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Speak Out

Courage under fire

TO THE EDITOR:

We never have taken the time to respond to previous editorials and comments made in *Just Out*. However, we were outraged by the comment made in the Oct. 4 issue by Basic Rights Oregon executive director Roey Thorpe ["Attack Ad"].

"I think that if Matthew Shepard met Gordon Smith he would indeed like him; Gordon Smith is a very likable man," she said. "But as a gay man living in Oregon, he would not have voted for Gordon Smith."

How dare she make such a comment! Who the hell does she think she is to speak for every gay man living in Oregon?

First of all, she cannot possibly know what Matthew Shepard would have done. Secondly, we are gay men living in Oregon, and she definitely does not speak for us!

And the commentary by Marty Davis, and the reasons for not attacking Smith, is pathetic, to say the least ["Truth in Advertising"]. It is very safe and comfortable indeed to support what is politically correct. Obviously, Bill Bradbury knows this, and there is little doubt in our minds that he keeps his finger very wet and high in the sky to see which way the political wind is blowing.

Smith, on the other hand, has been very courageous in not only being the only straight Republican to openly support the hate crimes bill but also standing up to President Mr. Bush in opposing oil drilling in Alaska. It takes someone with integrity to do what he has done.

My partner and I would like Davis and Thorpe to know that my partner is a Democrat and that I do not belong to any party. What's more, we both are voting for Gordon Smith and Kevin Mannix.

We believe more is at stake than just gay issues. We cherish the beauty of this earth and are fed up with paying taxes out of the ass because the state Legislature and the governor are lining their pockets with a 12 percent wage increase at the expense of much-needed programs as well as opposing a 2 percent wage increase for full-time state employees who qualify for food stamps.

We both enjoy *Just Out* and believe it provides a vital service to the gay community; unfortunately, we suspect this will not be printed because it goes against the party line. Thank you for taking the time to read this.

THOMAS MOHR III AND STEVEN BERWICK
Portland

Exploiting murder

TO THE EDITOR:

I live out of state but will be moving to Portland on Nov. 1, so I subscribe to *Just Out* and receive them late. Still, I hope you publish my

letter even though it might not be timely.

In response to Marty Davis' Oct. 4 commentary, you bring up some very valid points; in fact, I was convinced Gordon Smith was the better candidate—until I read he was using Judy Shepard, the mother of the late Matthew Shepard, as an endorser. He is exploiting the senseless and brutal murder of a young lad for political gain.

If Oregonians vote for Smith, Oregonians vote for exploitation. If he cannot get elected on his merits alone, but has to use exploitation of a horrific murder for political gain, is he then the best candidate if we elect people based on our own principles or a candidate's principles?

BILL THOMPSON
Houston

Hey, Mary!

TO THE EDITOR:

I think Jim Radosta missed an opportunity to shed better light on Gordon Smith's position on homosexuality around the quote regarding Mary Magdalene ["The Man with Two Faces," Oct. 18].

The relationship of Jesus Christ to Magdalene was based on her repentance and denouncement of her adulterous behavior. Obviously, Gordon believes homosexuality should be repented and denounced.

STEVE HENSLE
Portland

The advocate

TO THE EDITOR:

In less than one week we will vote. An overwhelming amount of information is coming at us from many campaigns. But one vote should be easy for *Just Out* readers to cast, and that's a vote for Serena Cruz for City Council.

Why? Because strong, responsible leadership is needed to manage the complexities of a diverse Portland.

Serena has proven her leadership and has done so with attention to equality and basic rights for all. As a Multnomah County commissioner, she fought to see that the Civil Rights Ordinance was passed. Every year I've attended Portland Pride, I've seen Serena marching, not behind a personal campaign banner but along with other Multnomah County employees and their banner.

Serena's record on the commission is outstanding; she gets things done. She continually fights to ensure diversity issues stay in focus.

I've watched her successfully influence responsible decision-making that includes the interests of all people. I know she will carry these values with her to the City Council.

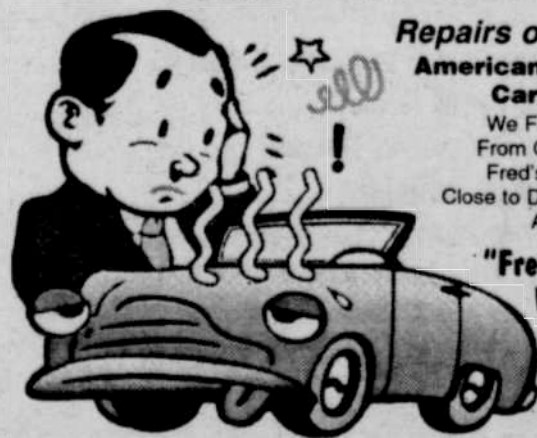
One of my friends said to me, "Serena is not

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