

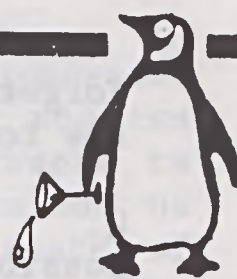
Obituary: Joseph Beam

On December 27, 1988, Joseph Beam was found dead in his apartment. One month later the Philadelphia medical examiner issued a report stating that Beam had died of heart failure, a result of AIDS. Beam, only thirty-three years old, was one of the most eloquent and thought-provoking gay authors of his generation. He continually challenged the assumptions of race and gender that pervade both straight and gay communities. He had been the first editor of journal Black/Out, an advocate for gay prisoners, and more recently edited a collection of writings by Black gay men entitled In the Life: A Black Gay Anthology. In the introduction to that work he wrote, "The bottom line is this: We are Black men who are proudly gay. What we offer is our lives, our visions. We are risin' to the love we all need." Although the passing of such an outstanding figure in our community is to be mourned, it is perhaps best to remember him through these words and take the example of his vision and his life.

--Mike McClellan

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