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I believe that violence and malevolent acts are created out of repression and frustration. Repressing a magazine like Playboy, which expresses views and depictions of female and male sexuality for the enjoyment of men (or women), can only fan the flames of frustration. I can also think of a dozen or so articles in defense of gay persons published in Playboy - so why take such a swipe at them? They are so similar to your own paper - are you just intimidated by its success or popularity? Allowing an attack on what is perceived as a heterosexual publication can only widen the gap between sexual views.

If the public only sees angry, protesting faces representing your cause, how can you ever expect to be liked and accepted?...People like people who like them. People choose friends because they find each other's company pleasurable....Find peace with yourself, be confident in your decision or nature to be gay and take the chip off your shoulder...And there is no need to go the other way either and flaunt your sexuality to prove a point. It doesn't need to be made!!

Signed, Kurt

"Gay Haters"

Dear Friends,

We have talked about "gay haters" violence and harassment in past articles.

I would like to share some personal feelings of my own.

I feel uncomfortable lately going in and out of Pearls. (There has been) A lot of name calling, and I have heard there has been trouble with young guys from the North Street area beating up on guys. Can't we go to a bar and have a good time without this bull....?!!

I would like to hear from others who might feel as I do. What can we do to protect ourselves? What could Pearls do to improve the situation?

Please write in to the paper with your suggestions. We're in this thing together.

Thanks,

John

Burlington

Germ-Warfare Charges!?

Dear Editor;

D. Hylander and A. Foster angrily called for a new support group in their letter in the June O.I.T.M. Their anger seems to grow out of the Novosti charges that the AIDS virus [HIV] was produced and disseminated by the U.S. Government. Because I am completing my graduate work in biology at UVM, I keep up with the scientific literature on AIDS. Hylander and Foster might be interested to know what the scientific community thinks of the Russian press agency's charges;

1. No serious journalist has ever substantiated any aspect of the charge.

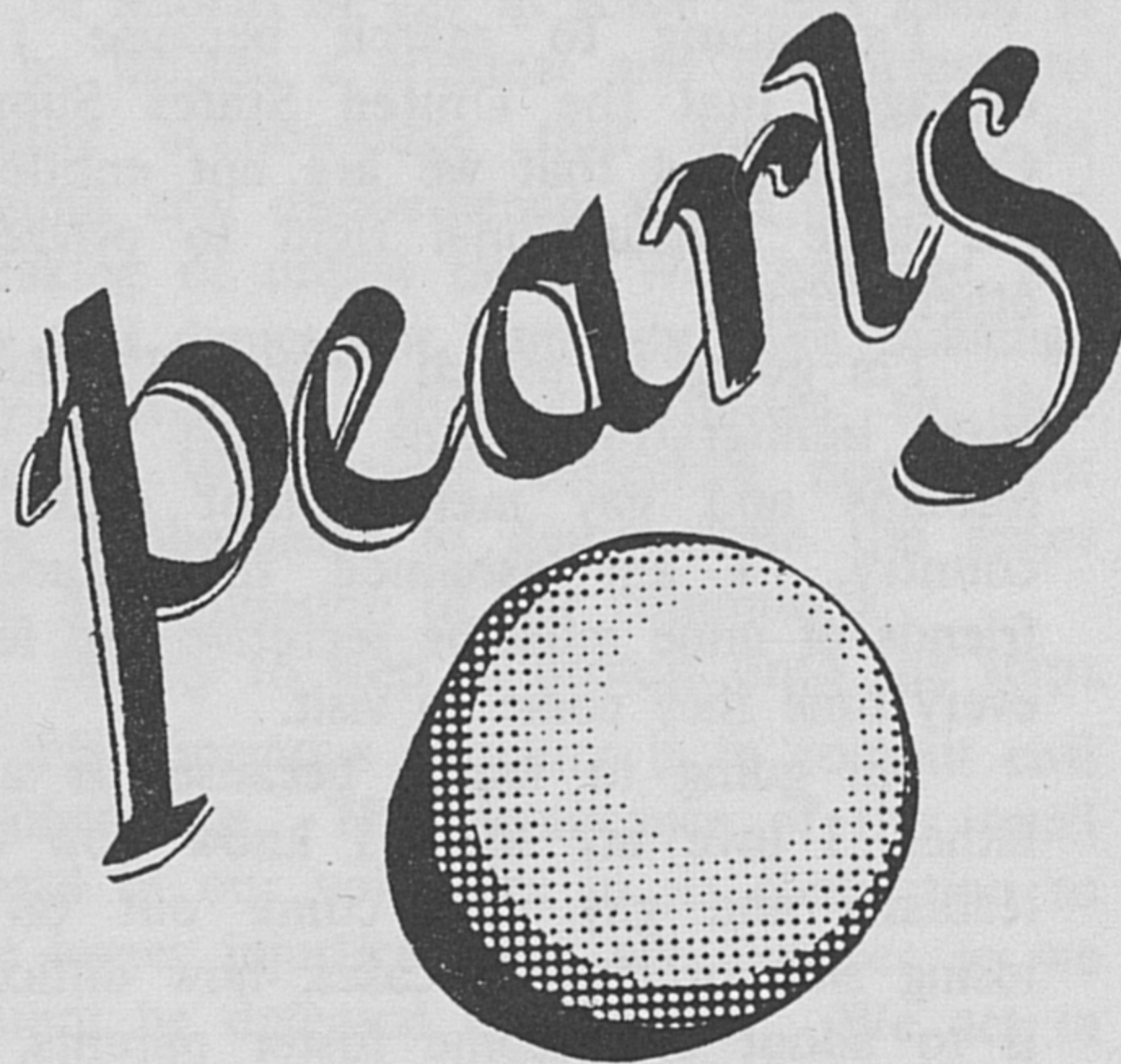
2. HIV has been found in blood samples from central Africa that were frozen

away in the mid-1970's. Therefore, the virus has been in existence for at least a dozen years, and probably more. The gene-splicing techniques of the 1970's were far too primitive to be used to create a virus like HIV. In fact, even the biotechnology of today is inadequate for that task! Remember, we still don't understand some of the mechanisms of HIV infection and cell-killing.

3. AIDS is not a homosexual disease. HIV is spread by intimate exchanges of bodily fluids, as well as by contaminated blood products and dirty needles. Straights as well as gays are already infected. As the disease progresses, more and more of the victims will be heterosexual.

The charges of germ-warfare origin of HIV are like President Reagan's calls for compulsory AIDS testing in that they both create "sideshows" that divert attention from the real issues of AIDS. From a scientific perspective, the most important factors in the spread of HIV infection are promiscuity (more than one sexual partner), high-risk sex practices, and sharing of unsterile needles by drug abusers. The Reagan Administration, with the exception of the Surgeon General, has ducked these issues, through inattention and then through distraction with compulsory-test controversy. Will the gay community be similarly distracted by phony germ-warfare charges?

Alistair Mackay



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