

Letters to the Editor

Dear *OITM*,

Just read the April issue and see that you will be covering the Gay Games - yeah!!

I competed in the 1990 Games in Vancouver and it was amazing! Wanted to let you know that I'll be competing in the Cycling Events (off road race, time trial, criterium, and circuit race). Look forward to seeing you there!

Phileo McAlexander
Montpelier

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To the Editor,

I picked up a copy of this month's issue of *OITM* at a metaphysical store in Barre, and was deeply touched by the articles. I became angry and frustrated at the challenges people who lead "alternative" lifestyles - not just gays, lesbians and bisexuals, but also those of us who choose any non-traditional path.

Even though I happen to be heterosexual, I too choose to stand up for the right for my fellow brothers and sisters to live in a manner that makes their lives happier. Isn't that the whole point of living?

I applaud all of you for taking a stand for the cause. I am grateful that there are others being true to themselves and doing their part to make life easier for those to come.

Peace to you my friends. I look forward to serving you and the Alliance.

With Love,

Stephanie Perrotto
Georges Mills, NH

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Dear Editor,

I'd like to talk about something that affects our community, and the human community as a whole; HIV transmission. I have heard recently from a number of people about their experiences of being infected with HIV by people who they were sexual with who did not disclose their HIV+ status prior to the sexual activity.

There are so many aspects to this issue. Whether or not to disclose when one is HIV+, when and to whom; these are very charged questions. I would like to present a position, mainly for the sake of bringing the issue more into the area of public discussion, but also because I believe this. I propose that anyone who is HIV+ has a responsibility to inform anyone they are going to be sexual with prior to sexual activity, even if the sex is "safe." The alternative is what we have now; people infecting others. I think if one knows one is HIV+ it is tantamount to murder to put

another person at risk. No ifs ands or buts. I understand that people are afraid of the possible rejection that can come with disclosure, and that for some people being alone feels intolerable. I don't think those feelings justify putting another person at risk, ever.

Another very important aspect of this issue is that each of us is responsible for our own safety. Anytime one is going to be sexual with a partner whose HIV status is not known with certainty to be negative, it is worse than folly, but possible suicide, not to take every known precaution.

I believe that some states have enacted legislation making it a criminal offense to knowingly transmit HIV. The Vermont legislature has not passed or, to my knowledge even discussed, such legislation. It is possible that in the not too distant future this debate will come to the Vermont legislature, at which point there may be people who will want strong punitive measures as consequence for knowingly infecting someone.

I believe we humans can take responsibility for ending this epidemic which we are all so sick of. The way to end it is for each person with HIV to be absolutely committed to not infecting anyone else, no matter what.

I am not suggesting that any judgment be passed on anyone. There is no blame for being infected with HIV. There is just the human condition, complete with love, fear, passion, joy, and suffering. We are not, however, powerless to choose our direction, our behavior, or our destiny. There are people who are too wounded to care about themselves much less anyone else. That is a sad thing, for everyone deserves love. However, we cannot afford, as a gay community, as a human community, to accept destructive acts that are ultimately murderous, no matter what the motivation for the behavior.

Walter I. Zeichner
Burlington

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Dear Editor,

Unlike letter to editor writer, Carol Cohen in May '94 issue I don't shop at Onion River Coop.

For that matter I have not dealt with Ed Kaufman of Lang Associates on page 19 (in that same issue) they have a light, delightful ad: *Remember the First Time? How great it Felt.*

I suggest to Carol to lighten up. Feel more. Think less. Too much political correctness makes one dull and reactive.

Sincerely,

Howard W. Johnson
Lyndonville