

Bigotry invades quiet campus

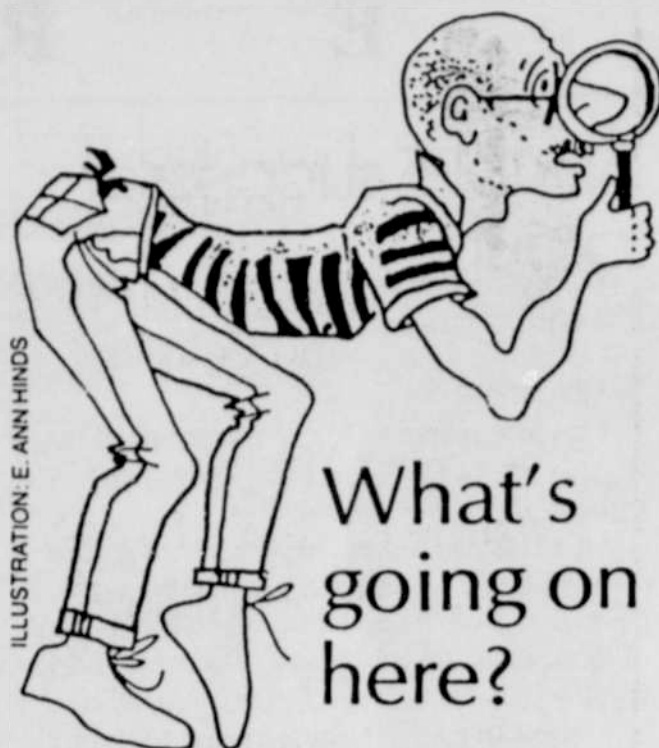
Gays and lesbians may be everywhere, but so are bigots — even in such environs as Evergreen State College in Olympia, Washington. Historically, Evergreen has been a magnet to political progressives and non-traditionalists, a place where lesbians and gays have felt safe being visible. Within the past year, however, gays and lesbians have been the targets of public harassment on a scale unheard of on the quiet campus.

As is the wont of bigots — "Reptilian Underground" in this case, who claim to be equal opportunity offenders, with the right to offend anybody, on any grounds, in any way — attacks on one group escalate to attacks on others. Since October, attacks on Jews have coincided with attacks on lesbians and gays.

The Lesbian and Gay Resource Center, Maavra (the Jewish cultural center), the Lesbian and Gay Film Festival office and the Evergreen Political Information Center were broken into several times since the beginning of October. During Thanksgiving break the Lesbian and Gay Resource Center sign was defaced to read Lesbian and Fag Resource Center. Visible individuals are being physically assaulted and verbally harassed.

On January 12, student groups of Evergreen State College, including those which are targets of attacks, will sponsor a demonstration of solidarity against the increasing violence and harassment. The Evergreen students are asking people in this community to show support by traveling to Olympia to take part in the protest.

For more information, call the Lesbian and Gay Resource Center at (206) 866-6000, extension 6544.



B Y J A Y B R O W N

"Midnight Caller" episode reinforces ignorance, fear

On December 14, four members of the newly-formed Portland chapter of ACT UP (AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power) were arrested in the lobby of KGW-TV as they protested the broadcast on the previous night of an episode of the weekly series *Midnight Caller*.

According to a letter to the management of the local television station, an affiliate of NBC, ACT UP's concerns included "serious untruths about the transmission of HIV and about the development of ARC and AIDS once a person is infected with HIV;" and that the episode

"presented violence against persons with AIDS as a reasonable response by society."

Vigilantism: "The San Francisco Police Department and the Department of Public Health were explicitly presented as having had their hands tied in dealing with a person with AIDS who continued to engage in unprotected sex with unsuspecting partners."

Asymptomatic HIV-positive status equals death: "Medical experts concur that a large percentage of persons exposed to HIV will never become ill with AIDS or related complexes. Further, even people who do become ill can take concrete life-prolonging steps never once alluded to in the television show."

Safe sex: "The suspect was consistently presented as the only partner engaging in unsafe sexual practices. Female characters should have been shown being concerned about the prevention of sexually transmitted diseases."

Inaccurate images of gays: "A small percentage of the homosexual community, like the heterosexual community, engages in SM activities. However, the episode only depicted gay bars as being SM, and only depicted the heterosexual bars as being bright and cheery."

"ACT UP feels that the cumulative effect of these inaccurate and stereotyped portrayals of gay men and people with AIDS will result in an increase of violent acts against them."

ACT UP requested that KGW-TV allow a response to the episode through an editorial reply and that KGW-TV broadcast a public service program with accurate information about the spread of AIDS as well as the hopeful steps people infected with HIV can take to prolong their lives.

In response, KGW-TV called the police and had the four members of ACT UP hauled away to spend a day in jail.

No charges were filed against Carl Goodman, Michael Petrelis, Kelly Tadlock and Steven Squires as a result of the incident.

A resolution for the new year by the City of Portland

Denouncing hatred and violence based on race, religion or sexual orientation, and declaring the City of Portland's intention to pursue remedies to bias and prejudice.

WHEREAS members of the Skinheads, a group which openly declares its hatred for minority races, the Jewish faith and homosexuals, allegedly beat to death an Ethiopian immigrant, Mulugeta Seraw, on November 13, 1988; and,

WHEREAS incidents of malicious harassment, violence and vandalism based on race, religion and sexual orientation are increasing in the City of Portland; and,

WHEREAS groups espousing hatred, harassment and violence based on race, religion and sexual orientation comprise a growing menace to the safety and well-being of tens of thousands of our fellow citizens; and,

WHEREAS bias and prejudice based on

race, religion and sexual orientation are ingrained in our society, and handed down from generation to generation; and,

WHEREAS the City Council believes such attitudes can be changed, over a span of time, through education and enlightenment;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the City Council of Portland denounces all groups espousing doctrines of hatred and promoting acts of malicious harassment, vandalism or violence based on race, religion or sexual orientation; and,

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City Council encourages the punishment, to the full extent of the law, of individuals who engage in acts of malicious harassment, vandalism or violence based on race, religion or sexual orientation; that the City Council pledges its full support to ongoing efforts to educate and enlighten the people of the greater Portland metropolitan area, with the goal of eliminating, to the extent possible, bias and prejudice based on race, religion and sexual orientation.

That such support shall include, but not be limited, to, hosting community forums throughout the City; establishing a Task Force to study the problem and recommend possible solutions; seeking the establishment of ongoing education programs in the Portland Public Schools; seeking support from the Oregon Legislature for statewide programs; and encouraging surrounding jurisdictions to join the City in promoting unity among all people, regardless of race, religion or sexual orientation.

The resolution was introduced on December 21 by Commissioner Dick Bogle. On the same day Commissioner Bogle asked the City of Portland to become a member of the Northwest Coalition Against Malicious Harassment.

Hate mail

Yes, *Just Out* receives hate mail. We don't feel obligated to publish the stuff. In the past month, however, our mailbox delivered up some ghastly examples of just how sick some people are.

The most disturbing (and disturbed) letter came from a person we suspect to be a male who plays the violin and lives near St. Helens. The letter was signed "Heterosexual AND PROUD OF IT!" and postscripted:

"We militant heterosexuals are starting a fag-basher award — nominees are OCA (Oregon Citizens Alliance), the No Special Rights Committee, and Priscilla Martin (I hope Tim Shuck gets the final result of being HIV positive before he gets a red cent out of this heroic woman!). You perverts care to add your nominees?"

Just Out also receives hate mail from within the gay community. Most of this stuff is also written by males who moan that *Just Out's* "content is overtly feminist interested and represented," to quote a recent arrival. This kind of mail comes from persons whom we suspect are not very far removed from the "militant heterosexual" quoted above.



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