

The Blushing Domestic

The next best thing

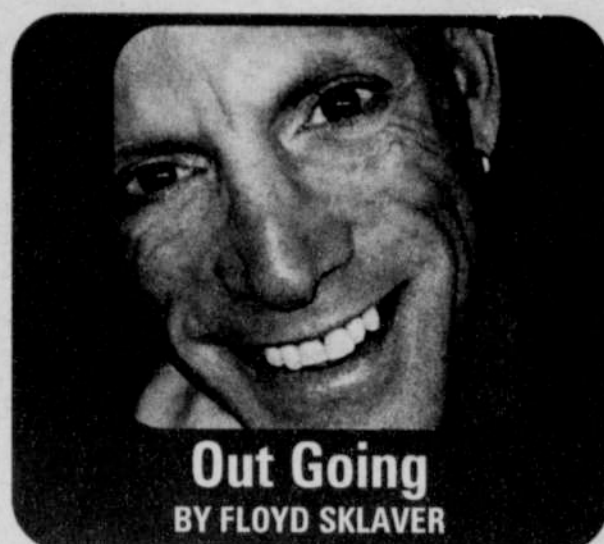
Truth be told, I've always wanted to be a housewife. Not like Betty Crocker with a frilly apron, but like Betsy Bloomingdale with a string of pearls. A lady who lunches. Gossiping at the finest restaurants, shopping at the top boutiques, volunteering for the most worthwhile causes. All, most importantly, while not working because my fabulously rich husband supports me wholeheartedly. Perhaps that's why I'm so strongly in favor of marriage—gay or otherwise. Inherently, I am lazy and don't really want to work. But instead, of course, I married an artist.

Fortunately, Marc is the love of my life, and we have a wonderful time together. I won't swear it's been all hearts and flowers. (In fact, if you read my last column, you know I never send flowers.) But during the past 21 years we've managed to navigate the rocky waters of a relationship and land on a shore where I'm happy and contented.

And while, as an unmarried couple, we've done many things to protect ourselves, we still want the legal rights and responsibilities of marriage. So why didn't we race down and get domestically hitched as soon as we could?

Perhaps it's the name—domestic partnership. It doesn't sound like a lifelong commitment as much as it does a Merry Maids franchise or part of an airline frequent flier program ("among our domestic partners are..."). Perhaps it's the disappointment that comes with second-class citizenship. I've already had to explain to countless friends and family members (gay and straight) that our Xeroxed certificate is useless outside Oregon's boundaries. But truth be told, we just didn't get it together until Feb. 8.

That's the day we finally went down to the Multnomah Building and became the 360th couple to pay our fee. So now we're domestics, like Hazel or Alice or Florida. Or domesticated, like goats or



ward, pinned matching boutonnieres on each other to celebrate as family members snapped photos with paparazzi frenzy.

Scott Smithhisler and Brian Langevin have waited 27 1/2 years for this day, while Bill Fry and Darryl Sanchez topped them (no, not like that) with a 30-year relationship. In total, we had close to a century's worth of love and commitment finally being recognized and sanctioned in what's hopefully a prelude to wedding bells.

Speaking of weddings, I went to see Federico García Lorca's *Bodas de Sangre* (Blood Wedding) the night before. Miracle Theatre marketing director Tim Krause (who, earlier in the week, DP'd his boyfriend of 11 years, Robert Dell) described Lorca's tragic tale of desire and societal repression as "such a metaphor for gay marriage." The Spanish-language production used easy-to-read supertitles and featured Enrique Andrade as the doomed man cuckolded by his wife on their wedding day.

Lorca is a fascinating character. A member of Spain's avant-garde, he is reported to have been lovers with surrealist painter Salvador Dalí. Lorca's first play, *El Maleficio de la Mariposa* (The Butterfly's Evil Spell), dramatized the impossible love between a cockroach and a butterfly.

Toward the end of the 1920s, the strain of concealing his homosexuality from family and friends sent the depressed Lorca to New York. He returned home three years later to a fascist Spain in turmoil. In 1936, Lorca—by then commonly known to be gay and widely considered a leftist because of his

artistic affiliations—was arrested, executed and dumped in an unmarked grave. Some reports indicate his killers made remarks about his sexuality, suggesting homophobia played a role. His works were banned in Spain until as late as 1953.

From the repression of fascist Spain to the enlightenment of progressive Oregon—what a difference 70 years makes in our ability to be out. And Out Going. **JO**

FLOYD SKLAVER wants to know about your event. E-mail him at floydsklaver@comcast.net.



From left, Nikki Ferchland, Celeste Grover, Marc, Floyd, Chrystal Bell and Lori Hays celebrate commitment Feb. 8.

cows or dogs. Or domestic partners, which means we're still free to have international ones, I guess.

Call it what you will; in the eyes of the state of Oregon, we're the same as our straight allies (and enemies), and I can't help but feel happy and proud.

Apparently, Marc and I weren't the only ones to wait until the last day of the first week to get DP'd. In line we met Chrystal Bell and Lori Hays, who couldn't decide whether they'd been together for six or seven years. Celeste Grover and Nikki Ferchland were in line with us as well and, after-

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