

speak out

just asking Same-sex public displays of affection: Do they fill your heart with pride, or do you think they're best left at home?

I think PDAs of any type should be discreet, and not just among gays. I don't appreciate seeing heteros deep-throating it in public. I have a 7-year-old daughter, and I don't think she should have to be exposed to that. Hand-holding and affectionate kisses in public don't bother me, and it should be OK for gays and heteros.

I usually gauge the environment around me before I decide to give a kiss. I also don't want to offend people. I realize some older people were not brought up with gay pride, and I consider it disrespectful not to take their feelings into account. Why create a scene?

KRISTI DAVENPORT
Portland

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Do same-sex public displays of affection fill my heart with joy? Of course.

My friend takes a moment, even when he doesn't have a moment, to give me a snuggle/hug.

A young man holds his friend in his arms while enjoying a boat ride at Disneyland.

The world gets to see the love, joy, confidence and support in these public displays of affection.

Two people openly enjoying each other? Absolutely!!!

RICH KIBBONS
Portland

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Simply put, I think public displays of affection are heartwarming. To see love expressed between couples of any age or gender is great. I like it that many gay and lesbian folks do not let social mores keep them from being themselves.



PHOTO BY JOEY GONZALES

There is a limit, however, in my opinion. There is a difference between being too publicly sexual and displaying affection. That is a standard I would hope even straight folks observe. But other than that, I think it is empowering!

THE REV. TARA L. WILKINS
Boring

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I love it! American culture, if there is one, has a strange relationship with love and sex. We see graphic depictions of "sexuality" in every magazine, television program, movie and billboard, yet there is some strange puritan leftover ethic that says, "Love and sex are bad!"

I think it's a nice reminder of what life is all about: finding someone to love. Kiss on, my friends.

ERIN SEXTON
Portland

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I have been on both sides of this fence. I have been in short relationships (that I thought were going to be long ones), kissing and practically glued to the other person. When it was over, it seemed rather embarrassing to find that my hormones took control.

But then again I have dated those who don't show much affection in public, and I have friends who feel the same. If someone feels scared or uncomfortable about affection in public, you should respect their opinion or not spend time with them. As the gay population becomes more acceptable to the general public, I hope someday one wouldn't think to ask this question.

As for me, I am an affectionate person, and hiding who I am would be like going back in the closet. Been there, done that.

RICK CALDWELL
Portland

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I like to see couples holding hands, hugging and looking warmly into each other's eyes in public. It doesn't matter whether they are same-sex or opposite-sex; if they are showing affection, I like it. I don't think there is a need for public



PHOTO BY DENI STARR

displays of a sexual nature. I think that type of involvement should be private.

I look forward to the time when all of our cities, towns and rural areas accept affection between same-sex couples just as they do for opposite-sex couples. The experience of being affectionate in public, as I experienced at Pride Northwest, should be experienced by everyone in our community freely.

CHERYL (ADERO) ALLISON
Corvallis

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It is important for the world to see that I am in love and that it is good. Showing the world I am happy to be with this wonderful woman dispels the myth that queers are a lonely and sad group of lost souls. I am proud to be in love and affectionate and am always delighted to see it in other same-sex couples.

ANNIE BULLINGTON
Portland

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I'm just 17, and the sight of two men together in public makes me glad to be alive in a time when that is even possible.

KEEGAN O'CONNOR
Portland

NEXT ISSUE: Gay niche marketing: Does it signal growing acceptance by mainstream companies, or are they just seeing lavender dollar signs? Are we being supported, or are we being manipulated? Respond at www.justout.com. (Don't forget to include your name, city and daytime telephone number.)

lesbian readers but also the community at large.

I am also aware your decision on this issue was not an easy one. Your courage in taking this ethical stance deserves to be acknowledged.

Each year, an estimated 20,000 greyhounds are killed nationwide because they are no longer fast enough to turn a profit. Grey2K USA is working with local advocates across the country to end the killing and cruelty associated with this industry.

On behalf of our more than 5,000 volunteers and members nationwide, we commend you for your decision.

CAREY M. THEIL
Grey2K USA President
Somerville, Mass.

Thank you, Just Out

TO THE EDITOR:
I really appreciate *Just Out* providing information and keeping our queer community up-to-date about Pride Northwest events. Many peo-

ple have told me they learned a lot from the article on our festival ["Pride Q & A," July 20].

Well, thank you Marty Davis. She is the one who suggested Tom Stevenson write the article because "people needed to know" what it takes to put our festival together.

I realize we all sometimes take *Just Out* for granted: It always will be there, always will keep us informed, always will support us. But that doesn't just "happen." It takes a lot of love, effort and money.

Just answering all the phone calls with questions about Pride and other events takes up a lot of time. And you all do it so cheerfully! (And your help is really, really appreciated!!!)

Portland Pride is truly a community event. No single group or club or person can make it possible.

I sincerely appreciate the ongoing help and sponsorship of *Just Out*. Thank you to all of your wonderful staff!

LINDA K. WILLIAMS
Pride Northwest Festival Chairwoman

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