The Roaring Twenties Are in Full Swing

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July 7, 2021 By Peter Staley

Heads up to our beautiful queer community, especially my fellow gay boys—the Roaring Twenties are in full swing. While PrEP and U=U will continue to reduce our community HIV viral load, other STIs are about to soar. We need to strongly encourage each other to adopt aggressive STI testing habits. If you're fucking every weekend, then you should be getting tested at least monthly. If your doc is a finger-wagger about stuff like this, then find another doc, or put your local STD clinic on speed dial (you can find yours here). In NYC, there are tons of walk-in options (GMHC, Health Dept. STD clinics, CityMD locations, etc.).

If you get an STI, then do the right thing, and text your sex partners from the previous weekend (at least those you had a digital connection with). I was in Ptown last week, so I'm scheduling a doc visit this week. Testing, testing, testing must become normalized and socially encouraged and supported.

And if your friends can't pull back from a particular party drug, don't avoid talking about it. From all I'm hearing anecdotally, our twelve-step programs will be overflowing with newcomers by this fall, if not sooner. Preach harm reduction with those you love. Read Sarah Schulman's Conflict Is Not Abuse, and learn how to have hard conversations with your friends.

Beyond that, I am very pro enjoying our new Roaring Twenties, as long as it's combined with a renewed sense of a loving queer community where we take care of each other, just as we've done before.

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