

# just news

## Four more charges of spreading AIDS added to Idaho case

On May 16 in Boise, Idaho, four more charges of spreading AIDS were added to the growing list by women who say they were exposed to the virus by a former college basketball star.

That same day, a federal civil rights team said it may look into the case.

Kerry Stephen Thomas, 25, who is HIV-positive, is accused of knowingly spreading the AIDS virus by having unprotected sexual intercourse with five women.

As with most sex crime cases brought to trial in Idaho, this one is being made even more inflammatory by the fact that two of the women were minors at the time of alleged exposure.

Prosecutors said additional charges are also being investigated.

Thomas is the second man to be accused under the two-year-old law which makes it illegal to knowingly spread the HIV virus, a precursor of AIDS.

The law has been seriously questioned by gay activists nationwide who say it makes confidential testing a farce.

The first person charged was George Frank Lewis, a homosexual. These charges were dropped when he was given a life sentence for lewd and lascivious conduct with a minor.

The "minor" was 15 years old.

A federal civil rights team from the regional office in Seattle may investigate allegations that the newly created Idaho law is being used to harass minorities.

The civil rights office must receive a formal complaint before it can actually investigate discrimination cases. It is not known at this time whether Thomas or Lewis plan to take such action.

Thomas, who denies the accusations, also was indicted on May 16 in a secret grand jury investigation.

The grand jury charges — which include the same five women — supersede the criminal complaint.

None of the women's names are being released, nor is their antibody status.

Through his attorney, Thomas also asked that the press be barred from further hearings and that the current judge be disqualified.

Thomas' case was being heard by Deborah Bail, the same magistrate who gave Lewis a life sentence.

—Dell Richards

## Material deemed "too sensitive" to print

Arcata Graphics, a major trade book printer with plants across the United States, has refused to print the first book to document the activities of AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP), *AIDS Demo Graphics*, by Douglas Crimp and Adam Rolston. The publisher, Bay Press of Seattle, was informed by Arcata sales representative Joe Smith that the material in the book was "too sensitive."

*AIDS Demo Graphics*, the lead title for Bay Press's 1990 list, was to be featured at the American Bookseller's Convention in June. "There's no question that we will be hurt financially by not having the book at the ABC," admits managing editor Thatcher Bailey, "but the real shame is that ten years into a devastating and tragic epidemic, fear and prejudice are still so pervasive."

The text and images in *AIDS Demo Graphics* trace the development of socially engaged art activities produced in response to the AIDS epidemic. Part history, part guidebook, part polemic, the book documents a decade of government inaction, corporate profiteering, media distortion, and public apathy. "The graphics are bold and often quite provocative," acknowledges Bailey, "but we're talking about people who must not only struggle for their lives but also for their basic rights."

*Publishers Press* in Utah has agreed to print the book. "We do not feel this is an offensive book," says sales representative Lyle Mumford. "We feel it is an important book."

*Editor's Note: The printing companies are in bold italic because Arcata Graphics should be avoided, while support should be given to Publishers Press. Just Out will always try to let you know about the clunkers and the good ones as well.*

## Feds fund gay sex project

In what may be a first, the Federal government has funded a Chicago project designed to keep gay men practicing safer sex.

The Alliance of Services for AIDS Prevention, a coalition of four community-based AIDS organizations, has received \$260,000 from the Centers for Disease Control to launch the project.

ASAP will target "the gay- and non-gay-identified men-who-have-sex-with-men community" with videos, posters, palm cards, counseling, support, and prevention education, according to John Copeland of STOP AIDS Chicago.

Coalition-member The Reimer Foundation has expanded its distribution of condoms and produced a series of safer-sex video spots for bars.

STOP AIDS is using the money to fund intensive discussion groups on risk reduction and community development.

The Test Positive Aware Network is offering support groups, weekly forums and a monthly newsletter. And Horizons Community Services has created a new workshop, "Men, Intimacy and Sex," which is directed at men who may relapse into high-risk behavior.

ASAP is receiving technical assistance from the Illinois Department of Public Health and the Chicago Department of Health.

Asked if the new video and print ads violate various amendments authored by US Sen. Jesse Helms [R-NC] prohibiting the expenditure of public monies to promote homosexuality, IDPH's Gary Monachino said: "There was some concern and the CDC set up a community review here in Chicago and the ads were approved. The review panel ruled the ads were not offensive."

In fact, the print and video materials are explicitly gay in flavor and tone, but never actually show two men together or directly say "gay sex." If necessary, the ads could be construed as referring to men and women.

"If he's too big to wear one, he's wrong. He's just too small to care," states one video spot.

The funding cycle for ASAP runs until December, 1992, when renewal will be based on the project's performance.

—Rex Wockner



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