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## Speak Out

erty and the pursuit of happiness." Our Declaration of Independence was not written by Americans, it was written by immigrants striving to become Americans.

Osama bin Laden's ultimate goal is not to kill our people, it is to change our way of life. While our young men and women are winning the war against terrorism, he is winning the war against our way of life.

We cannot sit and watch Ashcroft throw rights out for the expediency of "safety." He has attacked Oregon voters' decisions, the state's right to govern its doctors, civilians' right to attorney-client confidentiality, accused people's right to a public trial of peers and everyone's rights regarding monitored communication, nonwarranted searches and racial profiling.

I am happy my police are the kind of people who will take a stand for what is right.

CHRISTOPHER B. WEBSTER  
Portland

### 'Tis the season

TO THE EDITOR:  
I was quite happily impressed when the Salvation Army announced an extension of benefits to employee partners. Recently, under pressure from conservative religious groups, it has rescinded that policy.

I wrote to the Salvation Army to express my displeasure at this latest news and to say I no longer would be making contributions of any kind (not even for tax-relief purposes). I also explained I will not allow my daughter to make any further contributions (which come out of my pocket).

I have explained to her that the Salvation Army has demonstrated a discriminatory attitude toward its employees' unmarried partners, which in 7-year-old terms is "not fair" and "unkind." Instead, we will make little messages of displeasure (not what you think, but it is tempting) to drop into contribution buckets.

I am raising my daughter to be conscientious and kind and charitable. About the best thing I can say about the Salvation Army is it has handed me an opportunity to teach and show at the same time. Although we are not contributing, we will be discussing why we are giving to other charitable agencies instead.

FLORA M. RAMEY  
Portland

### Chewing the fat

TO THE EDITOR:  
I was saddened, disturbed and therein provoked to think at great length about the issues raised in the articles on women of size in your recent issue ["Bigger Isn't Always Better" and "Less Is More," Oct. 5].

All fat women are not physically or psychologically unhealthy. There are fat women who practice a healthy lifestyle and are not involved in self-defeating behaviors ["Tipping the Scales," Nov. 2].

Not all big women are fat. Some big people have ancestors who were big people.

Other large people, like the recent disclosure of Drew Carey, eat a lousy high-fat diet, have a genetic predisposition to heart disease and—voila!—almost die. So, yes, some fat people get fat because they live a slothful life!

Let's not forget we are saturated with high-fat food drenched with chemicals; that's what's available at the grocery store. Some thin people live a slothful life, yet they stay thin.

Most sadly, many women diet their way up to life-threatening diseases—wherein weight loss surgery becomes a last beacon of hope. Being on a perpetual diet is no more healthy than eating, as the weight loss surgery folks have to, only a tablespoonful of food at a time.

LINDA S. KANZINGER  
Portland

### Waffling homosexuals

TO THE EDITOR:  
I am not a homosexual, but I have to admit I do find the gay lifestyle immensely exciting and interesting, and I read many gay magazines and newspapers.

But there is something about homosexuals I find puzzling. I remember in the early 1980s when the Al Pacino movie *Cruising* was released. Many gays were outraged and highly offended by this film. I didn't understand the big hoopla then, and I still don't get it.

And when the Michael Douglas film *Basic Instinct* came out (no pun intended!), once again the gay community was extremely upset, and they complained about the way the straight community portrays gays in the movies.

First of all, if the gay community does not like the way they are portrayed on film, why don't they just make their own films instead of depending so much on straight people to make gay movies? Honestly, do homosexuals really expect heterosexuals to know how to create realistic gay characters?

Second of all, it seems as if the gay community wants to have it both ways. They complain when no gay characters are on television and in the movies, then they complain when they don't consider the gay characters to be realistic depictions of homosexual life!

My goodness! Now y'all got me just as confused as y'all are! Pardon my Southern accent.

SHIRLEY D. JACKSON  
Portland

### correction

In the Nov. 16 article "Going Down Under," Jill Schuldt's name was misspelled. In addition, these statements should have been attributed to Bec Williams: "We're going to do some fund raising to help people out.... How can you go wrong with a bunch of gay people? It seems like we always get together just to defend ourselves against the [Oregon Citizens Alliance], so it's nice to do something more positive."

Just Out regrets the errors.



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