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No outcry over gay support

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No outcry over gay support

To the editor:

Student Senate President Tim Keating's reasoning that allocating funds to the Wilde-Stein Club, the University gay organization, would result in adverse publicity for the University is notable not only for its probable inaccuracy, but more importantly for its insensitivity and ignorance.

Outside of Maine most colleges and institutions of higher learning have now some form of gay organizations. At Columbia University, in New York, gay students have been granted a special lounge in one of the dormitories. Many schools regularly hold dances for those who prefer their own gender. At the University of Colorado for example, gay dances draw an average of 400 students. Gay dances are held monthly in Bangor at the Unitarian Parish House on Main Street. Notice of the dances are publicized in the Maine Times. The Gay Support and Action Groups's sign is permanently attached to the building and clearly readable from the Bangor House, across the street. There has been no public outcry nor any hostile incidents.

I am sorry that Mr. Keating is basing his opposition to funding of the Club on an imagined negative reaction among Maine taxpayers. Blacks, Indians, women etc. would be in a poor way were they represented by people reasoned in that manner. It's easy to dismiss gay people. Stereotypes to some people are easy to believe. What is less palpable to others is that according to the Kinsey statistics—almost 10 per cent of our population is likely to be exclusively homosexual. That's one person in 10. It means that in all probability each of us has a relative, a neighbor or a friend who is homosexual.

Because of the brutal attitudes society holds toward those whose only "crime" is that they chose to love their own sex it is not surprising that most homosexual people feel they

cannot reveal their propensity. To do so might well result in the loss of respected friends, and one's job. Fortunately society's attitudes are changing, albeit slowly.

As a closing footnote may I add that the Gay Academic Union, an organization of gay college administrators and faculty, held its annual conference at the John Jay College of Criminal Justice in New York City this past weekend. Participating were many distinguished college people from all over the United States and Canada.

The Gay Revolution has come to Maine. It is as inevitable as it is overdue. Let us listen and communicate with our gay brothers and sisters. We have much to learn.

name withheld by request