

A little perspective, please

Now that the army of AIDS activists and assorted celebrities have left Toronto following the worldwide AIDS conference - where they distinguished themselves by displaying a relentless sense of entitlement which could put the federal Liberal Party to shame - it is time to ponder a few facts.

True, on a world scale, AIDS is a terrible scourge on humanity, particularly in Africa, although even there the actual deaths have consistently fallen well below the dire predictions of the activists.

What is not true is this constant theme from the conference - including, but hardly limited to, the movement's idol Stephen Lewis, and former U.S. president Bill Clinton - that essentially the AIDS crisis is a direct result of a) - a lack of concern from western governments; and b) - a conspiracy by the drug companies.

Even though other diseases kill more people - and we'll get to the Canadian situation in a moment - no other disease enjoys the star power and media muscle that AIDS commands.

Witness the behavior of the delegates who, unhappy with the absence of Prime Minister Stephen Harper - who, like Jean Chretien before him, didn't attend - rudely booed Health Minister Tony Clement when he spoke about the significant efforts of the Canadian government in dealing with AIDS.

Rather than show normal courtesy, or an interest in what is actually happening, the delegates instead chose to play cheap politics by displaying outrage that the prime minister (who no doubt would have been booed had he showed up, given the political bent of the activists) decided to pass on this one.

It has been 20 years since Life Magazine blared the spurious headline, in huge red letters: "Now Nobody Is Safe From AIDS."

This is complete nonsense, but is exactly what activists want you to believe. Why? Because it removes what should really be the focus of fighting AIDS, particularly in North America, i.e. the notion that AIDS is prevalent among people who indulge in selective personal behavior, namely unprotected homosexual male sexual activity, and intravenous drug use, both of which still account for the overwhelming number of AIDS cases in this country. Yes, it is growing among women too, but even here most are affected by men who are carrying the virus from their other activities.

In North America, at least, the vast majority of us are perfectly safe from AIDS, far safer than say, we are from cancer.

In 2005, for example, 272 cases of AIDS were diagnosed in Canada. Yes, many more were diagnosed with HIV, which often, although not always, leads to AIDS. But even here, Canada's Public Health Agency reports 60,000 Canadians have been diagnosed with HIV in Canada since 1982.

The Canadian Cancer Society reports that more than 140,000 Canadians were diagnosed with cancer in 2005 alone. Put another way, the number of cancer victims in one year was four times the number of HIV victims over 23 years.

Again, this is not meant to diminish the seriousness of AIDS or HIV, only to put the wild claims of the activists into perspective and to underscore the point that, while they appear to believe their disease deserves far more attention than any other, it doesn't.

Clinton claimed at the conference that "it's difficult to imagine how the world can grow unless we tackle AIDS."

Two things about that: first, world population growth actually is fastest in the areas hit hardest by AIDS; second, the notion that nothing is being done about AIDS is plain wrong. According to UNAIDS, for example, 1.3 million people in low-and-middle income countries received antiretroviral therapy in 2004. Granted, that's still not enough, but it's up from a fifth of that in just a few years.

Worldwide AIDS spending averaged \$1.7 billion between 2002-04, but ballooned to \$8.3 billion for 2005 and is expected to top \$10 billion by next year. So let's not continue to buy into the propaganda that nothing is being done because a) - politicians don't care and b) - the drug companies are conspiring against it.

For those, such as former Ontario NDP leader Stephen Lewis, who blames the West for AIDS (and just about every other ill), he likely knows that other diseases, which are curable, such as Malaria and TB, are at least equally as deadly as AIDS in Africa and parts of Asia.

Consider this: antiretroviral therapy for AIDS costs about \$300 a year per person in the Third World - and doesn't cure anybody - but TB can be cured for \$65 per person. But it doesn't have the same cache.

Malaria could also be prevented in Africa and Asia for pennies per person, simply by spraying DDT. But environmental activists - the sort of people who attend AIDS conferences and scream about corporate conspiracies - have blocked the use of DDT in countries where it is needed most.

Interesting, eh?



**National
Affairs**

**Claire
Hoy**

Ignoring the odds in life

I guess I'm mathematical-ly challenged.

While I can calculate percentages in my head, I really have an aversion to math-related issues.

Why else would I buy lottery tickets each week, in the face of 14 million-to-one odds? It's been said that lotteries are really just a tax on those who can't do or understand math. Count me in!

Odds aside, millions of us average working stiffs dish out a few bucks every week, in hopes of striking it rich. It's easy to rationalize, too. I contend that someone is destined to win, at least once a week. With potentially four millionaires crowned each and every week, the lottery helps create roughly 200 lucky millionaires each year. And that's nothing to sneeze at.

Why shouldn't one of those happy people be me? I am worthy and deserving of such good fortune. I am a very nice person to boot.

I would help my fellow citizens with my new-found riches. I'd be a much more active consumer and I'd purchase real estate, contributing to the Town's tax base. I'd likely purchase a new vehicle and buy my gas locally, helping the global economy. I'd wear designer fashions, helping to improve the lives of Third World slave labour. I'd eat out more often - good news for local restaurants, not so good news for cows, chickens and pigs.

I'd buy some of those fancy mustards, imported hot peppers and the like.

I would buy a magazine or newspaper subscription and perhaps get a satellite dish.

Wow. See how just one new wealthy individual can really have an impact on economies of scale?

Until that magical combination of six numbers materializes, all I'm really contributing to is the lottery corporation's profits. But even there, too, I'm helping Ontario's health care system with a needed injection of funds.

See how I can rationalize all of my reckless lottery spending?

The odds, although more realistic, are in play at the slots or tables at our casinos. While our chances of winning a few jackpots are better than being struck by lightning, there's a reason casinos generate millions in revenue each and every day.

Most of us ignore the odds regarding accidents and disease, until it hits close to home.

I've been very fortunate (knocking on a large piece of wood) so far, in that I've never been in a major automobile accident.

But every day, it's estimated that 8 or 9 Canadians



Mark Pavilons

are killed on our roads. That's more than 2,900 people every year! What a terrible human waste.

We are almost ignorant to the headlines each day on the news. We hear about a tragedy that claims a mother, father, child or teen. Sometimes we take a nanosecond to pause and reflect, glad it's no one we know.

But one day it may be someone we know and love.

Add to the numbers killed are the thousands and thousands of family members who must pick themselves up and carry on. The pain and suffering must be immense.

And that's just from one single cause.

We all know that heart attack and stroke, as well as cancer, are leading killers in

this country. Unfortunately, most of us likely know someone who's been hit with one of these ailments.

And for those who still think that cancer doesn't touch the lives of children, just visit Sick Kids one day, or call up the stats on the Internet.

Many of us expect to contract a disease or fall into disrepair in our declining years - our 70s or 80s.

That's the way it used to be. Today, and into the future if the numbers keep climbing, most of us will be lucky to reach 65. That's still far too young to pass away, in my opinion. Still so much living to do.

It's estimated cancer will touch one in three Canadians - one in every family. So far, I've lost one parent to cancer, and the odds are bleak indeed (again, knocking on a large tree).

Those of us in our 30s and 40s, busy with our jobs and raising our kids, spend little time dwelling on the unthinkable. And yet, in literally hundreds of local households, our neighbours are dealing with it now, today. People are dying of dreaded diseases earlier than ever before. We're all getting sicker.

Maybe we'll all live long, happy lives. Maybe all of our kids will grow up to be

kind, compassionate and successful adults. Perhaps humankind will meet and defeat all challenges that we face, so our race can venture out into space one day and visit other worlds.

And maybe not.

We're powerful creatures, with many wonderful qualities. The Creator gave us incredible tools and strong minds, but He did not give us clairvoyance or immortality.

Genetic conditions are passed down from generation to generation. Diseases are becoming stronger; more difficult to defeat. Toxins are building up in our bodies and our environment.

And the odds keep changing.

I am afraid of losing my loved ones. I am also terrified of one day entering the eternal darkness of nothingness.

We can't live our lives in fear. But we can try to beat the odds.

We must, or at least should, live each day like it were our last.

"Do all the good you can, by all the means you can, in all the ways you can, in all the places you can, at all the times you can, to all the people you can, as long as ever you can."

John Wesley

40th Annual Kleinburg & Area Binder Twine Festival

Join the residents of Kleinburg and area for an exciting, annual community festival organized and run entirely by hundreds of volunteers. Enjoy a day filled with good food, unique crafts, demonstrators, and great entertainment for the entire family. The site is wheelchair accessible.

For Health & Safety reasons please leave all pets at home.

Gates open 9 a.m.

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| 10:00 AM | Old Tyme Fashion Show |
| 11:00 AM | LOCAL JAZZ SHOWCASE
Kleinburg Public School Jazz Band &
Emily Carr Secondary School Stage Band |
| 12:00 PM | Opening Ceremonies w/ Taylor Made Trio |
| 1:00 PM | Back by popular demand
fiddlestep
Sensational fiddling! Sizzling stepdancing! |
| 2:00 PM | Southern Ontario Favourites
THE LINKS with Ken Losell
Rhythm & Funk & Blues |
| 3:00 PM | 40th ANNUAL BINDER TWINE QUEEN REUNION |
| 3:30 PM | Canadian Country Music Hall of Fame Inductees
THE GOOD BROTHERS |
| 4:50 PM | Old Tyme Activities - Winner Announcements |
| 5:00 PM | Binder Twine Queen Contest |
| 6:00 PM | 40th Annual Blue & Yellow Quilt Raffle |

AROUND THE VILLAGE (9am to 6pm)

Kleinburg United Church Organ Chimes - Helen Peacock; Dave Hoy Honky Tonk Piano; The York Regional Police Pipes and Drums; Taylor Made Trio; Carl Roberts on Guitar; and much more!

Admission:

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| ADULTS: | \$7.00 |
| SENIORS/YOUTH: | \$5.00 |
| CHILDREN (2 - 12 years): | \$2.00 |
| Everyone in period costume: | FREE |

Parking Available:

\$2.00

1. École Publique La Fontaine (10110 Islington Ave.)
2. Foster T. Woods Memorial Woodlot
3. Kleinburg Public School
4. McMichael Canadian Art Collection
5. Handicap Parking: Kleinburg Public Library

CHILDREN'S PARADE - 10:40 a.m.

Featuring the Binder Twine Mouse, Antique Vehicles, The York Regional Police Pipes and Drums, and much more! Everyone in period costume is welcome to participate! Decorate your bikes and wagons and JOIN THE PARADE starting at Lester B. Pearson Rd. and Islington Ave.

Children's World

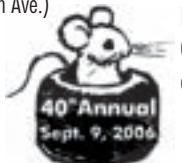
(sponsored by Tim Horton's)
Activities from 10:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.!
Giant Slides, Games, Prizes, Face Painting, Rona Workshop, Art Activities (sponsored by McMichael Canadian Art Collection), and more.

Olde Tyme Activities:

Log Sawing, Hammer Test of Strength, Nail Driving, Olde Tyme Basketball, Stilt Walking, Watermelon Seed Spitting, Hoops, Shave-the-Farmer

Plus:

Food Booths, Sarsaparilla, Beer Garden, Crafts, Demonstrators, Quilt Raffle, and more!



Saturday, September 9, 2006

www.BinderTwine.ca

www.KleinburgVillage.com