

# Magic's AIDS plight hits Behrend

Men's basketball coach Fred Paulsen talks about former player

by Greg Geibel  
The Collegian

Last Thursday, 32 year old basketball star Earvin "Magic" Johnson shocked the nation when he announced that he had tested positive for HIV and was retiring immediately after 12 spectacular seasons with the Los Angeles Lakers.

The announcement came as a great shock for those who knew "Magic" from watching him on TV, wearing his T-shirts, and pinning up his posters.

For those that knew him personally though, it was an even greater shock.

Fred Paulsen, head coach for the Lions basketball team, was once an assistant coach to the young sophomore guard, and helped lead the Michigan State Spartans on to win the 1979 Big 10 Title and National Championship.

"The first time I heard about it was last Thursday night at practice," said Paulsen. "I was shocked, saddened...I had an empty feeling in my stomach," he continued.

Johnson is viewed as an idol in all aspects of American society. From kids in the backyard courts and playgrounds to the pros in the NBA, everyone loves "Magic."

"What you see is what you get," explained Paulsen. "Earvin is a good natured, giving person. He always had something positive to say. He was the first one to arrive at practice, and the last one to leave."

**"I say to the guys on the team...Look, use some common sense, here is a guy that you look up to and admire...and he's going to die."**

**-Fred Paulsen  
Men's basketball coach**

With Johnson's recent admission, many are viewing him as a hero because he had the courage to admit it.

"He will always be a hero in my mind," said Paulsen. "Earvin will elevate the recognition of HIV and will be an excellent spokesperson. I think that he should be commended for coming out."

Johnson is the largest public figure to contract the virus since Rock Hudson, and because of the high regard that people have for Johnson, his coming forward is likely to have a positive impact in demonstrating that anyone can get HIV.

"I really hope that he reaches the college campuses," said Paulsen. "There are too many people out there with the 'It won't happen to me'

AIDS subject into his health classes, and the students seem to give it the most attention, but he still can't help but think that it's not enough.

"I've brought speakers into the class that have AIDS, and I can tell that when the students leave the class they have been really affected," remarked Paulsen, "but after a day or two, I know that they have forgotten about it."

With "Magic" though, the

examined.

"We have to have education in high school," stressed Paulsen. "Sex isn't new, and everyone knows all about it. I'm not condoning it, but let's be realistic. People have to be aware of the dangers."

"His mistake is no different than anybody else's mistake," said Paulsen. "It's just that it happened to 'Magic,' much like it can happen to anyone."

Johnson didn't get to retire the way most basketball stars do. He won't have the last season tour from city to city.

He won't be giving a farewell speech reflecting on a great career and thanking everyone, only to enjoy an easy life of retirement.

Instead, Johnson's farewell speeches will be exactly that...to say goodbye forever.

"The saddest thing is that we will never get to see him play again. I will have a hard time watching the 6'9" 220 pound 'Magic' deteriorate," said Paulsen. "It just won't be real."

attitude...even on this campus."

Recent studies have shown that for every 1000 people tested on college campuses, seven have the HIV.

"So that means that there are approximately 21 people on this campus that could have the HIV," explained Paulsen. "And that's scary."

Paulsen has incorporated the

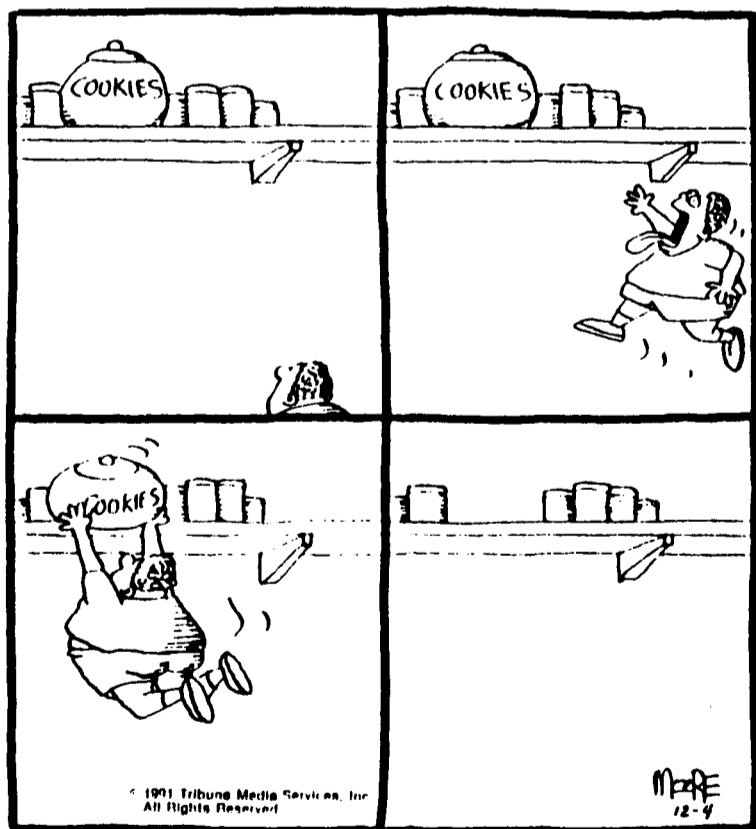
message and situation hits a little harder.

"I say to the guys on the team...Look, use some common sense, here is a guy that you look up to and admire...and he's going to die," said Paulsen.

With the recent influx of AIDS incidences, the need for sex education or AIDS education in high school may need to be re-

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by Steve Moore



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