

Speak Out

and hetero as we spend our lives trying to understand ourselves.

I have compassionate feelings for Ellen DeGeneres and Anne Heche. None of us has the power to make another person change from hetero to homo; it's like trying to change eye color. The code of life controls who we are.

Can we perform sexually as a homo and hetero? Obviously.

I wager that when Heche realized she was incapable of being a lesbian, the separation couldn't be stopped no matter how deeply they loved each other. I've backed off from judging anybody in their painful journeys to know themselves.

I wish DeGeneres and Heche the best in their search for the loves of their dreams. Because of their public standing, their dignity has been assaulted and their privacy as two consensual adults violated.

It's none of our business. And so it is with me.

FANCHON BLAKE
Eugene

Walk the talk

TO THE EDITOR:

I'm sorry to hear Jack Danger has concluded—with regard to my writing—"If she's against it, I'm for it" ["Frontier and Center," Aug. 3]. I guess that means he supports housing discrimination against transsexuals younger than 25 as well as allowing military recruiters back in Portland's public schools, to cite a few issues I've written about in the past year.

Danger apparently also is willing to mis-

lead *Just Out* readers by engaging in a selective reading of the words I used to criticize the Rural Organizing Project as undemocratic. In an attempt to prove I'm wrong to write that "individuals as such aren't permitted to join and vote [my emphasis]," Danger claims to be a member.

Check the bylaws, Jack—Article VI, Section I, titled "Supporting and Individual Memberships," clearly states: "A suggested donation category will be set by the board from time to time for supporting and individual memberships. *There are no voting rights* [my emphasis again] or benefits that accompany such memberships."

If Danger's disingenuous contortion of plain English is any indication of the rest of ROP's disenfranchised "membership," it's no wonder the organization claims to support "the values of democracy" and "build statewide power for democracy" but won't walk its talk.

MARGARET DEIRDRE O'HARTIGAN
Portland

Sporting chance

TO THE EDITOR:

Here's a request: *Just Out* needs a regular sports column in every issue of the paper. Here's why: In the past few years, the Northwest has witnessed a steady increase in GLBT sporting groups and events, only some of which get covered in *Just Out*.

This summer, the Rose City Softball Association played host to the Cascade Cup tournament with teams from around the region. Earlier this year, the Portland Lambda Pool League traveled to San Francisco to compete

in the first-ever nationwide gay billiards tournament. These and so many other sporting groups have a story to tell about the thrill of living.

Tell us about the GLBT bowling groups and darts groups. Tell us about the Adventure Group for gay hikers. Tell us about other GLBT sporting groups in the Willamette Valley and southern Oregon.

You recently told us about Team Oregon, which will attend the 2002 Gay Games in Sydney. But tell us more, about the athletes and their events: swimming, track, field, bicycling. And many of these sporting groups raise money for local charities, thus strengthening a sense of community.

The rise of GLBT sporting groups exemplifies a growing, maturing, dynamic GLBT community exploring its own talents and offering them to the wider world. Use your network of free-lance writers to capture this rising spirit of joy!

RON RASMUSSEN JR.
Vancouver, Wash.

Support system

TO THE EDITOR:

Excellent article about supporting those places that support you—and us ["Caught in the Cross Fire," Aug. 17]. It would be most helpful if you would print a page of businesses that allow *Just Out* to be distributed.

Also a list of places that have evicted us. Only then can we indeed know who to support.

CHARLOTTE KEMP
Portland

Just Asking

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?

Supported or manipulated, it's better than being told that we are not welcome, it seems to me.

Whether it is because of acceptance of homosexuality and alternative "sexual lifestyles" or just a desire to get my "lavender dollars," I'd rather spend my money at commercial establishments that give some evidence of wanting my business than at places such as Macheezmo Mouse, Taco Del Mar, Starbucks and Wal-Mart (see, I read the Aug. 17 *Just Out*!) that clearly are not welcoming to GLBT customers. And I let businesses know why I patronize or avoid them when deciding where to take my bucks.

I have contacted the businesses that were reported to be unwelcoming to the GLBT community in the last issue to tell them I will take my "lavender dollars" elsewhere! I also sent a message of appreciation to Beaulieu Vineyards for becoming a corporate underwriter of the *In the Life* television series on PBS.

LYLE M. TUCKER
Lake Oswego

competitive, they must eliminate barriers to hiring and keeping the best people. I would patronize a business that markets to the gay community simply because they present us in a positive light.

SANDRA STEWART
Portland

I feel the mainstream companies are seeing lavender dollars. But is that all bad?

They support local events. In return, all they ask is for a mutual support of their products.

When we choose to "buy" or "not to buy," we cast a vote of "yes" or "no" to what products or services they offer. Until then, be thankful the gay community has been vocal enough even to be recognized as a "niche."

ROB ADAMS
Tigard

Seems like I've read enough articles about how "affluent" we gays and lesbians are all supposed to be. Well then of course companies that are in it for the big bucks are going to go after the lavender dollars, because there's supposed to be so much of it.

On the flip side are the companies that give the appearance of being more accepting and go after our business as well as those that wouldn't touch our dollars for "nuttin' if we knows we doin' bizness with folk from the homa-sex-wal population!" (That last part of the sentence is said in what's called "redneck" speak.)

But at the risk of sounding too cynical, I'd like to think I lean more on the side of thinking that maybe it really is starting to soften up out there. Companies are realizing we're good consumers, too, who want the same things everyone else does—but with more fashion, color, taste and style, of course! (Definitely said tongue in cheek...hmm...maybe.)

TINA CONOVER
Vancouver, Wash.

Niche marketing is a clear indicator that gays and lesbians are being viewed as a powerful demographic sector of society. Organizations like Netflix—which recently added a "Gay and Lesbian" genre among others such as "Romance" and "Action/Adventure"—obviously acknowledge the strength and existence of our community. Being seen as an economically powerful community is a very prominent step toward across-the-board acceptance.

PAUL PRATT
Mountain View, Calif.

NEXT ISSUE: The Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation protests a stoner comedy and a 1970s game show. (See Page 23.) Is political correctness going overboard? Respond at www.justout.com. (Don't forget to include your name, city and daytime telephone number.)

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