QUEERS, QUOTES AND QUANDARIES

On the small screen, on a prestigious cover and behind the scenes, queer concerns are making the news by Inga Sorensen

FOURTH ESTATE RECOGNIZES DYKE MARCH

"It was so cool," blurts Susan Frances, member of the Portland Lesbian Avengers, the feisty and theatrical queer girl group that produces the Rose City's annual Dyke March. "I think we're getting so big-and more organized-that the mainstream media can't ignore us anymore."

southern California. It is a highly detailed piece that gives the reader a peek at the fine line walked by many queer military service members. The article explores the inherent inequities of the military's four-year-old "Don't Ask, Don't

Tell, Don't Pursue" policy.

"During a recent interview," Egan reports, "Kenneth H. Bacon, the Pentagon spokesman,

Corps officer based at Camp Pendelton in

told me: 'Obviously, there are many people serving in the armed forces who have gay relationships, but they're discreet. They aren't pursued, and they may not even be known about."

In her own words, Egan adds, "This suggests a split between the letter and the spirit of 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell': the letter says, Don't do it; the spirit says, It's OK to do it as long as you are discreet. But this double message leaves homosexuals on queasy middle ground: Theoretically, they are

allowed to serve, but their private lives are illegal and will cost them their careers—if they get caught. But then, no one is supposed to be trying to catch them."

She quotes other gay and lesbian military members who, like R., talk about the difficulty of serving under the "Don't Ask, Don't Tell" policy.

If you haven't seen the story, pop over to your public library and check it out.



It wouldn't be a Dyke March without a few pairs of bare breasts

ed up to 1,000 lesbians, queer girls, dykes and their friends. Most were fully clothed, while a few elected to go top-free-which makes sense, given the toasty temperatures and adherence to tradition. "This is the first time that I'm aware of that

According to Frances, at least two local tele-

vision stations-KGW and KOIN-covered

the June 20 march, which she estimates attract-

we've gotten television coverage," says Frances. "It was kind of funny because [KGW] put those black splotches over the women's breasts. Still, it was great getting the media attention."

NYT MAGAZINE DISSECTS 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell'

exual minority military personnel in Oregon and nationwide likely savored the cover story of the June 28 issue of the New York Times

The piece is entitled "Uniforms in the Closet: 'Don't Ask, Don't Tell' has created a world of fear and deceit, alienating R. and his friends from their fellow servicemen-and from the civilian gay world too."

Crafted by Jennifer Egan, the sprawling article follows a man referred to as R., a gay Marine

OPBEING TOUGHER

I ore than a dozen internal e-mails whizzed about at Oregon Public Broadcasting during the several days following word that Just Out has been mysteriously disappearing from OPB's break room.

In our June 19 issue, we told you that Lisa Gonzales, a master control operator for OPB's television section, was concerned that stacks of fresh Just Outs were constantly being dumped in a recycling bin by some unknown saboteur. She told us it happened many times over a period of months, prompting her to label the action "definitely deliberate."

Gonzales first approached OPB's human resources director, Debbie Rotich, a few months ago-to no avail.

Then, on April 22, Gonzales sent a missive to a union representative and management, in which she outlined the problem in writing and expressed her dismay about the lack of managerial response.

"By not taking any action after being notified of the situation, OPB is condoning this discriminatory homophobic behavior and contributing to a hostile work environment for myself and others," she wrote. "I am left with the impression that OPB is willing to allow some of its staff to be offended and intimidated to avoid confronting inappropriate behavior. I realize. probably more than anyone, that it is important to handle such a situation correctly. But even more, I know that it is vital to respond, and to make it clear that this type of behavior will not be tolerated."

After prodding from Gonzales, Rotich issued an April 24 memo to staff that did not specifically mention Just Out or the problem at hand. It essentially told folks to keep the facility tidy, and asked employees not to toss out newspapers

"they're because placed in the lounge for everyone's use."

Just Out continued disappearing, prompting Gonzales to once again a approach management.

During a June 16 conversation, Rotich told Just Out it was "time to be more specific.... We tried outlining general rules, but now I think we have to mention Just Out specifically.... We have to be more aggressive."

And it seems the powers that be at OPB are indeed getting more aggressive. Lisa Gonzales Since our mid-June

inquiry, management—with input from Gonzales—sent an e-mail to employees addressing the matter.

The message from Rotich reads: "It appears that someone is taking the Just Out newspapers from the lobby and lunchroom. For some time now, this publication has 'disappeared' almost immediately upon arrival at OPB. Often, the whole stack of newspapers has been found in the trash or recycle bin. OPB views this behavior as highly inappropriate.

"In April I posted some common rules of courtesy that apply to our use of the employee lounge on the main level. One of the rules included a request that we don't toss other newspapers out...they're placed in the lounge for everyone's use; and while you may not want to read a particular newspaper, others may. Since that time this behavior has continued. OPB's position regarding discrimination is clear—it will not be tolerated.... I want to make this very clear-if someone is taking the Just Out newspapers and placing them in the recycle bin, stop. That sort of action is inappropriate and appropriate disciplinary action will result."

The message also reiterated OPB's nondiscrimination statement: "It is the policy of OPB to continue its policies not to engage in unlawful discrimination against any employee or applicant because of race, color, marital status,

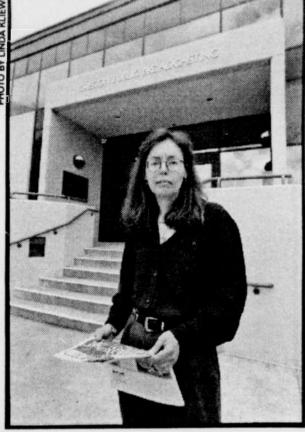
religion, national origin, age, mental or physical handicap. Neither will OPB discriminate based on sexual orientation. OPB's nondiscrimination policy is available for employee review in Human Resources. OPB encourages employees with a concern or complaint to come forward as outlined in the policy."

The message spawned a flurry of e-mails from current and former OPB employees, most of whom chastised the perpetrator, heralded the nondiscrimination policy, and noted the irony of someone working for a media outlet-public broadcasting no less-censoring via a nasty trashing habit.

During a late June staff meanwhile, meeting, Maynard Orme, OPB's president and chief executive

officer, told employees he found their responses "quite touching."

Gonzales says Orme never responded to her April letter, a copy of which was sent to him. As for other staffers, she says she is "extremely encouraged" by their show of support.







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