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Sex and power

Claire of the Moon *might* get an X rating, Audre Lorde
receives a major appointment in New York.

by Linda Shirley

RUMOR HAS IT that I have more width than depth and on more than one occasion I have exhibited shallowness (hard to believe). For instance, my December column concerning the OCA's video could lead some to believe that one's fundamental civil rights are connected to fashion (or lack thereof) or behavior. NOT! Our civil rights are non-negotiable and it doesn't matter if we walk the streets of San Francisco with 10 foot dicks trailing behind us or walk the streets of Portland wearing leather, lace and latex. We have no need to be apologists or to engage in self-censoring behavior. And we certainly don't need the *Alternative Connection* telling us to be nice and not give the OCA anymore ammo. (See editorial in Dec. issue of *Alternative Connection*.) It doesn't matter what we do, it's who we are that the right-wing hate mongers hate. It's not our lifestyle but our lives. Remember we are not talking about gay rights or special rights, we are talking about *civil rights*. Examples of getting screwed in spite of being nice abound. Joseph Steffen never had sex with anyone, he was a nice guy, a top student and still the Navy threw him out of the Naval Academy and then a homo-calling judge backed the navy's homophobic stupidity. Look at Karen Thompson, she is a nice woman who lived a quiet closeted life. And look where her niceness got her, eight years of being dragged through the mud and the legal system just so she could take care of the woman she loved. And through it all Thompson said that if she could have changed one thing, it would have been that she and Sharon Kowalski had been *out*, living their lives openly and honestly. Good advice.

WILLAMETTE WEEK ran a special holiday supplement in the Dec. 12 issue. In the article titled *Tuillating Toys*, reporter Cate Garrison talked about It's My Pleasure "providing a comfortable haven for women of both sexes." What the fuck? Women of both sexes! What is that supposed to mean? Oh, is Garrison subscribing to the asinine theory that lesbians really want to be men? I called Garrison and asked her what she meant. Her reply was that it was a joke and it meant gay and straight women. Well, I'm not laughing and everybody knows I have a great sense of humor. In fact whenever I'm in It's My Pleasure, I always find new dildos to laugh at. My favorite, the anteater clit massager.

SPEAKING OF SEX, one of my favorite subjects. Nicole Conn, hands-on director of *Claire*

of the Moon, is refusing to compromise her position (oh and what position might that be) on the lesbian sex scenes. She's willing to accept an X rating in the belief that there is nothing more beautiful than two women making love. (Can you spell penetration?) It's certainly not obscene and she's not going to cut those scenes out of the movie. Three fingers up for Nicole.

MONEY, not sex, is the number one cause of break-ups in most relationships. However these days QUEER MONEY is being seen as something worth going after. The cover of the Dec. 16th issue of *Fortune* magazine screams from the racks GAY MONEY, the article talks about queer investment firms, socially responsible investing and the fact that more and more corporations are adding non-discrimination clauses to their personnel policies because they want our money. Potential advertisers here in Portland and nationally are recognizing that we are going to be very intentional where we spend our money. We are not going to support homophobic businesses and we *will* support pro-queer businesses. We are becoming an economic force to be reckoned with and it's time we take advantage of this fact. One way is to support *Just Out's* advertisers. These businesses make it possible for our community to have a voice.

MONEY PART II: Okay, nobody asked me but here is my two cents worth concerning all the various coalitions and campaigns that have been formed to defeat the OCA's hate initiatives. First, we have No on Hate, then we have the Portland Fairness Coalition, and then there's the Campaign for a Hate-Free Oregon. All these groups are going to need blood, sweat, money and queers. Who do you give your money and time to? All these groups are doing worthwhile and crucial work. So, hey how about this idea, let's put aside our differences, both politically and personally, just for the next 11 months and work together. What a concept! One central committee raising money and distributing the money. Simple and effective. A people united cannot be defeated.

CONGRATULATIONS TO AUDRE LORDE who was just appointed the State Poet of New York. In accepting the award Lorde said "...that this award represents an intense contradiction coming from a state where a black woman can be raped and sodomized and her white college student attackers be freed in court; a place where date-rape and street violence against lesbians and gay men is on the increase yet the state poet is a black lesbian. We must find ways to use the best we have, our selves and our work, to bridge these contradictions, to learn the lessons they teach." Lessons we all should remember and as my friend Holly Pruett says, let's live our lives as if we were liberated.

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