

Defend yourself against AIDS

by John Rossomando
Collegian Staff

Since AIDS was first reported ten years ago, there has been a massive politicization of the disease. Celebrities wear red ribbons at the Grammys and every other major event in Hollywood.

The red ribbon is no more than a symbol, and by wearing a red ribbon the disease simply will not disappear.

People who wear these ribbons believe that they are helping fight the disease, and they wear them because they want to feel that they are a part of the fight.

What is concretely being accomplished by wearing these ribbons, and how are those suffering from this disease truly being helped by wearing them?

Symbolism over substance is all that the red ribbon represents. The red ribbon is little more than a pat on the back for sick people with a serious condition.

Instead of wearing a red ribbon which helps no one, you should concern yourself with helping AIDS patients in the hospitals or start a career in microbiology. True compassion comes from physically helping these sick people by making their days a little brighter, and not by wearing a red ribbon.

AIDS may be a tragic condition which leaves its victims unable to fight off infection and of course, eventually results in death.

Many people, especially those in groups like ACT UP, think

that there is some miracle cure for this disease, and the previous two administrations made sure that a cure was not found.

The first AIDS campaign was launched by Ronald Reagan's surgeon general C. Everett Koop, and billions of dollars have been poured into AIDS research. In 1992 four billion dollars was spent on AIDS research, more than on any other disease.

Still AIDS activists cried, "George Bush is a murderer." How is George Bush responsible for AIDS, and did George Bush deliberately spread AIDS? Finding a vaccine for AIDS will not be an easy process because of the nature of the virus.

The virus is unlike anything medical science has seen thus far because it mutates at an unbelievable rate, and if they prepare a vaccine for one virus, by the time that it is applied you will be dealing with an entirely different virus. Some researchers are even saying that there may never be a cure for AIDS.

AIDS activists constantly cry to use a condom when you have sex. They make the condom out to be the miracle preventative measure for AIDS. Quite simply, condoms break and the American Medical Association estimates that condoms have a 30% failure rate. As a result, a person could be wearing a condom and still come in contact with infected body fluids.

Because the AIDS advocacy is well-funded and has numerous supporters in the Hollywood Left, they are able to spread the

myth and perception that if you wear a condom during sex, you are invulnerable to the virus.

Instead, they should be stating that condoms reduce the risk, but the risk is still there. The only safe sex is no sex! "For the wages of sin is death."

The only thing that is 100% effective in preventing the disease is abstinence. Chastity may be hard for many people, but it is the only sure-fire way of eliminating your risk of AIDS.

Is instant gratification worth getting AIDS, syphilis, or hepatitis? Long term pleasure is far more rewarding than the moment. If you are celibate you completely eliminate all risk of AIDS, VDs, and pregnancy.

AIDS is also a behavioral disease because it is spread through various promiscuous sexual practices, and IV drug use. The best way to prevent AIDS if you are sexually active is to be strictly monogamous, and have your boyfriend or girlfriend screened to make sure he or she is not infected. Refrain from having sex with someone who you don't know well, and from having sex for the sake of sex.

The Centers for Disease Control estimate that the reason 90% of all AIDS cases are located among homosexuals is because the average male homosexual has as many as 12 partners per year thereby spreading the virus.

I don't personally hold this belief, but I am only going by a 1991 CDC report. If homosexuals want to slow the spread of AIDS, they should

press to close the bathhouses which are the breeding grounds for the disease.

To eliminate the spread among heterosexuals, prostitution should be cracked down on because prostitutes are the primary carriers of AIDS among heterosexuals. The primary way that AIDS is transmitted is by promiscuous sexual behavior.

Anyone who has AIDS and knowingly transmits the disease should be charged with first degree murder as well as receive a large fine. This should act as a deterrent because these people who knowingly spread this disease are just as dangerous as a mugger with a gun, and they should be treated just as seriously as would the mugger.

Why should we have an AIDS Awareness Week when millions of people die each year from cancer, leukemia, hepatitis and other deadly diseases? Back in the 1950s polio epidemics broke out every summer killing or paralyzing thousands.

Why should we concentrate on this one disease when more people die of heart disease and cancer every year than AIDS? Should we not attack other terminal diseases with the same vigor as AIDS?

AIDS should be treated no different than cancer, or any other infectious disease. Why should AIDS be a political issue when it is only one of many deadly diseases? All three strains of hepatitis are sexually transmitted and lethal as well as incurable, so why should AIDS be treated by

the media, ACT UP and other parts of the Liberal Establishment as if it were the only deadly disease?

I don't wish to diminish the severity of this disease, but I feel that it should be treated no differently than any other disease no matter how many people are infected.

We need to stop making AIDS a political issue because politics and science do not mix, and we also need to treat other diseases, especially alcoholism, with the same vigor that many of us have come to treat AIDS with.

AIDS is a disease which is behaviorally transmitted. Condoms break and if you think that wearing a condom will always protect you from AIDS, you're mistaken.

The only way to avoid AIDS is to not have sex, or have your partner checked for infectious diseases before you decide to have sex.

The next time someone tries to tell you that wearing a condom will prevent you from getting AIDS, they are dead wrong. Remind them about the failure rate.

If you have sex without thinking, you will pay the consequences for your actions, and the price of that decision could be your life.

Chastity is better than being dead. Think about it.

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Go ahead, sue me!

by Dave Barry
Syndicated Columnist

I am sick and tired of all this lawyer-bashing. When I hear somebody say something bad about lawyers, it makes me want to walk up and spit in his face, thereby causing him to shove me, so I can fall down and file a \$17 million personal-injury lawsuit against him.

Because I happen to think lawyers are great, I am darned grateful that I live in a country that has, pound for pound, more lawyers than any other country in the entire world. We NEED a lot of lawyers, to protect all these rights we have as Americans, including -- but not limited to -- the rights to life, liberty, the pursuit of happiness, job security, decent housing, affordable health care, the capture of happiness, a non-smoking section, a joke-free work environment, a smoking section, cable TV, a team that makes the playoffs, rain-free outdoor weddings, risk-free bungee-jumping, warning labels on everything including spiders, self-esteem and a choice of low-fat desserts.

We have so many rights that we cannot possibly keep track of them all with our primitive non-legal minds. This is why we need all these lawyers out there fighting for us, even when we are not aware of it.

A fine example of this, brought to my attention by alert reader Leon Rothman, is the case of the Denture Adhesive Menace, as reported in a Miami Herald story by Bruce Taylor Seeman. In case you missed this story, let me review the facts of the case:

From 1985 to 1990, a company named SmithKline Beecham manufactured denture adhesives sold under the names "Orafix Special" and "Brace." SmithKline recalled these products in 1990 after they were found to contain trace amounts of benzene, a carcinogen. SmithKline contends that the products were not harmful. There is no evidence anybody got cancer from using them.

Then a retired Philadelphia auto-supplies dealer named Meyer E. Duboff, who used SmithKline denture products, contacted his lawyer, Jay S. Cohen.

"He called me and said, 'I've been using this for years. Can you check it out?'" Cohen told the Miami Herald.

OK, is everybody following this so far? ONE GUY has called his lawyer. This guy does NOT have cancer. NOBODY has cancer. Nobody is claiming ANYBODY actually got hurt.

So the lawyer told the guy: "Gosh, Meyer, nothing really happened. Why don't you just forget about it?"

NO! Just kidding! That might happen in some backward, under-lawyered nation like Japan, but not here in the U.S.A.! What happened here, of course, was that Cohen and some other lawyers filed a class-action lawsuit against SmithKline on behalf of Duboff and all the other denture-adhesive users out there who, because of a tragic lack of legal representation, had not yet noticed that they were victims.

And of course SmithKline, to avoid the hassle and publicity and legal expense of a trial, settled out of court. Three groups got money in the settlement:

1. MR. DUBOFF. He got \$25,000. Fair enough. It was his idea in the first place.

2. THE OTHER DENTURE-ADHESIVE VICTIMS. They were notified of their victimhood via newspaper advertisements and direct mailings, paid for by SmithKline. About 650 people sent in proof of purchase -- filled out forms certifying that they had purchased at least one tube of either product; each of these people received a package of

discount coupons for SmithKline products.

3. THE LAWYERS FOR THE PLAINTIFF. If you are a fan of justice, American Style, you will be very excited when I tell you what the lawyers got, in expenses and legal fees.

They got \$954,934.57.

"It's a lot of money," said Cohen. "But there's also a lot of money that goes into these cases."

I am sure there is! A lot of money! Also a lot of work! It cannot be easy, taking a case wherein it appears, to the naked untrained layperson eye, that nobody has suffered any observable harm, and, using

legal skills, turning it into a financial transaction that involves thousands of people and a million dollars! Plus coupons!

So the lawyers certainly deserved this money, although I'm certain that, for them, the really important thing was simply the satisfaction of knowing that all those victims are now finally able, at long last, to put this horrible denture-adhesive nightmare behind them and begin leading happier lives, possibly by applying their \$7 settlements toward world cruises, vacation homes, etc.

Yes, we owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to these lawyers and the estimated 14.2 billion other members of the American legal community, many of whom, I am sure, will write to me on their official letterhead stationery to respond to this column. I look forward to reading these letters; I just hope that, in handling them, I do not suffer paper cuts, which could cause me, as a writer, to become incapacitated, not to mention pain and suffering.

And I'm not settling for any stinking coupons.