

Speak Out

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place in a newspaper in a metropolitan city and is very irresponsible.

EDWARD W. NOYER
West Linn

God bless Multnomah

TO THE EDITOR:

I am a lesbian and proud of it. The Christian Coalition should stop and think about the way it was before the government raised the ban on interracial marriage. In the Old Testament we were told not to marry outside our tribes. (Tribes are what we call races.)

Back before the courts ruled in favor of interracial marriage, it was no different from what gays and lesbians are facing today. We have as much right to marry the same sex as they have in marrying out of their race.

Come on now. Let the church stay separate from the state.

My partner and I would have been in line to get a legal marriage license if we knew our way around Portland. I would have taken my Bible with me.

What I feel needs to be done by the Christian Coalition is for them to see how many of them are in an interracial marriage. Would they like for their marriage to be banned by the courts?

Thank you to the four Multnomah County commissioners and county attorney for having the nerve and sense to do what they have done. May God bless you fine people in your endeavors to do right for all mankind.

THE REV. BONNIE JAMES
Lincoln City

Cash and Kerry

TO THE EDITOR:

I applaud the Multnomah County commissioners for having such great courage in giving all their residents equal rights under the law by issuing marriage licenses to same-sex couples. It was a little more than 30 years ago that interracial marriages were against the law in many states, and it took gutsy, principled government leaders to change that.

I have been voting for many years, and President Bush is one of the worst leaders in my memory. His latest proposal of amending the Constitution is an excellent example of his distorted leadership, which makes him so despicable; he has chosen the same-sex marriage issue for political purposes in order to divide our country, rather than uniting us.

If, as Bush says, the institution of marriage is so sacred, then why does the United States have the highest divorce rate in the world? Every year there are approximately 2.4 million marriages and 1.2 million divorces in America.

Ironically, the highest divorce rates occur among Bush's strongest supporters in the Bible Belt states of Alabama, Arkansas, Oklahoma and Tennessee, with other Southern states following closely behind in failed marriages. It seems very hypocritical that some righteous "Christians" in these states seem to be the most vocal in denouncing same-sex marriage and frequently quote the Bible to support their arguments.

Since many of these "Christian" heterosexuals seemingly have treated the institution of marriage in such a cavalier manner, then why do they have such strong objections to same-sex

marriages? Probably for the same reasons they fought interracial marriages.

With Bush promoting a constitutional amendment to ban same-sex marriage, I hope the 1 million gays throughout America who voted for him in the 2000 presidential election will get their acts together and cast their votes for John Kerry, who has unequivocally stated that Bush's proposal is a horrible idea. Better still, gays should not only vote for Kerry but should teach the unprincipled Bush a good lesson by donating big bucks to Kerry's campaign within the next few weeks.

LES HEFFLER
Vancouver, Wash.

Going down in history

TO THE EDITOR:

Much happiness to all those who chose to exercise their legal right to marry on that great day in Oregon history, March 3.

More than 150 years ago, my ancestor Entienne Lucier (who was one of the first settlers in the Willamette Valley and who was instrumental in creating the first provincial government in the Oregon Country) married a Native American. This union was undoubtedly unpopular at the time.

Today their marriage wouldn't be controversial, and hopefully it won't take a century for same-sex marriages to be looked upon in the same way as heterosexual marriages. Because of their love, same-sex newlyweds have kept the progressive spirit of Oregon alive!

ROBERT EMTER
Portland

Is Smith a hypocrite?

TO THE EDITOR:

Oregon Republican U.S. Sen. Gordon Smith has pledged to honor his son Garrett's memory by working to prevent suicide among youth. Admirable!

This same senator has pledged to support President Bush in his attempt to make all gays and lesbians second-class citizens in the U.S. Constitution by making same-gender marriage illegal. Not so admirable!

We wonder if the senator has given any thought to the fact that since the rate of suicides is already extremely high among gay and lesbian youth, his support of the anti-gay marriage amendment might just make gay and lesbian youth feel further rejected. We wonder if he thinks his actions just might be considered hypocritical?

HOWARD FRIEDMAN
JACK FALLIN
Milwaukie

Majority rule

TO THE EDITOR:

In all of the excitement lately about gay and lesbian marriage, and especially the furor over the proposed constitutional amendment, a sizable minority of Americans appear to have been forgotten. I am speaking of those born with ambiguous genitalia, known as intersex people.

I believe intersex people are a natural variation of human sexual development. It is estimated that about 1 percent of births are intersex. In a nation of 300 million, that is about 3 million

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