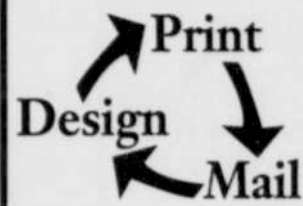


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## Speak Out

### Backwater blues

TO THE EDITOR:

For proof that the PC police have co-opted the local gay media, one need look no further than the recent editorial by Marty Davis, *Just Out's* new publisher, in which she loudly complains about the tasteless, offensive Scott Capurro ["Integrity a Constant," *Just Out*, Nov. 20]. Never mind that *Just Out* invited him to its little shindig, it seems he is now *persona non grata*.

As a member of the audience, I feel Marty did both Scott and your readership a grave disservice with her nasty diatribe.

Methinks Scott must have ruffled a few hen feathers with his hilarious on-the-money observations. Lesbians with poor taste in clothes? Gay men being led around by their dicks? Uptight straight people "tsk-tsk"-ing us to death? I suppose Marty would prefer a tasteful silence be maintained regarding these truths of our community; I would kindly remind her that in this matter, just as with the AIDS pandemic, silence still equals death.

Thank you, Howie Baggadonutz, for continuing to expose this provincial backwater town to cutting-edge humorists and their outrageous material. Marty, you'll survive both life and your publishership in better shape if you are somehow able to develop a sense of humor.

P.S. Marty, I was the fellow in the row ahead of you laughing my ass off.

DANA BUSCH  
Portland

### Bah! Humbug!

TO THE EDITOR:

The Portland City Council resolution regarding equal rights for the city's transsexual employees is nothing but the utterance of empty words even as this city continues to actively discriminate against transsexuals.

Had the council's resolution actually required the city to end its discriminatory exclusion of transsexual health care from employee insurance benefits—rather than merely promise yet another study of transsexuals' needs—I might be impressed. As it is, I recognized the council's action for what it is: a lump of coal masquerading as a Christmas gift.

And like coal, without application of the pressure necessary to create a diamond, the council's resolution is suitable only for burning.

MARGARET DEIRDRE O'HARTIGAN  
Acting director  
The Filisa Vistima Foundation  
Portland

### Sharing the scoop on balloons and condoms

TO THE EDITOR:

Will O'Bryan's holiday shopping guide ["Naughty or Nice?" *Just Out*, Dec. 4] was delightful, but had one glaring omission: How did he happen to bypass *Balloons on Broadway*—and its store-inside-the-store, *Condom Capers*? Located at 531 S.W. Broadway in Portland, *Balloons on Broadway* has served many of our gay and other gift shopping needs for years.

Moreover, owners Gary Hopping and Ron Pitt are quick to recycle their profits into our community: They have donated literally countless rainbow balloon arches to AIDS walks, pride parades, Peacock in the Parks, leather pride shows and anti-OCA rallies.

They purchase ads in practically every gay-related program we've flipped through, hang posters, distribute flyers and sell tickets for numerous sexual minority events.

*Balloons on Broadway/Condom Capers* deserve inclusion in any Portland review of gay and gay-supportive places to shop.

ANN M. SHEPHERD  
KAITE CHASE  
SUSIE SHEPHERD  
Portland

### Promoting page-turning promiscuity

TO THE EDITOR:

In a recent issue of *Just Out*, a member of the community felt that our advertisement for BookTalk promoted promiscuity [Speak Out, *Just Out*, Dec. 4].

BookTalk, a discussion group sponsored by Speak to Your Brothers (Cascade AIDS Project), offers gay and bisexual men a chance to read a wide range of books and get together once a month to discuss them.

As to promiscuity—we neither promote it, nor condemn it. Rather, we offer a safe environment for gay and bisexual men to discuss issues relevant to their lives and empower them to make their own decisions.

That is, unless you're referring to their reading habits. In this matter, I highly encourage men to embrace promiscuity and read as many books as they like. You can never have too many hardbacks waiting for you at home.

GEOFFREY BATEMAN  
Program coordinator  
Cascade AIDS Project  
Portland

### Where's Rufus?

TO THE EDITOR:

I can accept that advertisements and calendar entries are the responsibility of the promoter, but as journalists *Just Out* missed out on the opportunity to bring information to its readers about the recent appearance of Rufus Wainwright at LaLuna.

Though his handlers may shy away from his sexuality, he does not. As one of the extremely few out and proud male recording artists signed to a major label, Rufus has never been afraid of making his identity known. He clearly deserves our support and awareness. Though the Dec. 3 audience was sizable and enthusiastic, it could, and should, have been much larger.

MARKE NIELSEN  
Portland

### Name calling a no-no

TO THE EDITOR:

I am responding to the exchange between Margaret O'Hartigan and Nancy Clark about the Lesbian Community Project [Speak Out, *Just Out*, Nov. 20].

Expressions of self-righteous outrage and demands for perfection do very little to change anything. O'Hartigan's concern about racism is to be commended, but how is she going to act on her intentions? (She calls LCP the "Aryan Male Community Project," which only gives rise to a defensive response.)

I am involved in the six-week series for white women called *Doing Our Part*. We are educating ourselves through reading and discussion, trying to become more aware of our attitudes and behaviors.

I would urge O'Hartigan to find what values and concerns she shares with other lesbians and build in a positive way on that common ground.

ELLEN GREENLAW  
Sandy