

letters

Dyke-otomy

To the Editor:

I moved to Portland because *Just Out* is one of the best lesbian papers on the West Coast.

I am a lesbian from African-American and Native American parents, so when I came out one and one half years ago in Idaho, it was clear that I had to move somewhere else. I got gay and lesbian papers from every city in the western United States to help me decide where to go, and I decided on Portland.

A newspaper not only reports on a community but helps to form community values. In this respect *Just Out* is stellar in its performance. All the other papers were filled with articles and pictures from fringe elements that do not contribute to the struggle. Most of the advertising used the objectification of the body to sell products, not even mentioning the phone sex ads, which are not only disgusting but dehumanizing as well. *Just Out* has managed to keep that undesirable element almost entirely out of the paper. Not giving validation to the outrageous things that are occupying the press in all the other "communities" can only contribute to keeping the Portland community pure and committed to human rights and dignity.

I was a little disappointed with your pictures of the parade. In with all the pictures of wonderful and committed groups was included a picture of a leather group, which was bad enough, but in the group was a man with no shirt who was tied up with rope. I'm surprised that he was allowed in the parade. I can only hope that the picture somehow slipped past the otherwise eagle eyes of your editors. This is the type of thing that we must be very careful to keep from view, especially with the OCA.

Naomi Martin
Portland

Editor's note: Thanks for the praise. We hate to disappoint you, but Just Out supports, accepts

and joyfully embraces every "fringe" element of the gay, lesbian, bisexual and queer-as-a-three-dollar-bill community. The OCA can go fuck itself.

OCA can't win a fair fight

To the Editor:

Sen. Packwood's "neutrality" on the Oregon Citizens Alliance appalling anti-gay initiative, Ballot Measure 9, is astounding. It is like remaining "neutral" on the Nazi's edict in Germany.

I am a Jew and a target of the OCA's drive to shut up all opposition to their fascist plans for Oregon. Anti-abortionist Paul deParrie, an OCA activist, is attempting to sue me, Radical Women, many other gay activist groups, the City of Portland, Police Chief Tom Potter and Fred Meyer for \$14 million.

This lawsuit attacks the right to organize in self-defense against the OCA and the growing right wing in Oregon. If union members, women, people of color, the elderly and the disabled join the gay community, we can win this lawsuit. Unlike Packwood, none of us can afford to be "neutral" on the OCA. We must stop this lawsuit, Ballot Measure 9 and the OCA in order to survive.

Adrienne Weller
Portland

Editor's note: See update of the SLAPP suit in local news.

Waking up

To the Editor:

I am a 45-year-old gay man who has resided in the Northwest most of my life and consider myself to be an honest, hard-working citizen. Unfortunately, over the years, I have fallen victim to that same apathetic lethargy that so many other people in this country have succumbed to!

I have never felt compelled to speak publicly about being gay, about gay and lesbian issues or

anything political in general. But recent developments in the state political arena have suddenly changed that complacency to anger. I can no longer sit back and watch while a malignant tumor continues to grow in Oregon under the guise of a self-appointed protector of Oregonians' morals. The Oregon Citizens Alliance has succeeded in putting Measure 9 on the November ballot.

It's time we Oregonians wake up and read between the lines. Here we have a political organization spending a great deal of time, money and energy to change our state constitution to reflect its own bigoted and prejudicial beliefs while trying to solidify its own political muscle. The OCA has singled out a small minority in this state in an attempt to take away their civil liberties and reduce them to second-class citizens. The OCA is attempting to achieve this by presenting a warped view of the gay and lesbian community as a whole.

This is not just a question of gay rights but a question of human rights. Start taking away God-given civil liberties and equality from one minority and eventually we all stand the chance of losing the democracy we hold so dear. Allow a right-wing political group to rewrite our constitution and we open the door to anarchy! Vote "no" on proposition 9 in November.

David A. Ditty
Portland

Broad-based values

To the Editor:

Amid all the high energy and emotion surrounding the effort to defeat the OCA's shameful ballot initiative, I am concerned that the lesbian and gay community is losing sight of the importance of the issue of racism. The battle against racism needs to continue, and I believe that we should be putting the same amount of emotion, time and energy into it. While we're out marching

and doing volunteer work with No on Hate and Campaign for a Hate Free Oregon, members of the Portland community are the ongoing targets of hateful and terrifying racist attacks. A family in the Hawthorne neighborhood has, for several months, been waking to swastikas and death threats painted on their home, and a cross was burned on their lawn several weeks ago. The perpetrators of these crimes—the White Aryan Resistance and other groups affiliated with the religious right and the Ku Klux Klan—are the same element responsible for circulating hate literature and threats to the lesbian and gay community. The issues of racism and homophobia cannot be separated!

Racism is the institutionalized system that oppresses people of color. Discrimination is the practice, oppression is the result, and intolerance is the attitude that allows hatred and violence against people to exist. The same white "Christian" male power structure is responsible for the mentality of colonialism, racism, sexism, classism, homophobia, disablism, anti-Semitism and cultural genocide. One of the primary tactics of fascist organizations like Nazis and the OCA is divide and conquer, diverting the opposition from their primary goals and fomenting internal dissent. Singling out any group—such as the lesbian and gay community—causes the energies of people to be focused on a single issue. Other issues can fall by the wayside. We cannot put the issue of racism on the back burner until the OCA is defeated. I'm not accusing the lesbian and gay community of abandoning the battle for racial equality, but I am dismayed by how little concern for this issue I see when attending meetings and discussions as a part of my work against the OCA. They came for people of color a long time ago. They came for Jews, Communists, Gypsies, homosexuals and others in Nazi Germany. They're coming for us now. Who will they come for next?

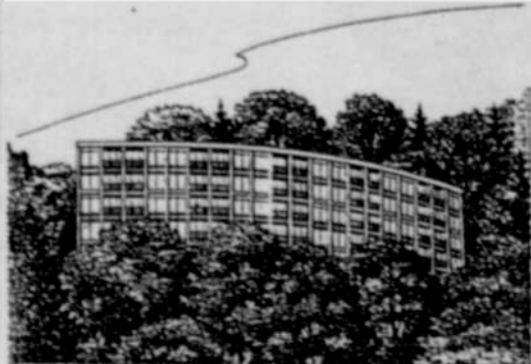
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Portland



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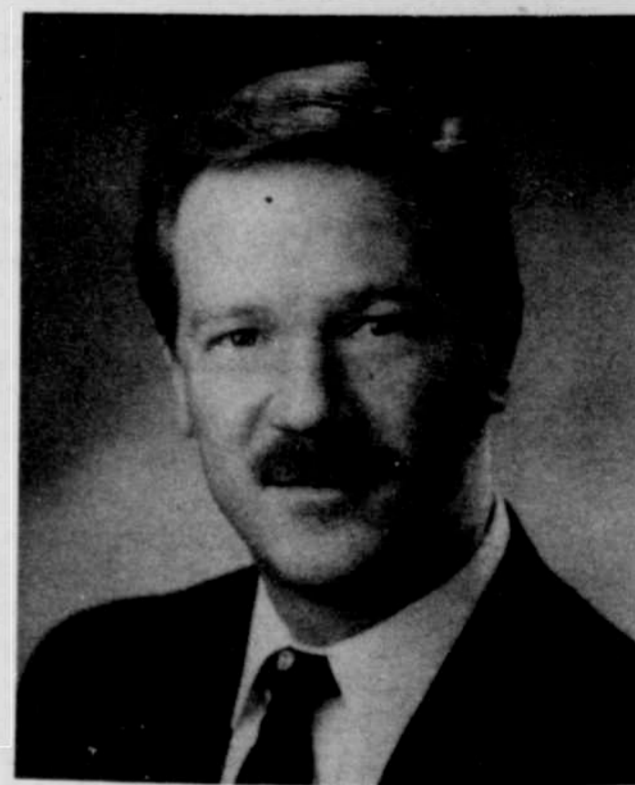


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