

Just news

Homophobia in the slow lane

In the third of the series, *Letters from the Road, the director of the American Run for the End of AIDS, reports from Midland/Odessa, Texas.*

BY BILL KONKOY

The American Run for the End of AIDS has now logged more than 5,500 miles through 22 states and innumerable cities, towns, villages, hamlets and wide spots on the road. Since we cover about 20 miles each day, spending at least three hours traveling at 7 mph in a car covered with signs and flashing lights bumping along the shoulder of high speed thoroughfares preceded by a slightly balding, very sweaty runner, we've had ample opportunity to be noticed, commented on and communicated with.

Most of the communication — from cars passing or standing, from pedestrians, stoop-sitters and window-hangers, from game-players and -viewers, shoppers and shop-keepers — has been overwhelmingly positive. It has ranged from thumbs-up, waves and raised victory fists, to shouts of, "Right on," "Keep going," and "We love you!"

Then there is the other kind. The kind that raises the hair on your neck, brings the red haze to shroud your darting vision. At

its most violently non-verbal it has ranged from the careful aim at Brent, our runner, taken by a speeding semi (could we have strayed into his path?) to the display of shotguns from a yellow half-ton Ford pick-up (some good ol' boys scarin' the fags). By now we have discounted that most pedestrian of insults, the raised finger.

But it's the verbal brickbats that are the most interesting — and the scariest. Some come out of confusion, like the South-side Chicago softball team which cheered until they could read the car signs. Their altered tune, along the line of "Eat shit, and die," was not music to our ears. Marion's personal favorite, "Hey lady, you got the AIDS?" provoked her to, first chuckle, then to get angry. It's the ignorance that gets to you.

Being out front, pounding the pavement, Brent is the usual target. He decided long ago not to expend valuable energy responding to taunts. So he ignores thumbs-down and raised fingers. But he admits to a pulse-pounding response to, "Hope you die, faggot." Brent has lost

more than 30 friends to AIDS.

The one response that lives in memory for its intensity of rage, depth of frustration and sheer volume came from a humpy, 30-ish Boston hard-hat. His face

empurpled and grimacing, he wailed a long, drawn-out, "Cocksucker!" that must have set dogs in three counties into a frenzy. Like them, his bark was worse than his bite.

Red Rose School to offer gay literature course

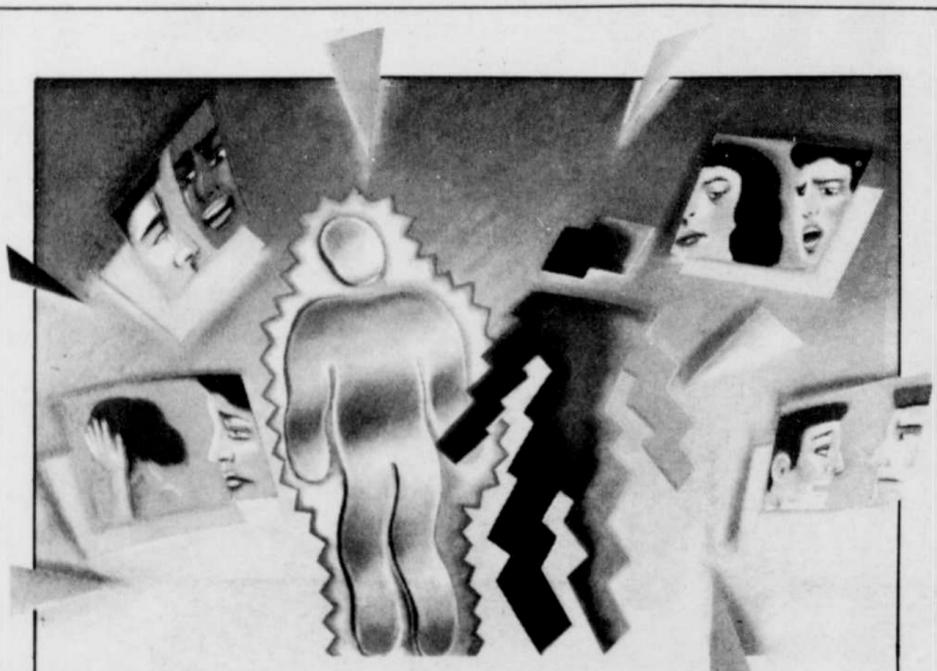
Portland's Red Rose School is offering a course entitled "Life Under the Plague: Gay Men's Writings in the Age of AIDS" as part of its Spring term. The course will be led by Terry Miller, who has taught two previous gay literature courses at the school. The course will begin at 7:30 p.m., Monday, April 13, 1987, and continue for eight Mondays at 7:30, through June 1. The first meeting will be held at the Friends' meeting hall, 4312 SE Stark Street.

Everyone in the course will read Dennis Altman's recent book *AIDS In The Mind Of America*, and two books' worth of literature, ranging from David Leavitt's *Lost Language of Cranes*, to Andrew Holleran's journals from *Christopher Street* magazine, to various safesex pornography books. Beyond Altman, participants will not all read the same materials — each person will choose readings they like off of a reading list. Books will be available in

the Gay Literature section at Looking Glass books.

The Red Rose School is a small independent progressive community organization which offers classes of interest to activists. Other courses this term deal with: a power structure analysis of Portland, the cultural and musical roots of rock 'n roll, class culture and ideology, anarchism, contemporary Indian America, women in the workplace, women's utopian literature, and community organizing. Tuition is \$25 (\$15 low income); the money is used by the school to pay for its mailings and advertising. No one will be refused based on inability to pay tuition. Class members purchase their own readings.

Advance registration is \$5 off (\$20/\$10), and includes an advance copy of the syllabus and annotated reading list. To register in advance, send a check for tuition to Red Rose School, c/o 4726 NE 13th, Portland, OR, 97211. Registrations will also be accepted at the first class meeting. Course size will be limited to twenty, and advance registrations will have the advantage should size be a problem. Questions about Red Rose School can be directed to 230-0488, and questions about the course can be directed to Terry Miller at 235-5665.



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Seattle softball tourney slated

Seattle's Emerald City Softball Association (ECSA) announces plans to host the EMERALD CITY CASCADE CUP, a four-day softball tournament from Friday, May 22, to Monday, May 25, 1987. All men's and women's teams in the N.A.G.A.A. League are invited to participate.

A "Meet & Greet" Registration party, the games at Riverview Playfield, a post-tournament awards banquet and a cruise on Puget Sound are some of the highlights of this year's EMERALD CITY CASCADE CUP.

"We are preparing for 350 athletes at this tournament," says Commissioner Gail Britto, "making this the largest gay and lesbian athletic event in the Pacific Northwest. Many teams have commented on the great organization and orchestration of past tournaments — we want to maintain this tradition."

The double elimination tournament will abide by ASA rules, and is limited to the first twelve men's and twelve women's teams that register. Cost per team is \$175. Deadline for registration is Friday, April 17, 1987.

For further information call Gail Britto at 206/938-0373, or Mike DiMartino at 206/232-3542.