

# Just Out

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**Deadline for submissions is the 15th of the month preceding publication.**

**Out About Town** is compiled as a courtesy to our readers. Performers, clubs, individuals or groups wishing to list events in the calendar should mail notices to *Just Out* by the 15th of the month preceding publication. **Listings will not be taken over the telephone.**

**Display Advertising** will be accepted up to the 17th of each month.

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## Steppin' Out

PHOTO BY JOHN KOZACHENKO



The final display of the entire NAMES Project Quilt. More than 10,500 panels were unfolded on the Ellipse behind the White House on October 6. The photograph was taken from the top of the Washington Monument.

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# P A G E T W O

## Privileges

*Nice women, maybe, get to eat lunch at the University Club.  
Bad girls get to go home and change their clothes.*

BY ANNDEE HOCHMAN

I remember a game we used to play as kids. A bunch of us stood shoulder to shoulder, and the leader stood about 20 feet away, facing us. You had to ask the leader, in turn, whether you could move forward a baby step, a middle step or a giant step. As long as you asked the right way, said "may I," the answer would be "yes, you may." But if you asked wrong, or tried to sneak up without asking and got caught, or sometimes if the leader just didn't like you, you had to take (depending on the leader's whim) a baby, middle or giant step backwards.

The infuriating thing about that game was this: sometimes you could ask just as nice as you please, say "may I," request only baby steps and still not win. Because the object was to walk up to where the leader stood. And the leader made the rules.

I like to read the newspaper because it makes me think about things. Just last month, for instance, I read that the Portland City Council had voted to urge the Arlington Club and the University Club to stop discriminating against women.

If the clubs comply (and chances are they will, because City Council plans to turn its entreaty into law if they don't) then women will be able, for the first time, to enter the Arlington Club, eat in the (formerly) men's grill at the University Club and have access to all the shmoozing, networking and power swaps that happen therein.

I thought this was a fine move, and long overdue. It was obvious from the testimony before City Council that women want to be allowed into these clubs. May we? Yes, you may. I'd call it a solid middle step.

The next day, the Multnomah County

Board of Commissioners, not to be outdone, voted an identical resolution. Now, if business clubs like Arlington and University want to continue discriminating against women, they'll have to go up against the city and the county. Good, I thought, and kept reading. Until I got to another article that made me think. You might have missed it. It was on page A23.

It seems that a 22-year-old woman in Fort Lauderdale said she was raped last November by a man who abducted her at knifepoint from a restaurant parking lot and drove her 120 miles away before she managed to escape. On the night it happened, she was wearing a lace miniskirt and no underwear.

The defense attorney for the man, Steven Lord, said the woman agreed to exchange sex for \$100 and cocaine, then changed her mind.

The jury had an answer for this dilemma, a very old answer, probably even older than that "may I" game I played as a kid.

"We felt she asked for it the way she was dressed," jury foreman Roy Diamond told the Associated Press. "The way she was dressed with that skirt you could see everything she had. She was advertising for sex." So they acquitted Steven Lord.

And the woman? Well, she had come to court looking for justice, and the jury gave her an answer. May I? No, you may not. Take a giant step backwards.

After the acquittal, there was outcry from women in groups like the National Women's Law Center in Washington, D. C. and the NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund — women who, if they lived in Portland, would probably be rattling the Arlington Club's doors until it let them in.

I wonder what would have happened if a cross-section of Portland city councillors and the county commissioners had been on that

jury? How about if the woman in the lace miniskirt were also an investment banker and a member of a high-profile business club? Hmmm. Some answers you can't find in the newspaper.

Stories like these happen all the time, not just on October 5, the day before I read about them. And they happen not only to women, but to blacks, gays and lesbians, any group that has traditionally been denied access and defined as Other. A baby step forward here. A giant step back there. May we? Well, let us take a look at you first.

What I'm thinking is that there seems to be a split here, a double standard. Not just between men and women. Women were on that jury, and they too voted to acquit. No, the split I'm talking about is between "them" and "us," between women who *would never* and women who just might, women who wear power suits and women who wear lace miniskirts.

It's a split of class and education and a certain kind of sanctioned behavior, bolstered by the idea that the more you have of those things, the farther away you are from the most violent and obvious forms of sexism. Nice women, maybe, get to eat lunch at the University Club. Bad girls get to go home and change their clothes.

This divide threatens to widen as women knock down, through legislation and sheer will, the barriers that have kept us out of certain jobs, clubs and income brackets. I worry that once we get those privileges, some of us start to feel rather cozy and immune. And we forget the 22-year-old in the parking lot. We forget, because forgetting makes us feel safer, that a lace miniskirt doesn't justify a rape. And a membership at the Arlington Club won't prevent one.

There's really just one sure way to win at that "may I" game. It didn't occur to me when I was eight, but now, well, it seems the only sane answer. You link arms, and you act like you've got plenty of company. And then you start walking. Baby steps, middle steps, giant steps, the whole thing. And you don't let go of each other. Not for a second. ▼