

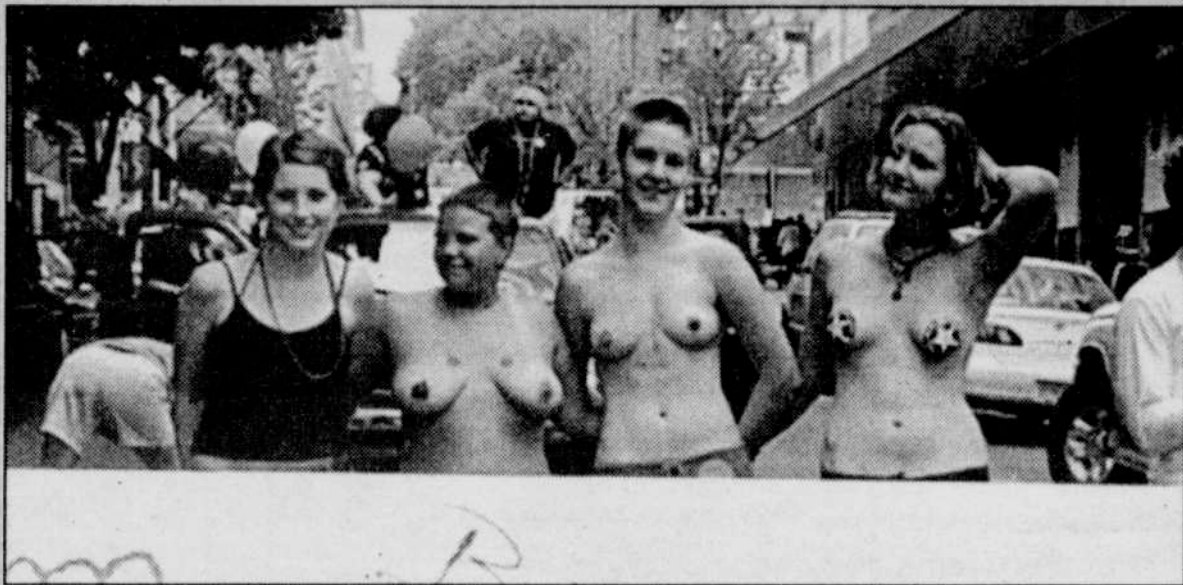
just asking How should the sexual minorities community respond to First Baptist Church's complaint about scantily clad women at Portland Pride 2002?

Don't look, don't watch the parade....

EVA HOFFMAN
Milwaukie

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My partner and I had a debate on this very topic. She felt that this public display had no place in Pride and that it put the sexual minorities community in a bad light. This is just the sort of thing that the media focus on rather than



Is this letter concurrent with these teachings? Is this the message they want to send to their youth? That those who are different from them and celebrate their heritage in different ways are bad and should be avoided? That "out of sight, out of mind" is a better solution than acceptance and compassion?

CODY BLAND
Portland

...

the less exciting parade entrants such as accepting churches, community employers and Parents, Families and Friends of Lesbians and Gays.

I saw it from the point of view of protesting sexual double standards in our community. No one complained about the topless men!

Yet I also had to look at it from the viewpoint of a parent. My 9-year-old daughter was embarrassed by it, and we had to discuss it afterward.

I was raised in the Baptist faith, and I'm sure that wasn't all they complained about. In fact, if the church had its way, we'd all be in reparative therapy and the parade wouldn't happen at all.

ALISA BREWSTER
Portland

...

Why do we always have to explain every gay person's actions? Does every Baptist? It's a no-win situation with many of the churches. No matter what we do they will nitpick.

I attended my first Portland Pride this year. I was amazed at the number of different religious groups represented. But yet did the media mention that? No, they always focus on the extreme.

I consider myself a moderate politically and

feel the best answer is this: If you don't like what you see, turn your head. There are a lot of things that bother me, too! Like organized religion. So I don't give them a dime (which is probably the part that bothers them most).

JACK LONG
Eagle Point

...

First Baptist Church's complaint cited two concerns—one being the concern regarding the topless women, the second regarding parking and departure after the service. Another option would be that because they are being inconvenienced by the parade, why not change the time of their service this one Sunday out of the year? This way, they would not see any portion of the parade nor would they experience any problems traveling to or from the church.

Any church that is at all aligned with Christianity or the teachings of the Bible should understand the importance of diversity and kindness and the celebration of tradition. First Baptist Church's Web site promotes reaching out to others, education, diversity and cultivating vital relationships.

What is the need to respond? There always will be people and churches wishing to make comments about something.

If change is something they seek, then offer a chance to work with the community. If action is what they seek, ask them to assist in the local AIDS association programs. If all they seek is a chance for a headline, they have had it, and there is nothing anyone should or needs to say about it.

MICHEIL MACCUTCHEON
Dover, N.H.

next issue The Burnside Triangle Advisory Group seems to be facing nothing but hostility from conservatives and apathy from queers. Is this a doomed effort, or can it be salvaged? Respond at www.justout.com. (Don't forget to include your name, city and daytime telephone number.)

a staff to help me. And from my pay as a delivery driver for the Irwin-Hodson Company, I am running my campaign while still keeping up my basic living expenses.

I do not have the money other campaigns have to buy hundreds of lawn signs and bus seat signs or even to have my own van painted. Because of all this, I have to work even harder to get my message out—hoping voters will look beyond the amount of lawn signs a campaign has and see the passion I have for the future of this city.

But thanks to the *Oregonian* claiming I am, as well as four other candidates who did not file for the voters' pamphlet, not serious about this campaign, basically we have been written off. I speak only for myself in saying that their irresponsible reporting has cast my candidacy in an unfair, negative light. Is the *Oregonian* only going to give serious attention to the candidates with money to spend for their campaigns?

As for myself, I do not want to buy this election, I want to earn it. And so I will work endlessly, against the negatives of the media, with the time and resources I have to earn the position on the City Council.

Hopefully the *Oregonian*, and other news agencies, will be respectful and give everyone a fair chance. One voice can make a difference. I am trying to make a positive difference, and I hope the media will follow.

RIC BERRONG
Portland

Vision of love

TO THE EDITOR:

I'm writing on behalf of the Hambleton Project, a direct services support group for lesbians with cancer and other life-threatening illnesses. It is the brainchild of Sharon Hambleton, a woman who for most of her adult life participated in women's fast- and slow-pitch softball.

In the '60s she starred in the outfield for the Portland Erv Lind Florists AAA fast-pitch team. She then went on to play slow-pitch for many years in Portland Metro Softball Association leagues.

I noted on your "Out & About" calendar page that the North American Amateur Gay Athletic Alliance World Series is taking place Aug. 19 to 25 here in the Rose City. Sharon would have loved taking part in these games had she not lost her life to cancer in 1998.

As her longtime friend and former teammate on the Erv Lind Florists, I watched Sharon battle her illness for more than four years. Even as her health declined, she remained upbeat and an inspiration to the people in her life.

After Sharon's death, her friends and a host of other volunteers went on to fulfill her vision of forming a unique nonprofit support organization for women battling life-threatening illnesses. Hambleton Project volunteers perform yardwork, cooking and housecleaning, among other chores, for women who are too ill to manage.

Sharon's vision is being realized. The Hambleton Project continues to grow, and more and

more women are being served.

To honor Sharon and to further the work of the support group she inspired, I believe it would be a most fitting tribute if a portion of proceeds from the North American Gay Amateur Athletic Alliance World Series could be earmarked for the Hambleton Project.

CHRIS MAZZUCA
Portland

Honest to God

TO THE EDITOR:

In justifying Metropolitan Community Church of Portland's banning of animal rights advocate Roger Troen, Rich Kibbons states: "I attend church to hear God's word.... Everyone is welcome—unless, of course, you don't want to!" ["The Last Word," Aug. 2]

Unless we are to believe God does not care about His/Her/Its creations in the animal kingdom, it sounds like it is Kibbons and the MCC decision makers who do not want to hear the word of God.

I did not witness how Troen acted at the church. But if he was disrespectful, I stand with him. I would not be able to respect a congregation that believes in a deity that is unconcerned with whether its sentient animal children are pointlessly tortured and killed.

TOM SOPPE
Portland

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