

letters

A life-threatening illness

To the Editor:

I'm really sick of the hypocritical, anti-white, man-hating dribble gushing forth from editor Ariel Waterman (sic) and *Just Out* in general. Your April 1, 1993 piece, "Sometimes It's Hard to Tell Who the Enemy Is" really hits below the belt—subtly implying white men are "racist, genocidal, and murderous." The same can be said in all races! Your statement is racist!

You say that you support a diversity agenda for the gay community. Why is it that you are quick to cut anyone down who disagrees with you? You've got 'PC' dogma written all over your magazine. In your quest to promote diversity you consistently go overboard—parading out the "Politically Correct Minority of the Month," bashing gay white men frequently, and whites in general, slashing all Christians without thinking of how you're alienating our religious allies, and overpromoting minorities, when in fact the bulk of the gay population is white. Your very tactics promote racism, not mitigate it!

Why do you constantly embrace the "transgendered" community? Gays have little in common with them. Prove how a man wanting to become a woman has anything to do with gay civil rights! It does not!

Also, I'm fed up with your frequent foul-mouthing of the gay community by using "queer"—that word is vulgar, painful, hurtful, and hateful. Why do you 'PC' types continue to use a word our enemies use against us?! You're promoting internalized self-hatred.

I doubt you'll publish this piece, since it would be "politically incorrect" to print anything that opposes your racist, fascist agenda. I, as a good number of quiet gays and lesbians who feel as I do, have a right to speak my mind. That's what this country was founded upon. If you were a true American, you'd realize that. . .

Kyle Martin
Portland

Editor's note: *It's in my job description to make Just Out a more representative newsmagazine. It's in my heart to work toward ending oppression of all peoples. I really just want people to get along and play fair with one another, and that means working to create a level playing field. There is no hidden agenda about my, or Just Out's, position on human rights. As a Waterwoman of the Tsalagi (Cherokee) Nation, in the Beaver Clan, I do tend to think of myself as a "true American." As a lesbian of color, I don't have the luxury to play "PC" games. Racism and genocide impact my life in the United States every day. Exchanging words, concepts and ideas is one way to examine the construct of these oppressions. We are all conditioned in certain behaviors and ways of thinking that deny our inherent humanity. One tool that I've found helpful over the years is to really stop and examine where strong negative feelings may be coming from within myself, especially when I start directing them at categories of people. I share this, not to sound condescending, but to offer another way of approaching strong reactive feelings. We do have real enemies that need to be fought. We have also been conditioned to perceive people of color, queers, women, children, and the physically challenged as "wrong" and less than "human." When people from these categories stand up and fight this oppression, we have been conditioned to perceive them as the real threat (pretty good system for the oppressor). The oppressed are then the "enemy" to be stopped, and the real enemy remains in power and unchallenged. These behaviors are programmed into us from infancy.*

I am not your enemy. I am naming the oppression, not creating it. Naming it is a "threatening" thing to do, but it doesn't threaten your well-being, it threatens the status quo of an oppressive society. The process of eliminating oppression

can reveal a multitude of passionate feelings: terror, guilt, anger, rage, grief, isolation, and many more equally disturbing emotions. It's not fun or easy; that's why it's called "work." Trying to make me the enemy is keeping you from doing this important work. In the long run, naming oppression and working to eliminate it will benefit all humanity, and the planet.

Cost-effective activism

To the Editor:

In your coverage (March 1 issue) of President Clinton's efforts to lift the ban on gays in the military, it is suggested by a Republican gay activist from Texas that we send Western Union "cablegrams" to politicians, urging them to demonstrate support for the president's plan. These messages cost \$8.75 each.

The Human Rights Campaign Fund (HRCF) in Washington, D.C. has a better idea. Their "Speak Out" program will accomplish the same thing for \$3.50 per mailgram.

"Speak Out" sends messages about 10 times each year to our legislators on critical federal legislation, always reaching them within 24 hours. Signing up for four messages costs \$14 and guarantees us instant political impact in Washington. What's more, you will receive a reply concerning each message.

For further information and to enroll, call "Speak Out" at 800-777-HRCF or write to 1012 14th St. NW, Wash., D.C. 20005

Lorn Folsom
Salem

Living peacefully

To the Editor:

Recently I was a victim of harassment when three teen-aged boys began yelling "faggot" at me while I was working in my yard. Instead of letting this continue, I decided to confront the boys and told them that I did not appreciate their remarks. Things got worse until I had no choice but to go to the manager of where I live. We talked, and the three "gentlemen" were found and brought over to my home with their mother so that we could have a nice discussion about the situation. Luckily, this particular incident ended peacefully, maturely, and without any damaging scars. I guess what I'm trying to say is that we all need to live peacefully together on this planet. We must stand up for ourselves and prevent others from hurting us. There are so many violent acts, both physical and verbal, and we must help end this stupidity. The Oregon Citizens Alliance is one form of abuse to all gay people. Together we can overcome the obstacle and become the strongest and most respected community ever! Let's all be there for each other! We deserve equality and respect. Harassment will not be tolerated.

Rod Johnson
Cornelius

TRANSITION

Rod W. Smith, one-time resident of Portland, died Friday, February 12, 1993 with the help and support of his loving family in the Chicago area.

Ron was born October 3, 1959 and lived in Portland in the 1970s and early '80s. He attended Beau Monde College and was employed by the Fred Meyer Corporation. After moving back to Illinois in 1983, he worked as a stylist, eventually owning his own shop.

Ron's life touched many people. He will be missed by his entire family, including his parents, Mike and Mae Smith; those he worked with both in Portland and Illinois; and his friends, including Ron Huxhold and Jon Murray.

Some things you might want to know about 47 year old Vancouver Furniture

1. We Give You A 12 Month Written Lowest Price Guarantee

Even though some chain stores buy by the carload and truckload, just as we do, the savings don't always get passed on to customers. We don't believe in that way of doing business. At Vancouver Furniture you get a written lowest price guarantee. If the identical item is offered for less in the next 12 months somewhere else or even at our own store, we refund the difference or credit it to your account.

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3. We Are The Only Union Furniture Store Of Any Size From Seattle to Medford

Vancouver Furniture has employed union sales people and warehouse/drivers for over 45 years. We are proud of our professional, dedicated staff.

4. Vancouver Furniture Is Community Active

Our company has always believed in community service. Some time ago we decided to focus more on problems of hunger and poverty. In the past few years we have given over 3,000 new and used mattresses to needy families. Our annual Peanut Butter & Johnny Limbo street dance has generated over 32,000 cans of food the last five concerts. This past year we donated 28 new twin mattress sets to the YWCA Safe Choice shelter for women and children who are victims of domestic violence.

5. We Keep Our Promises

Expect courtesy, respect and service from us. We participate in the Portland Better Business Bureau Care Program.

6. Brands You Can Depend On

Expect to find Simmons, Simmons Beautyrest, Sealy and Posturepedic mattresses, every size, luxury level and firmness. We also carry Lane, La-Z-Boy, Douglas, Stratolounger, Kincaid, GuildCraft, Pulaski, Hippopotamus, Amana, Maytag, Frigidaire, Toshiba, Mitsubishi, Magic Chef and more.



7. What About Oregon?

People from more than 85 different communities in Oregon cross the river to buy from us...from Cascade Locks to Astoria. Reason? Good taste need not be expensive. At Vancouver Furniture we simply sell for less.

"Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Not actors. The Mortensen brothers are really drivers.



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