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COMING IN AUGUST—Anti-NxNW '98

All underground bands interested in participating or other
unusual performances, please call for being put on the
performance list before Aug. 1. Volunteers welcome.

Speak Out

A taxing issue

TO THE EDITOR:

While it is true that gays and lesbians are denied important benefits by virtue of not being allowed to marry legally, I was sorry to read Will O'Bryan's editorial ["Don't go to pride angry," *Just Out*, June 19, 1998] in which he criticizes Congress' recent efforts to remove the "marriage penalty" from our tax structure.

This effort is not an attack on gays and lesbians but rather a step towards a system that supports a wider variety of family structures.

O'Bryan writes that "a hetero couple married one year gets the Congressional tax-code seal of approval." This seal of approval is only beneficial, however, if the couple is a "traditional" family in which one spouse works (traditionally the husband) and the other stays at home. If both spouses work and are equal earners, they actually pay more by being married than if they remained single. This is the marriage penalty. I see Congress' recent efforts to remove this penalty as a positive development.

O'Bryan is correct that taxes are an "institutional way of rewarding and punishing." Eliminating this marriage penalty would change our current system from one that has clearly favored the traditional family structure to one that also supports equal earning couples as well. I do not consider this detrimental to gays and lesbians, but rather a step forward in developing a system that supports a broader array of family structures. Someday, I hope this will also come to include gay and lesbian families.

BECKY SHINE
Portland

OPB pledge: JO stays

TO THE EDITOR:

Recently, you ran an article about someone removing *Just Out* from OPB's lobby and lunchroom ["Media Moments," *Just Out*, June 19, 1998].

An OPB employee brought this to management's attention and we responded with a memo to all staff stating that such behavior was "highly inappropriate" and "will not be tolerated." After this e-mail memo, I was heartened to see numerous employee responses agreeing with the zero-tolerance message.

I want to ensure OPB's stance on this issue is clear. OPB is a forum for sharing ideas from a broad variety of viewpoints. As a public broadcaster, we provide cultural perspectives that would otherwise be unavailable on commercial television. Our values on air match our values in the workplace. OPB's nondiscrimination policy states we will not "discriminate based on sexual orientation."

In June, we recognized pride month with three programs—*Out Loud*, *The Castro* and *In the Life*—which we highlighted in our member magazine. When we received letters complaining about these programs, we responded with an affirmation of our commitment to balanced programming for our entire viewing audience. OPB is and will remain an arena where a diversity of ideas and perspectives can be found.

Just Out will stay out in our workplace.

MAYNARD ORME
President and CEO, Oregon Public Broadcasting

Sense and sensibility (Or, pride and censorship)

TO THE EDITOR:

Since reading the article regarding pride and Carol Steinel and Howie Baggadonutz ["Pride and prejudice?" *Just Out*, June 19, 1998], I have spent considerable time thinking about the

impact this type of article has on our community. Frankly, I find this an inappropriate venue for either of these individuals.

Nowhere in the article does it state that Steinel talked with the [Pride Northwest] committee in person. Baggadonutz used his position last year to lambaste [Pride Northwest] publicly for allowing Coors to be part of pride. If they were in the practice of censoring people, they could have easily turned off his mike and let him rant on without the entire crowd having to be caught in the middle of his dispute.

Censorship is the act of removing or suppressing anything objectionable. This was not the action of Pride Northwest. An individual asking a performer to consider the audience having children is not censorship.

The other piece that is difficult is the fact that the reporter did not talk about the years of service and support both Janna MacAuslan and Kristan Aspen have provided this community.

Steinel and Baggadonutz are funny people and excellent performers. Their material is often more appropriate for adult audiences in my opinion. I enjoy laughing and singing along to Steinel's songs. At times, however, in a venue that hopes to promote families bringing their children, maybe all of us need to examine the content of our material. After all, we are the adults.

DONNA LUCKETT
Portland

TO THE EDITOR:

It was with disappointment and no great surprise that I read of the continued infighting regarding the content and context of the pride festival.

As a former board member of Pride Northwest, I can attest to the tremendous amount of cooperation, professionalism and spirit required to pull off a celebration of this magnitude. I can also testify to the tragic loss of time and energy directed toward issues that—in all candor—have little if anything to do with pride.

I respect Howie Baggadonutz's work as a board member, fund-raiser and sponsor of pride events, as well as his views from a perspective different than mine. Having purposely mixed professional and civic responsibilities with moments of personal expression in a public forum, however, Baggadonutz has little credible claim to the high road that would justify accusations of censorship. If the board of Pride Northwest voted for the Coors sponsorship of the 1997 pride festival over his objections, then the board must answer to that issue at the regularly advertised open board meetings. As a board member, he should have either respected that position, stepped aside, or raised it at the proper time and place.

As for Carol Steinel, I would agree that the handwritten note asking her to "do what you think is right" with regard to her material does smack of censorship pressure. Good! I'm no prude, and I doubt I'd be any more shocked at what Steinel says or does than she would be shocked if she knew more about me.

Yet, for the life of me, I have not been able to reconcile how spewing the lyrics from "I Want to Put My Fingers in You" in a public venue relates to pride. If she insists on thrusting her idea of pride on the masses, then I look forward to the time when I can answer back with the time-honored tradition of great theater: a rotten tomato thrown on the stage.

As a community, it is time we recognize the difference between making personal points and furthering just causes.

LARRY SHAW
Portland

66 **T**he right to be let alone is the most comprehensive of rights and the right most valued by civilized people."

— Justice Louis Brandeis



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