

# Objection overruled

Senate OKs worst judge ever

I'm never going to need an abortion. I'm never going to be racially profiled. I'm not allowed to serve in Iraq. (Thank Allah.)

Despite the Bush administration's relentless, ongoing attacks, I fully recognize that few of them will ever directly affect me. That doesn't bring me any joy, but it's the truth: I'm a privileged white queer. Yeah, I can't marry a man in Oregon, but I haven't even been on a date in five months, so that's hardly a pressing matter.

The GOP's latest power grab, however, could have a devastating impact on one Portland family.

In 2003 Dubya tapped Alabama Attorney General William Pryor for a promotion to the U.S. Court of Appeals for the 11th Circuit. After months of outcry about his terrible record of hostility toward equal rights, 53 U.S. senators—including back-stabber Gordon Smith, R-Ore.—confirmed the lifetime appointment June 9.

"The most anti-gay nominee in memory," declared Lambda Legal. "An ideological tyrant of the highest order...an American travesty," sighed the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force.

This is a man who called Roe vs. Wade "the worst abomination of constitutional law in our history." This is a man who filed a brief in the U.S. Supreme Court case of Romer vs. Evans supporting Colorado's anti-gay initiative. This is a man who also butted into Lawrence vs. Texas, which put the state's "Homosexual Conduct" law to the test. (Translation: He believes the sex police should be allowed to arrest couples for engaging in private, consensual acts.)

Worst of all, while temporarily sitting on the 11th Circuit via a sneaky recess appointment, Pryor cast the deciding vote upholding Florida's ban on adoption by gay men and lesbians. The lead plaintiffs in that case are Steve Lofton and Roger Croteau, the Portland couple who inspired Rosie O'Donnell to come out of the closet in support of their cause.

They're also the subject of a new Showtime documentary, *We Are Dad*, premiering at 7 p.m. on Father's Day. Even if you think you know their story, don't miss it.

Lofton and Croteau are raising five foster children with HIV, three of them from Florida. They have become exemplary role models not



Happy Father's Day to Roger Croteau (clockwise from left) and Steve Lofton, pictured here with Frank, Tracy and Bert.

just for gay parents, but for all parents.

The documentary gives us a glimpse at the hardships they've endured through the years, from medical crises to racism (three of the kids are black) to flagrant homophobia. Longtime family friend Richard Cardran recalls nosy onlookers snapping, "Where's their mother?!"

"Steve would turn around and say, 'Well, she was a crack whore, and she's dead.' That would usually shut them up."



Jim's Closet  
by Jim Radosta

## THE TOP SHELF



Lotta Liquor is not just the name of the Imperial Sovereign Rose Court's last reigning empress. It may as well be this year's Pride theme, based on the number of booze manufacturers targeting queers.

The drag hostess of *The Brini Maxwell Show* on The Style Network recently sent me a bunch of recipes for "lovely morning cocktails" to serve while watching the parade. She's also the spokeswoman for **Bacardi Flavored Rums**, so guess what ingredient pops up in every concoction?

Meanwhile, **Vox Vodka** and *Out* magazine are co-sponsoring the Emerging Voices of Style + Design Awards to honor gay artists and designers who are just beginning to establish a name for themselves. If you know anyone who fits this description in Chicago, San Francisco, Los Angeles, Philadelphia or Miami, nominate him at [www.voxvodka.com](http://www.voxvodka.com).

The granddaddy of gay-friendly spirits continues to be **Absolut**, which consistently sponsors sexual minority organizations and cultural events and features queer artists like Andy Warhol, Keith Haring and Annie Leibowitz in its advertisements. Earlier this month the vodka maker staged competitions for bartenders and chalk artists to celebrate its 25th anniversary in the queer market and to raise money for Portland charities.

Please drink responsibly. Cheers!

Because one of the kids, Bert, no longer tests positive for HIV, he is now deemed "adoptable," so the state of Florida is required to find him a permanent home, even though he already has one. In other words, thanks to Pryor's hatred, this teen-ager could wind up back in a notoriously corrupt child care system that has lost more than 3,000 kids in its \$300 million computer.

Cardran admits that Steve and Roger persevere as sort of a "screw you" to people who don't think gay men can be outstanding fathers. These are the same bigots, he adds, who tried blaming homosexuals for 9/11.

"Gay people seem to be at the bottom of the ladder," he says. "It's the catch-all for everybody's hate, for every problem. Are we actually gonna start believing not just the words of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights, but the intent of those documents? Was the intent of those documents to say that it's OK to single out certain people?"

To those of us who believe in "liberty and justice for all," the answer is obviously no. But to those bastards in the Senate who continue to rubber-stamp every ideological tyrant nominated by the White House, I'd like to remind them that the Pledge of Allegiance is to the republic, not to the Republicans. **JR**

Arts and Culture Editor JIM RADOSTA needs your feedback. Write to [jim@justout.com](mailto:jim@justout.com).

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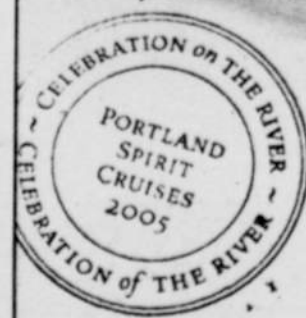
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