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Speak Out

Horizontal violence

TO THE EDITOR:

O.K. That's it. I have HAD IT with everyone in Queendom who wants to collect their politically correct brownie points at Marty Davis' expense. I don't agree with her editorials 90 percent of the time, but I am deeply grateful that she has opted to forego a lucrative career in corporate America in order to provide the queer community with a quality newspaper.

It is one thing to respectfully disagree with the perspective of an editorial; it is another thing altogether to personally attack someone who is making a major contribution to our community for the sake of feeling smugly superior. People who want to offer a different, broader, perhaps more educated perspective on an important issue are doing the community a favor, but this can be done without resorting to character assassination. A personal attack on a fellow member of the community just for the sake of being politically correcter-than-thou is bullshit.

People who don't like Marty's editorials should consider writing a guest editorial. People who don't think there are enough articles in *Just Out* that are all about them should submit their own articles. People who don't like *Just Out* should start their own newspaper. People who want to attack a valuable queer institution in our community and a contributing member of it just for the sake of indulging in their own histrionic need to be victims should FUCK OFF.

DENI STARR
 Portland

Poder to the people

TO THE EDITOR:

Poder Latino de Oregon focuses on developing leadership in the lesbian, gay, bi and trans community by organizing social, educational and HIV prevention events. Our objectives:

1. To promote health and well-being in the Latino communities.
2. To create a place that we can be proud of and feel safe.
3. To focus and promote our group among the Latino communities.

This letter is to clarify allegations made about our group in *Just Out* regarding the "exclusion" of Ms. Gay Latina Oregon Mizz Monique Moore and Mr. David Zambrano's involvement in the matter ["Latina Claims Bias Among Portland Poder," July 4].

First of all, Poder Latino de Oregon is a nonprofit group and has no affiliation with the Mr. and Ms. Gay Latino Oregon pageant or its organizer, Zambrano. He was first contacted May 4 by one of our members, Mario Martinez, regarding his interest in participating on our float and was asked to attend one of our meetings, at which time he was given all the information needed: time, date, place and people to contact with questions regarding the event. He made no attempt in any way to contact our group.

Two of our members, Rufino Gonzalez and Martinez, approached Moore the night she was crowned May 25 to invite her to be on our float for Pride. Her only response was she could not comment, and she referred us to Zambrano, therefore making herself unreachable.

One of our members spoke June 9 with Zambrano regarding the participation of Moore on our float, at which time he said that she would be entering the Ms. Pride Pageant, that it all depended on the outcome of the contest and that he would let us know either way. Three

days later June 12, our group decided we no longer could wait to hear from Zambrano and elected to have instead Mariela on our float as Ms. Poder Latino de Oregon, not as Ms. Gay Latina Oregon.

A Poder Latino member and Zambrano ran into each other June 14, at which time he was informed as to the group's decision to have Mariela representing Poder Latino de Oregon.

A committee of about six people came to our float June 15 as we were getting ready to take our place in the parade, demanding that Moore should be on our float. We explained again of our decision and that she was more than welcome to walk with the float. The committee declined on her behalf.

Since the beginning, our group has never canceled any of our meetings. They have always been every other Thursday.

In closing, our mission as a group is to build community, not separate. In the past two years we have successfully reached the Latin community through events. All of this with a team of volunteers. There was never an issue of miscommunication, as stated by the editor of *Just Out*.

SERGIO URZUA
 HUGO FLORES
 RUFINO GONZALEZ
 JOSE NUNEZ
 MARIO MARTINEZ
 Poder Latino de Oregon Board of Directors

Oh, the humanity!

TO THE EDITOR:

I'm writing regarding the July 4 letter "Does Anybody Care?" and newsbrief "Latina Claims Bias Among Portland Poder." Both struck to the heart of what I have observed and experienced as a lesbian and a person with brown skin.

I grew up in Los Angeles and had a multicultural upbringing. Some members of my family pride themselves in speaking Spanish fluently; others do not.

Back in those days, my father identified as Mexican American and spoke Spanish because my grandparents knew it but also spoke English because that is what is spoken in the United States and by my mother. Living this heritage, I learned that speaking Spanish in this country is fraught with emotional, political and societal implications.

I agree with Mizz Monique Moore and David Zambrano that the kind of discrimination she encountered from a predominantly immigrant Mexican community, glossily labeled as Latino, comes from ignorance. But I also believe that such circumstances result when labels are adopted without a specific "ethnic membership list." Moore, growing up brown in this country, has shown me that the demographics in these ethnic categories are continually shifting and that there was no way for me to keep track of all the boxes to check to meet the requirements for membership.

As for food-poisoned Dy Gulotta: Hey, I hear you! I've been in Portland for more than a year and have been completely ignored by my sister lesbians and brother gays at event after event even without the extra agony you experienced at the last Gay Pride. If you are alone at these events, good luck trying to penetrate a well-established clique!

Both of these items helped me see that I am not the only one who has these experiences. I believe that as much as labels such as "gay" or "Latino" may create an instant community for some, the opposite edge can cut to the core, as what has happened to you and me.

Labels can be divisive if, with your lesbian