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Crossing Barriers, Building Bridges: A Workshop on Sexual Minority Spirituality



Saturday, Oct. 28th 2000

9am-4pm

Sponsored by University Park
 United Methodist Church
 4775 N Lombard, Portland OR

Facilitators

Dale Rhodes M.S., M.A.

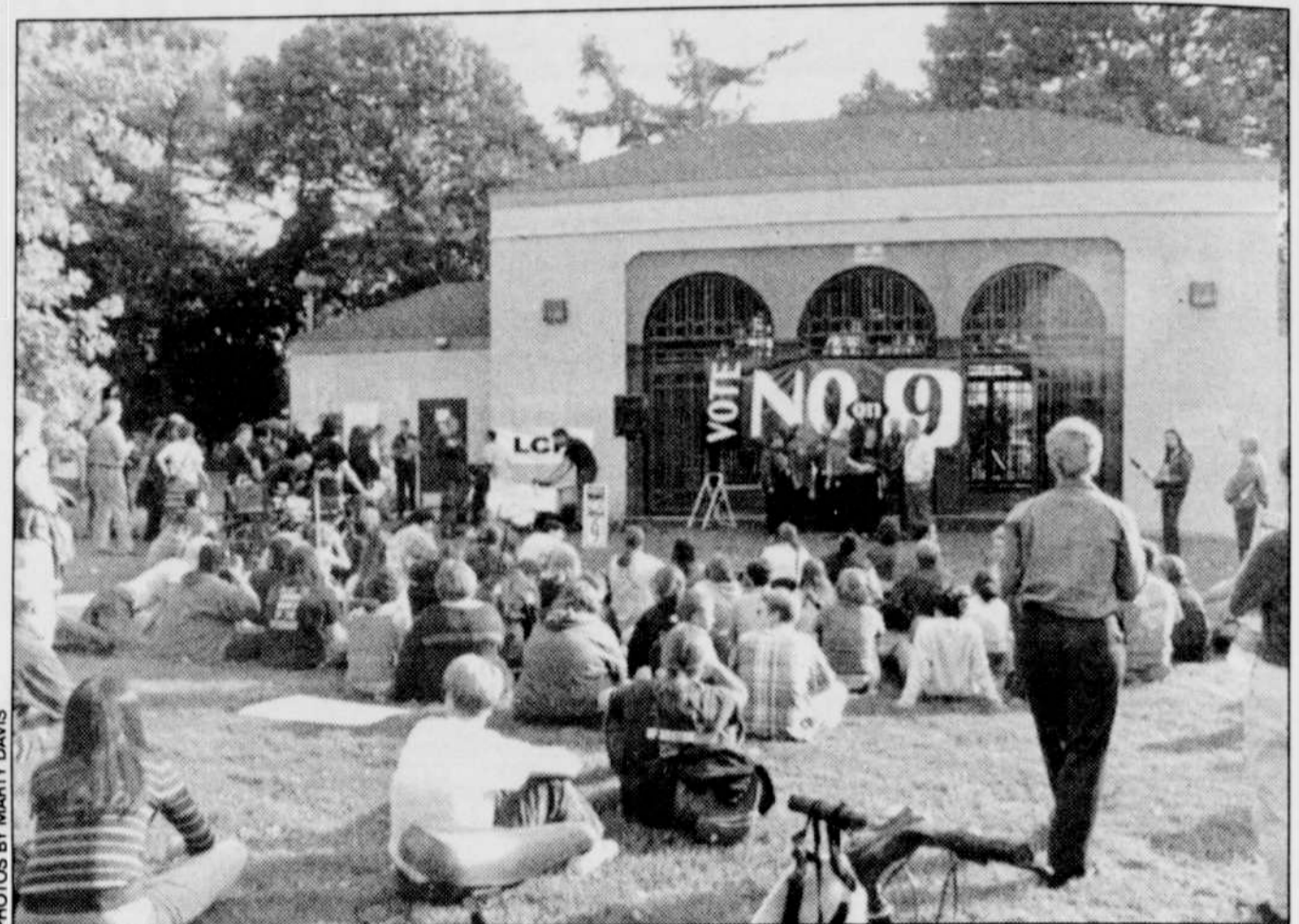
Dale is a spiritual director and founding member of The Interfaith Spiritual Center in SE Portland

Sharon Bowland L.C.S.W., M.P.S.

Sharon is a psychotherapist in private practice

Fee: \$3500. Register at Door. For more information, contact Dale Rhodes at (503) 289-4103 or Sharon Bowland at (503) 284-3426

NORTHWEST news



PHOTOS BY MARTY DAVIS

Dozens of students rally against Measure 9 on Oct. 17 across from Cleveland High School

CLEVELAND HOLDS RALLY AGAINST MEASURE 9

About 100 Cleveland High students, staff and supporters protested the Oregon Citizens Alliance's Measure 9 on Oct. 17 at Powell Park across the street from the school in Southeast Portland.

One by one, students took the stage and addressed the supportive crowd. Some speakers raged against the OCA, some spoke of their experience in school, and some shared their personal and often moving stories.

One story especially captured the crowd's attention. A transgendered youth told of her experience growing up in a rural area. She said she wasn't allowed to be openly queer in her small town.

When her peers found out she was different, seven people in the school's locker room raped her. "Silence is death," she said before walking away from the microphone and into the arms of her partner.

Kary Aloveah, a teacher at Cleveland, warned of the consequences that would follow if the measure passes next month. But even if it does, she said she won't acknowledge it.

"There is no way in hell I will change what I'm teaching in the class," said Aloveah, who teaches social studies, math and philosophy. "A lot of teachers feel the same way."

Her colleague Steve Peter is upset because he thinks the public only hears one thing about Cleveland High: teachers supporting Measure 9 and expressing opposition to Portland Public Schools policies on sexual orientation. "People all over the country know about Cleveland High School, but they don't know about this," he said, referring to the school's support of sexual minority students and staff.

Of the original six teachers who went to the media and expressed their outrage about Portland Public Schools, only four remain at Cleveland. The group, led by Spanish instructor Jose Salano, says that homosexuality is a choice and that the district is keeping scientific evidence supporting their claim from students.

Peter said these teachers are an absolute minority. He has been out of the closet as a gay man since 1988 and has found full support from the administration, staff, students and parents. "All that you hear about Cleveland High School is not true," he said.

Coincidentally, Peter's classroom is next door to Salano's. Before Salano stepped out in defense of Measure 9 and challenged the general acceptance of homosexuality in the schools,



Kary Aloveah, Cleveland High teacher

the two men got along fine, Peter said.

"It's uncomfortable but not antagonistic at all," he said. "I haven't spoke to any of them since this came out—sadly."

QUEER MENACE STRIKES RE-EDUCATION SEMINAR

Citing the necessity of confronting the homophobic brainwashing of young people, Queer Menace disrupted a meeting planned by Jose Salano and other Cleveland High teachers Oct. 7 at the Portland Convention Center. The instructors claim Portland Public Schools is keeping scientific proof from students that homosexuality is a choice and can be changed.

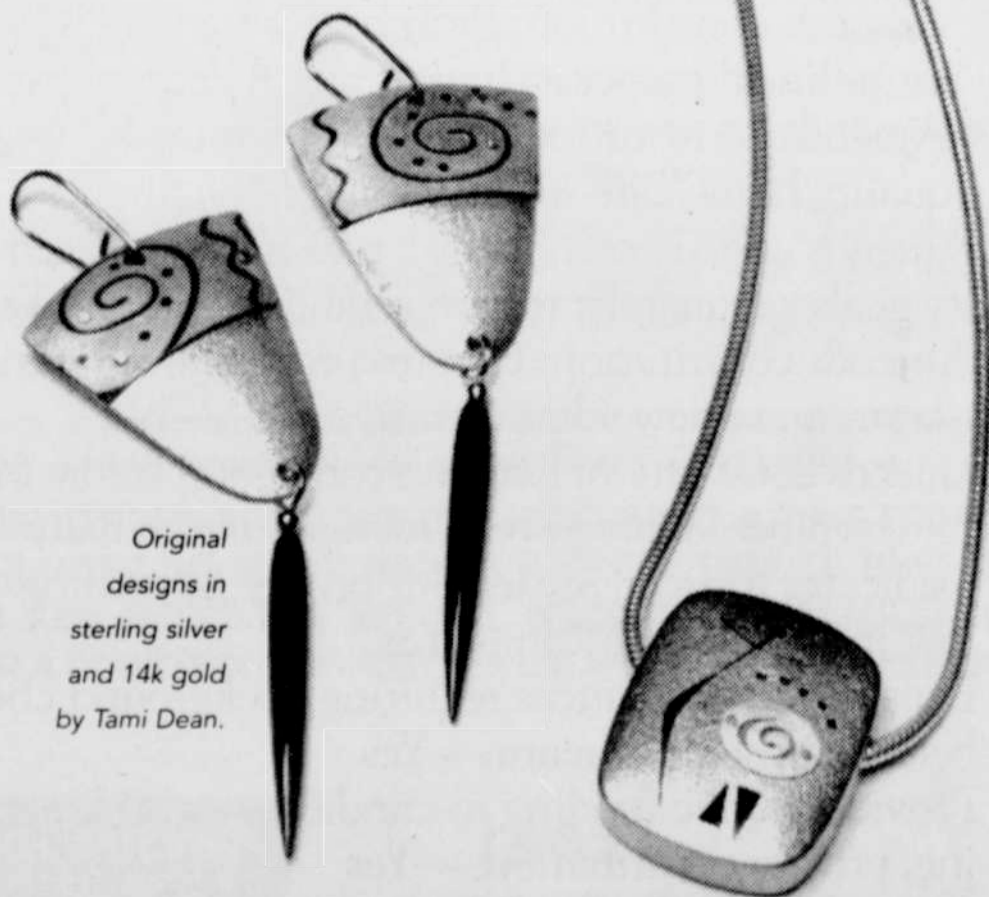
A district spokesman said that the teachers know the channels they need to take to get books admitted to school libraries and that they have not followed those channels. Portland Public Schools does not promote homosexuality, he said.

"We had to let these people know that they could not sit comfortably and spit their mind-control rhetoric," a Queer Menace press release said. "These people are cruel and dangerous. They want to undermine my self-worth and brainwash me into being something I'm not."

The conference was called to address the issue of reversion therapy for gays and lesbians. Queer Menace said the "cure" includes forced electric shock, medication and hospitalization. "We do not want tax money funding extremists preaching hate to children in public schools," the statement said.

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