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letters

Condensed Font Unreadable

To THE EDITOR:
 I'd enjoy the new look of *Just Out* a lot more if I could read it without needing a magnifying glass!

LYLE M. TUCKER
Lake Oswego

Condense a Font, Lose a Reader

To THE EDITOR:
 I completely agree with the letter writer from Roseburg who complained about the size of the font in the redesigned version of *Just Out* ["New Font Size Is Too Small," Dec. 16].

As much as I enjoy reading your publication, I may have to accept the fact that I just won't be able to do so much longer.

I am in my mid-50s and periodically have to deal with issues surrounding CMV retinitis. Each time I have eye surgery, my vision is a bit less clear.

Too bad you folks don't realize that many of your readers are not 25 years old with perfect vision.

JIM GIANAKIS
Portland

Brokeback Mountain Gives Me Nothing

To THE EDITOR:
 Were I to write Annie Proulx, here's what I would say. Dear Annie:

Tell me, what does *Brokeback Mountain* offer me? Once again, man-to-man love lurches along via anger and confusion until put to death for defying culture.

There is little uncertainty about where the story is headed. We know, sure as shit, that someone must die and that probably the better of the two men will be killed (which he is). The only real uncertainty is what weapon will be used. The tire iron is imaginative—and applied to the head, apparently attacking the problem where it resides. I do, however, appreciate you not allowing his assailants to fuck him with the tire iron before killing him. That is an improvement, I suppose—killing rather than torturing and killing.

I would also like to ask why you, as a woman, believe yourself qualified to write about gay sex and what gay men feel. Some details in the story are accurate. Leather, sweat, muscular bodies, hard work, for example—these pair with gay men like butter and bread. But butt fucking, particularly the first time, is not so easy, as you imply, and spit doesn't help much.

The story's early remarks on Ennis' pleasant memories about Jack also seem off the mark emotionally. Isn't Ennis at the center of Jack's death? Jack and Ennis also know the fate of gay men in Wyoming, yet there they are kissing, on the porch and going at it in broad daylight. This just forces Jack's death.

Discretion is survival out here in small towns. But society wouldn't quite be satisfied if Jack and Ennis lived happily ever after, would it? Society knows gay relationships are poisonous. Just look how they destroy marriage. Jack also has to go because he wants more than sex. Jack says: "We could've had a good life together, a fuckin' real good life. You wouldn't do it, Ennis." Yeah, Ennis, you got Jack's ass, so why take more risk? Limited options is shit, ain't it, Jack? If gay men weren't so screwed up and sexually obsessed, we could film our own stories about finding each other. But it's not that simple, is it? Society won't leave us alone, even if we're sweet.

Jack doesn't ask much—to build a cabin and to be safe. Let's not make him wait 20 years for happiness, then bash in his head. Let's instead pull him out of that

graveyard and give him to someone who deserves him. Write another ending, Annie, a better one. Write an ending for gay men instead of straight America. It does not need to be happy. But write an ending that allows two men to move beyond the endless first date and, most importantly, allows both men to live.

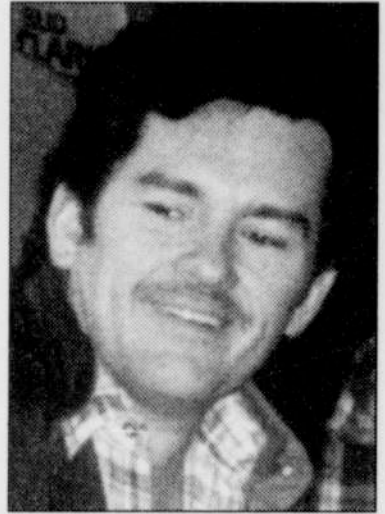
Let's stop replaying the final scene where gay men get snuffed to save society from witnessing men enjoying each other. It is time for a different ending. Give them the nails to build their cabin.

JACK JANISCH
Hoquiam, Wash.

TRANSITIONS
Ray Southwick, 1946-2005

Ray Southwick, a significant gay businessman and activist in Portland since the late 1960s, passed away Dec. 23. He was 59.

Southwick came to Portland in 1968 to work for IBM. His involvement with the gay community brought him into contact with the various taverns then popular in the city: Dahl & Penne's, Embers, Flossies and Derek's. With his partner, John Phillips, he opened a popular gay bar and eatery, JR's East, in 1979 on Southeast Hawthorne Boulevard at what had been the Raven's Nest. This venture was so successful, they opened a second location, JR's West, at Northwest 10th Avenue and Everett Street at what had been The Long Goodbye and is today Jimmy Mak's.



JR's West also featured a lower space known as JR's Cell. Although owned by Southwick, it was managed by "Raunchy" Robert Dunn, arguably Portland's leather master. Activity at the Cell equaled or exceeded that of any bathhouse in Portland and even, some said, San Francisco. Because of hard times and AIDS, both businesses closed in 1984.

Southwick's second major involvement in the community was his successful newspaper, *The Alternative Connection*, which he began in 1991 and published until 1994, carrying news, advice and advertising for the gay community.

In the mid-1980s, he became the partner, then the consort, of Woody Johnson, better known as Lady Elaine Peacock, Empress XXIX of the Imperial Sovereign Rose Court. His loyalty and service to Peacock during her 1988 reign and through the years until her death at age 33 in 1993 is well-remembered by his friends and members of the court. Noted for his sense of humor and hearty laugh, Southwick gladly played the supporting role as Peacock in the Park became a Portland institution. Peacock's intention was to expose the greater population to the charms, character and talents of drag queens. It was an unqualified success for 19 years, ending in 2004. Together, Peacock and Southwick established the Audria M. Edwards Scholarship Fund, honoring Peacock's mother. Today, the fund is administered through Equity Foundation.

Southwick was a good friend, a loyal companion and a positive influence on all he knew. He will be sorely missed.

Remembrances can be made to the Audria M. Edwards Scholarship Fund, c/o Equity Foundation, P.O. Box 5674, Portland, OR 97228.