

letters

Coverage lacks relevance

To the Editor:

On Sunday, March 12, the Portland Gay Men's Chorus presented a solid evening of silly and sobering song to a wildly enthusiastic, sold-out audience in the Intermediate Theatre. In *The Oregonian's* review of the concert, Bill Crane wrote: "The good news is that the chorus is back stronger in numbers and voice than it has been in recent memory. The members undertook a program of extraordinarily wide emotional range and sang it as smoothly as a pickup line at Darcelle's on Saturday night."

Regarding the difficult second half—Roger Bourland and John Hall's *Hidden Legacies*—Mr. Crane remarked: "Performing such a demanding work that serves an exquisite mix of emotion and strength requires a suppleness of spirit on top of honed skill. The Portland Gay Men's Chorus delivered."

As a long-term member of the all-volunteer chorus, which rehearses every Monday night for three hours, I can tell you that such notices are especially gratifying. They remind us, even as the applause fades from memory, that our labor of love counts for something after all. Which brings me to my real point: In recent years, as our audience is slowly rebuilding, the chorus has been increasingly ignored by the staff of *Just Out*. Most of your readers are probably unaware that we have had a "new" conductor, Bob Mensel, for over two years. He has brought a new vision and a warm, engaging presence to our rehearsals and shows. The chorus experience, for members and audience alike, has been more vibrant, challenging and fun as a result. And so I'm puzzled—why couldn't *Just Out* care less? Where is the voice of the gay and lesbian community on concert night?

I find myself tempted to join another growing chorus, the one composed of disappointed *Just Out* readers who find your coverage of the gay and lesbian community sadly lacking in relevance. Although I don't suggest a return to the ignorant carping of your former music reviewer, Dr. Tantalus (aka Jim Van Dyke), it was somehow more satisfying than your current stony silence.

Dana Busch
Portland

Editor's note: A series of internal mishaps kept us from reviewing the Portland Gay Men's Chorus's March 12 performance, though it was our intention to do so. Our excuses would only satisfy us and not the dedicated chorus members and their fans, so we won't add insult to injury by mentioning them here.

However, we must point out that in the Oct. 1 and 15, 1993, issues of *Just Out* we did report on Bob Mensel's having joined the chorus as conductor.

Thank you for fine reporting

To the Editor:

Again and again and yet again you prove what stuff you're made of. I am so very proud of the work *Just Out* has done in our community. Through

the years you have repeatedly shown us the very real connections between the various forms of oppression of minorities that our society seems to specialize in. You have consistently stood for working together among all minorities, since we are all in it *together*.

We, as members of these minorities, cannot possibly triumph over racism, sexism, homophobia, ageism and different-ableism in our society (plus the bigotry and mean-spiritedness

they engender) by dividing our strength and squandering our power in disagreements among ourselves. We can, however, see an end to these various forms of madness by combining our strengths for the elimination of all

forms of oppression. *Just Out* has repeatedly shown how we must demonstrate solidarity with the efforts toward freedom of every oppressed group.

In each issue I find articles and editorials representing the broad spectrum of the gay/lesbian community itself. Through the years you have printed features by, for and about the many segments of our own community, including African American, Asian American, Hispanic/Latino/a, American Indian and other people of color; deaf/hearing-impaired, blind/sight-impaired and disabled/differently abled people; various religious groups; and young/adolescent as well as older and elderly gay/lesbian people. You have attempted to include HIV updates and developments, as well as objective and unbiased news of interest to the leather and S/M community and drag/cross-dressing/transsexual readers. This cannot have been easy, and for those readers who have been dissatisfied or frustrated at the kind or quantity of coverage their particular segment of the community has received, they might possibly consider getting involved and writing articles themselves.

I never got around to telling you long ago how I felt about the beautiful, moving cover story on one of our national treasures, Audre Lorde. This great poet, thinker and leader of conscience will be remembered by all those whose lives she touched with her words of courage and integrity.

Now, I want once more to thank *Just Out* for its excellent hard work during the seemingly endless and daunting No on 9 and No on 13 campaigns. *Just Out* certainly provided one of the most important rallying points and consistent uplifts during those long dark nights of Oregon's soul.

Thank you for your dedication to fine reporting.

Jim Anctil
Vancouver, Wash.



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