

Speak Out

just asking

Basic Rights Oregon says, "Clog the Kettles." Is this mean-spirited considering the times or justified activism?

I think it's up to the individual, but I wouldn't donate to an anti-gay organization. It's just plain discrimination. There are lots of other ways to contribute to the homeless and hungry.

TARA TAYLOR
Portland

...

You're either for discrimination or you're against discrimination. You're either for clogging the kettles or you're against clogging the kettles.

I think it is justified activism, and I think everyone should do what I do: Go to a novelty shop, buy some phony bills, stamp "Gay Money" on all of them, find as many kettles as you can during your Christmas shopping spree and drop them in each one to remind the Salvation Army that discrimination will not be tolerated and will come at a cost! Let's roll!

CHRIS SCHLEGEL
Portland

...

This is a time, and a time of year, for transcendence above even our own oh-so-important political-social agenda; the end of the line of the clog proposed are the homeless, the hungry, humanity direly in need of hope. Make ourselves heard, yes, but know that a demonstration of this sort in the midst of winter may even have the effect of costing someone his or her very life, and that's no exaggeration....

CAMERON NEIL MICHAELIS
Eugene

...

Do we overlook injustice because they might do some good? No.

They did what was right, then caved in to right-wing extremists. There should be no reward for perpetuating hate and injustice.

It's enough that they use their tax-exempt religious status to get free government services already. Why should we voluntarily give them more to use against us? Letting them know that there is a cost to prejudice makes sense.

SCOTT SEIBERT
Portland

...

What I think we should do is boycott the stores that allow the Salvation Army to beg for money on their property. Then the only place it will be able to beg is on paid television and radio ads.

Deacon Jose's yellow roses for his patron saint. The cows came home; now, Kevin is home.

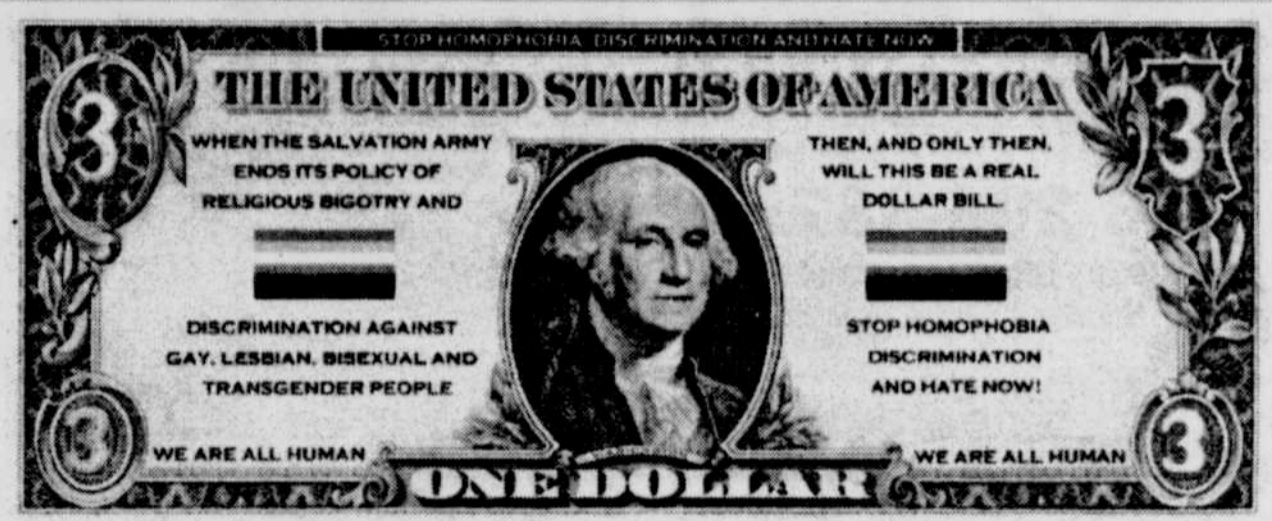
Less than one-fifth have their quilts on display. None are forgotten....

RICH KIBBONS
Portland

Sin and virtue

TO THE EDITOR:

Let's talk sin and virtue, shall we? Two people of the same gender fall in love



I know I will be e-mailing everyone I know across this great country of ours and letting them know how I feel, and hopefully they, too, will boycott any and all businesses that allow the Salvation Army on their property until they change their stance on discrimination against gay men and lesbians. Something needs to be done to get equal treatment in this country, and the almighty dollar seems to work well, so we need to use it as our voice.

ROGER STEFFANI
Beaverton

...

I think the Salvation Army's policies are I mean-spirited. Therefore, action against the group is not only justified but necessary.

Because the Salvation Army is a religious right-wing paramilitary organization, I think even more drastic and dramatic action would be justified. This clogging the kettles is pretty low-key, after all.

And in case *Just Out* readers have forgotten, it should be remembered that a few years ago the Salvation Army right here in Portland told a gay man in its addiction recovery program that in order to stop being an alcoholic he'd have to stop being gay, too. Even now, that story makes me so mad I can think of a few things besides fake money I'd like to stick in their damn kettles.

CHRISTOPHER D. CUTTONE
Portland

...

I originally was in favor of stopping my support of the Salvation Army. But after reading Marty Davis' editorial and visiting the Basic Rights Oregon Web site, I will send my usual Christmas check and the \$3 bill I printed off the Internet. I always can hope help for all humans might happen, even if the Salvation Army is so open to right-wing pressures.

(Then, by the by, I am agitated at the Human Rights Campaign for endorsing U.S.

Sen. Gordon Smith. I am leery of one-issue organizations who are so narrowly focused as to avoid looking at Gordie's full record and saying no more of his ilk, period!)

BRUCE RICHARDS
Beaverton

...

I support and am actively promoting the queer dollar campaign that Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays and Basic Rights Oregon are involved with. In addition to clogging the kettles, I even have written a letter to the Salvation Army's national office.

The fact that right-wing fanatics are countering our campaign tells me what we're doing is coming through loud and clear. This year, I've opted to donate to the Oregon Food Bank and my affirming church congregation because I believe in the spirit of charity—from discrimination.

As a gay man, what is personal is political. My history of giving reflects what I care about and what is relevant to me. The Salvation Army's recent "outing" as an anti-gay extremist Christian group is an attack on me and my beliefs and my choice to be a responsible, thoughtful citizen.

I look forward to a time when I can donate to the kettles guilt-free. I look forward to a time when the "biblical principle" that the Salvation Army chooses to espouse is to love one another. I know that one doesn't hurt as much as it helps.

HUNTER JOOS
Portland

NEXT ISSUE: Will & Grace: Is it on your "best of 2001" list, or should it make a new year's resolution to get real? Respond at www.justout.com. (Don't forget to include your name, city and daytime telephone number.)

and forge a lifelong partnership: Now that's sin.

Pat Robertson starts a campaign for the Bloated Babies of the African Outback, the donations of which are to buy a bush plane to take relief to the suffering angels, and after reaping the fat of Protestant guilt instead buys a shuttle jet so he and other members of the Christian Mafia can hip-hop over Africa doing diamond business with Liberian terrorists, whose real missionary zeal is to convert warlords and ruthless dictators, and while they're still dizzy from the bang contract for

10 percent of the annual profits from the drug trade, and who in his heart of hearts wouldn't deliberately help a little black baby across the street if he could kick it there with a steel-toed boot: Well, that's virtue.

Excuse me, Brother Robertson, but I believe I'll have to pass on snorting that fine white line for Jesus. With my fallen nature as a heathen and all, I guess I just fail to grasp the finer points of saintliness.

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