1996 POZ Honors

A look back at the past year begs one question

February 1, 1997 By Ronnilyn Pustil

Marvin Gaye was referring to war when he so passionately sang, “Brother, brother, brother, there’s far too many of you dying.” Looking back at the bizarre events of the past year, we asked ourselves the very same question: *“What’s going on?”*

What’s going on when, in the second decade of the AIDS epidemic, it takes Dr. Death to advocate condom use, Liz Taylor to teach politicians a thing or two, and the Unabomber suspect to extol the merits of masturbation as a form of safe sex?

What’s going on when 343,000 people in the United States have died of AIDS, and some Americans are still donning gloves? When nearly 17 million worldwide are living with HIV and repressed educators refuse to mention s-e-x?

What’s going on with tainted blood scandals, crazed politicians and a panel at the AIDS conference turning into a scene from *Carrie*?

What’s going on when *The Wall Street Journal* declares protease inhibitors everything but the “cure” based on studies that used AZT, of all things, as a gold standard?

So for the second year, *POZ* brings you the sublime, the ridiculous, the dangerous and the heroic moments of the past year. And we ask you... What *is* going on?

AIDS 90210

“There’s the birds, and there’s the bees...now open your math books.”
Texas state Education Commissioner Michael Moore said he would not accept a $1.35 million federal AIDS-prevention grant because it would force Texas to abandon its abstinence-based sex-ed curriculum. But in January 1996, Moore took the money because he was reassured that the grant simply requires some variation of sex-ed.

So they went to see *Showgirls* instead.
In Las Vegas, Clark County school trustees voted 5-2 to scrap a proposed field trip to a children’s museum exhibit about the risks of AIDS because it mentioned sexual behavior.

We thought it stood for “An Insipid Doofus Senator.”
Michigan state Senator Doug Carl told two high-school students doing research for a term paper that AIDS stands for “anal inserted death sentence.” Carl admitted that he had used the phrase in private before and was “shocked that this became a news story.”

Once again, Sharon Stone throws decorum out the window.
Emphatic about what must be done to stem the spread of AIDS, Stone says, “There’s no education because right-wing people can’t accept the fact that teenagers are having sex. Hello! This pretext of sexual decorum is outlandish, and it frightens me. It’s a terrible legacy for our children, and I can’t live with that.”

But there’s a sucker born every minute.
Public-health officials in Greene County, Missouri are worried about the transmission of HIV and hepatitis through a role-playing game called The Masquerade. Supposedly, teens getting carried away with their roles as vampires have progressed to “the actual sucking or licking of blood from a willing partner.”

DÉJÀ VU

Government leads the way for the common person.
Hungry from a day of power networking, the 175 gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people attending the Out Front Activist Conference sat down for dinner at their hotel, the Radisson Arrowwood Resort in Alexandria, Minnesota. But attendees were shocked to notice the wait staff had donned gloves to serve. The banquet manager explained to outraged diners that the gloves were meant to protect the staff against HIV. *Then* he apologized.

She can count, too -- at least to eight.
If Elizabeth Taylor hadn’t been an actress, she could’ve been a schoolteacher. “I don’t even think [Bob] Dole knows what the word AIDS is,” Taylor declared on CNN’s *Larry King Live* in July. During the ’92 campaign, La Liz told the *New York Post* that George Bush “can’t even spell AIDS.”

Ross Perot now has additional grounds to sue the government.
In a decision hailed by gay organizations and civil rights advocates, New York state’s highest court ruled in October that doctors and dentists may not refuse to treat people with HIV. Lawyer Robert W. Lehrburger said the ruling’s impact will reach beyond the lives of PWAs. “Any disadvantaged person who is part of a protected group who felt they could not get services may end up bringing a lawsuit.”

Patients’ Reichs Department.
AIDS researcher Dr. David Cohn conducted a MAC treatment trial for the National Institutes of Health that gave people with AIDS deadly doses of clarithromycin-despite what the FDA called “an excess of deaths” in two previous trials. Last February, an ethics board stopped the high-dose arm of Cohn’s study after it led to seven unnecessary deaths. NIH drafted but did not release a report. Asked why it wasn’t distributed, NIH medical officer Dr. Richard Hafner -- who had supported the trial -- replied, “We don’t want people to think we’re Mengeles.” Only after ACT UP disrupted a July

talk by Cohn did NIH issue a national alert to doctors.

DATING, ’90s STYLE

What kind of a joyride was it, exactly?
A 33-year-old HIV positive man who pleaded guilty to “unauthorized use of a vehicle” in Tyler, Texas was sentenced to five years’ probation with a unique stipulation: He must get written consent from his future sex partners. The consent form reads: “Thomas Paul McDevitt has advised me that he has been diagnosed as positive for the HIV virus in his body and may be symptomatic for [AIDS]. Although I realize I am potentially risking my own life, I nonetheless desire to engage in sexual relations with the above-named individual.” McDevitt could be locked up for 10 years if caught violating the terms of his probation.

Talk about lousy chemistry...
Two universities protested the donor-screening questionnaire of the Canadian Red Cross, which asks potential male donors if they’ve had sex with another male, even once, since 1977. Donors answering yes are turned away. Said one protester: “The Red Cross is basically implying that if you take two men, put them in a room together and they have sex, they form a chemical reaction that creates AIDS.”

CLAIMS TO FAME

But does it dry out the skin?
In Panama City, Florida, three men and four corporations were charged on a 16-count federal indictment that included allegations they had falsely claimed to have invented a soap that kills HIV.

Guess Tori Spelling will never get HIV.
“The Bible has reference to living water...rain has hydrogen peroxide,” said Rev. Leung Yat-wah, pastor of the Church of Zion in Hong Kong, in defense of advice he gave to more than 1,000 followers to drink large quantities of bleach. Many became sick. The cult leader told reporters that hydrogen peroxide could cure AIDS and other illnesses.

And we thought Missouri was the Show Me State.
Patrick Graham managed to con more than 140 people in southwest Missouri out of a total of $5 million by claiming he had a product to put AIDS in remission. Graham reportedly sold 505 investors nationwide stock and notes in Conquest Labs Inc., which was supposedly developing the drug. Graham was indicted in February on 20 counts of securities fraud.

Just in time for your sister’s wedding.
“HIV Negative in Six Weeks!” read an ad that a Brockton, Massachusetts woman posted on her “New Discoveries” Web page. Marjorie Phillips was issued a temporary restraining order in April after falsely advertising both a six-week and a seven-minute cure for HIV. According to Phillips, AIDS is caused by a flatworm that infests the thymus. Her cures consisted of a combination of three herbs taken during a six-week period or the use of a 9-volt-battery-powered “SyncroZap” device that could exterminate the flatworms and cure HIV in seven minutes. The ad was ordered

off the Web.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS

Let’s hope they didn’t dump it in the Nile.
Rioting in Jerusalem followed the disclosure that Israeli blood banks allowed Ethiopian immigrants to donate during the past decade, but then secretly dumped the blood. Officials said they intended to weed out donations from a group with a “high prevalence of HIV” without publicly embarrassing them. (The number of Ethiopian Jews known to have HIV is about 500 out of 50,000.) A commission further concluded that the move, while insensitive, was medically sound.

Turns out meat isn’t murder.
A food company in Poland used the slogan “Protects Against Hunger and AIDS” to market a tourist survival kit that includes four cans of meat, tea, plastic cutlery, checkers and a condom. A company executive explained, “Meat companies today cannot make a profit just on slaughtering. We knew we had to reach out to customers with something new.”

Brazilians must not allow for growing room.
Brazil’s Health Ministry distributed 5 million smaller-size condoms to adolescents as part of its AIDS-prevention program. The ministry detected that “underage sex is on the increase and [there is a need for] a product that is more suited to [a teen’s] situation.” The new, “more youthful” junior prophylactics are .15 inches smaller in diameter than the normal 2.1 inches.

Royal blush.
A condom company in Norway ran a newspaper ad after Princess Diana’s disclosure that she’d had an affair. The ad featured the princess dressed in white with the caption: “It’s hard to see on the outside whether someone has had casual sex. It happens in the best of families.”

While living, however, they must walk three paces behind their men.
Turkey’s Directorate of Religious Affairs declared that women infected with HIV through a blood transfusion would be considered martyrs when they died.

The French could learn a thing or two from Jerry Lewis.
Bad-boy ACT UP member Christophe Martet was blamed for the disappointing amount of money raised by the televised French fundraiser “SIDAction.” The annual telethon was broadcast simultaneously throughout the day on the country’s six major TV networks. Martet interrupted France’s minister of culture on-air, grabbed the microphone out of his hands and called him a murderer for deporting HIV positive immigrants back to developing countries. The telethon raised $8 million, only one-fifth of its estimated goal of $40 million.

HOLLYWOOD

Real men can cry if they want to.
When Eric Roberts was offered the role of a gay man with a rapidly debilitating AIDS-related illness who decides to kill himself, everyone but his wife told him to turn the role down. But Roberts ended up starring in the film *It’s My Party* anyway. “Yeah, it was about a guy who was

homosexual, he was dying, but -- God! -- it was about a love affair gone south, it was about a family that was dysfunctional, and it was about a man who was really special. It was a great role and a great script. That's all I needed."

Besides, which other diva will let him take his AZT in her bathroom?
It's official -- Barbra Streisand is not filming Larry Kramer's AIDS drama *The Normal Heart*. Fed up with delays, Kramer decided to take his script elsewhere. Days after he told *Daily Variety* he doubted Babs would adapt his play into a movie while he was still alive, she dropped the project entirely. Kramer said, "I love her, and I'll miss her. I hope [we] can one day go back to being the way we were."

At least the dress had a *backbone*.
Sharon Stone became an honorary chair of the American Foundation for AIDS Research (AmFAR) in December 1995. Her orders: To raise $76 million for the troubled organization within three years. So far, she's raised a third of the money. At a September AmFAR benefit at Carnegie Hall, Stone contributed good words, but the *Village Voice* quipped she was "very distracting in an almost frontless gown."

Playing a nun must have gotten to her.
Susan Sarandon's brave ad-libbed outrage at the US internment of HIV positive Haitian refugees during the 1993 Academy Awards didn't ruin her chances for a 1996 Best Actress Oscar for her role as a nun in *Dead Man Walking*. "I found it quite amazing that [the ad-lib was controversial] when everybody was going off-script about Sharon Stone's lack of underpants," Sarandon said.

Only the walls know who's lying, and they're not talking.
Suzanne Todd, the head of Demi Moore's production company, was quoted in *Los Angeles* magazine saying, "You can't do a lot of producing when you are in a hole in the ground." She was commenting on the decision not to grant a producing credit to Stuart Kaplan. Kaplan conceived and developed the concept for Moore's HBO movie *If These Walls Could Talk* during a four year period before dying of AIDS. Todd later told *POZ* she wouldn't make that remark about her worst enemy.

Even worse, what will they say about *Pretty in Pink*?
"I can't help but imagine years from now, taking my children to see *Rent* and hearing them ask, 'What's AZT?...What's AIDS?'" said actress Molly Ringwald, commenting on the impact of the Pulitzer Prize-winning show by her friend, the late Jonathan Larson.

And we know she's used to feeling like one in a million.
After two on-screen kisses with HIV positive former heavyweight contender Tommy Morrison, *Cybil* co-star Christine Baranski said she would get an HIV test. The two locked lips for the camera before Morrison knew he was positive. "I'm not scared. I don't think I'm going to get it. There's only a one-in-a-million chance of getting it from a kiss," she said.

She must have used a No. 1 pencil.
Courtney Love stars as PWA Althea Leasure Flynt in *The People vs. Larry Flynt*, the movie about

the *Hustler* magazine publisher. To announce her role, the Hole frontperson posted a message on the Internet: “I passed the peepee test.”

Those had better be free-range peas.
Exorcist star Linda Blair’s support of PETA doesn’t sit well with AIDS activists. When asked what ACT UP had planned for a July appearance by Blair on a morning talk show with a live audience, Jeff Getty would only say, “We’re considering a pea-soup motif.” No action was taken.

LAW

Because then someone would just complain about paper cuts.
Ambrose Sims, an HIV positive police officer in Miami Beach, arrested a woman after a scuffle in which both suffered cuts. The woman’s attorney commented on the fact that Sims is still on the beat: “I don’t understand why a police officer in that situation isn’t assigned to a desk job.”

A different client paid him with a glove and a knife.
F. Lee Bailey received a six-month jail sentence in Tallahassee, Florida because of an AIDS drug. The former O.J. Simpson Dream Team lawyer once represented an admitted drug trafficker, who agreed to turn his assets over to the government as part of his plea bargain. Bailey was to hold the stock temporarily, but when its value soared after the FDA approved BioChem’s AIDS drug, 3TC, Bailey refused to turn it over. He claimed it as payment for representing his client.

Introducing the “you can’t take it with you” defense...
Joseph Sullivan sued Delta after the airline fired him for being HIV positive. In 1994, a jury found that he had been wrongfully fired and awarded him $275,000 for emotional distress. But Sullivan died while Delta was appealing the decision, and last March the appeals court threw out the damage award. Why? Because Sullivan was dead, he no longer suffered from emotional distress.

...and the “AIDS made me do it” defense.
New York City serial murderer Joel Rifkin, who slayed 17 women between 1989 and 1993, said AIDS made him do it. But most people connected to the case think he’s lying. Rifkin reportedly told a probation officer that he hated women because he contracted HIV from a prostitute. Just last year though, he boasted about being with many sex workers, but said that he had tested negative.

Couldn’t they have just said, “Stick ’em up”?
Two men on trial faced charges of conspiracy and attempted extortion after they reportedly tried to extort some $160,000 from Sainsbury’s, a British food-market chain, under the threat that if they weren’t paid they would leave HIV-tainted needles among food at stores around the country.

At least they didn’t wear rubber gloves.
The Cannabis Buyers Club, a five-year-old San Francisco group that fills doctors’ pot “prescriptions,” was raided in August by state investigators, who claim the club sells pot for recreational use as well. California Attorney General Dan Lungren ordered the Sunday-morning bust in which officers -- carrying machine guns and wearing body armor -- seized some 150 pounds of marijuana, $60,000 in cash and thousands of medical records of members who have AIDS and other illnesses.

MEDIA

When did Gladys Kravitz move to Louisiana?
A moving story of a heterosexual woman's battle against AIDS turned into an ethical dilemma for the Baton Rouge, Louisiana *Advocate* when a neighbor phoned to say the woman is actually a cross-dressing man. The reporter promised to conceal the HIV positive man's true gender in return for his emotional story.

Since when does CBS take cues from Barbara Walters?
Rent fever swept Broadway, but the untimely death of its composer overshadowed the backdrop of the play: AIDS. Most stories about the pop culture phenomenon focus on the bittersweet tale of how Jonathan Larson never lived to see his show succeed. (He died of an aortic aneurysm.) A CBS News crew sat his family down in front of a VCR, ran a videotape in which he performed in an old musical and waited for the family to cry. "This should be the happiest time in your lives," the reporter prompted the Larsons. "What's missing?"

Yeah, and Baby Doc Duvalier was the world's leading pediatrician.
Patients from at least four treatment centers reportedly stopped seeing their doctors after a popular Miami-based Haitian radio-talk-show panel told listeners that AIDS doesn't exist. Host Claude Aubry, a psychologist and physician, said that AIDS was created by U.S. pharmaceutical companies bent on boosting business and stifling Haitian population growth. The panel advised listeners to discontinue treatment and stop using condoms. "We are not spreading lies. What we are saying are the facts," said psychologist Henri-Claude Saint Fleur.

Nor do you hire anyone from the Dole campaign.
"You don't get a deadly disease to improve your public relations," Andrew Sullivan said in response to charges that his coming out HIV positive was a stab at spin control of his highly reported step-down as editor of *The New Republic*.

Too bad.
Following the media storm over the disclosure that he was the "Anonymous" author of *Primary Colors*, Joe Klein defended himself: "We weren't talking about a cure for AIDS here. Just a novel."

Hey -- isn't Gallagher the one who sang "Don't Look Back in Anger"?
"I hope the pair of them catch AIDS and die, because I fucking hate them two," Oasis songwriter Noel Gallagher said about rival Brit band Blur's lead singer and bassist.

Did he say that on the record?
When Atlantic Records dropped post-punk rock band Extra Fancy just weeks after releasing its debut CD, HIV positive lead singer Brian Grillo said, "What happened to the fucking commitment to breaking barriers? Atlantic kept selling us a line that the HIV thing was breaking new ground, that Atlantic was proud of its part in raising awareness about AIDS. Atlantic lied about the whole gay and AIDS thing. They worked so hard to break Hootie [and the Blowfish] because that's a band for working-class, white, straight America."

There are a lot more fun ways to get HIV.
An e-mail chain letter spreading "HIV" was sent to friends by a high school student. It read: "Could you all pretend that I have HIV and I gave it to you? Then you could pass it on to your friends?" The message spread to hundreds of people around the country, including educational institutions and businesses.

Hardwood kneelers, on the other hand, are just what the doctor ordered.
Rev. Joseph Chambers, a man busily fighting against the purple dinosaur Barney and *The Lion King*, protested the opening of *Angels in America* in Charlotte, North Carolina. The local district attorney then threatened to enforce a public-indecency law if the play included a seven-second nude scene that occurs as a character is examined for KS lesions by a nurse. Rev. Chambers snipped that nudity was but a small part of what he found offensive in *Angels*: "The play is saturated with homosexuality, illicit sex, casual sex, sadomasochism, oral and anal sex, and unsafe sex. These are sicknesses. Our bodies weren't made for such abuse."

Don't adjust your set.
Jack Kevorkian is now a spokesperson for AIDS awareness. In an AIDS prevention public-service announcement produced by ABC, the man otherwise known as Dr. Death advocates condom use and says, "Why perfectly healthy people would want to commit suicide is beyond me."

POLITICS

What was your first clue?
Assemblymember William Knight, Republican author of California's antigay-marriage bill, revealed in September that his son is gay and that his brother died of AIDS. He reportedly refused to attend his brother's funeral and claimed he was uncertain whether the man was gay -- despite the fact that he was in a relationship with another man for 10 years.

Giuliani plays it safe.
In March, New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani enclosed a note in the paycheck envelopes of 110,000 municipal employees that requested their participation in the city's annual AIDS Walk. The memo, which urged workers to "make a meaningful difference in the fight against AIDS," was the first Giuliani has distributed with paychecks. Critics said the effort was an attempt to boost his 1997 re-election bid.

Is this either/or or neither/nor?
Oklahoma Rep. Tom Coburn, one of the main backers of the drive for mandatory testing of newborns, announced: "Either we will eventually test everyone in this country for HIV -- at birth, when they apply for a driver's license or a marriage license -- or we will manifestly change our morals about promiscuity."

A special case of AIDS dementia.
Rep. Robert Dornan, the recently deposed Republican from California's Orange County and chair of the National Security Subcommittee on Military Personnel, stuck to his guns about the legislation he wrote banning people with HIV from serving in the military. Even lobbying by Magic Johnson

didn’t budge him. Dornan dismissed the sports superstar by saying “a basketball court isn’t a battlefield.” Democratic Massachusetts Rep. Barney Frank says that Dornan’s support of a bill actually hurts it: “Dornan has deteriorated emotionally to the point where he helps us.” The bill was repealed.

Political analysts tend to be short-lived, as well.
Political analyst Norman Ornstein said he could see where weaving tales of the plight of PWAs into a campaign message could benefit President Clinton: “There’s a political plus to talking about AIDS patients. It’s graphic. Everybody knows you’re talking about horrible things because they inevitably die from the disease.”

So did she write the memo with her right hand or left?
Allan Clear, executive director of the Harm Reduction Coalition in New York City, says the Clinton administration came much closer to lifting the ban on federal funds for needle exchange than many realize. Clear says then-US Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders told him shortly before the congressional election in October 1994, “A press release announcing it has been written and is in place. We’re just waiting until after the election to release it.” Elders confirmed Clear’s story in a September memo to *POZ*.

Does this mean you won’t be pledging?
When asked by the Florida AIDS Ride to make a pledge, Broward County Traffic Safety Program Coordinator Leanne O’Connell fired off a letter condemning the event -- on government letterhead. “AIDS was created as a punishment to the gay and lesbian communities across the world. Unfortunately, many innocent people have also had to suffer. For those people, I am truly sorry. As far as the gays and lesbians...let them suffer their consequences!”

SPORTS

You lost us halfway.
“The other day I was sparring in the gym, and the guy I was sparring with had blood going everywhere,” said Olympic boxer-turned-pro Frank Tate. He wants to add a clause to his contract requiring opponents to be tested for HIV before stepping into the ring with him. “I bring my own water to the gym, and I don’t let anyone drink out of it. I don’t know what they do when they leave the gym.”

You had a better chance of beating Evander Holyfield.
Boxer Tommy Morrison came out as HIV positive in February. “There was a certain point and time in my life that I lived a very fast, reckless lifestyle,” he told the press. “I honestly believed I had a better chance of winning a lottery than contracting this disease.”

And why not?
Chicago Bulls guard Steve Kerr, on Magic Johnson’s celebrated return to basketball: “I think Charles Barkley said it best: ’We’re just playing basketball. It’s not like we’re going out to have unprotected sex with Magic.’”

Add a new page to the playbook.
National Football League spokesperson Greg Aiello says the league has no plans to change its policy prohibiting HIV testing: “In football, our doctors have told us that the chances of acquiring HIV are virtually nil. We will continue to tell our players that AIDS is a lifestyle issue, not a football issue.”

USUAL SUSPECTS

This isn’t the first time Michael’s needed a Reality check.
When foghorn/activist Michael Petrelis tried the female condom and liked it, he began calling the Female Health Co. to find out why they didn’t market their Reality condom to gay men. Their answer: The FDA says sodomy laws prevent it from approving a condom marketed for anal sex.

It’s a wonder he found time to make bombs.
Unabomber suspect Ted Kaczynski extolled the merits of masturbation in a letter to a female pen pal: “It helps curb sexual appetites and reduces the spread of the HIV virus.” Kaczynski labeled President Clinton an “airhead” for dismissing Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders for similar remarks.

What*ever*.
“[Safe, legal abortion] is like getting a medal for AIDS. If we have done something that’s brought on an impossible situation for ourselves, we ought to know it. We shouldn’t be cozened,” mused Norman Mailer on the danger of becoming too blasé about abortion in a dialogue with Pat Buchanan.

What? Gays don’t drink beer.
The AIDS activist formerly known as Luke Sissyfag changed his name back to Luke Montgomery. He’s also changed his tune. Although he is still “unfortunately homosexual,” the former ACT UP loose cannon now chooses to trash lesbians and gays. Instead of attacking politicians for “doing nothing while we die,” as he once yelled at President Clinton on national television, he now denounces “idiots spending money on AIDS willynilly with no accountability.” He also said, “The gay identity has nothing more to offer than AIDS, beer and shallowness.”

GROW UP
In the spring, ACT UP/ Golden Gate sent out press releases condemning ACT UP/San Francisco for “ill-conceived, harassing and sometimes violent actions,” alleged to include the disruption of cookie sales by two nine year-old Girl Scouts in the Castro district. The original ACT UP/San Francisco was hijacked by a small band of strident opponents of antiretroviral therapy, driving out all who disagreed. In September, three members pleaded not guilty to misdemeanor charges of assault related to the takeover of a local emergency room. At a subsequent protest, member Michael Bellefountaine spat at a nurse in the city’s AIDS office. The district attorney’s office said, “It’s a form of battery, and if the person doing the spitting has AIDS, it can technically be charged as battery with a deadly weapon.”

Who’s *he* to talk about limited involvement?
O.J. Simpson revealed his bias against PWAs during proceedings for the wrongful-death civil suit

against him. In a 1992 letter to Hertz chair Frank Olson, Simpson knocked “pseudocelebrity” athletes: “Every time I read about this cripple Bo Jackson -- not to mention Magic Johnson (incidentally, I’ve tested negative on all recent physical exams) -- getting paid millions for limited involvement, it amazes me.” (Simpson’s father, a well-known San Francisco drag queen, died of AIDS in 1995.)

“’Cause if we don’t find a cure, you’ll all just have to move to Alaska.”
J. Daniel Stricker, executive director of the Community Research Initiative on AIDS, wrote in a fundraising letter: “For many PLWAs with Kaposi’s sarcoma (KS), the shorts, tank tops and bathing suits that so many of us enjoy wearing in the hot weather are out of the question as they will reveal the violently colored lesions that are the hallmark of this often fatal AIDS-related opportunistic infection.”

And starving babies don’t wear Lacroix.
Commenting on burnout among AmFar staff members, super-fundraiser Sally Morrison said: “Working at AmFAR isn’t like working at other charities. If you go to Oxfam, you don’t have starving babies sitting at the desks.”

Fortunately for the Pilgrims, turkeys aren’t able to think for themselves.
Richard Doerflinger, associate director of the National Conference of Catholic Bishops’ Committee on Pro-Life Activities, says people with AIDS supporting assisted suicide “is like a turkey supporting Thanksgiving.”

VANCOUVER

Kind of like taking that role in *The Flintstones*?
At a private reception at the 11th International Conference on AIDS in Vancouver, Elizabeth Taylor attacked President Clinton and Congress for failing to fund needle-exchange programs: “In a society that claims to value human life above all, the deliberate withholding of the means to self-protection [against HIV] is more than passive neglect. It is a measured act of premeditated murder.”

You look so hip in your Freudian slip.
While speaking at the conference about Canada’s tainted blood crisis, federal Health Minister David Dingwall said: “I want to tell my fellow citizens who have been so devastated by the impact of HIV/AIDS how deeply I regret the strategy that has forever changed their lives.” He then corrected himself to say, “this tragedy.”

Lesson #1: You don’t wear it on your hands.
The conference’s hot exhibit belonged to the Female Health Co., maker of the female condom. “It was unbelievable, people were swarming” around the exhibit, said PWA attendee Laurie Priddy. They “did not just look at it and walk away. They wanted to get them in their hands and get diagrams on how to use them.”

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