MEMORIES OF A PENITENT HEART
Student Handout B: The Film in Context

STUDENT NAME____________________________________________________________

Instructions: Watch the film clips and take notes on your subject. Record general notes about scenes and quotes that surprised, confused or interested you:

Which subject are you focusing on while watching these clips? (Circle one)
5. Miguel’s mother 7. Miguel’s New York friends
6. Miguel’s partner, Robert/Aquin 8. Miguel’s sisters

1. How did your subject(s) “see” Miguel? (Write down at least two quotes that demonstrate your subject’s feelings about and perception of Miguel.)

2. How did your subject feel about Miguel’s homosexuality?

3. What was the public attitude toward gay men during the time when Miguel was living in New York?

Viewing Notes:
MEMORIES OF A PENITENT HEART
Student Handout B: The Film in Context
Page 2

Instructions: Share your Viewing Notes with your group members and collaborate to answer the following questions. (If you need more space to record your responses, use a separate sheet of paper or the back of this worksheet):

1. Why did Miguel refuse to be tested for HIV/AIDS? What did he mean when he said a positive HIV/AIDS result was a “blacklist”? How would that diagnosis have affected how his family and friends remembered him?

2. Which of the factors that we identified in the first activity influenced how Miguel and his story were remembered? What aspects of Miguel's story were erased after his death?

3. What were the similarities and differences between Miguel’s religious beliefs and his mother’s? How did their beliefs influence Miguel’s decisions before his death? How did they shape how Miguel was remembered after his death?

4. In the film, Cecilia asks, “Who did Miguel want to be?” What do you think? Why did Miguel change his name to Michael? How do you think Miguel would want to be remembered?

5. How might the fear, bias and social stigma experienced by Miguel and his contemporaries influence our historical understanding of the AIDS Crisis and the LGTBQI community?