

Benetton's True Colours?



Benetton, of all people, are sponsoring the publication of a magazine that tackles AIDS head on. Available from *Benetton* stores since June, the magazine *Colors* (IR£2) is surprisingly up front for a mainstream publication with graphic and statistically detailed articles that manage to avoid being either offensive or heavily dull. It entertains, educates and, hopefully, helps break down those barriers erected by ignorance (even at this stage people still need to be told that you cannot 'get AIDS' from sharing a glass of water or a toilet seat).

One fascinating image is based on two people having sex on just one occasion and the collective total of partners they will have shared over a 12 year period - a staggering figure of, on average, 531,441. There are also articles on inventive safer sex (eg "Start with spaghetti and tomato sauce on the small of the back. Turn over for dessert"), an interesting global report (eg

Thailand has a restaurant called *Cabbages & Condoms* which features "condom bouquets, condom salads and an after-dinner condom instead of a mint"), a series of honest first person accounts of living with the disease and a 'what if' doctored photo of an underweight Ronald Reagan with Kaposi's Sarcoma.

Unlike previous *Benetton* brushes with HIV, *Colors* has met with favourable response. Puffin Moynihan, who handles the *Benetton* campaign in Ireland, said, "There's been a universally positive reaction. I don't think there's been one person who didn't like it, except the Reagan camp".

Not only is *Colors* entertaining, but it's also lavishly done with page upon page of full colour photos. And in fairness to them there is only one *Benetton* ad - and a non-controversial one at that. All of which makes for a welcome and refreshing change.

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