

Speak Out

that it was important for our local LGBT organizations take a stand on this issue.

We do this for several reasons. First, LGBT folks are as diverse as the rest of the community. We are not all rich, or all white, or all men, as the stereotype goes.

Second, some of the same concerns about police attitudes toward people of color are concerns that we have about police attitudes toward sexual and gender minorities. So in part, we speak out because LGBT people also experience bias-related violence at the hands of the police. And the system in place, in which no officer has ever been indicted by a grand jury, is urgently in need of an overhaul.

We are also deeply concerned about systemic threats to the safety and civil liberties of people living in this country. Racial profiling and police violence are not new means of expressing racism, and now these wrongs exist in a context in which it is seen as unpatriotic to question what any governmental branch, including the police, does in the name of "public safety." We urge people to resist this trend and to speak out about this incident, which so strongly appears to be a civil rights violation of the harshest kind—the taking of a person's life.

We disagree with many of the sentiments that Marty Davis expressed in her column. We agree with Kathleen Saadat, who wrote: "The societal red herrings that surround the case of Kendra James are just that, red herrings. In this situation as described by either side, Kendra James should not have been shot by anyone sworn 'to protect and serve.'"

Far from seeing James as a person whose life

is less worthy of our attention than others, we see her life as not unlike our own. Who among us has not made mistakes? James' family has lost a daughter, a mother, a sister and a dearly loved young woman. LGBT people should, if nothing else, understand what it is like to have our basic humanity ignored—and to lose the lives of our loved ones—because of fear and ignorance.

The bottom line is that injustice is wrong. We all deserve to be safe in our city, and we urge you to join us in working toward a city in which are all equally safe and justice prevails.

ARWEN BIRD
Survivors Advocating for an Effective System
LORI BUCKWALTER
It's Time, Oregon!
SHERRIAN HAGAR
Parents Union
CHRISTA ORTH
Pride at Work Oregon
THE REV. CECIL PRESCOD
Ainsworth United Church of Christ
ANDRE PRUITT
Brother to Brother
ROY THORPE
Basic Rights Oregon
BONNIE TINKER
Love Makes a Family

End police brutality

TO THE EDITOR:
It makes me sad and angry that the editorial voice of Portland's LGBTQ paper could write about the murder of Kendra James as if she were

ister and/or vote. If we can communicate Dean's message to those people—and get them to the polls—Dr. Dean will be the next president of the United States!

MIM ZELNIK
Portland

Howard Dean is the only candidate who has a chance at beating Bush in 2004. We need to have a candidate who will provide a clear choice between Bush and progressive policies, and Dean is the only one who is providing that choice. As Dean says, "You can't beat Bush with Bush-lite!"

TYSON MORROW
Portland

Yes, I think Howard Dean "For America" has a shot of defeating Bush in 2004. Bush is standing strong in regard to security against terror; however, he hasn't a clue of what the people want. A progressive president would be someone who is for all the people, not just the rich, as Bush's tax plan suggests.

Dean supports all men and women in the United States. He believes in the slogan "life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness" for all. When he signed the civil unions bill in Vermont he said at that time it was a risk; however, if he had voted no he wouldn't have been able to live with himself. That is someone I want as my president.

CAROLINE POWER
Portland

Definitely not! Living here in Salem, the political city of Oregon, the homophobia

somehow not "like you." How many in the LGBTQ community suffer from drug addiction? How many LGBTQ people of color are at risk from traffic stops as a result of "driving while black or brown"? Please seek an editorial writer for the next issue of *Just Out* who can raise the voices of those of us who seek to build alliances across race and end police brutality.

MOIRA BOWMAN
Portland

When you assume...

TO THE EDITOR:
I appreciate many of the points you made in your editorial on Kendra James. I do not agree with the assumption that none of your readers knew her or are affected by the type of racism and classism that affected her. It is all of our responsibility to help build alliances within our LGBTQ community as well as with others.

JEANNIE LAFRANCE
Portland

Kill now, lie later

TO THE EDITOR:
What I would like to know is what exactly is a "routine traffic stop"? What I would like to know is why I, as a white female, have never been stopped for "failing to come to a complete stop" at a stop sign. Why, when I have been in middle-class and upper-class areas

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and right-wing Republicans are more evident than ever. Unfortunately, it has a very "don't ask, don't tell" feel about it.

TERESA SALAZAR
Salem

Our hearts say "yes," but our heads say "no." Although we all know the emperor (King George II) has no clothes, Bush has the money—and, now, the corporate press monopoly—to keep anyone from publicly pointing this out.

Neither Howard Dean nor any other Democratic hopeful on the horizon has the charisma or the access to money to break through the Big Brother shell now in place over "the land of the free." With ironic headlines like "Bush Pursues Peace in the Mideast" (*The Oregonian*, June 3), we'll overlook the obvious lack of clothing; after all, if everyone else can see this beautiful fabric he's wearing of "War is peace," "No child left behind" and "Save the environment by destroying it," who are we to question his right to another four years?

BOB BERGER
DAVE RESSLER
Portland

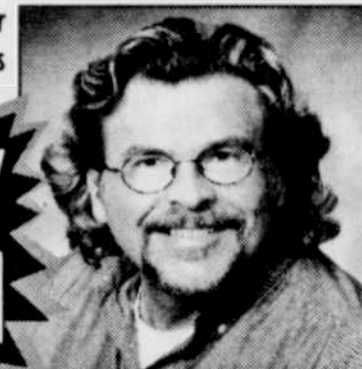
next issue If you could create the ultimate Portland queer community center, what would be its top priorities? Where would it be located? (Please see related item on Page 15.)

Respond at www.justout.com. (Don't forget to include your name, city and daytime telephone number.)

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