

## Outpatient treatment helps alcoholics

If you have ever been hospitalized for alcoholism you'll be pleased to discover that you may have gotten equally effective treatment (at substantially less cost) at an outpatient clinic.

That's the finding of a study directed by Dr. Motoi Hayashida at the Veterans Administration Medical Center in Philadelphia, as reported in the current issue of the *New England Journal of Medicine*.

### ... Between the Lines ...

BY JACK RILEY

Researchers found that those who went into the hospital were more likely to get through the initial program, but after six months, those treated as outpatients were doing just as well.

"We conclude that outpatient medical detoxification is an effective, safe, and low-cost treatment for patients with mild to moderate symptoms of alcohol withdrawal," researchers wrote.

The study surveyed 164 men randomly assigned to outpatient and inpatient programs. The outpatients were given the drug oxazepam and asked to report to a clinic each day, where their blood alcohol levels were measured and they were asked whether or not they had been drinking.

The total cost for outpatients ranged from \$175 to \$388, while for those hospitalized prices ranged from \$3,319 to \$3,665. Treatment took six-and-a-half days for outpatients and about nine days for inpatients.

## For every hotel room, a Valentine

Berkeley, California is toying with a new city ordinance that would require every hotel room to have a "safe sex kit" of condoms and educational literature about AIDS. Naturally, some of "Berserkeley's" citizens think that is going a bit too far.

Hotel operators, who realize that the town has its own approach to normalcy, say they are being unfairly singled out to convey the message of safe sex education. Others, including Marriott spokesman Nicholas Hill, are concerned guests might get the wrong impression. "To have a mandate that these be placed in a place of business is an infringement on people's constitutional rights," Hill told the *New York Times*. Hill's local hotel does supply the Book of Mormon in its rooms, incidentally, and carries no *Playboy* magazines in its gift shop.

The safe sex kit was proposed by nurse-practitioner Leland Traiman, who is working with city officials to develop policies to help stop the spread of AIDS. The idea is not new,

however. Since early 1987, the Shangrila Hotel in Montreal has placed one condom, in a box with the company logo on it, next to the hair conditioner and bubble bath bottles in the bathroom.

## Portland gets a new "Video Bar"

The next time you walk into Flossies Bar and Grill on Stark Street in Portland, be sure to look up at the video camera and smile. Your countenance is being recorded for god-knows-what.

Sources say the camera is just for surveillance of unscrupulous customers who may want to engage in a little illegal activity. Word has it that management would like to train another camera on the bar to "keep an eye" on its employees. Of course, the first time that happens, they can expect to look for some new employees.

Cameras in bars do not go over well — especially in the gay community. Remember the scanning camera at the Brig and Boxx's last year? If you are running a bank, casino, or late night convenience store, video surveillance makes perfectly good sense. But Flossie's?

## Cuba's quarantine for AIDS: police state experiment

Cuba has a very simple approach to AIDS. If you test positive, you are quarantined. And since there is no cure for AIDS in sight, that isolation from the rest of society is indefinite.

Although the state tries to make life comfortable for the 240 people who have been found infected so far (one-third of the country has been tested), that unusual policy could be in for some very controversial scrutiny now that many of Cuba's soldiers are returning from Africa. Their reward for patriotic service is to be tested and possibly incarcerated.

Though the detainees have color television and air conditioning — luxurious by Cuban standards — they have been separated from their children, even though casual contact does not spread the disease. No one leaves the compound without a chaperone.

What is going on in Cuba is an experiment. If it succeeds in stopping the spread of AIDS, then government officials will justify what they have been doing. But if the quarantine does not give its people a unique protection, then hundreds will have been deprived of liberty for absolutely nothing.

## Life in the future: mixed blessings

Much of the future looks promising. We will eat better and live longer. We will work less and stay home more. Technology will befriend us . . .

That's *Life* magazine's description of the near future published in a 30-page photo essay, "Visions of Tomorrow" in the February issue.

Some other predictions: By the year 2000, surgeons will have perfected cheek, voicebox, blood vessel, tendon, ligament, finger and toe joint implants — some of them assisted by lasers, not knives.

Insulin-dependent diabetes, multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, and 3,000 genetically-derived diseases will be eliminated.

And one final note: *Life* says the chance that AIDS will be gone by the turn of the century will be down to 50 percent.

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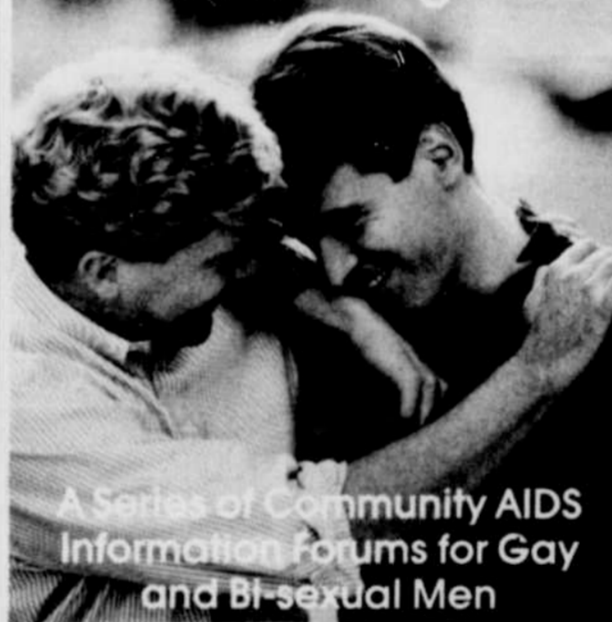
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