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[REDACTED]
San Francisco, CA 94110

Jan 4, 1992

Dear "Book Notes",

I should like to recommend writer
Rand Shiltz for your show in the
near future. He is busy right now
writing his Book on Sexual Minorities
in the U.S. Military. But he
has two films now in production
(See enclosed).

Mr Shiltz is a friend and
a powerful influence in the HIV
and discrimination communities.

Please think about it.

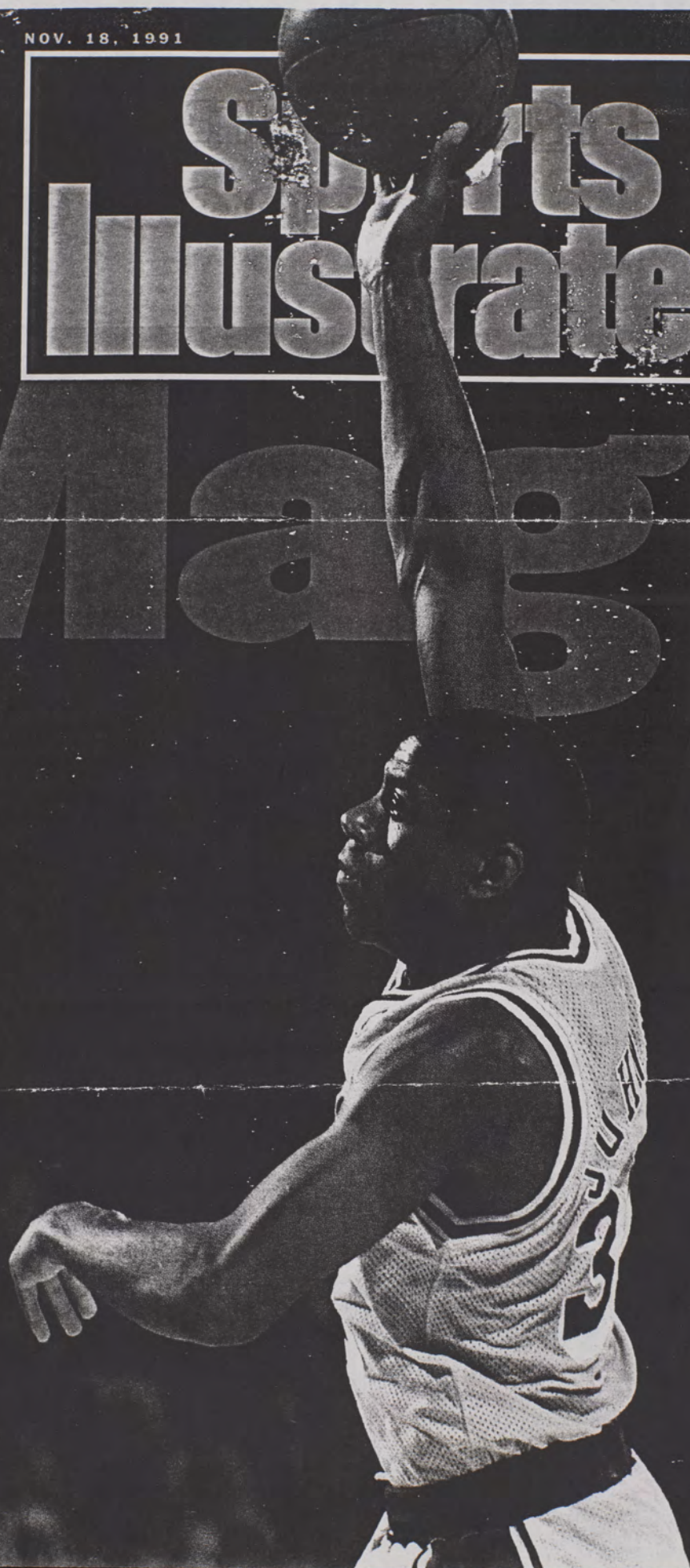
Sincerely,
[REDACTED]

NOV. 18, 1991

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Sports Illustrated

Magic



Speak for All, Magic

In his fight against HIV, Magic Johnson should not confine his concern to heterosexual victims | by RANDY SHILTS



CINDY CHARLES

IF THE PEOPLE BATTLING HIV HAD CALLED CENTRAL casting to summon the perfect spokesman, they could not have improved upon Magic Johnson. A man of integrity from the macho world of sports, Magic couldn't be better suited for taking on the cause of AIDS awareness. If this sports champion preaches the gospel of safe sex and more research, there's a good chance that heterosexual mainstream America will listen.

But now that Magic has bravely volunteered to be the messenger, he faces an even more demanding task in fashioning his message. Two of the first reactions to the news last week that he had tested positive for HIV through heterosexual contact offered clues as to the obstacles that lie ahead.

In his appearance on *The Arsenio Hall Show* last Friday night, when Johnson proclaimed that he was "far from being a homosexual," the crowd cheered, seemingly expressing relief that he wasn't gay. It was a jarring moment.

From the start of the AIDS epidemic 10 years ago, there has been a tendency to separate the "innocent" victims of HIV from the supposedly "guilty"—gay men and intravenous drug users. This impulse is basically an attempt to differentiate those for whom we should feel sorry from those who shouldn't have our sympathy. By inference this also divides those who don't deserve AIDS from those who do. The depressing subtext to Johnson's announcement was that suddenly people cared about HIV because it struck someone they liked, someone who clearly didn't "deserve" it.

In his war against AIDS, Magic will need to fight this prejudice, because it remains the largest obstacle to an effective response to the epidemic. Nobody deserves AIDS. If Magic becomes a spokesman just for heterosexuals with HIV, he will abet the prejudice that has impeded the fight to conquer AIDS. If he becomes a spokesman for all persons with HIV, he can help Americans transcend their biases and realize genuine compassion. Magic's basketball career has been marked by his ability to help teammates take their game to a higher level; now he can help the public do the same.

The second disturbing response to Magic's announcement came last Friday from Vice-President Dan Quayle, who said he would urge young people to practice not safe sex but abstinence. Hardly any health expert believes that a message of "just say no" to sex will do anything to stop the spread of AIDS. Young people are going to have sex; the challenge is to tell them how to do so without spreading deadly viruses. Quayle's unrealistic proposal is not born of public health expertise but is part of the political agenda of the far right, which maintains that nobody should have sex at all except in the missionary position on the matrimonial bed. Like

everything else having to do with AIDS, even safe sex is a political issue.

Most Americans have largely ignored AIDS politics. Magic is one of the few people who might pique their interest. But how he goes about doing this is crucial. Will he play a ceremonial role in AIDS education, spending his days posing for photo opportunities? Or will he confront the gritty political issues that will, in the long run, save lives?

Johnson's disclosure comes in a dark hour of the epidemic. President Bush has shown little interest in mobilizing the government against AIDS. Congress has been reluctant to increase AIDS funding in the midst of other budget battles. The leadership of the African-American community refuses to acknowledge that AIDS is even a problem for blacks.

No human being in the history of the AIDS epidemic is better positioned to get the battle against AIDS moving than Johnson. But he's going to have to be ready to rock the boat. He should ask tough questions about why the government is moving so slowly in combating the rapid spread of AIDS in minority communities and why funding for AIDS research has remained virtually unchanged for the past two years.

Getting involved in the politics of the anti-AIDS struggle might not be entirely comfortable for a sports figure, but Johnson must make the effort. Already the Bush Administration is reported to be considering naming him to the National Commission on AIDS. But Magic may find serving on the commission frustrating, given its record of making marvelous recommendations that hardly anyone in the White House or in Congress pays any attention to whatsoever. He might be far more effective working outside the government.

The choice is his, and the stakes are high. Scientists are edging closer to the creation of treatments that could transform HIV infection from a terminal condition into a manageable chronic disease. The time is coming when having HIV will be like having diabetes: The disease can't be cured, but it can be medically managed so that those infected will be able to live a normal life span.

However, scientists have been slow to translate their laboratory advances into life-saving drugs because the Bush Administration and Congress won't spend the money that the government's own health experts say is needed to do the job. A kick-ass Magic Johnson could provide the impetus to obtain these funds and get research rolling. If he chooses this course, the life he saves could well be his own. ■

Randy Shiltz wrote *"And the Band Played On,"* the best-selling history of the AIDS epidemic.

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DOODLES

By Deborah Mitchell

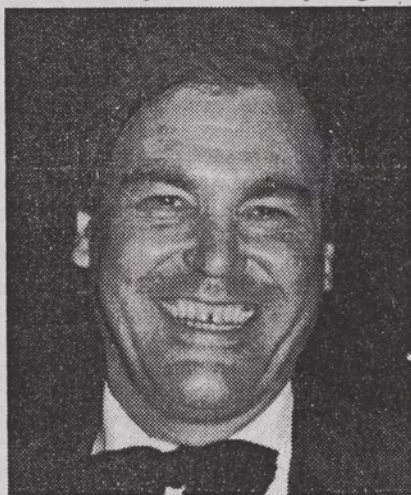
December 16, 1991

GLAAD to See You, Mr. Stone

Fear not: Oliver Stone is still politically correct. Some gay activists were concerned about the director's upcoming movie, *JFK*, which portrays three gay characters in a negative light. But when the Gay & Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation approached Mr. Stone, he readily agreed to a meeting.

The conference took place at 5 P.M. on Dec. 4 at Santa Monica's Lucas Film Sound Studios, where Mr. Stone was still working on the movie. Mr. Stone won points with his opening line.

"I can understand why you're upset," he said to GLAAD's Richard Jennings and Robert Sheps. Mr. Stone explained that the characters were based on historical figures who were part of New Orleans' gay underground in the early 60's. One particularly sleazy scene—the alleged conspirators tried to stop New Orleans District Attorney Jim Garrison (who's



Oliver Stone.

played by Kevin Costner) by tricking him into a sex-solicitation rap in a men's restroom—has been cut from the movie. Mr. Stone agreed to let GLAAD screen the film on Dec. 16 (the New York media have to wait until Dec. 18; the film opens on Dec. 20). Not surprisingly, Mr. Jennings feels that the director was "very sensitive to our concerns."

It helps that Mr. Stone's next project is *The Mayor of Castro Street*, which will be based on Randy Shilts' book about the life and death of San Francisco politician Harvey Milk. It was first optioned for the movies in 1982; Mr. Stone signed on as co-producer in March 1990. "This project was dead until Oliver got involved," reports Mr. Shilts. Now the word in the San Francisco papers is that Robin Williams is likely to star as Mr. Milk.

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