



# IN THE PINK QUEER HAIR MAGIC

*An interview with Nancy Dear, local stylist to the stars*

On a list of things that makes Portland *Portlandy* has to be our haircuts. The array of ironic and non-ironic coiffures parading around any social event typically out-dazzles a barrage of parading glitter ponies, although the distinction is practically negligible.

The queer community shines in this department. It's more than rainbow hair dye running in streams of sweat down our beaming faces at Pride. It's a yearlong commitment to visibility and the joy of expression. Personally, I never thought I'd be around for the return of certain styles, but the serious debate of, "Do I get a perm or a bowl cut?" is real.

Who better to chat with about the hair-dids of our community than Nancy Dear? She's been cutting queer hair for almost 3 years, has just transferred to the Mississippi Bishops, and is the favorite coiffeuse of yours truly.

Walking into the Mississippi Bishops is always pleasant. The store is cute. Generally, the wait is brief, and the beer is always cold. Did I have a beer at 11 a.m. whilst waiting for my friend to finish her current cut? Yes, and the man behind me was grateful that I broke the seal.

Nancy looks adorable. She has light pink hair, a vintage looking dress that is bright without being childish, sparkling blue-green eyes, and a laugh that is something between a giggle and a roar. The manager, Sara Bird, who I've also been fortunate enough to get a cut from, is there with a sense of grace and calm that balances the store energy nicely.

**Lyska Mondor:** Queer haircuts. What constitutes a queer/gay haircut?

**Nancy Dear:** Sometimes, a gay haircut is a very traditional haircut on a nontraditional man. Sometimes, I'm doing classic men's haircuts on femme ladies. Sometimes, it's detailing, a certain edge that is harder or softer and reflects as queer, and I would leave that out of a straight haircut.

It can be a compromise between what is acceptable as being visibly queer professionally, and visibly queer socially. It gets complicated.

**LM:** Do you cut any queer celebrity hair? Besides me?

**ND:** Um, well, I think so. I cut Shannon's, and Jenny Brusos's hair (a.k.a. DJs Action Slacks and Bruce LaBruiser).

**LM:** Everyone knows you do hair. Do you get sick of talking about it?

**ND:** No, I really like talking about hair. I love what I do.

**LM:** Should we give it a nickname, like "The Craft"?



Nancy Dear. Photo by Lisa Galloway