

# Northern Lambda Nord Communiqué

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GAY OR HOMOSEXUAL? by Dick

We often hear people refer to us as homosexuals; newspapers do it, politicians do it, we do it ourselves. How does the meaning of this word differ from the word 'gay'?

'Gay' is what homosexuals call themselves. Just as Negroes rejected that term in favor of 'black', homosexuals have rejected that term in favor of 'gay' (and some gay women prefer to be called 'lesbian'.) Many newspapers still refuse to call us gay (the *New York Times*, for example - unless it is part of the name of an organization or in a quote).

Homosexual is a clinical term. It denotes a person who has natural feelings of attraction and affection for someone of his or her own gender. It denotes one's sexuality. It describes only one aspect of our lives - our inherent sexual orientation. It is narrow in its meaning.

To be gay is to be more than homosexual. Sexuality is only one part of a person's life. A gay person sees society and the community from the standpoint of a mistreated and misunderstood minority. Where a homosexual may define him/herself merely by bed partners, a gay person sees him/herself in a broader context. We are part of a continuing culture which is only now being discovered and exposed through writings such as Boswell's *Christianity, Social Tolerance, and Homosexuality*, a study of gay people in Western Europe from the beginning of the Christian Era to the 14th Century; *Marching to a Different Drummer* is Alan Berube's study of gaymen and lesbians during World War II.

While homosexuals focus on the sexual, gays are dealing with the whole person. For example, a wide variety of gay magazines are published, some devoted to original gay literature, essays, and book reviews (such as *Christopher Street*), some focusing on rural gay life (*RFD: A Country Journal for Gay Men Everywhere*), some reporting the news of our growing world-wide community (*The Advocate*).

Gay community centers exist in several large urban areas. They provide meeting space for the myriad of groups of youth, elderly gays, legal groups, AIDS organizations, and more. This gay community is concerned with the complete scope of our lives, not just the sexual part.

Is there a gay community in northern Maine/New Brunswick? Are there gay people here who see their lives as part of the greater whole, connected with gay people throughout the region and beyond? Or is this a community of homosexuals, content with anonymous trysts at the Rest Area, after which they return home, pretending to be just like everyone else, afraid to deal with their complete being?

Some people are hesitant to get involved with this organization, claiming it is "too political", not understanding that being gay is a political act in and of itself. "The personal is political; the political is personal." How can a gay person separate him/herself from the political struggle to gain one's personal freedoms? This is not partisan politics, Democrats vs. Republicans, Liberals vs. Tories vs. NDP. Two men dancing at Yusef's Blue Room is a political act. Coming out is a political act. It's not just for whom you vote.

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The anti-gay homophobic feelings which plague many in society also affect gay people. If we don't think highly enough of ourselves to stand up for what is right, no one else will do it. If we don't love ourselves enough to take a selfish, self-interested position, we'll remain a disconnected non-community of homosexuals, content to accept society's anti-gay attitudes as our own.

The vast majority of people in our local gay community still live as homosexuals. Their interests do not yet include self-betterment, self-love. They've yet to take a first step, such as reading any gay books or magazines such as those in this organization's library. They continue to accept the false premise that there's something wrong with them, yet make no attempt to better understand themselves, to accept themselves as they are.

But the resources are here for the asking. In its seven-plus years, Northern Lambda Nord has accumulated literature and information unlike any collection in Maine or New Brunswick. And it belongs to each of us. Unless we, as individuals, take advantage of what's available, we'll remain a loose and weak community. Only through individual self-betterment and self-love will we grow as people and as a gay community.

# Our Paper

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A  
VOICE  
FOR  
LESBIANS  
AND  
GAY MEN  
IN MAINE

### GAY CIVIL RIGHTS BILL INTRODUCED IN MAINE LEGISLATURE

A bill to amend the Maine Human Rights Act to include the term "sexual orientation" has been introduced in the Maine Legislature. LD 602 is sponsored by Representatives Laurence Connolly, Bill O'Gara, and Charlene Rydell, and Senator Tom Andrews. Judiciary Committee hearings will be Tuesday, May 5, 1pm in room 113 of the State Office Building in Augusta. People are encouraged to attend so the room is filled with our supporters. Meet at noon at the Office Building. Representative Mary McBride of Presque Isle is a member of the Judiciary Committee. She needs to be contacted to support this bill in Committee. (1-800-423-2900 - leave message). Points emphasized this year about the bill: (1) Refer to it as "gay civil rights bill" or by the full title (bill to include sexual orientation in Maine Human Rights Act) (2) Opposition is exclusively from a small group of fundamentalists. No one affected by the bill (employers, landlords, banks, restaurant owners) has testified against the bill. (3) Some fundamentalists object on religious grounds. They have a right to hold these beliefs and even teach their children these values, but in the context of separation of church and state they have no right to impose their narrowly held moral views on the rest of society. (4) In respect to AIDS: Lack of civil rights for gays impedes the fight against AIDS. Because of no legal protection under state law, gays are wary of government and have learned how to hide. Now the Bureau of Health seeks cooperation of gays for HIV virus testing. This is a contradiction of policy towards gays. Civil rights must be granted to foster cooperation that is needed.





PROTECT YOURSELF! - Practice Safe and Sensible Sex!

SAFE

Massage  
Hugging  
Mutual masturbation  
Social kissing (dry)  
Body-to-body rubbing  
(frottage)  
Light S&M (no bruising  
or bleeding)

POSSIBLY SAFE

French kissing (wet)  
Anal sex with a condom  
Sucking - stop before climax  
Watersports - external only  
RISK INCREASES WITH MULTIPLE  
PARTNERS!!!

UNSAFE - Rimming, Fisting, Blood contact, Sharing sex toys, Semen or  
urine in the mouth, Anal sex without a condom. RISK INCREASES WITH  
MULTIPLE PARTNERS!!!

AIDS symptoms may include: Persistent fevers or nights sweats - Unexplained  
weight loss - Enlarged, hardened, or painful lymph nodes - Recently appearing  
new growths on top of or beneath the skin or on the mucous membranes  
(inside mouth, anus, nasal passages, or underneath eyelids) - Dry cough not  
related to cold or flu - Persistent diarrhea - Thrush, a whitish, thick,  
persistent coating on tongue or in throat - Easy bruisability or unexplained  
bleeding. CHECK WITH THE LAMBDA LIBRARY FOR LITERATURE ON AIDS AND STAYING HEALTHY.

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PIZZA PARTY PARTICIPANTS

In October 1986, we adopted a credit system whereby each time you attend  
a business meeting, fold'n'stuff, or work at the door at a party, you get  
one credit. Everyone with six or more credits in six months gets free pizza  
courtesy NLN. The six months are up. Twenty-one people earned at least one  
credit; eight earned six or more and will be Pizza Party Participants:  
Carl G, Dale, Dick, Doug, Jon B., Mark L., Roger M., and Phil. The next  
six-month tally period is April through October 1.

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BANGOR DAILY NEWS REJECTS ADVERTISING

The Bangor Daily News has returned advertising copy for a \$900 contract  
for 10 weekly educational messages. No reason was given; newspapers have  
the right to accept or reject advertising. The Steering Committee reviewed  
this incident and will resubmit one ad with NLN's name, address, phone,  
and services. The original 10 messages were short paragraphs with answers  
to such questions as, Who is a homosexual?, Do they recruit children?, and  
the like. Acceptance or rejection of the more simple, one-time ad will  
show if the original ads were rejected because of content or, more basically,  
because of use of the L word and the G word.

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CARIBOU BUSINESS SURVEY QUESTIONS ATTITUDES

In the continuing story of conflict between NLN and the Caribou Chamber  
of Commerce, the Steering Committee is preparing a survey which will be  
sent to the businesses in Caribou which are members of the Chamber. They  
will be asked to respond to four questions: (1) Do you welcome patronage  
by area lesbians and gaymen? (2) Assuming they were a good worker, would  
you dismiss a person from your employ if you discovered that he or she  
were gay? (3) Do you support a non-discrimination policy in employment  
to protect lesbians and gaymen from such discrimination in the State  
of Maine? (4) As a member of the Caribou Chamber of Commerce, do you agree  
with your chamber's policies to (a) exclude Northern Lambda Nord from  
advertising in the annual Winter Carnival Booklet (b) omitting NLN from  
being listed as a Caribou area organization, and (c) refusal to accept  
NLN's donation towards the Caribou welcome signs? This questionnaire  
will be accompanied by a brief summary of who and what NLN is, our  
activities and resources, our purpose, etcetera.

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Communicate



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### Gay/Lesbian GUIDE Lesbienne/Gai

- ★ **NORTHERN MAINE & NEW BRUNSWICK:** Northern Lambda Nord (NLN), CP/POB 990, Caribou, Maine 04736-0990 USA. Gay-Lesbian Phoneline/Télégai, 207/498-2088, Wednesdays/mercredi, 7-9pm (Eastern time/heure de l'est)
  - **FREDERICTON:** Fredericton Lesbians and Gays (FLAG), POB 1556, Station A, E3B 5G2 - FLAGline, 506/457-2156
  - **ORONO:** Wilde-Stein Club, Memorial Union, University of Maine 04469 - meets in Thursdays, 6-9pm in Sutton Lounge, Memorial Union Building
  - **BANGOR:** Bangor Area Gay-Lesbian-Straight Coalition (BAGLS), POB 1805, 04401 - meets the second Tuesday of each month, 7pm, at 87 Sunset Strip, Brewer - 989-3306
  - **BANGOR:** Interweave, Inc., POB 8008, 04401 - Meets 2nd and 4th Saturdays, 8pm at University College Center, Texas Avenue, Bangor - Dance and coffee house every Saturday, 9pm-1am at University College Center - \$3.00 - Information: 884-7079
  - **QUEBEC:** Centre homophile d'aide et de libération (CHAL), 175, Prince-Edouard, G1K 2M2, 418/523-4997
  - **QUEBEC:** Groupe gai de l'Université Laval (GGUL) et Groupe des femmes gaies de l'Université Laval (GFGUL), CP 2500, Pavillon Lemieux, Cité Universitaire, Ste-Foy, G1K 7P4
  - **MONCTON:** Gais et Lesbiennes de Moncton/Gays and Lesbians of Moncton (GLM), CP/POB 7102, Riverview E1B 1V0
  - **PORTLAND:** Gay/Lesbian Alliance, University of Southern Maine, 92 Bedford Street, 04102, 207/780-4085
  - **PORTLAND:** Harbor Masters, Inc., leather-levi group, POB 4044, 04104
  - **HALIFAX:** Gay Alliance for Equality (GAE), Box 3611, South Postal Station, B3J 3K6, 902/429-6969
  - **NEWFOUNDLAND:** Gay Association in Newfoundland (GAIN), Box 1364, Station C, St. John's, A1C 5N5
  - **MONTREAL:** Télégai, 514/933-2395
  - **ARCHIVES FOR THE PROTECTION OF GAY HISTORY AND LITERATURE:** Box 6368, Station A, Saint John, New Brunswick E2L 4R8
  - **OUR PAPER:** A Voice for Lesbians and Gaymen in Maine - monthly newspaper; \$12 for one year subscription, POB 10744, Portland 04104
  - **MAINE LESBIAN/GAY POLITICAL ALLIANCE:** POB 108, Yarmouth 04096
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- AIDS information SIDA**
- **AIDS-Line,** information and referral service, 207/775-1267 - 1-800/851-AIDS (-2437)
  - **GAY HEALTH ACTION COMMITTEE,** POB 10723, Portland 04104
  - **MacAIDS,** the Metro Area Committee on AIDS, POB 1013, Halifax, B3J 2X1

★★★★★ **COMMUNIQUE** is published ten times yearly by Northern Lambda Nord, an organization serving the Lesbian-Gay-Bisexual community of northern Maine and northwestern New Brunswick. Subscriptions - \$10 per year. NLN Membership - \$13 per year, which includes Communique. Low-income people may make arrangements to pay in installments. NLN accepts Canadian and U.S. funds at par. NLN is a non-profit organization; all donations are U.S. tax deductible. Advertising rates in Communique are available upon request. Your comments and contributions are welcome.