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Lesbian historian Lillian Faderman is coming to town to set some records unstraight Page 38

## Here We Go Again

Oregon voters will likely ponder a new anti-gay ballot initiative in November

BY INGA SORENSEN

Oregon Rep. Kevin Mannix, squishy like a man plunked too many hours behind a desk, sat before his colleagues during a recent legislative hearing.

He was there, he informed them, to protect traditional marriage from the "assault" of "perverse judicial adventurism."

He was there, he said, to "draw a firm line" against the encroaching "denigration" of a relationship that has been recognized for "thousands of years: a man and woman, many times with children."

The Oregon Court of Appeals, the Salem Republican charged, had engaged in "perverse reasoning" when it issued a December ruling in *Tanner vs. Oregon Health Sciences University* stipulating that state and local governments must offer domestic partner benefits to same-sex couples and that gay men and lesbians are protected from employment discrimination.

Mannix appeared alarmed, as though the courts had restricted *heterosexuals* from marrying, or stripped them of *their* spousal benefits.

If bold action wasn't taken now, he warned, same-sex couples would be demanding parental leave, and polygamists would be emboldened to further undermine heterosexual marriage.

"There's all kinds of ramifications—it's time for us to positively intervene," he urged on a striking afternoon in late May. The rain was on hiatus and the sun appeared with gusto.

But inside the state Capitol, in a committee hearing room, a threatening cloud hung over Mannix. In his world, giving same-sex couples—who cannot legally marry—some of the rights automatically granted to married heterosexuals is an astronomical affront to the latter and to society.

To counter the supposed siege, Mannix sponsored House Joint Resolution 29, which the House Judiciary Committee on Civil Law passed May 28 by a 5-4 party-line vote.

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# HAPPY HUNTING

The gay bathhouse culture of yesteryear may have faded, but Portland still offers a few places to get your feet wet

BY WILL O'BRYAN