a situation comedy with a continuing positive Gay character (male), and several films with positive Gay characters.

Those individuals who work with the Gay Media Task Force on an ongoing basis all have experience and backgrounds within the motion picture, television, and advertising industries. This enables us to approach networks, studios, and producers with a knowledge of their problems and an understanding of the language of the industry. Because of personal contacts, we are able many times to get to the top decision-makers. In the last analysis, it must be remembered that getting right to the person who can say

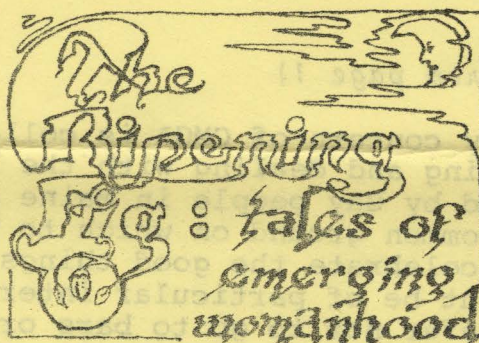
"yes" or "no" will accomplish far more than many meetings with many underlings.

## LONGLEY (Cont.'d from page 11)

cause or moving with even more conviction than previously. Whereas, if upon reflection he finds that he might improve or change his method or manner of doing things or his objectives in life, then he should move forward in another direction with equal conviction.

Frankly, I wish I had the time to be able to sit down with or try to help everyone in life, but I don't have the time so I simply must multiply myself as much as possible and call on all the talent around us. In that regard, I am taking the liberty of copying Bob Carlson who has this responsibility and asking him to please explore the complaints you have brought to my attention.

Very truly yours,  
/s/ James B. Longley



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR (WHICH WE NEVER FINISHED READING.....)

(From "Voice of the People," in the N.Y. Daily News of March 10)

### THE BISHOP & GAYS

MANHATTAN: I am afraid I find absolutely no merit whatsoever in Brooklyn Bishop Francis Mugavero's sympathy for homosexuals and their need of love and freedom from discrimination. As a former homosexual....

### THE SCOOP ON "SCOOP"

Sen. Henry Jackson (February): "I am not about to give in to Gay Liberation...the logical end of homosexuality is the gradual end of the human race..."

Sen. Henry Jackson (March): "I'll fight the bigots wherever I can."



## CALENDAR AND THINGS

ARE THEY SERIOUS?...GAY COMIC STRIP BANNED IN OHIO (TWICE) TEXAS, AND FLORIDA BY 'CONCERNED' EDITORS!

Four newspapers have cancelled several episodes of the "Doonesbury" cartoon strip which recently featured a Gay character. Letters from MCTF to the editors of the newspapers protesting their homophobic reactions were sent.

If you enjoyed the panel on the front page of this MGTFN and would like to send a note to the creator, Gary Trudeau, he can be reached at Universal Press Syndicate, 67000 Squibb Road, Mission, Kansas 66202.

\*\*\*\*

MGTF THANKS to all those who made the March 14th Benefit the great success it was. People attending the Disco/Dance at the Oasis Ballroom expressed individual pleasure during the evening and the Task Force was able to raise \$265, a pleasurable event in itself. Thanks again to the helpful staff of the Oasis and for the community support!

\*\*\*\*

The new Maine Criminal Code, originally scheduled to take effect on March 1, has been delayed again by the State Legislature. As of 4 PM, April 14, the new code is planned to become effective on May 1st, barring any last second revisions. On behalf of the State Legislature, we apologize for any inconvenience this delay may have caused our readers.

\*\*\*\*

SYBIL'S, a new restaurant/bar on Middle Street (in the F.O. Bailey Block between Franklin Street and Pearl Street) is set to open for business this Friday (April 16). The owners of the new establishment welcome Gay people to visit Sybil's and experience the result of many months of planning and hard work. Additional information may be obtained by calling them at 772-9476.

\*\*\*\*

ENTHEOS FELLOWSHIP... "A New Experience in Christian Acceptance." A Church for ALL people, regardless of race, creed or lifestyle. They meet on Sundays in the Portland area. Additional information may be obtained by calling 773-6031 or 797-5247. They produce a Sunday morning radio show for WDCS-FM in Portland and for its affiliate in Rumford. WDCS (98FM) is available for info at 774-9816.

BANGOR AREA PEOPLE: TV GUIDE says that the "Barney Miller" program for Thursday, April 22 (8:30 PM) will deal with "police harassment of homosexuals." For southern Maine viewers, the ABC affiliate is scheduling "Lawrence Welk." There may be a message in that somewhere...

\*\*\*\*\*

NEWSLETTER THANKS to Richard in San Francisco who sends us Gay-related newspaper clippings, periodicals, miscellaneous publications, etc. from the Bay Area. Also, MGTFN thanks to the person with the BRONX, N.Y. postmark who sends us newspaper clippings from the Big Apple.

## CALENDAR

Sunday, April 18: MGTf people on live radio program; phone in your questions... WJBO AM, 10AM - 12. Rebroadcast that evening, 2-4AM.

Tuesday, April 20: Maine Civil Liberties Union presents Morton Halperin; 8PM, Room 302, Law School Building, UMPG, Portland. 246 Deering Ave. at Brighton Ave. Halperin was a former Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense, a former member of the National Security Council, and the plaintiff in a lawsuit against Kissinger resulting from a government wiretap on Mr. Halperin's phone for a period of 21 months.

Friday, Saturday, Sunday, April 23-25: Maine Gay Symposium III; UMPG/Portland; Payson Smith Hall.

Saturday, April 24: Dance at Payson Smith Hall; 8 PM; with all-woman rock group "Liberty Standing."

Friday, April 30: Portland Women's Center sponsors two films (see BITS) on rape culture and release. 7:30 PM, 326 Luther Bonny; UMPG/Portland. For info call 774-6071.

Friday, April 30-May 1, 2: "Gay Rites of Spring," at U. of Mass/Amherst. Sponsored by People's Gay Alliance. (413) 545-0154.

May 7, 8: Gay Student Union of Univ. of Vermont sponsors: "On Becoming," a weekend of Gay cultural and political activities. At the campus of UVM. For more info call: (802) 656-4173.



## REMEMBER SYMPOSIUM I?

"I guess it was the Symposium that ended it...when everyone saw that Bangor wasn't going to be taken over by thousands of Gay people."

John Frank, former chairperson of the Wilde-Stein Club, reminisced about the early struggles of the organization. "They thought that homosexuals were something that hovered around the streets of Boston...and I think the controversy happened because it was a trauma for the state to find out that there were a lot of people that they didn't know about and they considered it a threat," he said. "And I think that when people are threatened, a lot of fear manifests itself in hatred, and that's what happened. It was a strange period."

Remember the Wilde-Stein Club?  
If you remember 1974, you should.

It was December of 1973 when the news media began to notice the first rumblings of what was to become one of the biggest controversies ever to hit the state. It began on the UMO campus, but would later receive national press coverage.

Wilde-Stein had been in existence since September of 1973, having grown out of Gay Support and Action of Bangor when a need for a gay student organization was recognized.

What triggered the great controversy that embroiled the then-small group? To pin down the exact cause would be difficult, but perhaps it began with an article in the Dec. 14, 1973 *Portland Press Herald*: "Public Gays--only Dance On Tonight at Orono." This brief mention of the group spurred members of the religious community to action, most notably the Rev. Benjamin Bubar, superintendent of the Christian Civic League.

Bubar, now the Prohibition Party's presidential candidate, objected to the University's recognition of the group and the use of the Maine Christian Association building for the dance. Other clergymen [sic] soon joined Bubar in his protests.

The University faced pressure from citizens and religious groups, who demanded the group be banned. The question of University recognition of the club had expanded to the questions of Gay rights and freedom of speech and assembly. A similar case had gone

to the State Supreme Court in New Hampshire, and was decided in favor of a university Gay group there.

Nevertheless, demands continued to bombard the University, demands which doubled and redoubled as Wilde-Stein requested University facilities for a regional Gay conference. The Board of Trustees granted permission for the symposium and the conference was scheduled for April 1974. Reaction was immediate. Bubar and other clergymen [sic] voiced their fears of Maine becoming a "mecca for homosexuals". They envisioned thousands of Gays flooding the state for the conference.

The Wilde-Stein issue was receiving almost daily coverage in Maine. Letters attacking and defending the group and Gay rights monopolized editorial columns in local papers. By March, the *Bangor Daily News* had to print a message to their readers, stating that any further letters dealing with the Wilde-Stein Club or the homosexual issue in general would not be published. The newspaper by then had a "substantial backlog of letters running the gamut of opinion."

Protests against using University facilities for the Maine Gay Symposium [I] reached the State Legislature, where the fiscal budget, including a \$35 million appropriation for the University of Maine, was under consideration. Some religious leaders had instituted letterwriting campaigns to legislators, and politicians were under pressure to cut funding to the University, with the hope that enough pressure would influence the trustees to reverse its approval.

But public opinion went in the other direction as constitutional rights became the issue. A group of almost one hundred Maine clergymen [sic] sponsored a newspaper ad supporting the Board of Trustees. After much debate in the House, the budget passed with the vote to spare and went quickly through the State Senate.

The Maine Gay Symposium [I] was successful, drawing 250 persons and a minimal amount of harassment. The controversy had run its course in the media, and disappeared as quickly as it began.

The above is an excerpt from The Maine Campus of February 27, 1976. Titled "Gays Discuss Past Struggles and Plan Future," it was written by Bob Cameron



The Archives has been available for community use for about three months now and we want to share with you some of the ways women have found it useful. First, just a brief discription of the scope of our holdings--over 150 books of past and contemporary writings including almost all of Hall's other novels, the Beebe Brinker series in original covers, *Diana*, *Price of Salt*, *Carol of a Thousand Cities*, and a large collection of Lesbian paperbacks from the fifties and sixties, newsletters and newspapers representing the Lesbian communities across the nation and internationally, including Atlanta, Albuquerque, Los Angeles, New York, Jackson, Miss., the Bay Area, East Lansing, Boston, Seattle, Milwaukee, Philadelphia as well as Canada and West Berlin and now we have a London representative promising materials, a file cabinet overflowing with articles on every aspect of Lesbian culture, over twenty bibliographic sources, a slowly growing tape and photography collection and a bulletin board filled with nationwide community announcements, research queries and publication notices. We have a monthly correspondence of about thirty to forty letters requesting newsletters and just making contact.

Since the Archives is in the back room of one of our apartments a visit to it is also a sharing of our lives. Coffee, sometimes bread and cheese, and a jumping dog are part of the welcome. The door of the Archives room is opened and a brief tour is given. The desk is ready and the Archives is turned over to the visitor.

Some women have just been amazed at the amount of material we as a culture have produced, some have held their first copies of the *Ladder* saying, "I never actually saw one before." Women have come to read about and prepare themselves for Lesbian Mothers court proceedings, to study separatist communities, to trace the impact of feminist theories on the Lesbian community, to find Lesbian short stories for an anthology, to investigate the possibilities of alternate cultural institutions such as the Archives, to explore Lesbian health programs, to read the *Wages for Housework*, and on many other information searches. Several women have come just to be comforted by the living, growing, strnegth of our community. Perhaps these are the most exciting visits, because they reach the deepest reason for our existence--an affirmation of our continuance in time as a creative, self cherishing family of women.

The main message of this our secone newsletter is REMEMBER US. Send us your photographs, your voices, your writings, your music, your ideas--so we may be remembered in all our cultural fullness.

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## POPE PAUL ASSAILS 'INSINUATIONS'

from Gay Community News  
VATICAN CITY --- Pope Paul VI personally told a crowd of 80,000 people gathered in St. Peter's Square for a noon blessing that an article in an Italian magazine which stated that the Pontiff was Gay was "a horrible and slanderous insinuation."

A French writer, Roger Peyrefitte, made the statement in an article in the popular magazine *Il Tempo* in which he attacked the Vatican's recent pronouncements on homosexuality, masturbation, and premarital sex. Police have seized the issue carrying the article on orders from a state attorney. In addition a suit has been filed against the editor of *Il Tempo* on the grounds of abuse of the honor of the Pope. Abusing the honor of the Pope is a crime in Italy.

Italy's Roman Catholic Bishops called for atonement prayers in all Italian churches yesterday because of the article. Acknowledging the call for atonement, the Pope told the Vatican crowd, "We know that you have been asked to pray for our humble person, made the object of derision and horrible and slanderous insinuations of honesty and truth," said the Pontiff. "We thank you all for such a demonstration of filial compassion and moral sensitivity..Thank you from the heart."

Peyrefitte, who is openly Gay, was expelled from Italy in 1958 after he attacked the then Pope Pius XII in an article.

Meanwhile, Bruce Voeller, on behalf of NGTF, said, "We wish to state categorically that to the best of our knowledge and information neither Pope Paul VI, Richard Nixon, Bebe Rebozo...nor J. Edgar Hoover are or were at any time Gay. It is our fervent hope that our information is correct."



DEADLINE FOR MAY NEWSLETTER:

APRIL 28

PUBLICATION DATE: MAY 9

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All readers are invited to use this page for brief notices, ads, information, announcements, and other various & sundry items of common interest. Please send your news to BITS, PO Box 4542, Portland 04112.

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FOR SALE- White 1972 Impala convertible with 53,000 miles. Has new tires, air cond., tinted windows, power steering and brakes, no rust. Best offer.

Winter Haven Apts.  
622-9487 Box 57  
Augusta, Me. 04330

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RIDES TO SYMPOSIUM III

If you need a ride to the Symposium or can offer one, contact C.M.G.A. (Central Maine Gay Alliance) at PO Box 2242, Augusta, Maine 04330 and they'll try to help.

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A GAY BROTHER at the Maine State Prison wishes to correspond with other Gay people. Please contact: Dave Harris, Box A, Thomaston, Maine 04861.

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SUBSCRIBE TO GAY COMMUNITY NEWS, a non-sexist, non-exploitative publication of news, features, and opinion. The cost is \$12 for 52 issues (one year). Mailed in no-peek envelope...GCN, 22 Bromfield Street, Boston, Mass. 02108.

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THE PORTLAND WOMEN'S CENTER will present two films on Friday, 30 April. They are:

RAPE CULTURE (investigates whole problem of rape)

RELEASE (concerns woman's problems after release from prison)

The films will be shown at Luther Bonney Hall, Room #326, at 7:30PM. That's on the Portland campus of UMPG.

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GAY MAN in Bangor/Brewer area wishes to meet and/or correspond with other Gay people in the area. Write to: Kevin; c/o MGTF, Box 4542, Portland, Maine 04112.

The Gay Academic Union of New England will present a conference for the second birthday of GAU-NE to be held at Northeastern's Ell Student Center; 360 Huntington Ave., Boston. Saturday, 10 April and Sunday, 11th.

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WOMEN'S COUNSELING SERVICE, at 13 Main Street, Topsham, Me. 04086 (207) 729-4561, continues to offer counseling to all women in the Bath-Brunswick area and are particularly concerned with making their service available to low income women. In addition to one-to-one counseling for women who want help and support in structuring their lives, building stronger identities and dealing with crisis situations, the service offers pro-se divorce information and counseling, abortion counseling, a referral service for women seeking medical, therapeutic and legal help in the area, and they have a growing library of books on women, psychology and feminism. They will soon be moving to Bath to be more centered in the working community.

If they are going to be able to continue the work they have begun, they will need our help. The women who go there for counseling donate fees according to their ability to pay, but that is not enough to make them self-supporting. They need our generous financial support now if they are going to meet their phone, utility and office rental expenses and continue to publicize their services. If you would like to know more about WCS or become involved in the work they are doing in addition to your financial contribution, please feel free to call or write them at the above address. Their mail will be forwarded to their new address. Thank you for your support.

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SUBSCRIBE TO THE MGTF NEWSLETTER

PO BOX 4542, PORTLAND, MAINE 04112

One year--12 issues--\$4; sent in plain, sealed envelope.

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

STREET \_\_\_\_\_

TOWN \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

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"WOMEN SOUNDS-A COLLECTION" is a program devoted to understanding the world as seen by women. For more information, contact the UMPG Student Activities Office; 773-2981.