

## SURVIVING THE AIDS CRISIS

A series of eight-week groups providing tools for dealing with the AIDS crisis. Led by Phoenix Rising professional counseling staff. Offered on a sliding scale of \$10-\$43 per session. Scholarships available. Advanced registration and a \$10 deposit are required for each group.

**STRESS MANAGEMENT** for men at risk for or concerned about AIDS. This group will generally follow a guide produced by the AIDS Health Project in San Francisco. Decreasing unnecessary stress and anxiety about AIDS will allow you to make clearer and better decisions based on necessary concerns. Led by Art Wilcox, M.A. Begins Thursday, November 17, with "time outs" for Thanksgiving and Christmas.

**STRATEGIES FOR SURVIVAL.** The objectives of this series for gay men are to better understand what health is; help you explore how changes in key aspects of your life may affect your health; learn a planning process for implementing these changes; evaluate your personal risk for contracting AIDS and better recognize the threat of AIDS to ourselves and our community. Starts Tuesday, January 24.

**NOW THAT YOU KNOW WHAT SAFE SEX IS, WHY CAN'T YOU DO IT?** This is a common problem that many people face. This series provides a safe, supportive, non-judgemental environment and positive tools for behavior change. For men only. Led by Art Wilcox, M.A. Begins Thursday, February 2.

**GROWING THROUGH GRIEF.** Mourning can be a lonely, overwhelming and painful process, especially during the holidays. However, growth can occur through sharing memories, feelings and ideas with others who are experiencing losses. For men and women. Led by Gayla Williams, M.N. Starts Wednesday, December 7.

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For more information call  
223-8299.

## NOW, VOYAGER!



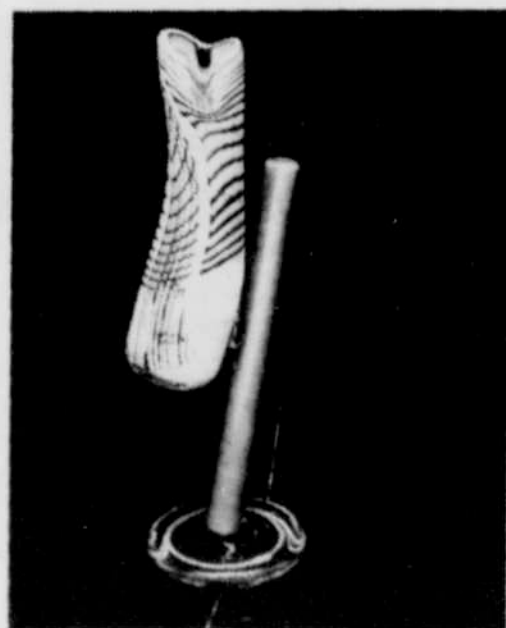
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The "safe sex" series,  
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## Two fruits are better than one

But thousands of us could make quite a ruckus

BY MICHAEL S. REED

October 13, 1988. Downtown Portland. The day is gray and cool. There is a plump, bearded man standing at the corner of Sixth and Main. He holds a stack of newspapers. "Read what homosexuals are planning for your children," he shouts to pedestrians bustling by McDonald's.

A gay man passes and says "fuck you" to the shouting man.



The plump, bearded man's response is quick: "Don't proposition me," he shouts, "I know you're a sick one, but don't proposition me on the street."

I take one of the newspapers. It has lavender headlines (how thoughtful, my favorite color). These headlines trumpet "No Special Rights for Gays, Yes on Eight," or even more ludicrous, "Giving Oregon Children to Homosexuals."

I have news for them. I don't want their children. Many of my closest friends are homosexual and they do not want their children either. Wherever have they come up with this silly notion?

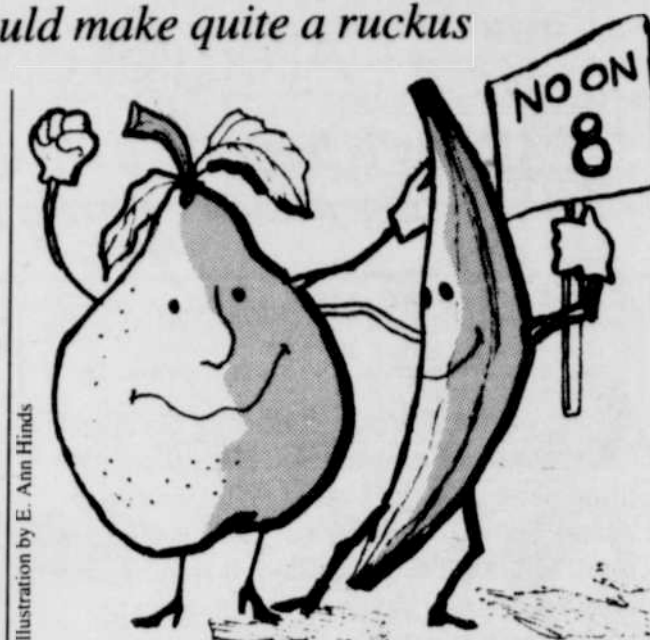
They worry about us harming their children. Consider the Ecclesia Athletic Association, a training camp for Olympic hopefuls run by a fellow named Broussard from the Watts Christian Center in Los Angeles. Fifty-five children were taken away from the Ecclesia Athletic Association. Why? They were beating those children with paddles and electrical cords.

A friend of mine works at a shelter for battered women. Through her, I know that the American family isn't very healthy. It is not, however, made unhealthy by "degenerates" as some would have us believe. Thousands of women and children are seeking refuge in shelters all across the country, running away from the heterosexual men who have broken their hearts and bodies.

Yet still it is us, a relatively small percentage of the population, who are touted as a threat to children everywhere.

The No Special Rights Committee's newspaper waxes poetic upon our sexual behavior, citing studies published in 1980. In terms of awareness of certain dangerous sexual behaviors, 1980 was lifetimes ago. Much has changed since — for those of us reading newspapers, anyway.

This hate literature asserts that in 1990 "a sick person" might not get a hospital bed "because of the tremendous influx into hospitals of AIDS infected gays."



Apparently these folks believe AIDS-infected gays are not people and don't deserve healthcare. They summarize with a call to arms: "Homosexual behavior presents a real and present danger to the physical and financial health of Oregon."

Our community is under attack by these people. We are labelled dangerous. It is for this reason they want us fired from our jobs if we are gay.

Friday night, October 14, 1988. Dusty and I are at cocktails. The waitress asks him for his ID, claiming, "Hon, I check everyone under the age of 35." I'm younger than Dusty. It's going to be a long night.

Dusty has signed up at the Oregonians for Fairness office to do this "toll" thing at the bars. We stop everyone coming into Scandals and request a \$1 donation for the No on 8 campaign. One fat old man tells us to "get off it" and stomps away. A drunken man throws quite the hissy fit when he is asked at every bar for this \$1 donation. He tells us he's going to vote yes on the measure, simply because of the annoyance we have been to him. We receive looks of friendliness and looks of disdain. We do not get money from everyone because the bar manager insists it be presented as a donation, not a cover charge. He is unwilling to believe that the other bar owners on Stark Street are allowing the campaign workers to make it a mandatory toll for entering the bar. Dusty and I are told to remain flexible. That's what we do.

In spite of encountering the occasional ignoramus, Dusty manages to collect about ninety bucks for the campaign in three hours.

October 17, 1988. Monday afternoon. Dusty calls, sad about politics, sad about life.

He tells me he put a No on 8 sticker on his car. Within 24 hours someone had marked all over it, obliterating the message. He does not want to replace it for fear of having worse damage done to his car next time. "So much for freedom of speech," he says sadly.

I try to cheer him up. I recount a commercial I saw Saturday morning for a snack item. The logo was "two fruits are better than one."

But thousands of us could make quite a ruckus.

This ain't no party  
This ain't no disco  
This ain't no foolin' around  
No time for dancin'  
Or lovey dovey  
I ain't got time for that now —

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