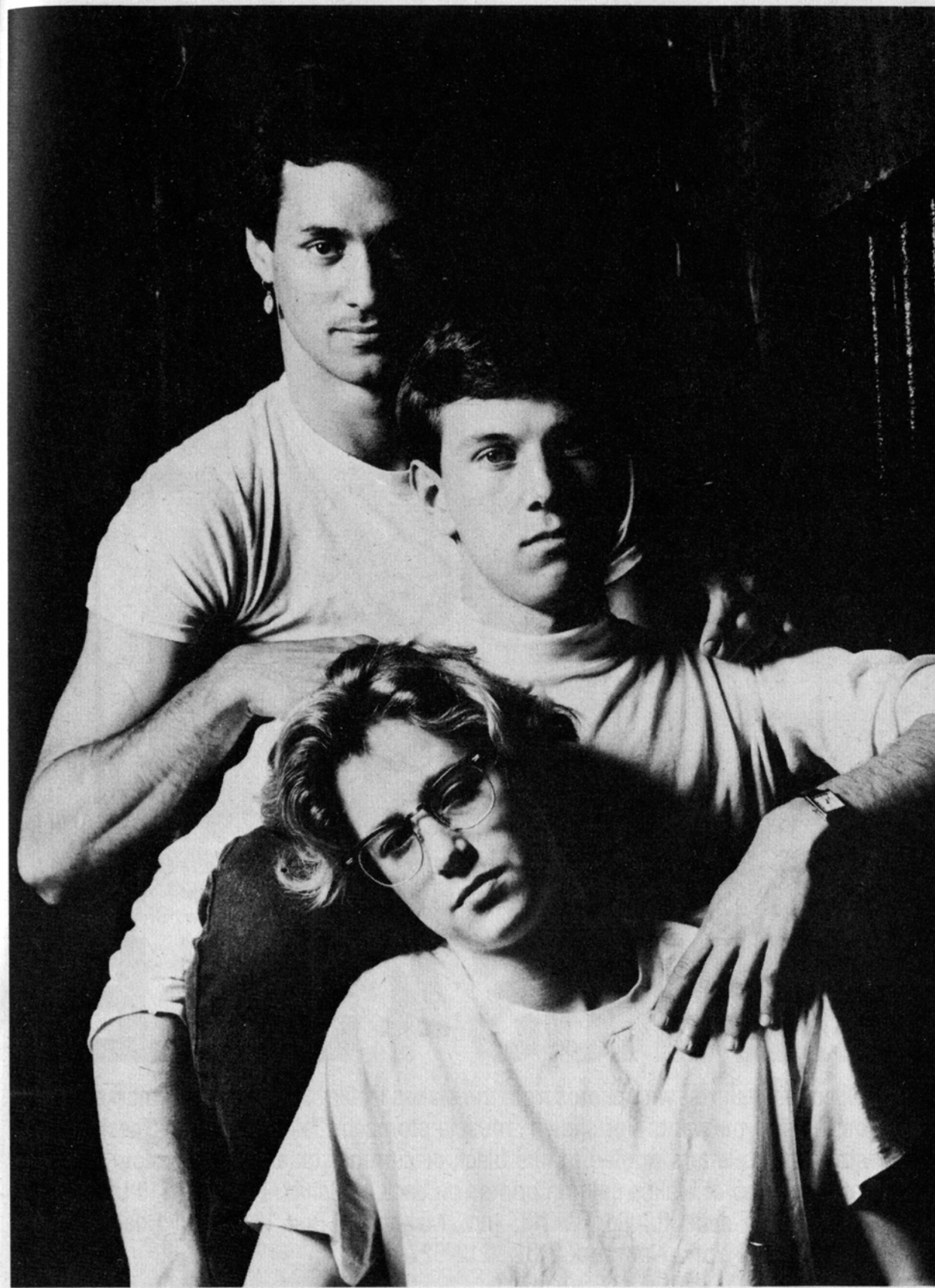




JULY \$2.50
U.K. £2.10

HAPPY
SPECIAL

PEE-WEE
HERMAN



A.C.T. U.P. (TOP TO BOTTOM): FRANK JUMP, DAVID STRAH, TANYA BILLINGS. PHOTOGRAPH BY BART EVERLY.

THOUGHT 195

A.C.T.U.P.

A.C.T. U.P. (AIDS Coalition To Unleash Power) is a political group formed not only to educate the public, but also to prod politicians to take action against the deadly disease. Already A.C.T. U.P. has stopped traffic on Wall Street to protest what it sees as the greed of pharmaceutical companies that are too slow to manufacture promising drug treatments. On April 15, tax eve across America, 500 of its members took to the steps of New York City's main post office on Eighth Avenue to demand that more government dollars be spent on AIDS research. A representative of the National Cancer Society said of A.C.T. U.P., "These people have accomplished in months what the cancer lobby hasn't been able to achieve in a decade of lobbying."

Three of A.C.T. U.P.'s most active members are FRANK JUMP, DAVID STRAH and TANYA BILLINGS. Frank, a singer/songwriter, joined the organization because "being an American and a gay person, I have to fight for my political rights." Is he worried about being openly gay? "No. I worry about those people who aren't open about it." David is an architectural history major at NYU and, at 20, the youngest crisis-intervention worker at Manhattan's Gay Men's Health Crisis. "I just think it's bullshit when someone says that he, as an individual, can't make a difference. When you get a lot of individuals together you can cause change. People have to be vocal. I've personally seen so much misery and suffering that I can't keep quiet." Tanya, who attended the Wooster School with David back in Connecticut, agrees. "I'm a straight woman, and it's important that I become involved now before it's too late for my particular demographic group. This is a plague we're dealing with, but we don't have to be stuck in the Middle Ages."

THOUGHT

194