

An open letter to Derry Jackson

TO THE EDITOR:

When I first read about your campaign for the school board, I was impressed with your passion to improve our children's education and compassion to the needs of all people. I thought your lack of experience would be more than offset by your commitment to a better and fairer education for all our children.

I concluded you would make a fine school board member. However, if the anti-gay remarks attributed to you in the May 2 *Willamette Week* are correct, then I am extremely concerned that I made a huge mistake.

If we lived in a time when people still believed in the flat Earth theory, it might be justifiable to think that we "choose" to be gay or that our "behavior" should allow us to be treated differently from African Americans when it comes to providing anti-discriminatory protections. But fortunately for all of us, we live in the 21st century, where the Earth has been proven to be round and such thoughts about gays are not only not justifiable but offensive.

The credibility and accuracy of observations such as those attributed to you are measured against today's knowledge, not that of the 12th century. Today it is commonly, psychologically and close to being scientifically recognized that we do not "choose" to be gay.

If, as a school board member, you are promoting your "gay choice" theory, then we citizens ought to be alarmed about the information being taught to our children on all subjects. I urge all those who say we "choose" to be gay first take a short course about our "lifestyle" before making further uneducated comments about us.

The military ban in our schools should remain. Opponents argue that it should be lifted because we don't also ban the Boy Scouts nor does it include in the justification for the ban that women are discriminated against in the military.

If we were to take this reasoning to its logical conclusion, no symbolic anti-discriminatory action ever should be taken unless it included restrictions on every group and protections for all classes. The women's and African American rights movements never would have succeeded to the extent they have if they first had been required to include all minority groups before moving forward with their individual causes.

In addition, no child in our public schools is being denied the opportunity to join the military. The armed forces advertise heavily on television, on radio and in other media. Recruiting offices are readily available to all interested students.

Our children who are or who are perceived to be gay and lesbian should not be subjected to the anti-gay practices of the military in the very buildings where they are being taught our national creed is "equality for all." If you are willing to add a footnote to that statement, "except for gays and lesbians," then you are making a mockery out of our national creed and supporting the blatant discriminatory policy of the U.S. armed forces.

GEORGE EIGHMEY
Portland

Losing my religion

TO THE EDITOR:

The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints is a homophobic "cult" ["Gay Mormons Sponsor Vigil," April 20]. As a former semiresident of Utah (I'm not a Mormon, by the way), I have been exposed to this religion.

Joseph Smith was kicked out of Illinois for something not desirable in our society—

essentially, polygamy and other unacceptable behaviors. On the way to the Salt Lake Basin, tablets were discovered...which brings you up to date! That's enough history for now.

In simple terms, this religion is nothing more than "population explosion"! Name me one member of the Council of Twelve who has homosexual leanings or understanding. Name me one ward bishop who is understanding of homosexuality, particularly in the state of Utah.

No way! They have a "police type check up on everybody" mentality!

Gays and Mormons are going in extremely divergent directions. They don't mix.

Gay Mormons should consider finding another church that supports their lifestyle if religion is that important to them. "They" always believe you will be converted...to "straight" life!

The pressure will not cease. But your association with this religion can!

If you are a tithe-paying member (15 percent to 20 percent of your income or salary), your dollars are being used to fund anti-homosexual campaigns nationwide. A million dollars comes to mind regarding the crusade (anti, of course) toward the state of Minnesota issue of gay marriages.

What a waste of money that could have funded needy people instead—food, clothing, etc.! This is an example of the extremism of this "cult."

Good luck, all gay Mormons!

CLIFF SROKA
Portland

Don't forget to vote

TO THE EDITOR:

Just a quick note to let you know about a poll of the top officers at the Keeston Lowery GLBT Democratic Club: unanimous support for Diane Linn as Multnomah County chair and for community member Charlotte Comito as District 1 commissioner. We are lucky to have these great candidates for two tough and unglamorous jobs.

We need these friends in high places. Please support them in this special mail-in election.

DICK LEVY
Keeston Lowery GLBT Democratic Club Chair

The truth about cats and dogs

TO THE EDITOR:

This is probably too late to make any difference, but I'd like to put in my two cents' worth anyway. Many people don't have any family except for their beloved animals, and as they say, love makes a family ["Did You Miss Me?" March 16].

I think it is very appropriate to include an obituary for an animal in *Just Out*; in fact, I think it would be cruel not to publish it. Thanks for the opportunity to comment.

BARB GREENE
Portland

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