

letters

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◆ Exception Taken with Misogynist Myth

In all due respect to Michael Albero's desire for gay liberation which puts us basically on the same side of the fence, I must take issue with his opinion that Wilhelm Jansen, a German scout leader who indulged in sex with his troop of boys was nobly engaged in "male bonding" ("The Original Boy Scouts" 5/98 OITM). The phallogocentric rationalization that these young victims of child molesting really were sexually attracted to their leaders, (their "father figures") in some sort of mutual way shows a clear lack of understanding of how power differentials play out in patriarchal forms of sex.

Michael seems to buy the principle that these "active" (i.e. dominant) leaders had every right to fuck their "beloved, hence passive" (i.e. submissive) children. This distortion is the foundation of male domination, the extension of which led to the rise of the Nazis. You're damn right this band of abusers considered "it in bad taste to spend time with women." Those women probably would not have stood around watching their sons get raped all in the name of penis worship.

If we're going to stand side by side in the movement, Michael, please educate yourself about sexual politics. It is a misogynist myth that males are victims of "an outpouring of one of the strongest hormones pulsing through men's veins - the desire to get off" (to quote a letter to the editor in the same OITM issue).

This view of masculinity justifies universal access of the almighty phallus so men can stick it to whoever, wherever, whatever. This is far from sexual liberation. Unfortunately this widely accepted precept has led to the rape of women, children and the earth.

Crow Cohen

◆ Riders Respond

Fenway Serves Vermonters:

As a registered rider in the Boston to New York AIDS Ride 4, I would like to show how this event does have a positive impact on Vermont. The funds I raise benefit the Fenway Community Health Center (FCHC) in Boston. FCHC provides quality health care to the gay and lesbian community of New England, and is actively involved in HIV research and prevention pro-

grams.

Fenway is committed to providing the best services to New England patients and fellow agencies. According to Glenn Kaufhold, Director of Development, up to 12 people from Vermont are currently receiving care at Fenway. This year, Fenway implemented the C.A.R.E (Collaborative AIDS Ride Effort) Program as a way to share a percentage of the funds they receive from the AIDS Ride. New England agencies who wish to be considered are asked to draft a proposal for funds.

FCHC was our nation's first community-based health clinic to initiate HIV research studies. They continued that tradition last July by enrolling people in Project ACHIEVE, a five year study to determine the immune system response to experimental HIV vaccines. Fenway is one of fourteen sites nationwide to participate in this study, and the only one in New England.

By supporting the Boston to New York AIDS Ride 4, you are doing something about AIDS. You are helping a clinic provide care to people from throughout New England, and ensuring that research will one day bring us the cure.

Thank you,
Gavin Wallace, Burlington

AIDS Not a Local Disease

The April 1998 Editorial concerning the Boston New York AIDS ride asking readers not to sponsor anyone and only donate to the terrific local AIDS agencies was disappointing. Since when is AIDS a local disease? The World Health Organization estimates that there are between 20 and 30 million people with HIV/AIDS world wide, 70% in developing countries. I totally support VT CARES with the AIDS walks, auctions, dinners and even donated furniture after the fire, but for me, this fund-raiser is about research dollars. I have 5 friends living with AIDS and I do not think any of the medications they take were developed in Vermont.

Please let me address some of the concerns in the editorial, as one of the 32 local Vermont bicycle riders planning on sacrificing a lot of free time training this summer for the ride.

An advertising expense of \$3000 does not buy a great deal of advertising. I suspect a large percentage of the 32 riders registered so far, like me, did so due to reading the advertisements. Also, many local people volunteer to help out at

the rides, including local bike shop personnel. I would say the ads were well worth the money, and have more than paid for themselves already. The old adage it takes money to make money, comes to mind.

The editorial stated \$60,000 left Vermont. First of all, did this the money come from Vermont? All my fund raising so far has been out of state. Secondly, the average annual cost of meeting a clients needs at the Fenway Community Health Center is approximately \$30,000. I would suspect out of 750 New England clients that there are more than two Vermonters taking advantage of their services. Thirdly, and most importantly, VT CARES and Brattleboro Area AIDS Project can apply for grants this year from a fund being set up based on a percentage of the ride profit. In other words this year some money will be available for Vermonters.

Yes, Bob Pallotta and his for-profit fund raising company make a lot of money. But they also raise a lot of money. The company also does fundraisers for the Breast Cancer Walks and the American Lung Association. The bike rides have delivered more money, more quickly back to AIDS charities than any other AIDS fund-raisers in history. Since 1994 twenty-two rides have raised approximately 70 million. Costs are different for each area ride. Administrative costs and public awareness can cost around 25% and taking care of the 3000 riders and about 1200 volunteer workers, can cost around 18%.

The bottom line is the important figure and approximately 40 million has gone to agencies for their client services and research. A Winooski friend of mine, working the ride in Washington DC, said Dan Palotta told her if the research funded by the rides develops a vaccine or cure he would gladly move onto something else.

The Fenway Community Health Centers research facility, built by rider dollars, is one of eight test sites chosen nationwide by the Center for Disease Control to administer and test the experimental AIDS vaccine. This is just one type of research the 32 Vermont riders and local volunteers are striving to help fund in order to eliminate AIDS in Vermont, the United States, and the around the world. AIDS is not a local disease. Please support the riders and local volunteers.

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Editor Responds to AIDS Riders:

The argument that Vermonters should support AIDSride because the money goes to research is typical of the misleading information put out by the recruiters for the event. According to the Fenway Community Health Center, \$70,000 dollars goes from the ride to the research department, which may seem like a lot. but put it this way, if a rider raises the \$1500 required to take part in this event, about \$25 of it goes towards research at the Fenway, while around \$400 goes to PR and advertising and Dan Palotta's \$ 250,000 a year salary. What AIDSride calls "public awareness" is nothing more than advertising and PR, another example of "good PR" or misleading information.

If you want to support AIDS research all you need to do is pay your taxes, the vast majority of AIDS research is paid for by federal grants. If you want to Raise money for a large PR firm in California that's fine too, but don't pretend that AIDSride is anything more than the WalMart of AIDS benefits.