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Speak Out

Nice job

TO THE EDITOR:

I just wanted to congratulate Renée LaChance and the entire staff on the revamped look of the latest *Just Out*. This issue (Feb. 6, 1998) really addresses local concerns and still retains an excellent overview of world and national news of concern to the local community. This latest issue of *Just Out* should be an award winner both for you and your readers. Thank you!

RICHARD C. LEVY
Via e-mail

Glad for Sunday parade

TO THE EDITOR:

I haven't been to a gay pride parade since it was moved to Saturday. As the founding member of "Gay Pride" in Portland, I will be overjoyed to march again with my fellow service employees!

DORIS DAZE
Empress of Oregon City

Take time to form your own opinion

TO THE EDITOR:

Jack's letter to the editor [*Just Out*, Feb. 6, 1998] was a baffling piece of work. Her suggestion that Margaret Deirdre O'Hartigan portrays "the position of 'if you don't agree with me then you suck'" was at best offensive. Her accusation that O'Hartigan "does nothing to further anyone's understanding of these [trans] issues..." was an untrue attempt to sway the readership as to O'Hartigan's integrity.

In September 1997, Portland Bisexual Alliance and Laughing Horse Books sponsored a panel discussion about trans issues. The panel included three local trans activists, including O'Hartigan. The discussion was extremely informative in terms of trans history, health care and many other issues. It was poorly attended. It was advertised in *Just Out*. I don't recall O'Hartigan putting forth any such attitude or proclamation that if the audience members didn't agree with her they "sucked."

I also do not recall any audience members named Jack. I also have not seen or heard of her attendance at any of the political actions that O'Hartigan tirelessly organizes in the fight to obtain proper health care and treatment of transsexuals in Oregon. These are the places where one would witness O'Hartigan's work to further the understanding of trans issues.

If one were to actually read O'Hartigan's "self-published manifesto," one would see that indeed she does criticize. She criticizes racism, classism, sexism, homophobia and transphobia. The only things "hateful" in the manifesto are direct quotes from others about trans people. We as trans people have faced enough criticism and harassment from all walks of life. I would think that people who find it in themselves to further that project would at least take the time

to talk to us face to face, or attend some of our functions before formulating opinions about us personally or collectively.

If you want to further your understanding of trans issues, keep your eyes open for scheduled panels and go there. If you see us doing a political action, come support us. Or, show up and ask us what the hell we are talking about. How many people have taken the time to ask Margaret Deirdre O'Hartigan what the hell she's talking about, instead of cowering in a corner or running to decry her? How many people have asked any of us? I don't agree with every last thing I hear in my learning process, because we are all individuals. I can, however, hold a respectful discussion about those disagreements. That is the beauty of honoring diversity.

Finally, here are some books that allowed me as a trans person to feel more whole, less insane and like there was some hope: *Transsexualism: Candid Answers to Private Questions* by Gerald Ramsey, Ph.D.; *Confessions of a Gender Defender* by Randi Ettner, Ph.D.; and *The Uninvited Dilemma* by Kim Stuart. These books will help people understand the physical and emotional issues that trans people face, rather than pure gender theory. I don't know if these authors suck; we're just friends.

JAYSON
Portland

Honoring women's facial hair

TO THE EDITOR:

For quite a while now, I've been yearning for a group for women and female-bodied butches with beards and moustaches and other kinds of facial hair. It would be such a welcome change for me to walk into a room where we reflected to each other the ordinariness of our facial hair. Now that Octavia (Jacqueline) Anderson's courageous self has been sensationalized into two words, "bearded lady," I can't wait any longer. I want to see us create an informal group that honors all women and female-bodied butches with facial hair, whether we're wearing it or not, of all orientations and backgrounds.

The first meeting will be at 7 pm Monday, March 16, at It's My Pleasure, 3106 NE 64th Ave. Call 280-8080 to preregister; the cost to attend is \$1. The store is wheelchair accessible.

You can contact me at babad@teleport.com. (Sorry to those without access to e-mail but I'm not up for publishing my phone number.)

KATHARINE BABAD
Via e-mail

Correction

In the Feb. 20 issue, the national news stories "Small Advances," on the 5th Conference on Retroviruses and Opportunistic Infections, and "Distorted Picture," on the risks for eating disorders of gay and bisexual men, were attributed to Inga Sorensen. In fact, they were written by Bob Roehr. *Just Out* regrets the error.

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