

## Word play

Ever notice how fundamentalists confuse religious preference and sexual orientation? The religionists apparently believe that it's religious orientation (why else would the Mormons be so obsessed with genealogy?) and sexual preference (a friend says his sexual preference is gay men, but he'll take bisexuals or even a straight man in a pinch).

And now the Saltshakers have added another chapter: the legitimization of homophobia. The Saltshakers are a group of fundamentalist ministers, educators (?) and businessmen who call themselves evangelicals. Lesbian writer and theologian Mary Daly points out that the root word *fundament* means *anus*. I checked Webster's, and, sure enough, that's what it says too. In other words, fundamentalists are assholes.

A gathering of assholes was told last month that "our [read: their] society has been desecrated by homosexualization." James De Young urged opposition to the gay rights agenda, which he said includes legalization of "homosexual relationships" and passage of lesbian and gay civil rights bills. De Young, a member of the teaching staff at Western Conservative Baptist Seminary in southeast Portland, also said that assholes should "reach out in compassion to homosexuals to help them change their sexual orientation."

The Rev. Gary Wilson, pastor of Metropolitan Community Church, had a different slant on the gathering of assholes. "The seminar, or whatever they called it, was nothing but a program upholding homophobia as a positive value to society. Everything I heard them say, I've heard them say before," Wilson (who is *not* an asshole) commented.

"It was a thinly disguised kickoff for their campaign against Gov. Goldschmidt's executive order. They passed out petitions and voter registration forms."

Commenting on the assholes' distance from reality, Wilson said, "They cannot even deal with AIDS information separate from their homophobia. For example, they discussed the need to establish a hospice house where PWAs will be hounded to repent of their homosexuality."

## Amtrak OKs same-sex family fares

A gay couple's refusal to accept bureaucratic obfuscation has led to clarification of Amtrak's policy on family fares. On May 10, Walter Wheeler was not permitted to buy an Amtrak Family Plan ticket for himself and his partner of five years. Under the Family Plan, a head of household pays full fare and the other adult family member pays half fare; children between two and eleven years of age pay one-fourth fare.

"This is just another example of the day-to-day discrimination that costs our families more money for the same service," Wheeler said. Wheeler and his partner, J. Carey Junkin, are president and executive director, respectively, of Couples Inc., the National Organization for



ILLUSTRATION: E. ANN HINDS

B Y J A Y B R O W N

Family Diversity. Wheeler added, "I believe we must stand up for rights, even over small issues. Otherwise we will not receive equal treatment and may even lose the rights we already have."

Wheeler and Junkin were not willing to accept the opinion of a ticket clerk who held to the position that Family Plan tickets are for legally married couples only. In a telephone conversation with John Jacobsen, director of community affairs for the National Railroad Passenger Corp. (Amtrak), the official policy was clarified. Amtrak issues Family Plan tickets without regard to the sex of family members. The policy, changed in 1985, is meant to be non-judgmental; no inquiry is to be made of the family's legal status, and no proof is to be required. Couples must be willing to say they are "married," however, because the official policy requires that the half-fare adult be a spouse.

For more information on this and other family issues, write to Couples Inc., PO Box 13323, Los Angeles, CA 90013-0323.

## Unionists to join Pride march

For the first time in Oregon's labor history, lesbians and gays who are members of organized labor will march as a united group on Lesbian and Gay Pride Day this year.

Lesbian and Gay Unionists has gathered momentum since Jimmy Bryan, a staff secretary with the Oregon Public Employees Union, promoted the idea at OPEU's annual women's conference in March.

"It is time for gays and lesbians to come out one more time. It is time for our brothers and sisters in the labor community to recognize the value and contributions that lesbians and gays have made to the labor movement in its rich history and continue to do today," Bryan said.

Bryan encourages all gay and lesbian unionists to participate in the march to claim that they are "Rightfully Proud," as the slogan of the march and rally declares. For more information, call Jimmy Bryan at 230-9231 or 232-0662.

## Hate-crimes bill passes House

A bill requiring the federal government to keep figures on crimes motivated by prejudice passed the House of Representatives by a 383-29 vote after an attempt to remove attacks on lesbians and gays from the crimes list was overwhelmingly rejected. Oregon's congressional delegation split on party lines; Democrats Les AuCoin, Ron Wyden and Peter DeFazio voted with the majority. Republican Bob Smith voted against the bill.

A hate crime is "an act of violence which is accompanied by an additional motive: an attempt to intimidate a larger group or class of people," according to Rep. John Conyers Jr. (D-Minn.), chairman of the House Judiciary Subcommittee on Criminal Justice, which held extensive hearings on the bill since it was introduced in September 1987. The bill had 109 sponsors, the largest number ever to cosponsor a measure containing a sexual-orientation clause, according to the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force, which assembled a coalition of 53 organizations to lobby for the bill.

"Hate and violence motivated by sexual orientation more than doubled between 1985 and 1986. To me, it is a grave injustice to tell thousands and thousands of victims that their pain, their suffering and their fear are unworthy of the attention of a government that is supposed to safeguard the rights and freedoms of all Americans," Rep. AuCoin said in opposing the amendment to delete that category from the bill.

A substitute amendment, submitted by Rep. John Miller (R-Wash.), that defines sexual orientation as "homosexuality or heterosexuality" and states that "nothing in this act creates a right for an individual to bring action complaining of discrimination based on homosexuality" passed by a 383-30 vote.

## Hot licks to cease

The right wing, it seems, will stop at nothing to invoke the eleventh commandment. Last month Big Ron signed a law prohibiting interstate phone-sex lines. The measure was an amendment to Section 223(b) of the Communications Act of 1934 prohibiting any interstate communication by phone for commercial purposes that is obscene or indecent. The amendment was the work of Sen. Jesse Helms (R-N.C.) and passed by overwhelming margins in both houses. It will go into effect on July 1, 1988.

"Phone-sex services have mushroomed in the past few years, in part because they are a safe sexual outlet for gay men," observed Urvashi Vaid, an attorney on the staff of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force. "This vote by Congress continues a trend to enact legislation that is counterproductive in the fight against AIDS. Like amendments which restrict the content of safe-sex educational materials, this bill damages efforts to encourage creative, healthy and safe sex."

A court case challenging the constitutionality of the law is expected. "Indecent communi-

cation" has not been constitutionally defined.

The eleventh commandment? Thou shalt not take pleasure in anything.

## Jesse Helms's amendment hits Oregon

I really hate being a nag about this, but those assholes are giving the Oregon Health Division a bad time. They're writing nasty letters to Kristine Gebbie and complaining about the ad on page 24. The ad campaign hasn't even begun and those assholes are already bitching. They've seen the poster only in this publication and *The Oregonian*.

They're saying that they don't want their taxes spent on materials that "promote homosexuality." So, may we assume that there are taxpayers who favor the message in the ad and that they will write to Gebbie also?

The address is 1400 SW 5th Ave., Portland, OR 97201.

## Bookstore in a crunch

A Woman's Place Bookstore is in crisis. A Woman's Place Bookstore is much more than a bookstore. In addition to selling books, it provides a lending library, a community resource area, a children's space, a space to meet friends old and new, and a place to network, as well as to sit, read and enjoy oneself.

A Woman's Place Bookstore has served Portland for fifteen years. Because of rapid growth — expansion of both space and stock — in the past couple years, the bookstore finds itself in a financial bind. For more information on the situation, stop by 1431 NE Broadway for a chat.

And bring your checkbook!

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