

# letters

## One man's pride is another's shame

To the Editor:

I'd like to make a few comments about the Lesbian, Gay, Bi, Trans Pride Festival. On Friday night, June 20, I walked down to Waterfront Park after work to enjoy the festivities. I had invited several co-workers to go along, and once I was there I was very glad that they were unable to join me. I would have been very embarrassed to have them hear what I heard coming from the stage.

Isn't this event supposed to be about our pride in what we are, who we are, and our accomplishments? I wasn't aware that the agenda was to be about what we do behind closed bedroom doors. The speaker on stage was making very explicit comments about gay sex, and I felt this was very inappropriate. Being the father of two young children, I'm also very glad I didn't have them with me.

My friends will tell you that I'm not a prude in any way, and do enjoy a good laugh over sexual humor. But I also feel that there is a time and place for such comments. I don't recall ever attending any of the other various events that are held at Waterfront Park each year and hearing the speakers discuss heterosexual sex, so why should it be deemed appropriate for gay pride? I feel that this behavior only helps to fuel arguments that we are solely sexually motivated, and detracts from the idea that in most ways we lead lives very much like everyone else.

Kevin Weiche  
Portland

## Photo exhibit makes for a learning experience

To the Editor:

In the June 6 issue of *Just Out*, you covered the opening of Leaving Silence: Queer Asian Oral History Exhibit. After the opening, Asian and Pacific Islander Lesbians and Gays, the group which hosted the exhibit, received a letter from local activist Margaret Deirdre O'Hartigan, pointing out that the only individual in the show whose

photograph was not included was also the only transsexual in the exhibit.

O'Hartigan's criticism centered around issues of tokenism and the second-class status of transsexuals and transgendered people that she felt the lack of a photograph represented (and she did not want to hear excuses about how hard the creators of the exhibit tried to find a trans person who was willing to be photographed).

I cannot speak for decisions made by the exhibit's creators and the interview subjects. However, I am one of the organizers who brought the exhibit to Portland and one of those who had seen the exhibit prior to bringing it here.

First of all, I appreciate O'Hartigan's willingness to share her concerns with APLG. I welcome feedback and dialogue about the exhibit both laudatory and critical.

I think she has made some good points about transphobia in the exhibit. While I do not want to minimize the transphobia, I think this is an opportunity to explore further the different kinds of risks we face as people of color. It is often difficult to "come out" as a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual or transgendered person. When one is of a different race or from a different culture (e.g., someone from a relatively small, tight-knit minority and an extended family-based culture that values obedience to parents) than the majority of people in this country (e.g., "white," European descent) it can be even more difficult and stressful. Not only do we face the risk of discrimination, rejection and harm from society, we also face the risk of rejection from our racial/cultural community. In a society where racism does exist and where we will never quite "blend in" (the hair and eyes usually give us away), the loss of the connection to our own racial or cultural community can be very painful to contemplate or experience.

Again, I am not trying to counter O'Hartigan's criticisms. I do think it is important that we continue to challenge ourselves and each other to develop more understanding and build relationships. This exhibit was meant to be a learning experience, and I appreciate this chance to learn from each other.

Leslie Griep  
Portland

## TRANSITIONS

### Theida Beads passes on

Ricky Edward Meador, 52, better known as Theida Beads, passed away on June 27 at his home. He died of liver failure.

For the past five years, Meador worked as a bartender at Seafood Mama in Northwest Portland. He also made his mark in the community

working at the Silverado and the Family Zoo tavern.

Meador made a second home in Hawaii, working for Hamburger Mary's in Honolulu and in Lahaina, Maui.

Meador was born Sept. 23, 1944, in Quincy, Ill. He left Illinois when he was drafted by the military. After a two-year tour in the Navy stationed in San Diego, Meador moved to Portland in 1971.

Friends remember Meador as an avid traveler when possible and as an enthusiastic reader always.

He is survived by his sisters, Sherry Lindberg of Dallas, Texas, and Judy Butler of Orange, Calif., as well as several nieces and nephews, extended family and many friends.

Meador's ashes were scattered at a July 13 memorial service at Rooster Rock State Park. In lieu of flowers, friends suggest donations in Meador's name be made to Cascade AIDS Project, 620 SW Fifth Ave., Suite 300, Portland, OR 97204.



Ricky Edward Meador, a.k.a. Theida Beads

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