

"Absolutely Positive"

by Michael Warner

When director Peter Adair learned that he was HIV positive he decided to make a film about it. The resulting documentary, "Absolutely Positive," was broadcast on PBS on June 18 as part of the Point Of View series. Adair explains at the beginning of the film that he makes films about things that matter to him. His film about gay life, "Word is Out", has been described as groundbreaking.

For "Absolutely Positive", Adair and producer Janet Cole interviewed 120 men and women, all of whom were infected with the virus which causes AIDS. Eleven of them to appear in the film. These 11 people represent different social classes, different races, different sexual orientations, different age groups, different sensibilities, yet they have something in common: they are all coping and living with the knowledge that they are HIV positive. Powerful and moving personal portraits of bravery begin to emerge in their discussions. We learn about their pasts, their presents and their hopes for the future. One thing is clear: while living with the specter of disease in their everyday lives, these people are not just surviving; they are LIVING.

"Absolutely Positive" is about people. We hear their stories in their own voices. There is a black woman--a former drug abuser--who had turned her life around. She found out that she was HIV positive when her infant son was diagnosed with AIDS. There is the man whose lover came down with AIDS only weeks after they fell in love, yet they built a life together. A male nurse told his colleagues of his diagnosis when they discussed the filming of this movie. A Puerto Rican soldier learned of his illness when his first wife died. A couple became infected after the husband's tainted blood transfusion. These are stories of courage, mistakes, joy, sorrow, and of people who are continuing to build their lives.

Peter Adair narrates the film, asking questions and interjecting thoughts and observations of his own. The image reflected in the computer screen is his own as he discusses various concepts of what it is like to be diagnosed with HIV, including the second "coming out" required of a gay person faced with telling family and friends. His "presence", which is apparent throughout the film, is captured in an overall sensitive and hopeful outlook. This is not a film about death. It is a film about changes, growing, finding strength, and moving forward. One man says that it's okay to be afraid of death--what isn't okay is to sit down and wait for it. We all need to be loved, to give love, to look forward to the future--to be ourselves.

While this film may tell the gay community very little we aren't already aware of and living with, it is significant in that it offers a message to mainstream, middle-class, straight America. Perhaps that is the greatest positive of all. The show was worth watching. If you missed it, try and find someone who may have taped it (ahh, the modern world) or look for a re-broadcast on ETV (the reality of the television world). ▼

PTL Holds its Awards Banquet

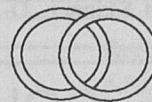
Amid festive decorations of pearl pink bowling balls and purple alyssum, the PTL (Pink Triangle League), a bowling league for discriminating adults, held its second annual Awards Banquet at the Hotel Coolidge in White River Junction on May 11, 1991.

After dinner and the cocktail hour, trophies were presented to the first place team, "THE SKY'S THE LIMIT"; second place to, "MEN WITH BALLS"; and third place to, "WHIPS AND CHAINS". "THE ALLEY BOYS" were presented with the last place trophies.

Additional trophies and awards were presented to the bowler with the high handicap game of 280; high handicap series of 690; high scratch game of 244; and high scratch series of 568. Other recognitions included the "Gutter Duster Award", perfect attendance awards and the most improved bowler.

The PTL is a fully sanctioned mixed league member of both the A.B.C. and W.I.B.C. The 1991-1992 bowling season will begin in September. Bowling is on Sunday mornings at the Astro Bowl in White River Junction. For more information, please contact Al Fry at (802) 785-4617 or Route 2, East Thetford, VT, 05403. Plans are now underway for a pre-season potluck get acquainted party in late summer. ▼

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