

stayed overnight. Not only did we feel secure in our safety on-site, everyone we came into contact with was just plain nice. This was my first pride event, and I am grateful to have come into contact with such great people.

I especially want to thank Dana Rosenlund and the security crew, as well as the *Just Out* folks for lending a hand with our set up. We really appreciate the positive reception we had and a great experience. Thanks again.

DEBRA PORTA  
Portland

**Olympian gratitude**

TO THE EDITOR:

Thank you for seeing that Olympia receives *Just Out*. we can't get the Seattle gay paper in Olympia.

As the result of a story in *Just Out* about *The Most Fabulous Story Ever Told* ["The Gay-den of Eden," June 2], a friend of mine from Tacoma and I are coming to Portland to see the play.

I just wanted to let you know it pays to get your papers to Olympia.

OLYNUDE  
Olympia, Wash.

**Had a permit**

TO THE EDITOR:

I want to make a correction to Katy Davidson's recent story about the Lesbian Avengers organizing the Dyke March ["Avengers in Action," June 2].

As the coordinator for this year's Dyke March, I can say that the Lesbian Avengers did, indeed, have a permit for this march. I have been involved in the last four Dyke Marches, and we have had permits for all of them. We also plan on having permits for future years.

Why is this? Are we not as badass as our Avenger sisters in New York, Boston, D.C. or San Francisco? Well, my personal opinion is that in Portland—with a gun-and-baton-happy police force that loves to go nuts on peaceful protesters—it is our responsibility to keep dykes safe from this kind of brutality during the Dyke March. Rest assured, the Lesbian Avengers do enough fun, illegal activities the rest of the year to keep us busy.

It is especially important for me to make this

correction after being notified that our alleged lack of a permit was brought up at a Sexual Minorities Roundtable meeting, by none other than a board member of Pride Northwest. Is there a connection between this rumor and the Dyke March being left out of the Pride NW program for pride weekend? While I regret that this misinformation was spread this year, I don't seem to recall any year in which the Dyke March was printed in Pride Northwest's schedule. Although I am not sure whether this is because it is not sponsored by Pride Northwest (strange, exclusive policy!) or if the Dyke March is too political (what are you angry dykes yelling about now? You should be at the waterfront dancing!), it saddens me that queer women missed the march because of a fear of being arrested or worse.

SARAH BARNARD  
Portland

**Bitching about 'Barbie'**

TO THE EDITOR:

The recent cover article "Bigger Than Barbie, Stronger Than Ken" [June 2], was one of the more biased articles that I have ever read in *Just Out*. The author, rather than actually analyzing body image issues in the queer female community, managed to build more stereotypes.

I am a queer woman and a femme. I enjoy wearing lipstick and dresses, and I shave my legs. In fact, I know many queer women like me and I also know many women who love to date femmes. However, I don't wear lipstick because someday I will run off with a man, and butch women don't date me because men look at me. I know that there are women who, like Andy and Theresa, think I'm "still catering to men." Thankfully, they are only a small segment of our community.

Because of the pressures of the queer community, I tried to be butch when I first came out. It didn't look at all natural, and through a lot of struggle I accepted that I look and am more comfortable as a femme. Yes, I do look like your average straight girl. But, because of that, I feel that it is my responsibility to be as out as I can. So I am out at work and to my family, my partner is on my health insurance, I have rainbow stickers all over my car and I'm active in the queer community. I am not trying to pass.

Where was my voice in this article? Where

were the voices of other femmes and lovers of femmes? By choosing the quotes that she did, the author effectively silenced the other side of the story. This is not how I want my community to operate.

MANYA SHORR  
Portland

TO THE EDITOR:

Gay women of Portland, LIGHTEN UP! I was stunned to read "Bigger than Barbie." Why, oh why, are we still discussing makeup, hair length, shaving issues and, most offensive of all, this whole notion of "passing"?

I'm a 28-year-old gay woman who's been out for about seven years, and frankly I can't believe that women out of high school are even struggling with these issues. What happened to the goal of just being yourself? We don't have to "pass" for anything, and we don't have to make statements about our sexuality every time we step out of the door. Guess what? No one cares. Not everything we do has to be a reaction to straight or male "culture."

Aren't we supposed to be trying to live happy, well-adjusted and (forgive me here) normal lives? Why is it so horrible to be women, to be different than men, to be pretty? I don't get it. The article reads like a long teen-age letter to a parent explicitly pointing out that "you're not the boss of me!"

I'm so tired of hearing that I'm not a real lesbian unless I stop fussing over my appearance, drop the lipstick, and put on a comfier pair of sandals. And I'm tired of being pressured to make every footstep a giant leap for lesbian-kind. Sometimes it's OK to relax and just be.

CARRIE COLE  
Portland

**In praise of 'Barbie'**

TO THE EDITOR:

The "Bigger than Barbie" article helped me to re-evaluate some of my attitudes and to look at potential partners in a more open-minded manner. Thanks for writing about this subject matter.

GILDA ROSEN  
Portland

**Capital concurrence**

TO THE EDITOR:

THANK YOU! THANK YOU! THANK YOU! to Jeff Cook for writing about the sad state of our so called "community" [Speak Out, June 2]. All I have to say is "I AGREE, I AGREE, I AGREE." If gay men were any shallower, they'd be urinals.

M. BIGAI  
Portland

**Commentary comments**

TO THE EDITOR:

I just read your editorial ["No Rainbow Flags Here," June 16] and was touched by your sincerity around wanting to discuss and understand economic issues.

I missed the last editorial where you put your foot in your mouth, but I'll find a copy and read it. I also read the letter from the reader that took issue with your previous article.

Rage is such a small word to describe what I feel around race and class (economic) issues. Powerlessness, sadness, exclusion, frustration, righteous superiority because I "get it." Each one of these emotions are walls between us.

I am Samoan, I was raised by my Anglo

**just asking** *Reeling from the harsh blow of a personal betrayal, Just Out's reporter set out in search of honest answers to life's tough questions. (Whatever!) Play along at home now: "Have you ever said, 'I love you,' without really meaning it?"*



NANCY ASHMAN  
Portland  
Social rebel

"At the time that I said I love you, I mean it... But I might not mean it later..."



BECKY BILYEU  
Portland  
Owner, Touchstone Coffee House

"No, love is not a word I take lightly."



DEBORAH N.  
Portland  
Brutally honest person

"No. I've never faked an orgasm either."



AMY MCINTOSH  
Portland  
New to Portland

"I've always meant it. It's a powerful phrase. I do, however, love different people at different levels."

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