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Just news

AIDS and women

*People are realizing that AIDS is a pandemic,
it can hit anyone*

BY ANNDEE HOCHMAN

Any hope for stopping the spread of AIDS lies not with government policy but in community standards, Ines Rieder, an editor of *AIDS: The Women*, said in a lecture here last month.

Rieder, whose book compiled essays and interviews with 41 women affected in some way by AIDS, said that safer sex — and uninhibited discussion of it — must become a social standard.

"We have to lose some of our inhibitions and be able to talk about condoms and dental dams and latex gloves," she said. "It has to be totally unacceptable to have sex with someone without protecting yourself." Rieder spoke to an audience of about 25, mostly women, at Metropolitan Community Church in NE Portland.

AIDS: The Women included interviews from women in Africa, Brazil, the Netherlands, and West Germany, as well as throughout the United States. In comparison to some other countries, Rieder said, people in the US are complacent about "official" AIDS policies, including statistics, advertising standards, and laws on needle distribution.

She suggested that the number of women with AIDS may be much higher than the Centers for Disease Control figures indicate. Currently, women account for nine percent of AIDS cases in the US, according to the CDC. However, Rieder said, many women who are sick never seek medical care and never receive an AIDS diagnosis. In some cities she visited on a nationwide tour, people minimized the threat of AIDS to women and suggested that women could only become infected through

needle-sharing, not by having sex.

"I think it is very, very slowly changing," she said. "I think people are realizing that it is a pandemic, it can hit anyone . . . thinking, 'Maybe I'm at risk, too.'"

In several Western European countries, she said, explicit advertisements are used to educate about AIDS. A Dutch television ad shows a man with an erect penis putting on a condom, she noted. "We cannot continue to say things like, 'Use condoms,' and not tell people how to use them."

In non-industrialized countries, though, encouraging condom use may be unrealistic. In Zimbabwe, for instance, an imported condom costs more than \$1, an exorbitant sum for people whose average yearly income amounts to \$400 or \$500.

"What are you going to tell people in other countries, outside the industrialized world?" she said. "What are you going to propose to them? What kind of message can we give these countries but — be monogamous?"

Rieder, who lives in Oakland, stressed that people who work on AIDS issues must form coalitions, develop long-term strategies, and become a political force. If health workers or others have access to clean needles that may prevent HIV transmission, they should give them out, whether they have government sanction or not, she said. "Why wait for federal funds to be approved; why wait for the government to say, okay?"

She praised the efforts of ACT UP to jostle a public, and a government, that is often complacent about AIDS. "ACT UP has, at least, disturbed people," she said. "And people need to be disturbed. There are too many people in this country who are comfortable and they need to be made uncomfortable." ▼

Louise L. Hay to appear at Civic Auditorium

The most important thing is to love yourself

BY LINDA ROSS

It started in a living room and grew to a weekly event. It was a support group of six men living with AIDS. It is still a support group with over seven hundred participants. The group includes people with AIDS, their families, their friends, and their loved ones. The atmosphere is cheerful. The message is simple. It's a message of love, a message of hope. Most of all, it's a message that works.

On Thursday, May 18, Louise L. Hay will be in Portland. She will share her experiences and ideas. Her ideas focus on transforming negative beliefs into ones of wholeness, health, and well-being. "Healing Your Life, An Evening with Louise Hay" is sponsored by the Living Enrichment Center of Beaverton. It will begin at 7:30 pm at Portland Civic Auditorium.

Hay is the author of *You can Heal Your Life*. With over one million copies in print, Hay's book has been on both *The New York Times* and *Publisher's Weekly* bestseller lists. It is available in ten languages. Hay has also appeared on the Oprah Winfrey and Phil Donahue shows.

In all her workshops, tapes, and books, Hay shares one message: you can change your life by loving yourself. "What you give out you get back," she says. "You change your life by changing what you believe. You change your life by changing what you believe. The most important thing is to love yourself. Forgive

everyone and love yourself. Your whole life is just perfect."

"Forgiveness is the hardest part," she added. "The more trouble someone has loving one's self, the more you know they have someone to forgive. Forgiveness opens the door to love, it dissolves bitterness and self-righteousness and the need for revenge."

Hay speaks through her experiences. She was physically and sexually abused from the age of five until she ran away from home at 15. After giving up a child for adoption, she went on to become a high-fashion model in New York, working for names like Bill Blass and Oleg Cassini. After the end of her 14 year marriage, Hay began studying healing. She became a minister and wrote the booklet, "Heal Your Body."

She had an opportunity to put her philosophy to work when doctors diagnosed her with cervical cancer. The alternative healing methods she applied included dietary changes, reflexology, and visualizations. Within six months, her cancer was gone.

When asked about her troubled years, she simply says, "It all led me to where I am." Her message is simple, "Love yourself. You have power and control over your life."

Tickets at \$9.50, \$12.50 and \$14.50, are available at the Living Enrichment Center in Beaverton, Civic Auditorium, and Stiles for Relaxation. For more information, call 292-2050. ▼