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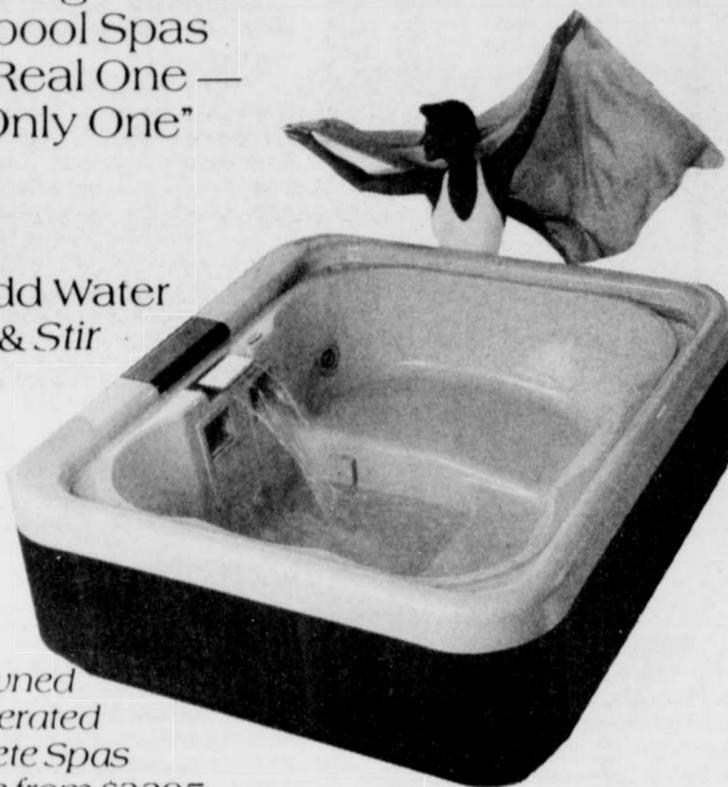
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ILLUSTRATION: E. ANN HINDS

What's
going on
here?

B Y J A Y B R O W N

Voice in the wilderness

Since the evidence points to the conclusion that homosexual persons do not choose their sexual orientation, cannot change it, and constitute a quite normal but minority expression of human sexuality, it is clear that heterosexual prejudice against homosexuals must take its place alongside witchcraft, slavery, and other ignorant beliefs and oppressive institutions that we have abandoned.

"Surely the laws of church and state must give equal protection and affirmation to this group. Our pious conditional resolutions binding moral homosexuality to celibacy reveal nothing less than an irrational belief in a sadistic God, in the light of new knowledge. This God created gay and lesbian people only to punish them. God made them in creation complete with sexual drive and then said that morality demanded that this drive be repressed. Once again we are confronted with the dictum that bad biology and bad biochemistry result in bad theology."

— John Shelby Spong,
Bishop of Newark,
The Episcopal Church (*Living in Sin?*
A Bishop rethinks human sexuality.
Harper and Row, 1988.)

Stripes

Gay power may be rainbow power, but one stripe does not a rainbow make. On the evening of June 18, when hundreds of lesbians and gays trooped from the pride rally to that empty green and white tent near the Morrison Bridge, the message rang out loud and clear: "If it's gay, stay away."

It is not that Lenora Fulani did not make strong appeals to other stripes of the rainbow — blacks, Native Americans, progressives, the homeless — but it was gays and lesbians (and a miniscule smattering of others) who showed up to put Fulani on the ballot.

According to Fulani campaign organizers, when the other "stripes" realized that the convention would follow the Lesbian and Gay Pride Rally all pretense of support vanished. And once again, homophobia was the name of the game.

Just imagine, a rainbow in two colors — one lavender stripe on a field of yellow.

QUAC, OFF: getting started

Fred Menard saw red when he saw that vicious sign in Lloyd Center. Then he took action and called a meeting to discuss the homophobes' petition drive. He mailed a letter to every address listed in the resource directory in *Oregon Gay News*. Fifty-four people

responded. (And for the first time in Portland, I'd wager, a meeting like this had to be moved to a larger space.)

The meeting resulted in the formation of two organized groups dedicated to fight the right wing's attack on Executive Order 87-20. Oregonians for Fairness (OFF) and Queers United Against Closets (QUAC) take different approaches in their united attack on the vicious and exploitive campaign of homophobia waged by Oregon Citizens Alliance and the No Special Rights Committee.

Oregonians for Fairness will kick off its campaign with a rally at Terry Schunk Plaza (Southwest 3rd Avenue and Madison Street) on July 8 — the day on which all petitions must be delivered to the Secretary of State.

Queers United Against Closets organized and executed a symbolic demonstration on Father's Day at Hinson Memorial Baptist Church, a conservative congregation located in an area with large gay and lesbian populations in inner Southeast Portland. (Hinson Memorial sponsors Homosexuals Anonymous — they call their group "Portland Fellowship, a ministry to those who are leaving the gay lifestyle" — and teaches that homosexuality is a sin.) About 100 people joined QUAC during the two-hour demonstration.

QUAC has scheduled another demonstration against homophobia at *The Oregonian* on June 30, the second anniversary of the Hardwick decision which upheld heterosexual and religious persecution of lesbians and gays.

(This is a deadline dilemma, but I can only anticipate a fun time — we had a blast at Hinson Memorial.)

Why *The Oregonian*?

There are many reasons for gays and lesbians to demonstrate their dissatisfaction with *The Oregonian*. In the last month alone *The Oregonian's* corporate establishment has shown itself to be particularly insensitive to lesbian and gay concerns.

The last straw for me came when Randy Ponce told me that *The Oregonian* rejected the Cascade AIDS Project's new AIDS education ad campaign. Ponce, CAP education coordinator, said that he had been unable to arrange a meeting with *The Oregonian's* officers to discuss the matter further.

In a letter to Ponce dated June 10, 1988, Stephanie Oliver, director of public relations at *The Oregonian*, said, "I cannot recommend that *The Oregonian* put public service financial support behind your proposed ad.

"The message of the ad is unclear to the broad spectrum of *Oregonian* readers and therefore ineffective as far as AIDS prevention is concerned," Oliver said.

What follows is from a QUAC (Queers United Against Closets) press release:

"*The Oregonian* was chosen for this demonstration because of its systematic censorship of news concerning gay and lesbian issues. *The Oregonian* appears to unilaterally support gay-bashing by the Oregon Citizens Alliance as shown by a column by Steve Duin published on June 21, 1988.

"*The Oregonian* chose to ignore the 4,100 people who participated in the Lesbian and Gay Pride March on June 18, 1988. Even 5,000 people at the rally were not enough to attract the attention of the newspaper's editors.

"*The Oregonian's* biased story by John Snell on discredited psychologist Paul Cameron's appearance in Beaverton on June 14, 1988, in which Cameron debunked AIDS education and called for the genocide of all homosexuals failed to report that Cameron's peers rejected his credibility when he was ousted from the American Psychological Association in 1983.

"QUAC will not sit back and allow *The Oregonian*, Oregon's largest statewide newspaper, to ignore 10 percent of the state's population while espousing the anti-gay propaganda of the Oregon Citizens Alliance."