

Death with Dignity

TO THE EDITOR:

In the Feb. 18 issue of *Just Out*, there was an article by Jaymee R. Cuti titled "Theology and Christianity." It described the clash between conservative Christians and gays through two opposing views, one by Alisa Simmons, a board member for Basic Rights Oregon, and the Rev. Renee Ward, a community relations spokeswoman for Killingsworth Little Chapel of the Chimes. Each stressed her views about people being Christian and gay.

In America, we have the right to freedom of speech. However, the opinion of one person does not necessarily represent the philosophy and views of a particular organization. Dignity Memorial Funeral Homes represents eight locations in the Portland area. Dignity Memorial does not discriminate on the basis of race, creed, color or sexual orientation. We provide services to people of all faiths.

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DAVID HINTON
Dignity Chapels

In defense of BRO

TO THE EDITOR:

This letter pertains to a letter to the editor from a former staff member of *Just Out* to *The Portland Mercury* in the Feb. 24 edition. I just thought I would show support for the folks at *Just Out* and Basic Rights Oregon. Thanks for all your help and support during the past year.

DEAR MERCURY:

I am writing this in response to Meg Daly's letter to *The Mercury* published Feb. 24. Rather, I am writing in support of Meg and in response to Wm. Stephen Humphrey. I believe that there are a few things that need to be straightened out.

When No on 36 started, it seemed like *The Mercury* was very supportive of the campaign and, through its humorous and editorial style, broadcast that support to its readers. However, once the campaign was lost, so was *The Mercury's* support. All I have been reading since the campaign is how awful Basic Rights Oregon is. You claim that everything in the campaign that went wrong is BRO's fault. *The Mercury* even carries this mentality forward into post-election season events like the BRO lawsuit against Measure 36. It seems as though all you have to say is how much the staff at *The Mercury* thinks BRO is nothing but a pack of blithering idiots.

That's fine that you have opinions; everyone

does. Please, please, please support those opinions with facts, though.

First of all, No on 36 was a coalition NOT under BRO's control. The National Gay and Lesbian Task Force actually seemed to play a much larger roll in the campaign than BRO. Most of the campaign staff was made up of NGLTF people. The Human Rights Campaign also sent a contingent to help out with the campaign. How do I know all of this, you ask? I myself was a member of the campaign staff—a full-time volunteer staff member, actually.

And while we are on that note, as one of the more than 9,000 volunteers, no, I don't feel like a failure. On the contrary, I feel like I helped build something big, something good, a foundation for future campaigns to work with.

Now back to your attacks on BRO. You stated that you did not like the timing of BRO's lawsuit. Not many of us did, either; however, most of us understood the strategy that BRO was using and are willing to go along with it. You see, BRO is actually behaving smartly. It was actually trying to build a case that it could sustain in court and that would actually have some validity and merit when its lawsuit was filed. The idea was that it wanted a case that its opposition couldn't merely throw a few motions at and get dismissed. No, the idea here was that BRO wanted a lawsuit that would withstand the arguments brought against it by the opposition. In short, BRO wanted a lawsuit put together that would actually, well, win (a novel concept, I know, but a good one).

Now Wm. Stephen Humphrey states that Scott Moore is in support of the lawsuit, just not the timing of the lawsuit. Strange, I saw no indication of that in his article. All I could find was sympathy for Tim Nashif et al. and a growing fear that BRO would lose and that this was all a waste of time. Interesting comments from a supporter of the lawsuit, don't you think?

Finally, and I'll say it again and again: All I see is *The Mercury's* criticism of BRO. Where has *The Mercury* staff been hiding? I never once saw a member of *The Mercury's* staff volunteering for No on 36. (If someone did, my apologies; however, what can I say—I call 'em as I see 'em.)

NEIL BARNES
Portland

Don't fall for the homophobes' trick

TO THE EDITOR:

The Feb. 18 "Page 3" editorial by Marty Davis scolded the wrong party ["The Reflex"]. Although I agree that angry e-mails are counterproductive, she should have scolded *The Washington Post* for printing such a homophobic story.

Specifically, why did the story focus on anonymous "angry e-mails" that public officials routinely ignore? Why did the story paint Bush appointees as being victims of "angry" homosexuals?

Homophobes love to dismiss their opponents as "angry." Misogynists use the same trick to dismiss women as "angry" and "hysterical."

By being graciously conciliatory, Marty Davis fell for the homophobes' trick. She inadvertently accepted responsibility for a problem that was created by homophobes.

These apocryphal "angry e-mail" writers did not create the "misunderstanding" over the suicide workshop title. The divisive leadership and homophobia of the Bush administration are solely responsible for this problem.

THOMAS KRAEMER
Corvallis

Life partners

TO THE EDITOR:

On behalf of the Sexual Minority Roundtable, thank you to *Just Out* for the coverage of the celebration of the reaffirmation of the partnership agreement with the Portland Police Bureau. The roundtable also thanks all those in the community who were able to attend the celebration and reaffirm their participation and support of the partnership.

Those who missed the February celebration still have an opportunity to indicate their support of the goals set out in the partnership agreement by adding their signature to the document at the roundtable meeting from noon to 1:30 p.m. April 12 in the Chief's Conference Room on the 15th floor of the Justice Center.

The partnership agreement will also be available for review during this year's Pride celebration. You can see for yourself who has committed to the ongoing support of the partnership. Plans are to have the document displayed at the Portland Police booth.

The police bureau will be conducting a recruitment drive at Pride. It is actively recruiting candidates from a wide range of groups to increase the diversity of the police department. The roundtable encourages all those who might be interested in working in the police department to contact the Human Resources Department of the city of Portland or drop by the information booth at Pride.

DANNY ROSEN
Sexual Minority Roundtable

How does that foot taste?

TO THE EDITOR:

I realize it's next to impossible to curb some of the offhand comments made on local morning television programs, but that doesn't mean we should just let them slide.

Ken Ackerman of KATU's AM *Northwest* wins a foot-in-mouth award for his smirk, "Well, on that show anyone could have worn that dress." The show's segment on purchasing clothes worn by celebrities was looking at a dress worn by Debra Messing of *Will & Grace*.

If a real comedian had made the comment, it would be a "whatever." But Ackerman's homophobia is clear to me after viewing this program for a few years. You can almost see his skin crawl when anything gay is mentioned.

His need to be seen as a man's man is obvious, probably because he has issues being on a predominately women-focused program. I've heard breast comments in front of a studio audience with children. His demeanor around attractive women is sophomoric. Single, he is.

KATU management should really look at the idea of sensitivity training for its talent on this show. There's a difference between being funny and trying so hard to be.

KENNY DARLING
Milwaukie

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