Your Feedback

July 1, 2009

PAY TO PLAY

In "Sex, Tourism and HIV" (March 2009), former POZ *"barebacking" cover boy Tony Valenzuela examined the controversial practice of traveling to foreign countries—ones with high HIV rates and rampant poverty—to solicit and pay for sex.*

[This was a very] compelling story. I appreciate the discussion about how to be an ethical sex tourist and how [the article] acknowledges the practical reality that there will always be sex workers and people who hire them. We need to continue to have more conversations about how to be honest and true when it comes to sexual experiences around the world.

Robbo
Miami

[In regards to the following that Valenzuela wrote in his article]: "Is it possible to be an ethical sex tourist?... The answer then may not come from the governments. Instead it may lie in the tourists themselves and, possibly, those like Drey who book their travel." Don't imply that I'm profiteering from sexual tourism. In fact, we are essentially a nonprofit organization, and I'm laughing looking at our financials. The majority of our bookings are from gay couples or those that are looking to reunite to meet a Brazilian love interest.

Drey
City Withheld

MAN IN THE MIRROR

Kat Noel's "About Face" (March 2009) discussed the growing trend of people living with HIV who travel abroad to have inexpensive fillers injected in their faces to help with wasting and possibly as a means to regain their self-esteem.

It is a deterrent to look unequal in your body due to this disease. It gets you horrid looks from people that you would not believe. It is bad enough to have to fight the disease every day. When people at the mall don't really want you to try on clothes then there is something wrong with the medicine we are taking. We must have other choices soon, or who knows what may happen.

Jerry R.
St. Petersburg, FL

I am 55 years old and have been positive for 25 years. I am in a long, committed relationship but

still chose to have my face fixed. It looks so much better; I don't look sick. My sunken face was not making me feel good. I know [fillers are] temporary, but until better stuff is here, I will do it and will even travel for a better solution. I waited three years before acting. Today, my lover says I am one hot cookie, so I did it and I feel better.

Alain Filiz
Miami

NO GLOVE LOVE

On March 17, POZ.com reported that Pope Benedict XVI said that condoms do not help the global AIDS epidemic, they only "aggravate" the issue. Here's what some of you had to say:

The pope's statement against condom use rejects the courageous work of many—it is like stepping back 20 years. In Africa, there has been a coming together of Catholics and non-Catholics for an ABCD approach (Abstinence, if not then Being faithful, if not then Condom, if not then Death). The pope's statements will further marginalize any role for the Vatican in the pandemic. Condoms are not birth control, they are death control.

Brother Toby McCarroll
Annapolis, CA

The pope's criticism proves he is out of touch. Maybe in his mind, [he believes] if he can live without sex, we all can.

Christopher
Seattle

Just another reason to stay far away from organized religion. Pope Benedict XVI is ill-informed and uneducated—stuck in the Dark Ages just like the rest of the church.

Eliza
Augusta, GA

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