

just out
since 1983

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Letters to the editor should be limited to 500 words. Deadline for submissions to the editorial department and for the **Calendar** is the Thursday before the first and third Friday for the next issue. Views expressed in letters to the editor, columns and features are not necessarily those of the publisher.

The display advertising deadline is the Monday after the first and third Friday for the next issue.

Classified ads must be received at the **just out** office by 3 pm the Monday after the first and third Friday for the next issue, along with payment. Ads may be accepted by telephone with VISA or MasterCard payment.

Ad policy. No sexually exploitative advertising will be accepted. Compensation for errors in, or cancellation of, advertising will be made with credit toward future advertising.

Subscriptions to **just out** are available for \$17.50 for 12 issues. First Class (in an envelope) is \$30 for 12 issues.

A copy of **just out** is available for \$2. Advertising rates are available on request.

The mailing address and telephone numbers for **just out** are PO Box 14400, Portland, OR 97293-0400; (503) 236-1252. The phone number for the advertising department is 236-1253. Our fax number is 236-1257. Our e-mail address is JustOut2@aol.com.

steppin' out



One of Portland's newest cavities gapes where history stood: This downtown block was once home to such businesses as *The Fox Theater*, built in 1910, *The Music Box theater*, which opened in 1960 for the debut of *Ben-Hur* (the film's gay subtext was discussed by its screenwriter, *Gore Vidal*, in *The Celluloid Closet*), and *Hamburger Mary's*, which opened in August 1974 as a "multipurpose" queer-positive restaurant (the popular eatery has since moved its eclectic menu and whimsical decor to 239 SW Broadway).

PHOTO BY LINDA KLEVER

editorial

In to be out

The past 14 years are but a brief moment in queer time, but progress has leapt by eons

by Renée LaChance

We are creeping up on our 14th year of publishing *Just Out*. This being Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual History Month got me thinking historically, and our upcoming anniversary nudged me to look back over that period of time and contemplate the changes. And the times they have a-changed.

I was joking with one of our freelance writers recently that when we first started, there were so few books written by lesbians or gay men that it was easy to decide what should get reviewed and what shouldn't. In those days there were very few publishers that would touch a queer-oriented book or work with out authors. Not to mention the fact that there was only a handful of bookstores in town that would sell queer books.

Now we get several review copies of books mailed to our office every day; most every bookstore in town stocks queer books, and every mainstream publisher publishes them. Who can keep up?

The year *Just Out* started you could find a movie with a gay or lesbian theme or character maybe two or three times a year, and they were usually foreign films playing at small art houses. It was a good movie if the queer character didn't have to die at the end.

Now there are films like *In & Out*, which grossed monster box office revenues on its opening night and is playing in every major theater across the country and getting good reviews by every major mainstream press. Go figure.

When *Just Out* started publishing, Oregon seemed to be a small community—there weren't enough organized lesbian and gay groups in Oregon to fill one of our pages. Now we run four pages of groups listings in tiny print, and we only have the space to do it once a month.

Musically, lesbians in the early '80s were still making *Women's Music*—folksy tunes played at festivals where women went topless (some things never change)—and we were thrilled that the melodic love songs wafting from the stage contained the correct pronouns. Gay men were into glamorous disco divas and dancing the night away on recreational drugs (again, some things never change).

Now we have Melissa Etheridge, the Indigo Girls and kd lang being queer role models in the mainstream populace, and local grrrl bands are mauling each other on weekend nights in every major city. We have straight musicians as widely divergent in styles as Jewel and Garth Brooks singing gay-positive songs to their predominantly heterosexual audiences.

Television...well, let's not go there. Suffice it to say we are no longer sailing on the fringe of the stream. We are chic; being out is in. The visibility is exciting and at the same time frightening.

We must continue coming out and living out. We must record and teach our history so that we will never forget how we got here and how many came before us. During this month we should celebrate our outness and our history as enthusiastically as we celebrate our pride in June.

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