Mailbox

September 1, 2008

Superstar!
Thank you for the inspiring story “HIV: Behind the Music” [by Kellee Terrell, May 2008], about Sherri Lewis, the lead singer of the ’80s band Get Wet. I was partway through the story when I got to the lyrics of the band’s song “Just So Lonely” and realized that I was quite familiar with the record. I was a deejay in the nightclub Babylon in Houston, back in 1981, and I had played the record many times. Being an HIV survivor since 1984, with 15 years of club deejaying and partying, I saw many of the crowds and my friends die from AIDS. Hearing Sherri’s story makes me feel that I’ll be okay.

Jon Mott
Dallas

Although I agree with Ms. Lewis that few women are publicly out and about living with HIV/AIDS, I do not want us to forget those brave and wonderful women who are [open about their disease]. After living with HIV for 17 of my 42 years, I have seen many heterosexual women, as well as lesbians, who opened their arms and were there for others in the very beginning of this disease, when no others were. I object to the [May issue’s cover line about her] and Lewis’ title for her podcast, Straight Girl in a Queer World. It is past time that POZ and everyone else stop talking about sexual orientation in reference to this disease, especially since it has killed—and still kills—millions of every age, race, creed, religion and gender. Time to ACT UP and FIGHT BACK!

Charlie Dale
Canton, OH

What Sherri didn’t mention was how she impacted the lives of people she touched who are living with HIV and AIDS. Meeting Sherri opened my eyes to a completely different idea of how to fight this. She provided info and support and even participated in my children’s lives. She has definitely improved the quality of my life, and I am sure there are other women who would say the same thing. Keep up the good work “Straight Girl in a Queer World.” We need more women like you.

Margie Davin
Santa Monica, CA

Ladies’ Night

I am an HIV-positive woman, and right now I am pissed [after reading Regan Hofmann's "What's a Girl to Do?" about a new study of stigma surrounding positive U.S. women]. How come people are still so ignorant? This is why I will never disclose my status outside family and doctors. To think that of all the "friends" I have, such a high percentage would look down on me for having the virus, makes me want to stay silent.

Kelly Chersi
Orlando

I am a pregnant positive woman, and because I decided to have a baby, my friends do not always look on me favorably. I think ignorance is a big thing; based on the comments I've gotten, they either think I will have an HIV-positive baby or believe I will die soon. Not one person I know even realizes that it is highly possible for me to have an HIV-negative child. I've heard many abortion debates from people who don't know my status; they have said that "obviously" someone with HIV should have an abortion.

Name Withheld

The Money Shot

Regarding Kellee Terrell's article "Lights! Camera! Bareback Action!" [May 2008], about the absence of condom use in celebrity sex tapes: I don't know anyone who believes that celebrities are smarter than "mere mortals," as your article suggests, nor do I know anyone who takes safe-sex tips from them. If I did know such people, I wouldn't respect them.

M.J.K.
Atlanta

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