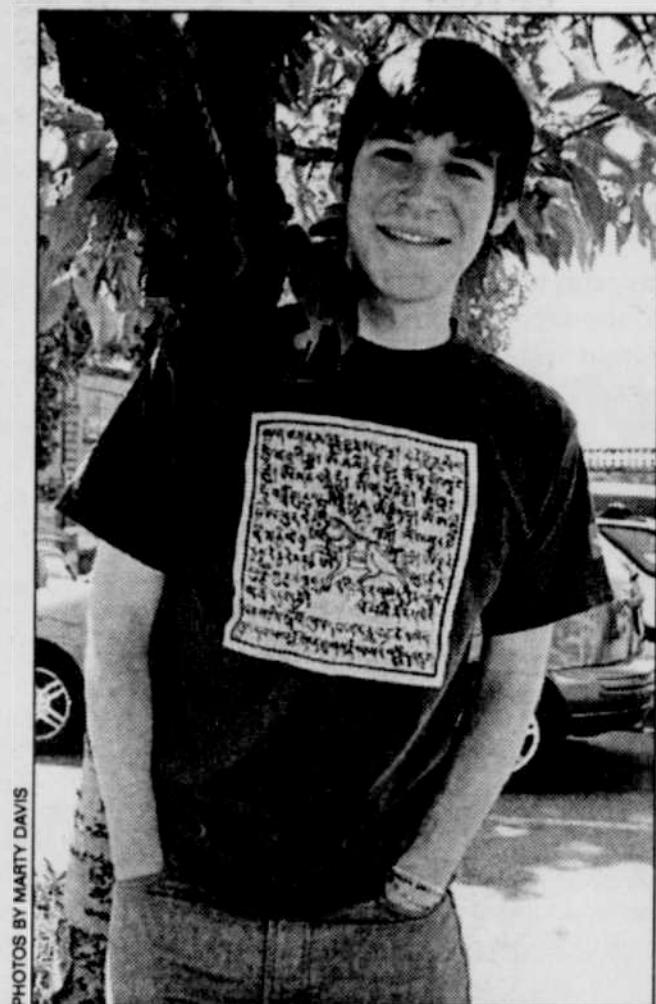




PHOTOS BY MARTY DAVIS

There is a charming modesty about Turner. He opts for comfort over high fashion, which may have to do with his penchant for cross-country running. He flashes a shy smile often, yet he is clearly confident.

Turner says he had a sheltered childhood growing up in Beaverton. He has known he was gay since he was in middle school, but, he says, "I just grasped what it meant last semester."

Being exposed to the wider world has emboldened Turner to stand up for his ideals. When asked about his thoughts on his life work, he doesn't pause: "Peace and justice work. Or working for a nonprofit. Or teaching maybe," he says. "I'd like to do something where I can be on my soapbox."

Turner is an activist by nature. "When gays and lesbians come out, they think the struggle is over," Graham says. "It's not. We have to understand what it means to have gay politics."

However, he is disappointed by many gay politicians. "They're all white men," he says. "They're the same as the rest of the politicians except for what they do in the bedroom."

On the subject of same-sex marriage, Turner says he's still trying to figure it out. "Gays and lesbians are missing an opportunity to examine

what marriage means," he opines. "For example, why are economic advantages given to anyone who marries? Is it just that the pro-creative relationship is honored?"

"Gay couples think with marriage they gain legitimacy and are safe," he continues. "In reality not much is changed. They join the institution which oppressed them."

Turner realizes, however, that "it is easy to be radical in thought and not in action. I'm working on the action." He flashes his shy smile. He looks ready for the challenge, soapbox under his arm.

—Rodger Larson



Sue Frye

When Sue Frye was only 22 she was discharged from the Marine Corps for being a lesbian. "In the military it is a heinous event," she says. "I had to go down to the Office of Naval Intelligence and be interrogated. They search your room...it's scary."

But Frye was not ashamed of who she was. It may have been bad timing, but it just happened that she came out during her service. "More than I should have, obviously," she says.

Although the discharge was hard emotionally, she refused to let it destroy her. She was lucky to come home to a supportive family and two younger sisters who would also eventually come out as lesbian.

She went to work and got involved in the lesbian social scene. In the 1960s, many Portland lesbians gathered at the now defunct restaurant/bar Zorba's to eat, dance and play

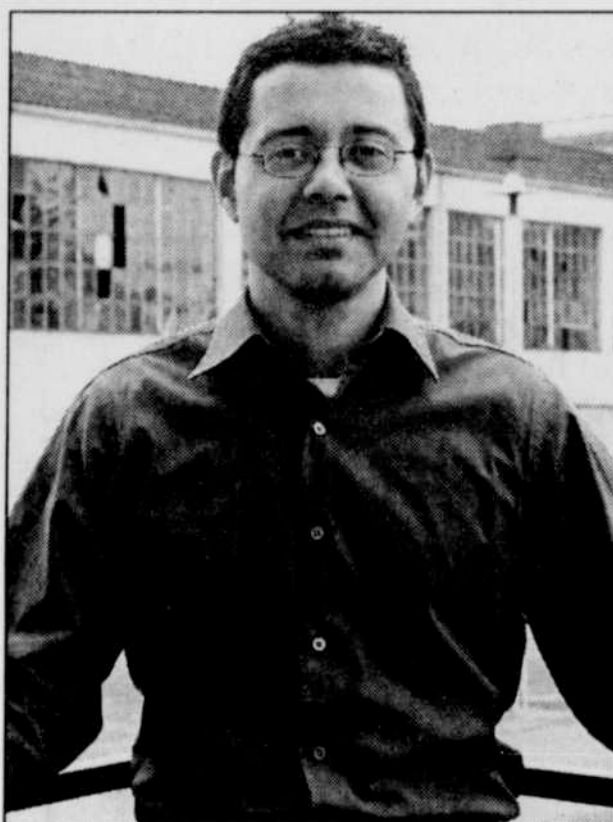
pool. Frye also played softball and bowled. Bowling is where she met Joyce Mitchell, her partner of 21 years.

For the past 15 years, Frye has been part of the monthly 50+ Lesbian Social Group and now serves as its coordinator. "It's a place for newcomers, people who have just come out, people who have just moved to the area and people who have lost their partners after a lot of years together," the 63-year-old says.

A natural organizer, she is also president of her union, the United Industrial Workers Fish Cannery, and a member of the LGBTQ Community Center Fund board of directors. She feels it is important for sexual minorities to have a place where they can gather, get support and express their pride.

"Being proud of who you are is what gay pride is," she says. "It shouldn't be an issue in anything you do."

—Kathy Belge



Oscar Fernández

You are as likely to see Oscar Fernández at a peace rally as at the Cinco de Mayo festival. Or at a sushi restaurant. Or taking in Mahler's "Resurrection" at the symphony.

This 32-year-old assistant professor at Portland State University gives the word "eclectic" new meaning. Born in Costa Rica, Fernández had a nomadic family, depending upon his father's assignments as headmaster at various overseas U.S. schools.

Fernández earned his Ph.D. in comparative literature at Pennsylvania State University, with a focus on representations of disease at various

moments in literature of the Americas. "To me, talking about disease always includes questions of race or gender or social class," he says.

Fernández likes the liberal feel of Portland. He says the first time he rode MAX he was delighted to see a young white man reading *Moby Dick* while a Latina woman across from him read the Bible. "I thought, this is a good place where people are free to read whatever they wish," he says, adding slyly, "whether it's Christian mythology or American mythology."

He is looking forward to his first Portland Pride—sort of. "I miss the angry queers," he says, referring to AIDS activists in the 1990s. "Now we tend to cater to a commodified sense of self. We have to get married. We have to love *Will & Grace*."

Speaking of television shows, Fernández is a not-so-secret *Star Trek* fan, which he says "provides an idealistic future for the world." In his personal ideal future, it goes without saying that he is looking for a mate who is similarly smart and liberal—"and not religious," he adds, despite his penchant for what he calls "church music."

Above all, he doesn't want his sense of community to come from a gay *Cheers*-like bar scene. "I want to choose where I belong."

—MD



Suzanne Scopes

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