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steppin' out



This billboard was located at Northwest 21st and Marshall. It is one of the many you may have seen around town that have been vandalized to reflect the antimilitary sentiments of the artists.

editorial

Kids: an endangered species

Dr. Eric Johnson, the associate executive director of the Morrison Center for Youth and Family Services, the founder of the Male Survivors Treatment Network and a psychologist, made a phenomenal statement on the KGW Channel 8 news the other night. He was being interviewed in reference to the escalating violence from young people directed toward family members. Johnson said, "The most dangerous place for kids these days is in the American family home."

Isn't that exposing one of the really big lies that heterosexual society depends on? Every time I see or hear the affirmation of the danger for kids in the "traditional" family setting, I immediately think, "Great, now all of these heterosexual evangelists will leave the queers alone." But does that happen? No way! It seems to whip them into a higher frenzy of finger pointing; at gay men especially.

So, where does the information go? Is it one of those things that is just too devastatingly painful for people to really hear and acknowledge? This truth is buried deep inside mountains of denial. A major piece of that denial involves attacking anyone who lives outside of "normal" family life: people who choose to live alone; lesbians; gay men; moms (straight, lesbian or bisexual) raising kids without a man.

Sex crimes perpetrated by men against boys is considered to be one of the most heinous crimes ever. To enable the perpetrators of these crimes, a huge smoke screen has been erected, which says, "Homosexual acts are *only* done by homosexuals. Therefore, *all* homosexual assaults on boys *must* have been perpetrated by *homosexuals*!" This is the logic. This is the smoke screen. This is one of the biggest *heterosexual* lies ever. (I have to acknowledge that sexual assaults happen way more frequently to girls than to boys, but as these are *heterosexual* assaults, something "normal," the public outcry is largely silent. There is another heinous lie which says, "They (girls: infant-girls/toddler-girls/teenage-girls) are going to have to have that (sex) *done* to them anyway, so how could it cause any *real* damage? Not like the damage done to a *boys* self-esteem after he's been violated.")

Ninety-five percent of all sexual violations, sexual assaults,

rapes, ad nauseam, are perpetrated by *heterosexual men*. This is an amazingly easy statistic to find. It's not buried anywhere. And yet, gay men and lesbians are continually bombarded with the violence of the lie that gay men sexually assault boys. That gay men, by definition, are the only people capable of doing it. This lie is a violent thing that is done to us and to kids. Telling kids this lie keeps them an easy target for heterosexual men. Believing this lie allows people to look the other way when someone is bashing or harassing a gay man or lesbian. This lie supports denial on the part of heterosexual family-makers, perpetuates a total lack of responsibility for heterosexual men, and therefore, denies the opportunity to stop the violence.

There is a deep-festering insanity running loose in heterosexual society that targets innocent babies and kids, and then tries to lay the blame at our feet. No way! The desperate dangers facing kids today in the "traditional" family home are serious, and need to be addressed seriously by the loudest supporters/perpetrators of this despicable insanity: Every member of the Oregon Citizens Alliance, Pat Buchannon, the Pope, George Bush, Priscilla Martin, Pat Roberts, Jesse Helms, Larry Campbell, and everyone who has *ever* voted for any of these people. You are all so hot on this "traditional" family, let's see you make it a healthy place for kids. Let's see you create a safe home where kids stop killing themselves and each other, where kids get clean and sober, where kids are free to explore *ALL* of their potential. Where kids are safe to sleep.

Gay men and lesbians are *not* the ones hurting your kids in your homes. We are not the ones coming into their beds and cradles at night. You heterosexual fathers, heterosexual brothers, heterosexual male cousins, heterosexual uncles, heterosexual grandfathers, heterosexual trusted-male-adults, as well as the few heterosexual male strangers who manage to get their hands on kids, are.

No wonder heterosexual "traditional family values" people are so terrified of gay men and lesbians coming out of the closet. Our healthy existence in every facet of society exposes their stinking lie for what it is.

Ariel Waterwoman

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