

## NORTHWEST news

advertising to cover costs as the show's ratings continue to plunge.

Almost 100 advertisers have pulled their support because of host Dr. Laura Schlessinger's controversial comments about homosexuality. KGW says it already has purchased programming to replace the talk show next year.

According to the Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation, Seattle's KING-TV dropped *Dr. Laura* on Dec. 1. The NBC affiliate had aired the controversial talk show in a prime 3 p.m. timeslot since its Sept. 11 debut, but beginning Dec. 5, the show started airing at 2 a.m. on its independent sister station, KONG-TV.

Portland's NBC affiliate, KGW, initially put *Dr. Laura* in its 11 a.m. timeslot but after several weeks of dismal ratings moved it to 1 p.m. Since then, the station regularly has pre-empted the talk show, usually with paid advertising to help recoup some of its losses; during recent weeks, the program only has aired twice a week.

Most stations across the country have relegated *Dr. Laura* to overnight timeslots. Others have canceled it altogether.

*Dr. Laura* recently changed its format, now closer resembling Schlessinger's popular radio show. Despite that, the infamous advice giver has yet to mention homosexuality directly.

Some wonder whether Schlessinger has changed her views about the subject or whether her financial values have replaced her moral values. In this case, it pays for her to keep quiet.

### ANTI-GAY GROUP TARGETS YOUTH

During its Oct. 3 meeting, the Exodus International board of directors gave official sanction for the development of a new outreach program geared toward youth struggling with homosexual issues. Oregon's Jason Thompson, Portland Fellowship co-director, will head the national project, Exodus Youth.

Ironically, his anti-gay organization is listed on one of the country's largest reference databases for sexual minority youth published by OutProud, the National Coalition of Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Trans Youth. "Find local sources of friendship and support," the Internet site says.

Exodus is well-known for its reversion therapies, which mental health professionals around the world consider abusive and dangerous. The Oregon Citizens Alliance is a contributor to the organization.

Among Exodus leaders, discussions regarding youth outreach have been under way for more

than six years. In April, Exodus funded a meeting to formulate a specific plan to launch a youth ministry. Now, with the approval of the board and the creation of several new youth-oriented resources, Exodus is ready to implement a referral service for youth resources and outreach.

"We have been anticipating the launching of Exodus Youth for a long time," Thompson said. "I'm very excited to see it finally becoming a reality."

The National Youth Advocacy Coalition, which works on behalf of sexual minorities, is preparing to take the lead in strategizing against Exodus Youth—particularly the dangerous and harmful treatments and therapies such ministries advocate. The group is hoping to hear from adults about their experiences; suggestions and comments from anyone who has confronted Exodus International and its affiliates, particularly involving youth issues; and any other proposals.


The coalition will gather information about the experiences of young people who have undergone such "reparative" and "transformational" therapies and distribute them for the media and for use in future publications. Those submitting pieces may request anonymity.

Send comments as soon as possible to [nyac@nyacyouth.org](mailto:nyac@nyacyouth.org). For more information about the OutProud database, visit the Internet site [www.outproud.org/menu.html](http://www.outproud.org/menu.html).

### BOOK AWARD PRESENTED TO DE HELEN

Playwright Sandra de Helen's *The Bobbsey Twins Go to Hell* recently received accolades from Literary Arts Inc.'s 2000 Oregon Book Awards, the most prestigious honor available to writers statewide. The drama category had only two other finalists, Melinda Pittman and Will Sharp.

Rohan Preston, lead theater critic at Minneapolis' *Star Tribune*, served as the judge. He wrote the poetry collection *Dreams in Soy Sauce*, co-edited the anthology *Soulfires* and has won numerous awards for his creative writing; his expository work has appeared in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post* and *Chicago Tribune*.

Preston said of *The Bobbsey Twins Go to Hell*, "This piece balances strong artistic value with social content—getting at pedestrian notions in our culture—without the author taking herself too seriously, which is always a key to success." The writer is at work on a full-length play, *Witch!*, about a modern-day witch hunt. 

Compiled by Just Out staff



Sandra de Helen

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