

Out in the Mountains

established in 1986

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To Submit Articles and Letters

We encourage and implore our readers to do what they can to make *OITM* a paper both for and by gay, lesbian, and bisexual Vermonters. Please assist us by typing your articles and letters double-spaced and including your name and phone number in case we have any questions. Your submission should be received by *OITM* no later than the 1st of the previous month. **Thank you for helping out!**

Editorial

Maybe what we really need is more anger.

While I've always been a strong supporter of working through the system, I think more and more that groups like ACT-UP and Queer Nation play a vital part because we **have to become visible**.

The media treatment of Magic Johnson's announcement that he has tested positive for AIDS is a classic example. I have respect for Johnson's decision and the way in which he is handling it, especially his work on educating others. I have no respect for and am angered by the fact that the media has suddenly decided AIDS is newsworthy again. The deaths of over 128,000 Americans is not newsworthy; the HIV positive status of one basketball star is.

Some would say I should be glad for the attention this is focusing on AIDS and that maybe this is what it will take to get our government moving on the issue. I'm tired of being grateful for gratuitous victories. Just once I'd like us to win one because it's the right thing to do, not because it can somehow be twisted into something acceptable to the straight community. The theme running behind all the media reporting and commentary on Magic Johnson is that now we have to pay attention because it happened to one of "us" not one of "them".

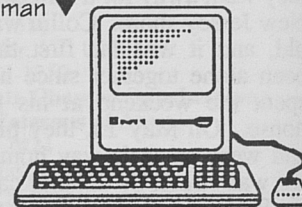
It's comforting to focus on how far we have come; harder to think about how far we have to go. When our families are not accorded the same basic rights as other

families, when we have to fight and make a special case every time we need health insurance, when we are discriminated against by everyone from the IRS to credit card companies to businesses offering "family discounts"; when we read that violence against gays and lesbians is at an all time high it's time to fight back in every way possible. For some of us that means civil disobedience, for others lobbying and legal challenges, for others letter writing. For all of us it means being out and visible in as open a way as we can possibly be.

Next month's issue will be coming to you just as the Vermont legislature once again considers the civil rights bill. It is incumbent on all of us to do as much as possible to highlight the issue and lobby our legislators (and the rest of the state). At a minimum, **write or call your representative**. Legislators need to know we elect them and can equally well vote against them. If they don't hear from us it is easy to ignore us.

This month we've printed Peter Cooper's description of testifying before the legislature. Next month we will provide an easy way for you to be heard; a clip-out form to mail your representative.

Deborah Lashman ▼



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