



Liberace in his traditional guise

Mothers Pride

As the Aids saga develops we can watch veil after veil of illusion being stripped off sexual hypocrisy. Until recently only women working in prostitution were expected to carry condoms, now they're part of the make-up bag of any sensible sexually active woman. Soon the shops will be selling special sequined holders for them.

So why, when Liberace died, were there only subterranean rumours of Aids being responsible? Why the sensitivity, when the roll call of famous names associated with the disease has ceased to shock, and bets are being taken for the names of the first MP or member of the royal family who will be smitten?

The media behaved with great discretion, simply reporting the fact of Liberace's death from cardiac arrest. It was only the Californian coroner's insistence on a post-mortem that forced the connection with Aids to be

revealed.

This colourful piano player with his glitzy style and his frequent references to his love for his mother had won a unique place for himself in the hearts and minds of middle-aged women in Britain and America. For them it was precisely his asexuality that was his charm. He was their permanent little boy dressed up for a party, singing sentimental songs beside that symbol of bourgeois swank - the candelabra.

How could they not love him and how unkind it would be for anyone to threaten their fantasies with the grubby reality of a sexually transmitted disease. There are less worthy motives for distorting information.

It is more likely that the PRs in the entertainment industry smell danger. How can glamour survive, how can illusions be maintained, how can record sales grow, how can we continue to believe in the cabaret if the skull too often shines through the mask? The most deadly weapon Aids might release on the world could be truth. #

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