

Q+A

JOAN CRAWFORD

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN PORTLAND/OREGON? WHAT DO YOU LOVE/HATE ABOUT IT?

I moved from Chicago, where I lived for 14 years, to Portland in 2001. I love many outdoor activities in the city, rivers, coast and mountains. I wish we had more of Chicago's diverse cultures.

WHAT DO YOU DO FOR A LIVING?

For 15 years, I worked as a Disease Intervention Specialist in the HIV STD Program in Chicago and Oregon. The Federal Communicable Disease Control reduced our state funding this year and my position was eliminated. I'm grateful to still be working for the Oregon Health Authority in a temporary assignment with the Maternal and Child Health Program.

HAVE YOU EVER EXPERIENCED GAY BASHING?

I've been assaulted by Chicago police during ACT UP and other issue protests in the late 1980's and early 90's — no permanent physical damage or gay bashing.

HAVE YOU EXPERIENCED DISCRIMINATION WITHIN THE QUEER COMMUNITY?

Back in the 80's and 90's, there were all kinds of pressure on me to identify only as a lesbian. I hope we've made it easier for queers today to express themselves honestly. To me, sex is sex and love is love, all equally valued and necessary for the health of our humanity and planet.

WHO DO YOU LOOK UP TO OR REVERE IN THE GAY COMMUNITY OR HISTORICALLY?

I find inspiration every day and historically from people who worked to make the world healthier and more loving for all. ■

Be a part of Q&A. Send a short note to editor@justout.com and tell us about yourself or a friend.

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