

**speak out**

**just asking** *The first same-sex couple featured on the Oregonian "Celebrations" page has complained about being segregated under the heading "Commitments." How do you feel about this? Also, are you planning on announcing your union now that the newspaper has an inclusive policy?*

I agree that it should be classified as "Commitments." Until the day comes that we actually can get married, we simply are committed! We should be happy that we are at least to a stage where the Oregonian is happy to recognize that!

DAVID PETTIT  
Portland

...

The first "couple" should go rent *Last Call at Maud's* and then rethink their need to complain about one more positive rung on the status quo ladder! It was not that long ago that any announcement of this type in a publication not targeting the gay/lesbian lifestyle would have been unthinkable. This is a positive step; drop the negative attitude!

In answer to the second question: No, we called everybody we wanted to tell because—at

rorism bills that have been passing in Congress without so much as a dialogue on the damaging effects of the legislation on our freedoms, I felt a need to express concern.

Does no one understand that as more power is given to the federal government, the people lose their ability to influence and maintain their rights and privacy? National standards for state driver's licenses, FBI ability to spy on any American without a court order, and eased restrictions on wiretapping. Big Brother grew faster in one year than during the past 20.

I am not opposed to a restructuring of our governmental agencies to address terrorism more effectively. I am opposed to increased scrutiny of Americans by Americans as well as government spying on Americans.

I am not opposed to increased nonintrusive observation of people in certain areas of work. But I am opposed to the idea that because I simply want to enter a plane that I am a possible terrorist. What happened to the part of the Bill of Rights protecting me as a U.S. citizen from unreasonable search?

Big government is even now considering the unthinkable: using our own military for domestic law enforcement. Can you feel assured of your rights when arrested by an 18-year-old military officer for a domestic offense?

ERIC BROWN  
Portland

**On the radio**

TO THE EDITOR:

I have listened the past several months to Rick Emerson's local talk radio show on KOTK-AM.

He consistently puts down lesbians and gay men and seems to take delight in making denigrating comments and using a derisive tone of voice. While one can be grateful we live in a free society, when frequent, derogatory comments aimed at gays indirectly foster more hate, it's time to stand up and take notice.

I invite you to tune in to the show and find out for yourself or, better, just e-mail rick@rickemerson.com and ask about the policy regarding GLBT people. Or write to program director Bruce Agler. Mention you can choose to go without the products and services of their advertisers.

I'm enormously open-minded and appreciate

the risk of sounding repetitious—10 years ago an announcement of this type in a publication not targeting...etc.

ELAINE CRANDALL  
Beaverton

**next issue** *Would a more vigorous courting and acknowledgment of lesbian fans have helped save the Portland Fire from financial failure? Also, what will dyke sports nuts do for athletic entertainment now that the WNBA team has folded? (Please see related item on Page 3.) Respond at www.justout.com. (Don't forget to include your name, city and daytime telephone number.)*

a sense of humor; however, entertainment that's making fun of others or putting down an entire group of people when they are still subject to considerable discrimination and hate crimes is too much.

I have a considerable number of examples. The constant portrayal of gays as weak, limp-wristed, sissy-voiced, inadequate men is offensive.

Emerson's diatribe against us only seems to be increasing during the past several weeks. His comments will encourage straight and young people to ridicule us more, and in time, it will escalate into more hate.

If his comments were balanced, that would be different. However, never are the strengths and attributes of gays mentioned—just the put-downs, and some very nasty ones.

Emerson is not a closed-minded conservative but a white straight guy who is very liberal and independent. Likely this is a cheap ploy to build ratings—but at what price, when we are being put down?

In 2003, no one has the right to make their living by walking over us. As one who continually has witnessed the strength, manliness and goodness of gay men, I find the mean-spirited comments on his show reprehensible. We are not second or third class.

And a young generation of GLBT people deserves better.

STEVE A. ENGEL  
Portland

**A fond farewell**

TO THE EDITOR:

In with the new, out with the old. I have submitted my resignation to the board of Pride Northwest concerning internal policy issues.

I would ask the sexual minorities community for their continued support of Pride Northwest. This board is passionate and committed with new ideas to expand our community's cultural celebration.

Our parting is without rancor and is with mutual respect. I now can focus more time working on a project of the Sexual Minorities Roundtable to make a safer environment for homeless youth.

NORM COSTA  
Portland

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