

Say It Loud, Say It Proud

This is one woman who is voting for gender

I'll step up, I'll admit it. I'm supporting Hillary Clinton for president and I'm doing it because she's a woman. A qualified woman, I shall add. In this race I will bear the label of genderist. I accept, with pride, the mantle of gender bias. My political identity and beliefs have been formed by a complex swirling of factors, including, but not limited to, race, age, gender, economics, education, or perhaps the lack thereof, and sexual identity. Hold on, there's more. I also cling to a deep-seated resentment that it's now 2008 and the grand old United States of America has never passed the Equal Rights Amendment for women.

Yup, that old dog is still around, and some of us remember her.

Our nation, our America, has never formally acknowledged the simple act of granting equal rights to her women citizens. And now it's our time.

Long before ENDA, long before gay rights, before trans rights, long before anti-discrimination laws based on sexual identity and orientation, there was a struggle to secure a place in the Constitution for women. Some of you will bridle at the notion that I equate these. So be it.

The Equal Rights Amendment, so very simple, and yet so very unattainable: "Equality of Rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any state on account of sex."

Now, this doesn't sound all that complicated or radical, does it? Apparently it did in the years between 1979 and 1983, when only 35 states ratified the amendment, failing to reach the 38 required within the specified time. Oregon, thankfully, was one of the states that voted to ratify the amendment. Seldom mentioned these days is the fact that this amendment is still brought before every session of Congress, every session since 1923 actually, but never again has it even made it out of committee.

The time has come to make amends.

Many will make their cases against Hillary Clinton. Some points will be valid, others won't. Some will say she comes with too much baggage. Well, you know, if I am to follow someone whose task is to lead the nation on a monumental journey, I'd rather have that person show up with experienced and well-traveled baggage than to arrive empty-handed and unprepared for the challenges that lie ahead.

America loves her firsts. First Catholic president; first man on the moon; first black Oscar winner; first woman in space; first woman astronaut arrested; first gay TV kiss; first every age, every race, every gender, every challenged person to summit Mt. Everest. Yup, we love our firsts. Had gay actor/musician/HRC spokesperson Lance Bass managed to get himself launched into space think

of the bonanza that would have ensued. The mind boggles with possibility.

While I'm waiting for the first woman president to be elected, I watch endless hours of televised political coverage. While watching a few days ago, another stunning first popped up on my screen. It was a commercial for Tylenol, a pain medication. Different from all its competition, this commercial featured a beautiful montage of human bodies. There were backs, legs, joints and skin. So what, you say. All commercials show flesh, show skin. After all, sex sells. Ah, but these bodies were different. They were sexual, sensual, bold and beautiful, yes. More than that, they were old. Old as in aged, matured, wrinkled, saggy and worn. They were the bodies of the aging baby boomers; they were the bodies of the real. The intent of the commercial is clear; these aging bodies, while beautiful, also ache with pain a great deal of the time, hence the need for Tylenol. The message, the visual, is stunning. Old can be beautiful.

It was a bold move to make, to place this ad before America, a nation obsessed with body image. Television programs and commercials are filled with the unattainable, not the realistic. Our own gay, lesbian, bi, trans community struggles greatly—maybe more than other—with body image, perceptions of self and beauty, with doubts of worth. Staff writer and columnist Stephen Marc Beaudoin brings voice and gives face to this topic on page 34 of this issue. It's a very good column; I encourage you to read it.

One more first remains to be shown on television. That would be the respectful showing of the overweight body. And I don't mean Jenny Craig commercials. My guess is that we'll have a woman president in the White House long before overweight women are respected on television.

On to lighter topics, *Just Out* will be on vacation the week of Feb. 18. Fear not, Gay Skate goes on as scheduled Monday, Feb. 18. It's President's Day and we anticipate a large, exuberant crowd. You wouldn't want to miss that now, would you?

Our second event coming up will be the monthly Women Seeking Women Bunco Night. This will be Sunday, Feb. 24. We meet at the Q Center, 69 S.E. Taylor St., at 5:30 p.m. Our January event drew a delightful crowd and a grand time was had by all. This is an event strictly for the singles crowd, for women seeking women. Don't be shy about coming. These games are the perfect mixer and everyone quickly feels comfortable. 10

JUST OUT will see you back in print on March 7. You'll find us daily at Blog Out at www.justout.com.

reflections

10 Years Ago in *Just Out*... Volume 10 Number 6, February 1, 1998

- An ordinance cosponsored by Portland Mayor Vera Katz and City Commissioner Erik Sten requires companies to formally agree that they will not discriminate against workers based on sexual orientation.

- Welcome to the world of the Portland Lesbian Avengers, who will kick off several days of lollipopping actions Feb. 20 at public high schools in the Portland metropolitan area. If all goes as planned, an estimated 2,000 Tootsie Pops—and their queer-friendly messages—will wind up in the hands of students heading in and out of school.

- The state's largest daily newspaper declined Feb. 9 to endorse either of the two openly gay candidates running for Multnomah County Commission posts in the March 10 special election. In the District 1 race, the paper opted for Diane Linn over George Eighmey, although it said Eighmey "has strong consensus-building skills. And he offers an important legislative connection for the county to the state, which sets much of the county's agenda." The editorial said Linn was chosen because she has a greater record of citizen involvement.

- The *Oregonian* ran an informative spread on the front page of the Feb. 2 Money section called "Straight Financial Advice for Those Who Aren't."



The column, authored by Julie Tripp, featured an interview with Portlander David A. Woosley of American Express Financial Advisors. Woosley, who is gay, provided financial planning strategies and advice specifically geared toward gay men and lesbians.

- "Survey studies of homosexual men have shown that they are more dissatisfied with their body weight and shape than heterosexual men and that they consider their physical appearance to be more important to their sense of self," writes Daniel Carlat in a groundbreaking study published last summer in *The American Journal of Psychiatry*.

- Washington became the 27th state to ban same-sex marriages Feb. 6 when the Legislature overrode a governor's veto. It was Democratic Gov. Gary Locke's first veto override.

- The highly touted Gay and Lesbian American Music Awards, given to openly gay and lesbian musical performers, will be presented at a ceremony March 9 in New York City.

- Eighty-two gay men and six lesbians were murdered last year in Brazil because of their sexuality, according to a new report from Grupo Gay de Bahia.



MARTY DAVIS

FEATURE

20 FAMILY PORTRAITS

The faces of Oregon's newly recognized families

NEWS

7-15 NORTHWEST

Renowned couple visit Q Center for art exhibit, book reading; Equity holds eighth Investments in Dignity fund-raiser; CAP objects to closure of threatened clinic; Educate Ya heads to Cuernavaca for gay Mexican history; YWCA creates trans support group; Brother to Brother holds Black History Month events; Our House awarded million-dollar grant; grant funds new African-American PFLAG chapter; adoption conference comes to Portland

16-17 NATIONAL

Gays prefer Clinton; California Supreme Court will hear marriage equality case; marriage ban will appear on Florida's November ballot; Maryland judge cuts damages in Phelps lawsuit; teachers in Massachusetts safe to teach tolerance; New York recognizes out-of-state marriages

18-19 WORLD

Euro court: Gays must have equal adoption rights; Spaniards support marriage law; nearly 500 Czech couples have registered; Swedes support full marriage equality; Kuwaiti cross-dressers arrested, abused

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Portland International Film Festival screens Argentine intersex drama, Gus Van Sant's latest

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Revolutionary documentary leads the pack of new releases aimed at African-American queers

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Valentines from Hell promises a night of camp and sleaze

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