

Dumber than Barbie

TO THE EDITOR:

The article about women's body image ["Bigger Than Barbie, Stronger Than Ken," June 2] interested me, because I gave birth to my daughter and gained 50 pounds. But the social mores presented are dumber than Barbie and more conformist than Ken. Lesbians aren't the only women in our community. We have a diverse community, which also includes bisexual, transgendered and transsexual women. This exclusion provided a strange, vacuous quality to the discussion.

When I was raised as a fundamentalist Christian, I was told makeup was forbidden because it was from Satan. When I came out as a rebellious lesbian, I wore makeup. I was then told that makeup was forbidden because it was from Men. I decided to say "fuck off" to both right and left and wear makeup—get this—just because I want to.

There may be "many ways to deviate from the mainstream standard," but sadly it appears there are few acceptable ways to deviate from a predefined lesbian norm.

Take wearing a bra, for example. When you're nursing a baby, a well-fitted nursing bra can feel comfortably supportive. I went from a two-hook 36A to a four-hook 42DD in two trimesters. I would like for "Zoe," who said she

would never date a bra-wearing woman, to strap a half-liter of milk to each of her breasts and hear her repeat this opinion.

If fat is currently "in," why am I not outrageously chic? Why haven't I been able to "pass" as a lesbian among lesbians, even when I had cropped hair and wore coveralls?

I had hoped this article would have insights about gender and body image instead of dictation of vapid style, e.g., "[Lesbians do] piercings in visible places." What's the difference between that and the "no white shoes after Labor Day" rule? None as far as I can tell.

BETTY HALE
Portland

Low-income student talks back

TO THE EDITOR:

My name is Erin. I'm a college student, I work for a nonprofit organization that fights for women's reproductive rights, I'm an activist, a volunteer and an agent for social change. I'm also poor. Nonprofits don't pay well, and neither will any of the jobs I get when I graduate. So if you ever want to talk to me about my queer politics, we'll have to do something low-cost, like meet for coffee, because our worlds will never meet at one of your fancy shindigs. Bummer.

Although I don't personally identify this way, according to Marty Davis ["2, 4, 6, 8... We Refuse to Assimilate!" June 2], I'm also a "pig." I think it has something to do with the (proud) fact that I refuse to sell my freedom for a beer sponsorship and acceptance by straight society and assimilationist LGBT community members. So I march topless and eat fire with my queer friends and allies and relish the fact that many of my community members feel like I do. And look at that. I didn't mention that article, and it only took me three lines to state how I really feel.

As far as the economic justice bit goes, well Marty, your white middle-class privilege allows you to say such things and feel that way, but the rest of us who know the reality of working hard for not enough money, of being forced to choose between selling out and putting out for cash, of trying to maintain a shred of personal dignity and a job, we would have to disagree. Apparently you've never been fired 'cuz you're queer (how long have you been out anyhow?), have had to suck your boss's dick for your incremental raise, or seen someone of a lighter skin color get promoted instead of you. So, Marty, you can fuck off and enjoy your Dinah-Shore-Olivia-Cruise-lines-\$500-a-plate-dinners, and the rest of us will just keep fighting for social and economic justice.

ERIN SEXTON
Portland

notable

Vincent B. Amen died April 18 at his home in Portland at the age of 83.

Born July 15, 1916, in Walla Walla, Wash., he earned a bachelor's degree in German and a master's degree in education from Whitman College. During World War II he received a Bronze Star while serving as an Army interrogator in France and afterwards taught at the Moclips, Wash., high school. In 1959 Vincent moved to Portland, where he taught German at Cleveland High School until illness forced an early retirement in 1975. In 1959 Vincent also met Paul Paxton, his life partner for 33 years until Paul's death in 1992.

Vincent was an accomplished pianist and vocalist in his youth, and an avid reader. Despite 25 years of wheelchair confinement and numerous health issues, Vincent remained remarkably positive about his life to the end. He was a Christian Scientist.

Survivors include his caregiver, Chris Smithrud; his friends David, Carol, Bobby, Bruce, Alma, Tom, Hans and Doug; two sisters-in-law and two nieces. Interment was in Willamette National Cemetery.

just asking In a tireless quest for answers, Just Out went to a Portland Fire game to ask basketball fans: "Has the Fire sparked our flame yet?"



JENELLE THOMPSON
Portland
Yard and landscape maintenance

"Yes, they're exciting to watch and I think they have great potential."



LISA WEAVER
Lake Oswego
Director of sales

"I just got here, it's my first game so I don't know yet. It's still new."



NANCY WILLIAMS
Portland
Real estate developer

"Oh baby!"



TINA SCHAFER
Portland
Realtor

"Yes, I enjoy the fact that the team is revitalizing professional women's basketball in Portland."



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