

letters

Gordon Smith, Not Our Friend

TO THE EDITOR:

Once again, U.S. Sen. Gordon Smith shows his support for discrimination and his opposition for fair treatment for all Oregonians. I know that several gay organizations gave money and staffing to him in the past. When do they step forward and call him what he is—a hateful bigot who is no more our friend than President Bush? We should not only hold Smith accountable, we should hold our own organizations equally accountable for their support of this evil man.

SCOTT SEIBERT
Portland

Return to Sender

TO THE EDITOR:

A staffer in Republican U.S. Sen. Gordon Smith's office, Chris Maier, once arranged for a formal letter from Smith welcoming our oldest son into the country. (He was born in Cambodia.) My partner and I—together 17 years, married in Canada in 2003, and last year we were a host family for a teenager from Germany—well, we're sending that letter back.

Smith, compelled by his "Mormon faith," voted in favor of the Federal Marriage Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. In striking down similar, religiously inspired anti-miscegenation laws and amendments (laws prohibiting interracial marriage), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in 1967 that marriage is a "basic civil right," like voting, assembly and speech. This amendment would scar the U.S. Constitution—as Oregon's Constitution is now

scarred—by selectively reducing basic constitutional protections for gay and lesbian Americans alone.

We don't want anything to do with a guy who believes our family is worth less legally than his own and who works hard to enshrine his personal, evidence-free, dehumanizing religious prejudice into our state and federal constitutions. My kids, my family and our societal contributions are not worth one right less than yours (or Smith's).

That letter of "welcome" (from our right-wing, gay-bashing Republican senator) is in the mail.

BILL GRIESAR
Portland

Unwelcome in Michigan

TO THE EDITOR:

Say, your article by Holly Pruett makes the Michigan Womyn's Music Festival sound like an absolute gas ["New Blood and Longtime Beloveds," June 2]! I'm saving up my money right now so I can go!

Oh wait, hang on a second...silly me, I forgot. Trans women aren't allowed to go to the festival.

Seriously, what in the hell were you thinking? As a paper that claims to be "serving the lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender communities of Oregon and southwest Washington," how does such an article serve the Portland trans community? What's next? Glowing reviews of conservative Christian women's Bible study groups that exclude lesbians? If the festival had a "don't ask, don't tell" policy regarding lesbian attendance, would you be so supportive? Yet this is exactly its policy regarding trans women, and

you give no appearance of thinking twice about publishing such a supportive article...in your once-yearly *Pride* issue, for God's sake. Is it really any wonder that trans people are made to feel like the unwanted stepchildren of the queer community?

Here's some news, though: I, like many of my trans sisters, am a lesbian. And, get this, there's a lot of my trans brothers who are fags. Guess what? We're here, we're queer, and we'd all appreciate that you quit endorsing organizations that despise us and exclude us.

Holly says you can sit back and see "thousands of women in all shapes and sizes." There's one shape you won't see there, Holly: the shape of any trans woman. "See you in August?" Love to, can't...I'm not allowed.

RACHEL B. RANDIG
Portland

Thanks for the Marginalization

TO THE EDITOR:

Just a follow up to the show June 1 at Portland City Hall.

Even now I can't resist the urge to thank the folks at City Hall—Polly Birge, Sam Adams, et al.—for all the hard work that went into the queer art show, except I know any platitudes would be business as usual. In fact, I am disgusted with myself.

I am disgusted that I am so ready to be understanding when I should be very pissed off, and so should you.

When we were first approached, the show was presented as an opportunity for queer artists to

show their work at City Hall. At the time it was Black History Month, and a coordinated show was hanging in all four commissioners' offices. A month before the show, we were told that only two offices would be available because two commissioners had already made plans for June. On the day of the hanging, we were told that through a miscommunication, only one of the four offices would be available for the show.

The reason I am pissed off is that I expected this. I am pissed because I politely rolled over and thanked everyone. The truth is, this show is emblematic of the marginalization that is the accepted norm in our country. We are a community fighting for our space at the table, and we are asked to do with less at every step. Equally telling was my knee-jerk passive response. When will we stand up, I wonder?

To add insult to injury, I was grossly misquoted when interviewed in *Just Out's* piece about the show ["Queering City Hall," May 19]. I mention this because it speaks to a political correctness that is of the same nature as my passive response to the incredible shrinking art show. I said I didn't believe in equality because we are not equal, "we are better," not "we deserve better."

I was told I should feel proud—although we didn't get everything we wanted, this was a historic moment. I was told queer artists had never been invited to show in City Hall before. These ideas are metaphor for so much more. Except I don't feel proud. I feel robbed.

The very idea this is the first time queer artists

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