

# COLUMBIA SPECTATOR

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## CU to distribute AIDS info this fall

By JILL LEVEY

The Columbia AIDS committee will release an educational pamphlet on AIDS this fall to the University community.

According to University Health Services Director Richard Carlson, the pamphlet will provide the most up-to-date information on how AIDS is acquired, how to prevent it, what groups run the risks of catching the disease, and information about the AIDS blood test.

Carlson said in the course of the AIDS committee meetings that many outside institutions would look to Columbia as a guide in determining their AIDS policy. Recently, the National Council of Churches expressed an interest in using the Columbia pamphlet, according to Carlson and Laura Pinsky, co-coordinator of the Gay Health Advocacy project on campus. Carlson said the University might consider sending them the pamphlet without Columbia's name on it. He said he did not want the Columbia name on the information because it would be distributed to other groups, and thus should be a general information pamphlet instead of one catering specifically to the Columbia community.

When asked whether Columbia was reluctant to acknowledge the

pamphlet because of possible fear of association with AIDS, Carlson responded, "No institution is anxious to have its name associated with AIDS." However, he said that this was not Columbia's reason for withdrawing its name from the pamphlet, and he expects that Columbia will acknowledge their role in producing the pamphlet.

Carlson said that in a city like New York where many people have AIDS, it is important to know all the facts about the disease.

The pamphlet is designed to "increase people's abilities to protect themselves from AIDS and decrease irrational fear of AIDS and homophobia," according to Pinsky.

Pinsky said that many people are not aware that they run a risk of catching AIDS, and that the pamphlet would be educational to them. Women in particular need to be educated about the risks of contracting AIDS, Pinsky said.

The pamphlet is part of the Gay Health Advocates' campaign make information about AIDS easily accessible at Columbia. Although it is easy for openly gay people to attend meetings about AIDS and get necessary information, Pinsky said, those who are not openly gay may not be getting vital information. Pinsky said members of Gay Health Advocates will meet with floor counselors next semester to discuss informing students about AIDS.

"We want to present information in so many forms that people can be sure to get it," Pinsky said. "We want to cover the campus with literature."

Pinsky said the pamphlet also provides information to dispel myths and prevent misinformation about AIDS. "People shouldn't run around thinking they'll get AIDS from sharing a towel," she said.

In researching the project, the committee consulted medical journals and medical experts on the disease, and obtained information from Centers for Disease Control, a federal agency that coordinates information on diseases, Pinsky said.