1995 POZ Honors: Research

January 1, 1996 By David Tinmouth

Decisions, decisions

Controversy broke out this year when it was discovered that baboons can develop AIDS. Other animal models, such as chimpanzees, have long been known to carry HIV, but never to develop symptoms of disease. While the news pleased researchers, animal rights activists (and baboons everywhere) were outraged.

Voluntary anonymous testing? That's just so five minutes ago

In the wake of a study showing that the administration of AZT to HIV positive pregnant women may significantly reduce the chance of mother-to-child transmission, debate erupted over whether or not to impose mandatory testing—and perhaps even worse, mandatory administration of AZT—on pregnant women.

"Mr. Stone? Mr. Stone? Rep. Gutknecht is on line one"

Freshman GOP Rep. Gil Gutknecht sent a letter to eight government AIDS scientists and authorities demanding proof that HIV causes AIDS. Science reported that the letter asks whether the use of recreational and antiviral drugs isn't the real culprit. Later fired for his comment, a senior legislative assistant to Gutknecht said that "[the Federal AIDS effort] will make Watergate look like a no-fault divorce."

Mrs. Paul leaves a better taste

Although many activists looked to William Paul, in his first year as head of the NIH's Office of AIDS Research, to shake up a stagnant research community this year, Paul's much-trumpeted calls for a return to "basic science" and his decision to distribute money to individual scientists rather than to committees, have yet to demonstrate their effectiveness.

As if we needed another reason to dislike Matthew Modine

Legendary researcher Don Francis has decided that gay activists aren't really interested in AIDS prevention. Commenting on controversy surrounding the ethically sensitive issues of vaccine

research, Francis declared broadly, “One can only conclude that the gay community supports HIV therapeutic research but does not want money invested in vaccines.”

First Tony Bennett, then the Republican Party, now this

The authors of the “Kinsey follow-up,” Sex in America: A Definitive Survey, concluded that “AIDS is, and is likely to remain, confined to exactly the risk groups where it began: Gay men and intravenous drug users and their sexual partners.” America breathed a sigh of relief to be told it is indeed who you are and not what you do that transmits HIV.

We suggest a nice Ebola appetizer to go along with that

Robin Weiss claimed in the pages of Discover to have proved HIV is not a manmade virus developed for biological warfare, or to kill prisoners in the 1960s, and that HIV was not first spread by polio vaccines made using the cells of monkeys. He speculated man got it from eating monkeys.

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http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/HIV-Commentary-Controversy-19721-4429