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letters

Some progress being made

To the Editor:

In a time when I often feel dismayed at the general community for their lack of acceptance and tolerance of our homosexuality, I am also filled with hope that we are making progress.

I work for a large Salem-Keizer School District High School. During recent months a student had been verbally harassing me on campus. I would hear shouts of "Dyke!" and "Lesbian!" echoing down the halls. After repeated incidents, I approached the administration.

Rather than being brushed off or ostracized, I was assured by the vice principal that he would personally take care of the issue. The student was called out of class and informed that his behavior would no longer be tolerated. In addition, he was informed that the school would support me in pressing charges should another incident occur.

The school's commitment to me as a valued staff member demonstrates that attitudes towards our community are changing. I know I have helped an institution become more aware of the diversity within its own walls. I am coming to understand how the statement "Silence = Death" affects my world. I am continually challenging my own silence, realizing that being passive is contributing to my own cultural death.

Lauren Ohlgren
Salem

Steadfast support

To the Editor:

Thanks so much for sharing with your readers the story of my fight for reinstatement to reporting—a fight I believe will benefit all journalists and working people ["An Unjust Standard," *Just Out*, Jan. 5, 1996]. Since your article was printed, the Washington state Supreme Court has agreed to hear the case on direct review in June.

In your article, you focused on the support I've received from my family and partner to stand by my convictions and fight for my political rights. While such support is gratifying, by itself it would not have been enough to keep me going this long.

The steadfast support of the Sandy Nelson Defense Committee, the Freedom Socialist Party and the Pacific Northwest Newspaper Guild has helped me most, by transforming my individual struggle for a job into a much larger and broader one that holds great promise for the entire community. And it is the publicity provided by community-based newspapers like *Just Out* that has convinced the court to act.

Thank you for providing such a service to the sexual minority community and pointing the way for others to fight back.

Sandy Nelson
Tacoma

Frightening and dangerous

To the Editor:

I can hardly believe, after all this time, that you're still at it. You simply *cannot* continue to refer casually to child sexual abuse as if it's just another sexual preference! If you substitute the word "rape" or the phrase "child abuse" each time you use one of those ridiculous euphemisms—"intergenerational sex" indeed!—you will realize how frightening and dangerous such an attitude is.

You write as if this is merely another news brief [World news, Canada, *Just Out*, Jan. 5, 1996]. The last sentence is worst of all, as it clearly implies that none of [journalist Gerald Hannon's] regular (i.e., gay and lesbian) audience thinks it's any big deal and it's only controversial now that the "mainstream" has got hold of it.

Even though the OCA has receded somewhat into the background, it's still probably unwise to provide ammunition for the right wing's guns. So even if it's your editorial policy, and the opinion of

most of your readership, that sex between adults and children is just fine—an "adolescent" can be someone as young as 11—you should probably cool it when it comes to making that opinion commonly known.

Arline Jacobson
Portland

Editor's note: It is not Just Out's policy to condone sex between adults and youth. I also believe the majority of our readership feels that sex between adults and youth is child abuse. The term "intergenerational sex" was in quotes to indicate that it was not our language. I think your interpretation of the news brief read more between the lines than was there.

Consumer beware

To the Editor:

Reputable consumer organizations have reported that fraudulent sales and service practices in the auto industry cost us over \$22 billion last year alone. Additional ill-gotten profits were likely milked from unwary consumers through legal but unfair and manipulative practices. The automobile industry, due to unscrupulous practitioners, has garnered a low public reputation, [although] vehicle sales have remained relatively robust.

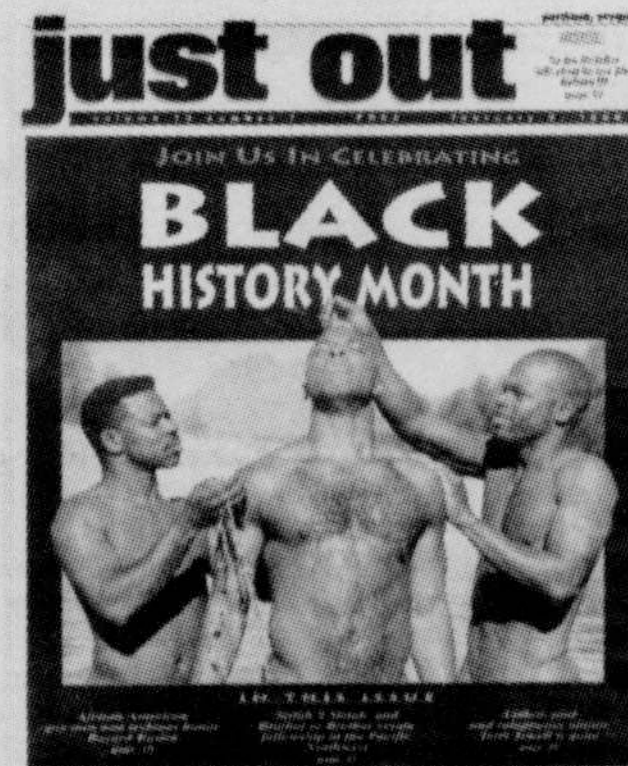
It's time for the auto industry and consumers to get together with their governments to enact "fair car sales and service practices" laws to protect consumers, industry and our economy from inflationary practices that tax us unfairly.

Regulating may be a good place to start: training, testing and monitoring car sales and service "professionals" similar to the way we regulate the real estate industry.

A free consumer-friendly Web site that offers a car buyer's car deal repair kit is CARveat Emptor, Tricks of the Great American Car Deal. It's located at <http://www.well.com/user/kr2>. Check it out before buying.

Rand Knox
San Rafael, Calif.

Credit where due



Several readers phoned us asking who took that gorgeous photo on the cover of our Feb. 2 issue. Normally, photos printed in *Just Out* are credited. We got the image from a *Brother to Brother/Seattle* poster, which did not have a photo credit. Prompted by your calls, we contacted *Brother to Brother/Seattle* and were told that Geoff Manasse took the photo. Manasse is a Seattle-based photographer whose book *Making Love Visible* was featured in our Dec. 1, 1995 issue.

Meanwhile, a photo on page 17 of the Feb. 2 issue, of men meeting at Cascade AIDS Project in 1995, was erroneously credited to Linda Kliever. It was in fact taken by Keith Ciminello.