

letters

State your policy

To the Editor,

Regarding the guest editorial ["Why clean up our parades?" June 3, 1994]: Is *Just Out* stating, as editorial policy, that pedophiles are a legitimate part of the gay "presence"? Richard Mohr states that "gay conservatives... have been calling ever more frequently and loudly for us to clean up our parades—to throw out not just NAMBLA but leather folk and drag queens, too." He then states that these groups are merely "the more colorful bands of the queer spectrum."

Is it *Just Out's* position that members of NAMBLA are equivalent to leather folk and drag queens? I feel very strongly that Mohr's inclusion of NAMBLA as an example was not just a slip of the pen. His statement makes it clear that gay groups have distanced themselves from pedophile organizations just to look good to the mainstream and not because they believe that pedophilia is child abuse.

As a longtime reader, I remember when NAMBLA and similar groups were included, both in coverage and advertising, and I'm sorry to say it looks fishy that they were not excluded from *Just Out's* pages until the AIDS crisis and the OCA came along.

Regardless of your views on age-of-consent laws and sexual freedom, adults whose sexual focus is on children are child molesters. *Just Out* owes it to its readers to state, loud and clear, where it stands on this issue.

Mohr complains about stereotypes, but official organizations of men dedicated to having sex with (or "loving") little boys goes beyond stereotypes and is ugly, factual reality. If you don't want to be stereotyped as a child molester, don't hang around with child molesters and don't invite them to march in your parades. You can't have it both ways. As long as child sexual abusers are considered a legitimate part of queer "experience and culture," we will lose on every front—political, social, cultural—and what's more, we'll deserve to lose.

Lena Kinsley
Portland

Publisher's note:

No, it is not *Just Out's* position that members of NAMBLA are equivalent to leather folk and drag queens. And yes, *Just Out* does most definitely equate pedophilia with child abuse, and we believe NAMBLA is an organization of pedophiles. We definitely agree with your sentiments regarding NAMBLA and appreciate you questioning us on the issue, since Richard Mohr's statement was understood by some to be an endorsement of NAMBLA. My interpretation of Mohr's statement is that the exclusion of NAMBLA is justifiable, while the exclusion of leather folk and drag queens is not.

Another point: *Just Out* has never run a NAMBLA advertisement. We are often confused with the *Lavender Network* on this issue. That paper accepted classified advertising from NAMBLA in the late '80s. Our coverage of NAMBLA has been limited to dialogue about the group on our letters page and articles reporting on organizations denouncing it as a gay group. Our coverage of these issues predates the Oregon Citizens Alliance, and *Just Out* began publishing in 1983, after the onset of the AIDS crisis. Nothing fishy about that. Read our July 1, 1994, editorial, "The issue is NAMBLA," for more insight regarding our position.

Transsexuals should be referred to by the proper gender pronoun

To the Editor:

Reading your paper is always a pleasure, but the June 17, 1994, issue had an unpleasant barb in

it: In the national news section, in an article under the headline "Court ruling revives transsexual inmate's lawsuit," a reference was made to the gender of Dee Farmer, a male-to-female transsexual, as "he." This was personally jarring, insulting and upsetting. As a transsexual woman I expect to be referred to in the third person singular feminine. I also expect that other transsexuals be referred to by the proper gender pronoun.

The straight press can always be expected to make this error, but one hopes that the gay press will be more sensitive. However, the wire services are the sources of many of the stories in the gay press, and they definitely ran the wrong gender. Copying over that wrong gender is a slip that is easy to happen. I believe this mistake was simply that and not an editorial comment upon Dee Farmer's personal gender.

Surgical status of the genitals is never to be used to determine what pronoun gender to use. As a guideline, in future articles the gender used for transsexuals is always the personal psychological gender. To do anything else is insulting.

It is interesting to note that several of the Supreme Court justices correctly referred to Ms. Farmer in the feminine gender at all times, while others restricted themselves to neutral pronouns, still insulting, but preferable to using the wrong gender.

If any portion of this letter is to be published in the letters section, please print my name as "Kay," as there is still much more dire consequences to coming out as transsexual as there is coming out lesbian (which I have).

Kay
Portland

Carbon copy

The following letter was originally sent to the general manager of KOIN-TV, Channel 6, Greg Veon.

Dear Mr. Veon:

On Sunday, June 19, I watched all the local and national network news, eager for news of the Gay Games in New York City. I consider it important, given that the Gay Games: gathers 10,000 to 11,000 athletes from 40 countries, includes 75 athletes from Oregon, will draw an expected 1 million spectators, has over one half of its events sanctioned by official sports organizations, and is the world's largest athletic event.

ABC national news covered the Gay Games, and KGW-TV local news had coverage, but not CBS national news or KOIN-TV.

I called KOIN to ask if they knew about the games and why they didn't cover it. I was directed to Brian Bushlach in the sports department, who said he "didn't know about it, wouldn't have run it anyway...because it was not a bona fide sporting event." Then he directed me to the producer if I wanted to discuss it further.

I was somewhat put off by Mr. Bushlach's response. So, I decided to write this letter so that if I want to see "bona fide" sporting events on KOIN-TV, I don't have to be content with the "Paris Waiter's Race," one of the "sporting events" KOIN did cover that night.

Storm N. Fawcett
Portland

Just a note of thanks

To the Editor:

Just a note to say thanks for the service you give to our city. If people would open their minds and hearts and pick up one copy of *Just Out*, they might find a better understanding. I look forward to a day when none of us has to have a label. When we can all be one.

Ric Berrong
Portland

TRANSITIONS

Active volunteer takes her life

A memorial celebration was held Saturday, July 2, in Laurelhurst Park for Carol Hertz, who took her life June 24. She was born July 7, 1965, and grew up in Great Neck, N.Y. She later moved to Portland, where she attended Reed College. Hertz was active in a local karate club, and did

volunteer work at the Lesbian Community Project. A funeral was held in Great Neck on June 30.

Instead of flowers, Carol's two cats would like maintenance contributions or adoption, as a pair, into a loving home. Call Sally Cohn at LCP 223-0071.

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