

Speak Out

decision. Realize the endorsement was given in order to maintain a foothold and ensure the passage of future legislation to protect our civil liberties.

LINCOLN HEARTSONG
Portland

Word's worth

TO THE EDITOR:

I am sorry Marc Acito finds Walt Whitman boring ["Whitless," Jan. 18].

I have always rather liked his poetry, even though it can be wordy at times. I have not read Gary Schmidgall's work, so I am not sure how much of Whitman's life he covers, but I think most academics would agree that the poetry is homoerotic and that he was not just looking for a place to sleep along the docks.

Whitman had a career as a journalist for the *Brooklyn Eagle-Dispatch* in his early days. He rode one of the new horse-drawn trolleys to work, which is where he met Peter Dugan, a young (I think around 15) bell ringer

and ticket taker. (He obviously rang Whitman's bell.)

They had a rather long relationship until it was stopped by Whitman's sister, who lived in New Jersey. That is why he spent the last years of his life trying to revise and expunge some of his works.

He had a heart attack, although it was not that serious or he would not have lived for that much longer. His sister promised to care for him under the condition that he part ways with the young man, and it would seem she was the hand behind his literary revisions.

She put the fear of dying alone into him, and the man capitulated. It is a sad tale.

I might point out that one of the late 20th century's main gay poets, Alan Ginsberg, looked upon Whitman as the mentor of the whole Beat movement and considered himself Whitman's spiritual successor. The bookstore Lawrence Ferlinghetti opened in San Francisco (Marc should visit it for better works on Whitman) takes its name from a series of Whitman's best poetry, *City Lights*. That is what Marc should read rather than

Leaves of Grass. He might find it more enjoyable as well as very enlightening.

MICHAEL MASE
Portland

Stein's way

TO THE EDITOR:

I was happy to see that Beverly Stein is making jobs for Oregonians a top priority. I'm glad she understands that getting our economy back on track will solve many of the state's problems.

While everyone else talks about the economy, Beverly will attack the problem from every angle. She will work for real solutions.

She will work with businesses of every size and stature to provide more opportunities for Oregonians across the state. And Beverly certainly has the experience and record of success to back her up!

Please join me in supporting the candidate who will work with and support every Oregonian to rebuild a strong, resilient state economy. Beverly Stein is the best choice for governor.

ANN CENTIS
Beaverton

Deep in the heart of Texas

TO THE EDITOR:

I had to write and thank you for always sending copies of *Just Out* to the HAPPY Foundation and the Bonham Exchange. Because San Antonio never can maintain a gay newspaper, I probably know more about Portland than I know about what is going on here.

The Bonham Exchange is a popular gay disco in a historic building next to the Alamo, and the HAPPY Foundation Archives also is located in the Bonham Building.

I keep copies of each issue of *Just Out* in the archives and go through others tearing out articles for the vertical files. The rest of the copies I put at the Bonham, and they go fast.

Anyway, while doing my catch-up reading recently, several articles made me roar with laughter. The first one about the Transformers protesting the Butchies concert was so hilarious I thought I was reading a script from *Saturday Night Live* ["Trans Activists Protest Concert," Oct. 19].

The next article about Ernesto Garcia caused me to split my other gut ["Are You Room Bored?"]. Even though he looked adorable, that living room situation was definitely in need of some serious Fag Sway (maybe some Texas or lesbian Fag Sway), which I soon learned of in Marc Acito's column a few pages later ["Interior Decline"]. I am definitely in step with his way of thinking, and he is my new favorite columnist guru.

Then, the "Erotic Education" article brought out some laughs during the brunch group at Madhatter's Tea House Cafe.

I also enjoyed reading about Katie Potter because I had kept the article about her and her father from 1991 in my police file ["Badge of Courage," Jan. 4]. That had made a big impression on me at the time, and I made a point of giving those copies to gay activists here who were struggling with the San Antonio Police Department.

Anyway, I thought your readers would like to know that *Just Out* has an effect on San Antonio and that the eyes of Texas are upon you.

GENE ELDER
San Antonio

just asking Queer as Folk: entertaining fantasy or damaging stereotype? Would you watch it with your parents?

Yes, I would watch *Queer as Folk* with my parents. In fact, I have watched it with my mother.

I have been out to her for so long, it really doesn't matter, especially since she seems to have more gay friends than I have. Isn't there something strange about that? My mother the "fag hag," if you will.

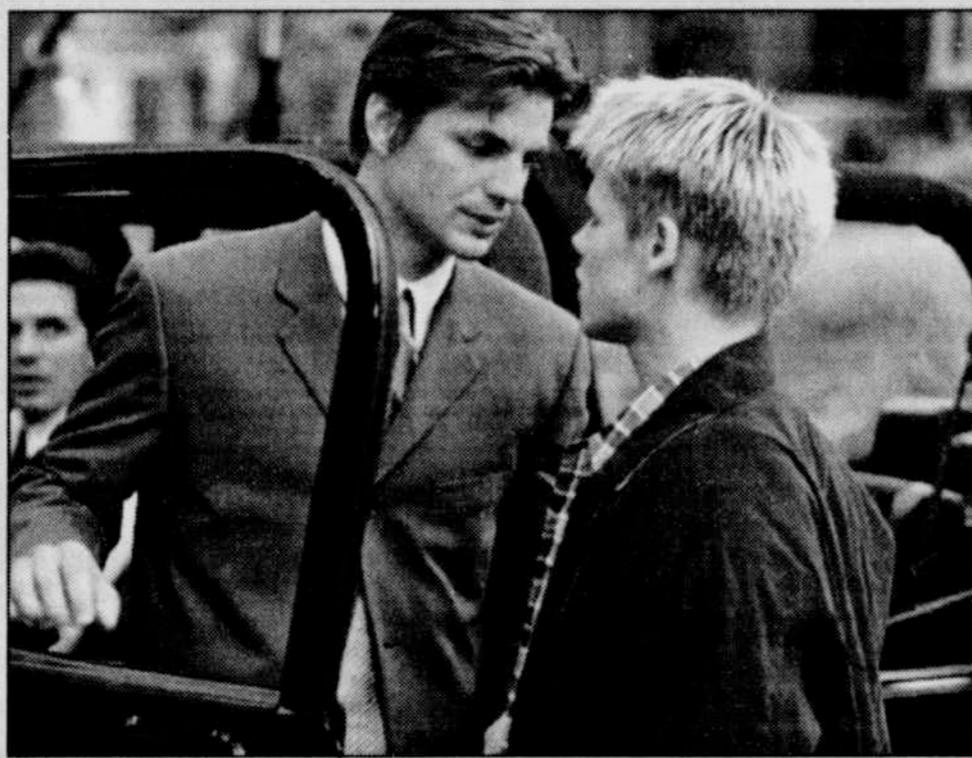
As for stereotyping, of course it's stereotyping. Everything we watch on television is in one way or another.

I think it's excellent that we have a show to watch that has any homosexuality in it at all. It might not be the stereotyping that everyone wants, but it's a step in the right direction. It's finally starting to happen—this new wave of homosexuality being accepted in Hollywood—and if it takes a bit of "stereotyping" to get us there....

We now are beginning to be seen on television as positive people who live just like every other human on this earth, except we sleep with the same sex. We always will be stereotyped no matter what genre of life we choose.

I am just glad they have chosen us. We are interesting and productive parts of society, and finally people are noticing. Kudos to Showtime!

JOHN HICKS
Salem



like the two women who have a baby. I went through something like that. I had a child with a lesbian couple, and it was a wonderful experience!! I think it's a great show for entertainment and also for true-to-life content!!!

SCOT JAIN
Salem

...

I know all of gay society is not like the show. It's fun and frivolous and a gay soap opera. Instead of *Days of Our Lives*, we watch *Queer as Folk*. I watch it with my partner's parents.

EVA HOFFMAN
Milwaukie

next issue How do you react to gay-baiting disc jockeys? Should we lighten up and learn to laugh at ourselves, ignore them and hope they go away, or rise up in righteous anger? Respond at www.justout.com. (Don't forget to include your name, city and daytime telephone number.)

Of the two, I think it's entertaining fantasy. There's nothing damaging in it at all.

A lot of the content is just fun stuff. Most of what is shown can be proven to be true for certain people. Just because they chose to use the club and bathhouse scene as the primary premise doesn't at all imply it is the only "gay life" there is.

They are also good at showing other things


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