

Speak Out

just asking *How do you feel about Fox's new reality television series Playing It Straight? Does the competition make queers out to be villains, or could the gimmick actually help shatter some stereotypes?*

I don't think the show is set to vilify anyone. Remember, the guys are both straight and gay. It shows what guys are like in general, and you get from that a spectrum of emotions and actions that further humanize gay boys. I think you're just watching people in a crazy situation and the drama that ensues. Any exposure gay people get I think helps desensitize people, making them more comfortable having gay boys around.

LANCE HICKMAN
Portland

next issue *As reflected in the 2003 reader survey, are Just Out readers an adequate and indicative reflection of the greater sexual minorities community? (Please see related item on Page 3.) Respond at www.justout.com. (Don't forget to include your name, city and daytime telephone number.)*

Liberty and justice for all

TO THE EDITOR:

I think what we used to believe was a perfect family—i.e., mother, father, 2.3 children and a dog—needs an update. When I was growing up I never had friends who only had one parent until I was in my teens.

Now I look at my friends and the families I see, and it is mostly one-parent families or same-sex, two-parent families. Some children have two sets of parents due to divorce. How normal is that and how confusing?

Someone said the children would be confused by a same-sex family. I say they are lucky to have two parents!

Children see that there are different kinds of families and adapt. All that concerns them is that they are loved and that their friends are loved and cared for. Children are confused only when they are told their parents are bad, evil perverts by narrow-minded people.

Most of the people I know in same-sex relationships have been together for many years, some as long as 40 years. I don't know many "regular couples" who have been together that long! How is the sanctity of marriage being damaged when, after 13 years, you can legally marry your soul mate and show your children what commitment really means?

The new definition of family is two parents who love each other and their children. If the children are lucky, they can see that when two people are in love, they commit to each other in the bonds of marriage and the meaning of "with liberty and justice for all."

ALICE LYNN
Portland

The war is never over

TO THE EDITOR:

A new biography of President Rutherford B. Hayes reminded me of the present movement to outlaw gay marriage by means of a constitutional amendment. When Hayes was gover-

nor of Ohio, he waged a constant struggle against groups who were trying to reverse Ohio's acceptance of the 14th Amendment, which abolished slavery. To quote Confederate Gen. John Bell Hood in a fiction novel, "The war is never over."

ROLLIN "SPEEDY" ZAWISTOWSKI
Gresham

What if the shoe was on the other foot?

TO THE EDITOR:

In spite of what political and religious conservatives would have you believe, there is only one common thread that is found in ALL definitions of marriage. Marriage always creates a wholly new family. Their claim of "one man, one woman" is not as pervasive as that.

The right to create a family through marriage is so important to us because most of us weren't raised in gay families. We were raised by straights, with straight values and prejudices that hurt or damaged most of us. But the natural human instinct to bond together into family units is not lost or diminished in us, just forbidden by law.

We have tried everything possible to protect our rights through existing legal means. And still, any blood relative with the complicity of practically any judge can throw out all the most carefully crafted legal documentation after a brief court hearing.

Nothing short of full civil marriage will protect our rights fully in the current legal climate. In a more libertarian society none of this would be necessary because the courts would not be allowed to ignore legal documents and contracts in favor of a bigoted blood relative.

But what if the shoe was on the other foot? What if every straight couple had to execute the excess of legal documents suggested as the alternative for same-sex couples? Wouldn't straight couples be crying for equality under the law? Wouldn't they be demanding their rights to the protections of marriage as long as government offered such protections?

The efforts to write discrimination into our Constitutions serve only to deny us the right to create our own families. We don't want to dictate their church's definition of marriage, nor their own personal definition. All we want is our equal right under the law to marry—nothing more, but nothing less.

The Libertarian Party of Georgia recently approved a new platform plank supporting the gay community's position in this fight, and the national Libertarian Party is moving to do the same. Isn't it strange that just when the gay community needs the power of the Democrats most, so many of them go limp on us?

ALLAN K. WALLACE
Outright Libertarians

Vote for Potter

TO THE EDITOR:

We are living in remarkable, historical and changing times, and now more than ever the GLBT community must work collectively to elect the leaders who will keep us moving in the direction of a brighter future.

I've decided to support Tom Potter for mayor of Portland. I like what Tom stands for. He was a different kind of police chief, and I believe he will be a different kind of mayor. I like his commitment to small businesses, healthy schools and the GLBT community. I believe he has the leadership, the vision, the character and the strength to reignite true community involvement in the future of our city and to bring us together.

You can see his positions and sense his passion at www.tomformayor.org. While you are there you can also contribute to his campaign. It won't cost

you much: For the primary, Tom won't accept more than \$25 per person in your household (or per organization donating). A small price for one, but collectively what an incredible amount it could be.

If you don't have money to donate, consider volunteering your time and energy to his campaign. Work on the lawn sign campaign, volunteer to register voters, work the phone banks, or just talk to your family and friends.

As a lesbian and a small-business owner, I'm really happy to be able to say this is a positive choice. A choice that fills me with hope for our city and the GLBT community. I hope you'll agree and join me.

Help us spread the word to everyone across Portland: At last, there's a real alternative to "politics as usual" in our city—a proven leader, standing up for the inclusive and forward-looking community we want.

Tom's campaign slogan is "Bringing Portland Together"—and it all starts with your help! The first step is registering to vote if you haven't already; this means if you have moved you need to reregister!

Also, don't forget the stand our Multnomah County commissioners took for our community. We must fight every step of the way to keep them all in office!

Your vote matters. Don't waste it!

BECKY BILYEU
Touchstone Coffee House

No excuses

TO THE EDITOR:

Minister Tyrone Williams sometimes confuses publicity with actual formal education—and I don't mean what Oregon calls a basic education ["The Last Dawn," Feb. 20].

To wit: The 10 million men, women and children—6 million being Jewish, the remaining 4 million being non-Jewish—did not just go into the crematorium and quietly die. How patently stupid!

"Queers" of all stripes were one of the very first groups to be rounded up, beaten, tortured and then forced like a herd of cattle into chambers that had gas pellets of cyanide dropped into special containers in the roof. When the showers were turned on, the water reacted with the cyanide, and clouds of deadly poison rose up and eventually killed every single man, woman and child in that chamber.

What is true and is known by those of us who actually know history is sometimes the SS would peer through windows from the top and laugh. Once dead, the bodies were then taken to the crematoriums and reduced to ash and bone pieces.

As to kids being raped, sodomized and murdered, what is needed is for somehow the

Continued on Page 7

corrections

The March 19 newsbrief "Show Your Support for Commissioner Rojo" misreported that Love Makes a Family is holding a fund-raiser for Multnomah County Commissioner Maria Rojo de Steffey. The event is being hosted by Kevin and Alex Bailey-Gilliam, Steve Wagenhoffer, Mitch Zahn, Sima Teherani, Willa McConnell, Barb Bloom and Gabrielle Groshong.

A caption accompanying the March 5 newsbrief "Training Workshop, Potluck Planned" misreported that Bonnie Tinker and Sara Graham are married. They have their license, but the ceremony will take place April 17.


The last sentence of the March 19 column "A Friend in Need" was cut off. It should have read: "No matter what the outcome of our battle for marriage rights, very few of us living in Oregon will ever know or face the fears of the two women who I met from Alabama."

Just Out regrets the errors.

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