

Nups and downs

Or: Pew, this church smells funny

I used to enjoy weddings.

Having been born into an atheist household, I would always marvel at the ornate altars and cryptic rituals of church ceremonies as a child. Holy water fascinated me—I presumed it had magical powers, like a fountain of youth.

Today, on those rare occasions when I find myself listening to an otherwise rational adult rambling on about holy ghosts, I can't help thinking: "You guys really buy this nonsense? Not that there's anything wrong with that, but did you flunk science?"

So when a high school friend from Salem invited me to his wedding at a Presbyterian church, I was cautiously optimistic. Yeah, he's a Republican, but he has gay friends; how bad could it be?

Worse than I ever could've imagined.

Maybe it's me. Ever since same-sex marriage became the hottest topic next to Paris Hilton and Bennifer II, I've been particularly sensitive to heterosexist language at weddings.

This preacher was particularly, er, preachy. She immediately launched into a definition-of-marriage rant about how God created males and females, how marriage is nothing without God, etc. I'm not sure if I was more offended as a homo or as a freethinker.

Then she made a pointed remark about how words lose their meaning from generation to generation, but

some things should never change. Was this a wedding or a political rally for the Defense of Marriage Coalition?

Worse, this conservative comment was spewing from the mouth of a woman officiating at the wedding of an interracial couple. Uh, did I miss something here? If not for progress, this whole service wouldn't be taking place!

As a card-carrying member of the American Civil Liberties Union, I'll defend everyone's freedom of religion and freedom to throw an offensive and tacky wedding. However, as a human being, I'm troubled why people would invite their friends to an event that is guaranteed to make a great deal of them feel uncomfortable and, frankly, unwelcome.

It's sorta like inviting an alcoholic to a party where only booze is being served. Sure, he's the only guy in the room who will go home thirsty, but then why'd you ask him to show up?

I'm thinking now is the time for a little civil disobedience. The idea popped into my head while shopping for a wedding present at REI, where the couple had registered for such essentials as a \$90 pair of hiking boots. (Hell, forget hospital visitation—I demand the right to make everyone buy me and my future hubby lots of stuff!)

As I collected dust waiting in the lengthy line, I decided that the next time I'm invited to a het wedding, I'm going to get these privileged couples something of real value. I'll figure out how much money I would've spent on that china platter or that melon baller, and I'll donate the money to the American Civil Liberties Union in their name.

It might irk some newlyweds that they won't be receiving those linens with the obscenely high thread count, but I truly feel like this is a moral imperative until we have marriage equality. In other words: No justice, no sheets. **JR**

Arts and Culture Editor JIM RADOSTA needs your feedback. Write to jim@justout.com.



Jim's Closet
by Jim Radosta

THE TOP SHELF



So many choices, so little time. The inner east side will be swarming with gender-bending musicians May 22, so plan ahead for maximum enjoyment. Here's a suggested minute-by-minute itinerary:

8 p.m.: Start out at Holocene's *Indie All Stars Show*, a daylong extravaganza to celebrate the 15th anniversary of *Curve*, the nation's best-selling lesbian magazine. Scheduled to perform during the first hour of the evening showcase are queer rockers Excuse Me Sir; spoken word artists Marie Fleischmann and Inga Muscio, the author of *Cunt*; and drag kings Johnny Mozarella, Ricky Z. Starr and DK PDX.

9 p.m.: Now it's time to *Double Your Pleasure* at gay-owned and newly expanded Crush with Bollywood DJ Anjali and genderfucking trip-hopper Flava Kelly. Proceeds benefit the Sexual Minority Youth Resource Center.

10 p.m.: Relocate to the Doug Fir Lounge for *Snatch: A Dyke Knight*. This month's headliners are Lipstick Conspiracy, the world's only all-trans rock band.

11 p.m.: Head back to Holocene, where T-reXXXa and Pom Pom Meltdown will be bringing the party, and the weekend, to a climactic finish.



You've probably never heard of the *Forest Film Fest*—this is only its second year at the modestly sized Clinton Street Theater—but based

on the caliber of indie shorts competing this weekend, the festival seems destined to thrive. As a judge for this year's festival, I won't divulge how I voted, but I can recommend several highlights:

Animation (9 p.m. May 20): John Cernak's "Joyride," a wild adventure set to Queen's "Bicycle Race," and "Dear Sweet, Emma," a sick-and-wrong story of a grieving grandma.

Family Fiction (5 p.m. May 21): "Little Red Jiving Hood," a Jewish musical version of the classic fairy tale, and "Apology," a teen drama that packs more emotion into 20 minutes than an entire season of *Gilmore Girls*.

Fiction (7 p.m. May 21): Comedies "Saddam 17," about one of Hussein's look-alikes coming to America, and "A Couple on the Side," about opposite-sex roommates dabbling in the swinger lifestyle.

Local Fiction (9 p.m. May 21): "8 Minutes to Love," starring Sandra Oh (*Sideways*) as a speed (dating) freak, and "Sterile Packaging," in which Sissyboy scribe Mark "Zebra" Thomas provides a startling answer to the question, "Where do dolls come from?"

Student Fiction (5 p.m. May 22): "Pee Shy," a campfire story with a twist, and "The Death of Theodore Graham," a buddy film about the title character's date with the Grim Reaper.

Feel Better.

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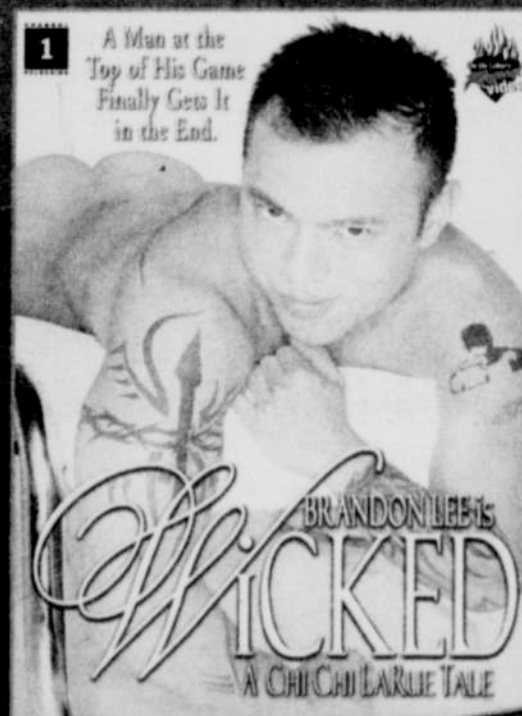
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