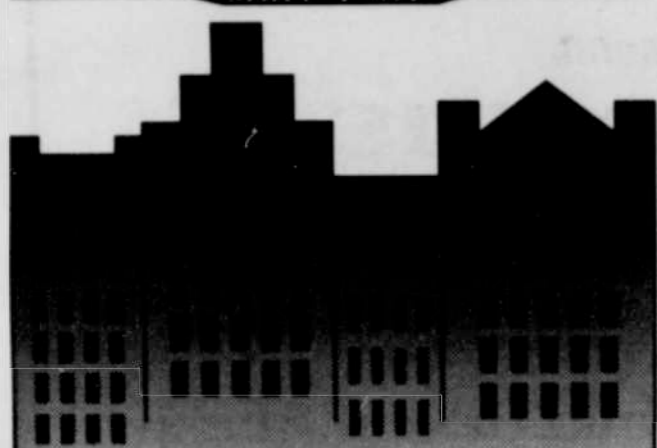


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# just news

## Radio gaybaiting lambasted

*Gay people have had difficulty pointing out to heterosexuals that such verbal bashing leads to further and more serious discrimination and assaults*

BY ABBIE HAIGHT

An incident of lesbian baiting on a Portland radio station drew criticism from a fledgling gay and lesbian anti-defamation and education group.

While no decision was made to protest at station KMJK, members of the Oregon Gay and Lesbian Action (OLGA) Network agreed January 17 to begin telephone blitzes of radio or television stations that broadcast homophobic comments.

KMJK program manager Mark Capps said complaints about the recent lesbian baiting — involving disc jockeys joking about whether an entertainer was gay — were overreactions, but had educated him about the feelings of some of the station's listeners.

The disc jockeys were not disciplined.

KMJK, which broadcasts 'classic' rock on 106.7 FM, has been the subject of several complaints by members of the gay community and others concerned with homophobia.

Members of OLGA, which meets at 7 pm Tuesdays at the Metropolitan Community Church on NE Broadway and 24th Street, said they would respond immediately to future derogatory comments. The group formed in early January to promote lesbian and gay liberation through legislation, education, and direct action.

In early December, Christine Hennel sent a letter to the station after hearing an exchange between two morning disc jockeys who wanted to stage a call-in contest to decide if evangelist Jim Bakker was a "homo" or not.

On January 5, the morning disc jockeys were gay baiting again, this time directed at entertainer Whitney Huston. The two created a "Lesbian Love Line" to answer whether Huston was a lesbian.

Several listeners immediately called the station and members of the AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power (ACT UP) activated the group's phone tree.

The disc jockeys briefly, and still laughing, apologized over the air after the initial complaints.

Carl Goodman, a member of ACT UP and OLGA, said he called the station after hearing a

report of the broadcast exchange.

Station program manager Capps agreed the program was in poor taste, but later refused to invite a lesbian on the air or to meet with members of the gay community to listen to a tape of the incident and discuss it, Goodman said.

"Heterosexuals may think lesbian bashing is fun, but it's not," Goodman recalled telling Capps. "He interrupted right then and said he was heterosexual and he didn't think it was funny either and he had already reprimanded the D.J."

Goodman said that historically, gay people have had difficulty pointing out to heterosexuals that such verbal bashing — even done jokingly — leads to further and more serious discrimination and assaults.

"You can't point to any specific incident that this lesbian baiting joke caused this assault," he said. "But you can certainly talk about the links that make up the chain and he's certainly one of the links."

"As it turned out, I reviewed the tapes and I came to the conclusion that there was no need for action," Capps said.

Members of ACT-UP briefly discussed the incident at a recent meeting, but decided against leading a demonstration against the station because the baiting did not involve HIV/AIDS.

The KMJK incident represents what many see as rising intolerance in Portland to gays and lesbians. A demonstration against the station would be an ideal debut for OLGA, Goodman said. Organizers see the new group taking up legislative and anti-defamation issues and working with existing groups to promote gay rights.

Meanwhile, the KMJK morning disc jockeys were at it again on January 11, when they discussed singer David Crosby's assertion that he was glad he gained weight because then he avoided "unpleasant" homosexual experiences while in prison.

Listener Hennel wrote to the station about the Bakker incident: "Your incredibly insensitive and obvious ridicule towards gays and lesbians was really a shock to me."

She, and other former listeners, have turned the dial on KMJK.

## Meeting notice

Discussion of gay and lesbian concerns in the current legislative session will be the focus of a meeting to be held on February 15, at 7 p.m., at Metropolitan Community Church, 1644 NE Broadway, Portland.

The meeting is being organized by a coalition of existing organizations in the Portland metropolitan area, including the Lesbian Community Project, Right to Privacy Political

Action Committee, Oregon Lesbian and Gay Activists Network, American Civil Liberties Union Commission for Gay and Lesbian Concerns, and individuals concerned with the lesbian and gay agenda.

One urgent item on the meeting agenda will be recruitment of a lobbyist for the current legislative session which began during the first week of January. All interested persons are encouraged to attend this important meeting.

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