

Beat: Health

## FAG HAGS, DIVAS AND MOMS - THE LEGACY OF STRAIGHT WOMEN IN THE AIDS COMMUNITY

### VICTORIA NOE ANNOUNCES NEW BOOK

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**USPA NEWS** - Chicago author and AIDS activist Victoria Noe announced a crowdfunding campaign on RocketHub offering a tax deduction to donors supporting her book's research. Coming in 2017, 'Fag Hags, Divas and Moms: The Legacy of Straight Women in the AIDS Community' will fill a gap in existing literature...

Chicago author and AIDS activist Victoria Noe announced a crowdfunding campaign on RocketHub offering a tax deduction to donors supporting her book's research. Coming in 2017, 'Fag Hags, Divas and Moms: The Legacy of Straight Women in the AIDS Community' will fill a gap in existing literature about the AIDS epidemic. 'The history of the epidemic is overwhelmingly a reflection of the experiences of gay men,' said Noe. 'I'm excited to offer a book that will recognize the contributions of straight women in the AIDS community.'

The friendship between straight women and gay men has been the object of some ridicule for many years. But when the AIDS epidemic began, that relationship took on an urgency never imagined. Why did straight women become involved fighting a disease that was considered to be a well-deserved punishment for a marginalized group? Was there a price to be paid for that involvement, especially in the early days ?

Fag Hags, Divas and Moms first considers the various pathways to that involvement :

- Many straight women had an existing relationship with gay men. They were their stylists, decorators and designers; coworkers, patients and neighbors. Gay men were their sons, brothers, fathers, husbands.

- For those women in the medical field, the challenges of the disease itself drew them to study it.

- Straight women themselves became infected with HIV.

Involvement took many forms: advocacy for themselves and others, direct care, research, fundraising, support services. They bridged two worlds, especially in the early days of the epidemic.

Some women, like gay men, burned out, especially after 1996, when the anti-retroviral 'cocktail' of drugs dramatically improved life expectancy and quality. Others remained in the community, or joined later.

Although celebrities like Elizabeth Taylor and Princess Diana will be in the book, readers will be introduced to the stories of many more women who have made the world a better place because they joined the cause.

Fag Hags, Divas and Moms is a fiscally sponsored project of the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA). All donations received by NYFA on behalf of this project are tax-deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

Victoria Noe is the author of the Friend Grief series and winner of the 2015 Christopher Hewitt Award for Creative Nonfiction. Victoria Noe began her involvement in the AIDS community of Chicago in the 1980s as a fundraiser and is currently a member of ACT UP/NY.

Source : Victoria Noe

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