Gay legal battle is over

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Gay legal battle is over

To the editor:

It may interest your readers to know that the Federal Courts have already decided that campus gay organizations have the right to exist and to use the university facilities made available to any other group on campus. The relevant decisions involved the University of New Hampshire, University of Georgia and Oklahoma University. This is not the first time that the Courts in interpreting and enforcing the Bill of Rights have blazed the trial for those not so well-versed in Constitutional law nor well-traveled in the realm of liberty.

With regard to its decision concerning the Wilde-Stein club’s right to sponsor an educational conference on homosexuality and bisexuality, the board of trustees are to be congratulated for safeguarding the Constitutional rights and upholding the liberty of the club’s members. And in the process, perhaps, sparing the taxpayers a costly and fruitless law suit which might well have followed a negative decision by the board.

It seems to me that the conflict surrounding this issue stems not from the existence of homosexuals on campus or in Maine, but from the fact that such people have joined together in a Club and refuse any longer to be victims of what they know to be repressive attitudes toward their sexual orientation. It is this rejection of guilt and self-punishment, society’s legacy to homosexuals in the past, and the group’s assertion of a right to an existence free from such mental anguish that so irks those who have been in the forefront of the opposition to the club and the board of trustees. Such people remind me of those whites who became positively outraged at and sometimes lethal to those blacks who dared stand up for their rights and assert their human dignity. These people purchase their own self-esteem at the expense of others whom they can feel superior to, despise and oppress.

The syndrome works out as follows: “I may not be so great, but at least I’m better than those homos, niggers, kikes, etc.”

The Reverends Gass, Frankland, and Bubar’s authority for repressing the gay person is the Bible. But the Bible is also the authoritative text for many southern racists. And Bible stories tell of the slaughter of whole towns and peoples in God’s name. The Bible may be a source of divine inspiration and a way of approaching God for some, but in a society which respects the principle of separation of Church and State, all its prescriptions do not have the force of law, thank God.

Let me say, as a final word, that already some students on campus have tried to make the gay people feel guilty for causing the university and its students untold losses of money and prestige, and the threat of violence lurks very near the surface. The people of Maine have an opportunity at this juncture to either push the gay community back into its closet of fear, guilt and self-reproach or welcome their efforts to achieve that sense of human fulfillment and dignity for which we all strive. Can we dare take the human alternative?

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