

true of those like Podlodowski, who disagree with the direction that the Democratic Party has taken. As Nader's support grows among many of the Democrats' traditional constituents, Clinton may have to reconsider some of the positions he has taken to woo Dole voters. Nader's presence as a candidate has already been acknowledged by the White House as a factor in Clinton's veto of the "tort reform" bill.

Nader is expected to be on the Washington state ballot as an independent. His presence should be supported by everyone who wants to rebuild our democratic institutions.

Steven Dubnoff
Seattle

A gesture of peace

To the Editor:

It has been a little more than three weeks since the final votes were counted following the May 21 primary election, and I have finally recovered from 36 weeks of campaigning. I wanted my first official post-electoral act to be an overdue thank-you to *Just Out* for its endorsement of my campaign.

We came so close—roughly 200 votes shy of first place—and we did so without exceeding the voluntary spending limit of \$20,000. Though I did not emerge as the Democratic victor in District 12, I believe the experience produced winners of whom to be proud: This was a victory for coalition politics (witness the breadth and depth of support for this candidate—19 organizational endorsements strong), it was a victory for positive campaigning (I refused to "go negative," and for the most part, my opponents held to the same promise), and it was a victory for issues-based campaigns (all four contenders did their homework and advanced thoughtful ideas). To all of you who experienced disappointment at the outcome, I reiterate, "we were all winners."

While I was saddened that some folks chose to find fault with my logo design—and to turn it into a negative campaign issue—I was encouraged to see that the ferment was minimal and that most people kept their focus on the question of each candidate's worthiness for office. I am proud that your publication considered me the best choice for House District 12, and prouder still that so many of your readers agreed.

To those who felt it necessary to be ugly I would extend a gesture of peace: my willingness to forgive them their bitterness. It would be my hope that we could stay focused on what is truly important—achieving the civil rights all people so richly deserve. We *must* avoid beating up on each other when the real enemies are so numerous and so powerful.

Laurie Wimmer
Portland

Wholesome? Get real!

To the Editor:

While reading your cover story about The City Nightclub ["A Tale of Two 'Citys,'" *Just Out*, June 7, 1996] it struck me as odd how blind social service organizations and churches in the gay and lesbian community are when it comes to the youth they say they want to serve. They are whining that they haven't come up with the right formula to attract these teens to a place that *they* would consider safe and wholesome, as if they ever will.

Right from the get go, they don't respect how bright these young people are, and how observant. The young people at The City know damn well that the world they live in is not wholesome. Their schools are not wholesome; their television sets are not wholesome. The YMCA isn't even wholesome. The only place these kids will ever go that's wholesome is *maybe* their local grocery store or a Disney movie. I've seen Greenhouse, Outside In and Harry's Mother. None of those places said "wholesome" to me. They're a little scary, to be

honest. The only place that these kids are likely to be exposed to what looks wholesome to me would be CAP (interestingly, the only service organization of those mentioned in your article that goes to The City to do outreach to these youth).

These young men and women have nowhere to go *other* than The City Nightclub where they can really be themselves, dress how they want, talk like they want, and do what they want, without societal judgments. They know that every one of these organizations including City Hall has a hidden agenda when it comes to youth—especially gay and lesbian youth. If the City of Portland, Metropolitan Community Church, Harry's Mother, Outside In, Greenhouse or Phoenix Rising were to open some sort of "wholesome" imitation of The City Nightclub, these kids would still not come. The reason would be that these kids know that all of those people, well intentioned as they may be, have a hidden agenda. They know that sooner or later they're going to be hit with it, too.

Everywhere they go in society they have people telling them that they are not competent to make decisions. People *teaching* them lessons. People telling them that they have to dress a certain way, talk a certain way and behave a certain way to be acceptable. They know that any alternative to The City Nightclub will have some combination of those restrictions. They know that anything these other organizations come up with will include manipulating them into some cheap imitation of Barbie and Ken, and they know that Barbie and Ken are toys—they're not real. You give these kids something real and it will make your head spin how fast they will pick up on it.

Closing The City Nightclub is going to be a major disaster for those who are truly concerned about the welfare of these youth. Understand that if The City closes, those things that we now *fantasize* are going on at the club really will be going on—out on the street in front of our businesses. The reason will be that we've shut down all of their *safe* alternatives.

Gregory Franklyn
Portland

Retired charge card

To the Editor:

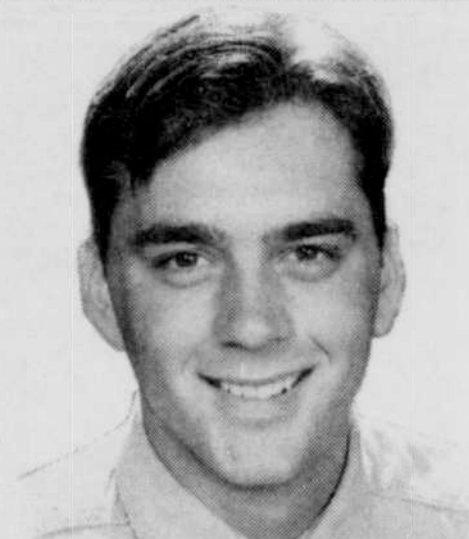
Several issues ago, there was an article on an ex-employee of the Nordstrom retail chain who felt she had been denied deserved promotions because she is gay ["A Suit with Appeal," *Just Out*, April 19, 1996]. [Statements in the article indicated] there were one or more people in [Nordstrom] management who openly stated that they did not like and would not promote homosexuals.

I wrote to a salesperson in Encore at the downtown Portland store from whom I purchase a lot and said that even though the Nordstrom chain had won in court, that the whole tenor of the article did not bode well for me or anyone who is gay, bisexual, transgendered or pre- or post-op transsexual and that I expected someone higher up to read my letter and send a comment to my inquiry.

The result was a stunning silence. Zip. Nothing. Nada. So, I did as I promised in my letter I would do if no one cared about the worth of a transgendered person or any other person in my world—I went in and paid off my \$2,500 bill in its entirety and will never use my card again. I will on occasion shop at Nordstrom, but 95 percent of my purchases were done with my card.

I find it curious, particularly in Portland, that this gay-world person and perhaps all the gay world can be written off, but businesses are entitled to make their decisions, and I and all the other card-holding gay and bisexual people are entitled to express their displeasure in a way that will eventually get the attention of Nordstrom: hitting them in the bottom line. Life goes on, but not my Nordstrom charge card; it has been retired forever.

John Boynton
Portland



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