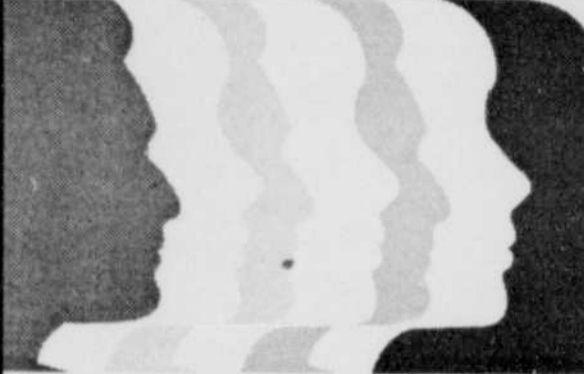


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**Speak Out**

**Anger management**

TO THE EDITOR:  
Your story "Yoga Teacher Invites Gay-Basher to Oregon" is incorrect [Dec. 5]. I never invited Brian Joseph, the person who assaulted me, to Oregon.

Mr. Joseph brutally attacked me without provocation, yet I do have compassion for him. During a court-supervised meeting with him, he expressed to me that he had a problem with anger. I simply invited him to my class in South Africa since I believe yoga is a safe and appropriate way to deal with anger.

I never approved of the media labeling him a "gay-basher." I am concerned that if Mr. Joseph continues to be called a gay-basher, he will be less able to turn his life around. The term diminishes his efforts to reconcile for his poor behavior.

Mr. Joseph apologized to me, and I accepted his apology on the condition that he plead guilty to assault. He is now serving a six-month suspended sentence for three years. Even though I did not specifically ask him to, he also apologized to Cape Town's gay community. He was remorseful and showed courage in facing consequences.

Why must the media indulge in sensational language and label him a gay-basher after he has been brought to justice and made amends?

Am I defending my attacker's violent behavior? Certainly not. I am simply defending him, as I would anyone else, against language that diminishes rather than heals.

People can make whatever assumptions they want, but assumptions should never lead to hate speech or violence. Assumptions should not even lead to misunderstandings, but obviously they do.

For example, *Just Out* assumes that I am "straight" and labels me "heterosexual." This is inappropriate.

My sexual orientation is not relevant to my being assaulted. Mr. Joseph's perceptions about my sexual orientation were completely irrelevant when he asked, "You're one of those,

aren't you?" as he flapped his wrist effeminately. My fellow yoga teacher, Birgit, and I both found this offensive. I tried to diffuse the situation by telling him that I was with my girlfriend and that we wanted some privacy. Shortly thereafter he became violent, hitting me five times.

I remained calm while Mr. Joseph assaulted me—never hitting back or insulting him. I made every effort to bring him to justice. I was able to see past his behavior and see the inherent good in him. I forgive him without hesitation.

I am proud of the contribution that yoga has made in my own life and that I am willing to share yoga with others, including Mr. Joseph.

Through all of this, I am adamant that Mr. Joseph and *Just Out* can't have what's not theirs. My private life is my private life. Please respect that.

The injuries I sustained during the attack have healed exceptionally well, and I am thoroughly-enjoying my holiday abroad.

Please express my best regards to: my family and friends. I trust this letter will address any confusion *Just Out's* story may have caused.

JAMES GIROD  
Portland

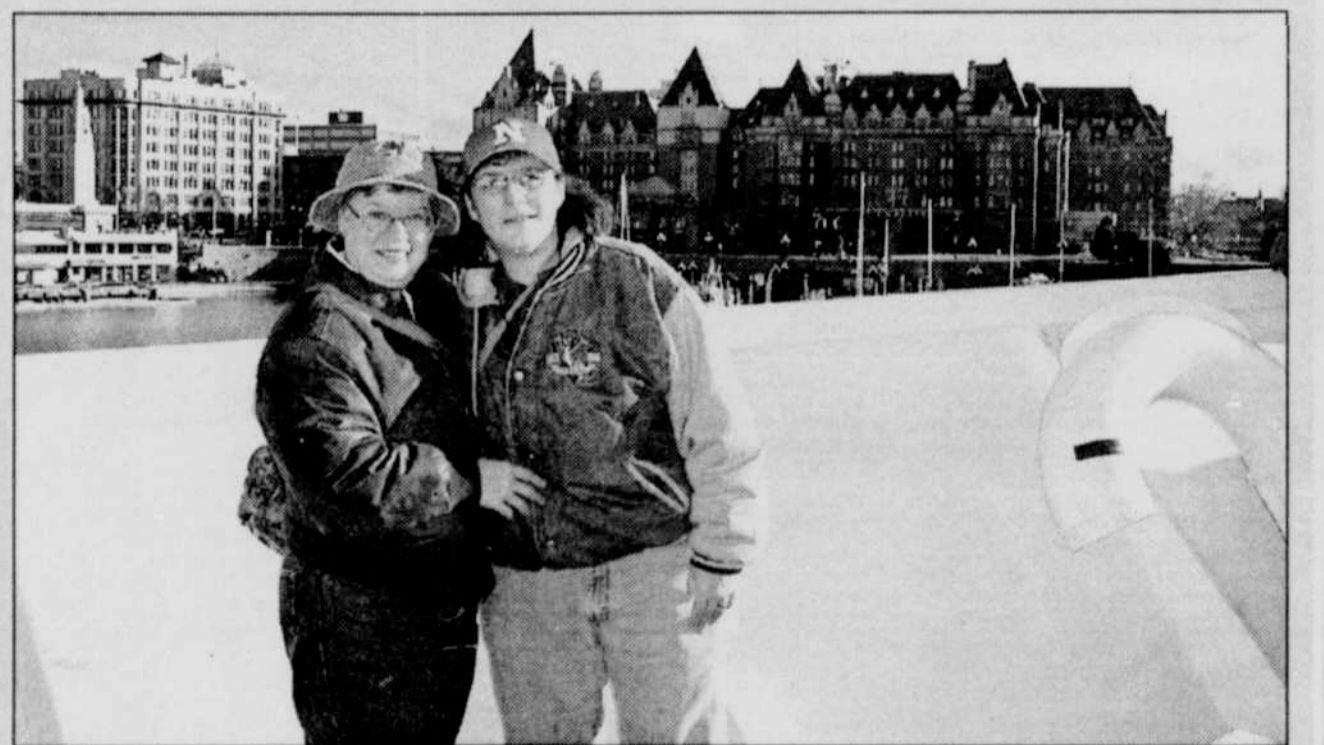
**Mothers deserve compassion**

TO THE EDITOR:  
As lesbians, as grandmothers, as advocates of the right of lesbians and gays to marry, but most especially as human beings and former single mothers, we are horrified by and ashamed of Marty Davis' callous and insensitive insult of the single mothers of two murdered girls ["Hail Marry!" Nov. 21].

Children don't die because of the sexual orientation or marital status of their parents. These mothers loved their children. They are not responsible for their deaths. The girls died because one perverted man murdered them.

Lesbians and gays have not been allowed to marry. We suffer legal and social injustice. But

**notables**



Marlene Daab (left) and Carol Jennings of Portland were married Nov. 28 at the Coast Harbourside Hotel and Marina in Victoria, British Columbia. The couple (pictured here on the deck of the ferry as they left Victoria Harbor on Nov. 30) had a civil ceremony with friends Victoria and Anthony Hawley as their witnesses. They then spent the long holiday weekend in Victoria sightseeing, shopping and finding good restaurants.

Jennings works in the accounting department of a DSL company in Vancouver, Wash. Daab is unemployed.

"We have been together over 10 years and felt that we wanted to make a public declaration of our commitment," the couple told *Just Out*. "The good people of Canada have granted us legal status, and because everyone deserves recognition and validation of their relationships, we decided to take the plunge. Everyone there seemed sincerely happy for us and could not have been more supportive. Too bad we had to go to a country other than our own for that acknowledgment!"