

Hollywood AIDS publicity only first step to awareness

"It is a town near hysteria. Since Rock Hudson's confession, actresses have been shunning love scenes with gay co-stars. In a world known for easy sexuality, even a social kiss is suspect..."

The above quote is, surprisingly, from the cover of People magazine. The entertainment publication took time out from its usual quota of stories on Liz Taylor's waistline and Jackie O's breathing patterns to report on how AIDS is affecting Hollywood and showbiz.

It is indeed sad when awareness about AIDS must be glamorous before people will open their eyes to an epidemic that has been gaining fatal momentum for more than three years.



Scott Harrah

Hollywood's stars are the U.S. counterpart of European royalty, and people have always been influenced by the rich and famous. As ludicrous as it is, the media exploitation of Rock Hudson's fight with AIDS has finally made people conscious of what could become the most dangerous disease of this century.

So, since many people have made the incorrect assumption that only gays and heroin junkies get AIDS, the media went to the stars to make people listen.

Elizabeth Taylor, that heroine of many suburban housewives, summed up the reality of AIDS best: "I cannot stress how important it is to learn what AIDS is and to realize that it's a serious threat to all humankind: men, women and children."

Some of the country's housewives will probably get in their station wagons, drive to the post office to mail their college children's tuition money, then go to the supermarket to buy groceries and a copy of People magazine. When

UNL flute professor in faculty recital

UNL flute professor David Van de Bogart will present a faculty recital at 8 p.m. today in Kimball Recital Hall, 11th and R streets.

Van de Bogart will perform works by Handel, Debussy and Doppler. Also on the program is an anonymous work titled "Selections from the Delightful Pocket Companion from the German Transverse Flute," which he will perform on a William S. Haynes wooden flute built in 1917.

He will be accompanied by Catherine Herbener, keyboard, and by Donna Harler, narrator.

they read Taylor's comments, they'll think: "Gee, Liz seems to think this AIDS business could happen to my daughter. Hmmm."

It won't be enough though. AIDS will continue to spread.

However, awareness isn't going to do any harm; it's the first step in actions aimed at finding a cure.

Like it or not, homosexuals have been behind a large portion of the glitz and creativity in Hollywood, Broadway and the art world for ages. It's only natural that AIDS has caused hysteria among stars of the film and stage but that's not important in this issue.

What is important, and most of all disturbing, is that people have used AIDS to discriminate against homosexuals instead of trying to stop the disease. When Hudson announced he had AIDS, all that people cared about was whether he was gay and if Linda Evans, whom he kissed on "Dynasty," would contract the disease.

Right-wing warbler Jerry Falwell feels homosexuals should be quarantined because AIDS is purportedly "God's wrath against a perverted lifestyle."

Isn't it interesting that studies show that lesbians are at a lower AIDS risk

than heterosexual women, Mr. Falwell?

AIDS is a killer that just happened to strike the homosexual population first—the rest of us are next. AIDS should not be used as a moral or personal judgment against normal people who happen to sleep with their own gender.

Of course, we live in a country where just 30 years ago we used to make blacks use a separate drinking fountain because they had a darker skin pigmentation.

That is the same type of abysmal mentality that is so prevalent in America today. "AIDS just kills the faggots," people say. "And we could use a good queer cleanser."

Those people are the same bigots who won't be laughing so lachrymatically when AIDS finally hits places like Nebraska in full force.

It won't arrive in the form of a swishy hairdresser. More likely it will arrive in the form of buxom blondes with bisexual boyfriends in L.A. — the same blondes the bigots will pick up at the local bar.

Maybe this new, fashionable AIDS awareness will keep that from happening.

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