The AIDS Decade: The 99 Greatest Moments of the ’90s

December 1, 1999 By Walter Armstrong

As the new millennium turns, many of the contributions of PWA self-empowerment and AIDS activism will prove lasting. But at this close range, it must be said that the main event of the ‘90s was the end of the “crisis.” This has left those at the epidemic’s ground zero feeling a little crazy, since the world’s 40 million people with HIV have, at best, only a provisional future. Yet because sex is at the root of this health emergency, the movement that started in doctors’ offices and street demos has, in the ‘90s, swept up not only science but politics and the arts, schools and churches—the whole culture. The following pages give 99 glimpses of this revolution, with all its courage and compassion, conflict and cruelty. They remind us that it has always been as much about priorities as about protease. At stake in the crisis was what it means to be human, a vision formed by desperate people with a terrible disease who confronted their own fears and hatreds and then demanded of society that it do the same. As both the disease and the revolution roll on, that’s at stake still. —Walter Armstrong

1. Fast-Track Drug Approval
Five years of feverish AIDS activism dovetail with right-wing deregulation fervor to yield a life-extending policy change: The FDA sets up a fast-track timetable for approving new drugs for AIDS and cancer. In lieu of years of testing, it is now enough to use reliable lab results. “Accelerated approval” still requires fuller testing after the fact, but PWAs leap into the void without info on long-term effectiveness or side effects. **4.9.92**

2. Ryan White CARE Act
Though slashed after its approval, the authorization of the five-year, $226-million Ryan White CARE Act is landmark legislation. Named in memory of the crusading pariah-turned-poster boy who died in April ’90, the bill declares AIDS an emergency and channels funds to ASOs in hardest-hit states and cities. But the bill’s longest-lasting effect will be to create “AIDS, Inc.”—an industry of caregivers and bureaucrats that both professionalizes and retires grassroots efforts. **8.18.90**

3. AIDS Leaders
Wearing “a little black dress and Barbara Bush pearls,” Urvashi Vaid, NGLTF’s executive director, mounts a one-woman disruption at President Bush’s first and only AIDS speech. As the Secret Service hustles her out, her fellow gay and AIDS honchos sit politely applauding Bush’s “we do care” response. **3.29.90**

4. Red Ribbon
The U.S. Postal Service issues a commemorative 29-cent stamp of Visual AIDS' Red Ribbon, its official recognition as the emblem of the epidemic. The 25 million printed booklets, each listing AIDS hotline numbers, sell out fast. **12.1.93**

5. AIDS Ward Closes
Staff arrive at San Francisco General Hospital's Ward 5A to discover that the protease-produced PWA health boom has forced administrators to assign 10 beds for general patient use. The ward, a one-time model for AIDS care that PWAs clamored to get into since 1983, soon closes its doors, the bittersweet end of an era. **1.15.99**

6. HHS Head Silenced
The Bush administration feigns a kinder, gentler response to AIDS, but actions speak loud than words. HHS head Dr. Louis Sullivan delivers the closing address at the Sixth International AIDS Conference in San Francisco (Bush, the first host-country leader to decline, is at a Jesse Helms fundraiser). In response, ACT UP stages a "Turn Your Back" action while a din of foghorns drowns out Sullivan's 20-minute speech. **6.23.90**

7. Tag forms
Divisions over insider/outsider strategies drive leading treatment vets to break from ACT UP. Dubbed Treatment Action Guerrillas, the brainy bunch completes several dramatic actions and arrests, attracting funds from celebs like David Geffen. Its wonkish "AIDS Research at the NIH: A Critical Review," calling for a stronger Office of AIDS Research, wins TAG a seat at the table. Easing into it, TAG abandons "Guerrillas" for "Group"—and the divide in AIDS activism deepens. **1.92**

8. Suicide 1
Just before taking his life, Brad Davis, 41, the star of *Midnight Express* and *Querelle*, writes: "I'm an actor and I died of AIDS. I'm writing this because there are so many other HIV positive actors who are healthy and working, but who live lives of paranoia because they can't tell the truth. Now I'm telling it." Publicized by his wife, Davis' account of his struggles in the HIV closet pushes Hollywood to begin to confront its AIDS hypocrisy. **9.8.91**

9. Suicide 2
PWA Michael van Straaten, 32, serving a life sentence, hangs himself in his cell at California's Corcoran Prison. The letter he leaves behind says that he intends his death to move others to "use my story to expose prison cruelty" to inmates with HIV. 12.8.98

10. Clinton Elected
During his campaign for the presidency, Clinton makes unprecedented promises to HIVers, including a cabinet-level AIDS czar and a Manhattan Project for research. On election day, voters in the gay and AIDS communities return the favor, and when the future president says the word *AIDS* early in his acceptance speech, many feel a moment of "after the long night of Reagan-Bush" exhilaration. Then it passes. 11.3.92

11. The Quilt
Since first unfolded in 1987, the NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt has inspired terror and pity. This weekend, the 40,000 three-by-six-foot coffin-sized panels stretching from the Capitol to the Washington Monument draw some 750,000 viewers, including the Clintons (a presidential first). Elizabeth Taylor leads tens of thousands on a candlelight vigil to the Lincoln Memorial. Though only one of eight Americans who died of AIDS is memorialized in its grief-stitched threads, the Quilt will never again be displayed in its entirety. 10.11.96

12. Literature
Michael Cunningham wins the Pulitzer Prize in fiction for *The Hours*, a meditation on Virginia Woolf's *Mrs. Dalloway*. By placing openly gay and HIV positive characters at the center of a narrative that is defined by—and that redefines—one of modernism's monuments, Cunningham, an AIDS activist who has passed many hours in handcuffs and at hospital bedsides, writes the epidemic directly into literary history. **4.12.99**

13. *POZ* Publishes
The first issue of *POZ* hits newsstands nationwide. Its brand-new blend of glossy style, disease subject, sexy HIVers, activist mission and drug-company ads pushes buttons on all sides of AIDS. **3.94**

14. Compassionate Release
Rosalind Simpson-Bey, certified by prison doctors as six months from death, is wheeled out of the Washington, DC, Jail as the first DC prisoner to win "compassionate release." Roz thrives on the better care available outside of prison walls and lives for nearly five years. But compassionate release programs remain rare, and prisoners with AIDS die faster than any other group. **12.16.93**

15. The Black Emergency
With rates of HIV infections and AIDS deaths climbing relentlessly in their communities—and much arm-twisting by black PWA advocates—African-American leaders finally mobilize against AIDS. The Congressional Black Caucus, led by Democrats Rep. Maxine Waters and Rep. Louis Stokes, calls for President Clinton to declare AIDS in the African-American community a "public healt emergency." Five months later, the president earmarks $156 million to target the epidemic in communities of color. However, the CDC waits until October 1999 before realizing any funds. **5.11.98**

COMEBACK KIDS

16. Sex
After a decade of erotic anguish, genital activism sans protective barrier explodes among gay men. The *au naturel* taste is christened "bareback" and pits "condom Nazis" against "gift-givers and bug-chasers."

17. Vaccines
In '97 Clinton launches the goal of an HIV vaccine within 10 years. The hype--along with a windfall

from new-money philanthropist Bill Gates--restores a shine to the tarnished hope, and by ’98 volunteers roll up their sleeves for tests of the first HIV vaccine candidate. **5.18.97**

18. AZT
In ’93 AZT’ name is mud after Concorde shows that its long-term use was no worse than taking no drug. The next year, the ACTG 076 study finds that AZT reduces mother-to-child transmission from 25 percent to 8 percent.

19. The Virus
In ’96, protease combos’ three-sided knockout pnch promises to stop HIV in its tracks. But as HIV roars back in many, multidrug resistance rears its mutant head not only on the treatment scene, but also in prevention circles, where “supervirus” transmission looms as a threat.

20. Lazarus
Proving there *are* second acts in American lives, many lucky enough to get their paws on protease rise up from the tomb of a terminal diagnosis. Welcome home.

21. Activism
As Al Gore announces his prez bid in front of international media, a group of loud AIDS activists waves signs reading “Gore’s Greed Kills: AIDS Drugs for Africa.” At eight more campaign events, the cacophony continues. Caving in, he agrees to withdraw U.S. objections to South Africa’s efforts to produce AIDS drugs cheaply.

22. Bathhouses
In New York in ’93, a bathhouse opens down the street from GMHC; in ’99, in San Francisco, a push to reverse the erotic-emporium ban is nixed by the health commish. Also back: Sexual rights vs. public health responsibility.

23. “No Obits”
U.S. AIDS deaths are cut in half in ’98. San Fran’s *Bay Area Reporter* leads an August issue with this head, trumpeting the first issue sans AIDS obit since ’82.

24. Hydroxyurea
A 30-year-old, expired-patent chemotherapy called hydoxyurea is dusted off for AIDS in ’97. Studies show that it targets the enzymes needed by HIV to replicate, and works especially well with drugs like ddI to reduce viral load.

25. Names
Names reporting, opposed in the ’80s by a united HIV community fearing discrimination and deterrence from testing, wins the day. With groups like GMHC waffling on privacy concern in the interest of higher caseloads and funds, the floodgates open. Now 32 states have names laws on the books.

BIGGEST BUSTS

26. ADA
Congress passes sweeping laws granting antidiscrimination protection to folks with disabilities. Intended to cover asymptomatic HIVers, the ADA is itself disabled by a decade of judicial decisions. **7.26.90**

27. AIDS Czar
Candidate Clinton promises a cabinet-level "czar"; President Clinton appoints three blond mice: Thurman, Gebbie, and Fleming (well, she's dark-haired).

28. AIDS Summit
Clinton invites 200 community reps to an "historic," scripted White House meeting, while some 200 uninvited picket in the cold. **12.6.95**

29. "I'll lift the ban"
Candidate Clinton promises to lift the ban on federal funds for syringe swaps. But President Clinton falters for five years. As the science and outcry mount, Clinton allows HHS head Donna Shalala to draft a lift-the-ban statement, which he derails at the 11th hour when drug czar Gen. Barry McCaffrey threatens to quit. **4.20.98**

30. ACT UP
After Bob Rafsky's memorial, after the 10th anniversary march, after Gore.... Has the activist group gone from Norma Rae to Norma Desmond?

31. Terrorism
In *OutWeek*, Larry Kramer calls for the nonviolent ACT UP to shift gears at the upcoming Sixth International Conference on AIDS in San Francisco. "WE MUST RIOT!" the piece reads, in the rag's signature all-caps. "I AM CALLING FOR A FUCKING RIOT!" But at the conference, Kramer is a no-show. **3.90**

32. Eradication
The cure according to Ho arrives with a bang and—after its ETA is revised from two to 80 years—exits with a whimper. But if studies confirm that HIV can't be blasted from the body, they also hint at the hope of immunologic control of HIV.

33. Lazarus 2
Bill collectors, stale love, back-to-work jitters. The good news is, you're gonna live. The bad news? Ditto.

34. Remune
The discovery that polio pioneer Jonas Salk's 10-year-old vaccine induces CD4 cell responses has immunologists crying "Eureka!" But the promise that HIVers can quit HAART and keep HIV in check with a shot or two of Remune bites the dust in '99 when data from early tests show no

benefit.

35. Closet Cases
Ten years ago you dashed past paparazzi to avoid looking AIDSy in the tabs and trades. Then your docs hook you up with protease, you're all pumped up and it's party time. But, you know, there's still time to be a hero.

36. Elizabeth Taylor
La Liz, who by decade's end will have raised close to $200 million for AIDS, raises her voice against President Bush's refusal to lift the HIV immigration ban. At the Seventh International AIDS Conference, which was moved from Harvard to Amsterdam in protest of the U.S.anti-PWA immigration policy, Taylor's shark-toothed sound-bite—"George Bush Can't Even Spell AIDS"—leaves its mark. **7.20.92**

37. Oral Sex 1
As a "second wave" of infections threatens gay men, safe-sex measures that go beyond the condom code are developed by theorists like psychologist Walt Odets—whose call for a focus on negative men stirs resentment in some HIVers—and by harm-reduction advocates. Boston's AIDS Action Committee is the first high-profile organization to step up to the plate, with a campaign endorsing oral sex without a condom as safer sex. The establishment cries foul. **6.94**

38. Oral Sex 2
Andrew Sullivan announces that he is stepping down as editor of *The New Republic*, after six colorful, newsy years—and that he has tested positive. One of the first famous "new infections," the ex-wunderkind is asked to explain how a smart guy who knows about safe sex could get HIV. He blames a blowjob. **4.12.96**

39. Eazy-E
Near death, rap artist Eazy-E, 31, releases a statement confirming he has AIDS. "I've learned in the last week that this thing is real and it doesn't discriminate," the artist legally known as Eric Wright says. He dies 10 days later, leaving his pregnant widow, Tomika Wright, and a number of other sex partners anxious to sue his estate. **3.16.95**

40. Home HIV Tests
The FDA approves the first over-the-counter home HIV test, and Johnson & Johnson's Confide takes to market. A year later, J&J withdraws it due to "lack of consumer demand," paving the way for Home Access to access the market of those concerned about confidentiality and insurance. **5.14.96**

41. Michael Callen
Co-inventor of safe sex Michael Callen had, along with his doctor, Joseph Sonnabend, raised questions about the level of proof that HIV causes AIDS and challenged the basis for mass prescribing AZT. With Callen's death from KS, the AIDS dissident movement loses its most insightful leader—and, soon, its way. **12.27.93**

42. Sharon Stone
She steals the scene at the star-studded Cannes Film Festival with a gut-wrenching AIDS speech at an amfAR fundraiser. Taking the chair of the group, the glam girl counters “AIDS is over” complacency with juicy quotes in support of needle exchange, condoms for kids and the right of HIVers to bear children. **5.28.95**

43. Magic Johnson
“Here I am, saying it can happen to anybody, even me, Magic Johnson.” And so the no. 32 jersey is retired by HIV. Although his later performance on the President’s Commission on AIDS and as an all-purpose poster boy is criticized by activists, this announcement—followed by his temporary but triumphant return to b’ball—causes a sea change in the public’s perception of risk that no amount of demos ever could. **11.7.91**

44*. Destiny of Me*
Larry Kramer’s sequel to *The Normal Heart* bypasses agitprop and goes straight to the heart with its tragic but tender tone. Critics note that the play, which opens with Kramer’s alter-ego, Ned Weeks, in a hospital bed, was penned after Kramer found out he was positive, and praise its resonant sense of mortality. “I wanted to be Moses,” says Weeks, “but I could only be Cassandra.” **10.20.92**

45. Week of Prayer
“What would Jesus do in this epidemic?” Balm In Gilead founder Pernessa Seele demands of the black community. After six successful years in Harlem, Gilead’s Week of Prayer for the Healing of AIDS, which includes prayer, education and an emphasis on compassionate ministry, gets CDC funds for its six-city expansion. Now churches across America, the Caribbean and Africa participate each Lent. **3.5.95**

46. AIDS Redefined
The CDC officially expands the AIDS definition to include more women-specific conditions, resulting in a dramatic jump in the number of female PWAs and a better assessment of where funds and research are needed. But the addition of an arbitrary less-than-200 CD4 cell count as an “AIDS-defining event” is a nasty surprise—let alone bad science—for many, who ring in the new year with a new diagnosis. **1.1.93**

47. Large, Simple Trials
With the FDA poised to rubber-stamp the first protease inhibitor, TAG charges that such fast-track approval has led to a research quagmire. The group’s alternative proposal—a return to “large, simple [long-term] trials” that delay approval while getting better data about a drug’s effectiveness—is a heresy to the “drugs into bodies” camp. **4.95**

48. “Aids Is Over”
Newsweek’s “The End of AIDS?” cover climaxes a season of headlines featuring *cocktails, hope* and *hype* above happy-face tales of science turning a death sentence into a chronic, manageable disease. **12.2.96**

49. David Wojnarowicz
This PWA's fury exploded into the late-'80s art world. His ghoulish heads, flaming boys and lurid gunshot wounds testify to AIDS' ravages; his incendiary texts expose the bigotry of the body politic. The target of right-wing attacks for obscenity, Wojnarowicz becomes an icon to AIDS street fighters, who mark his death with a fiery march through downtown Manhattan. **7.22.92**

50. David Ho
Time names Ho its man of the year—only the seventh AIDS cover for the newsweekly. Ho's audacious predication that protease combos will eradicate the body's HIV in two or three years is mainstreamed as a virtual cure, but efforts to do so in humans famously flounder. **12.30.96**

51. Kimberly Bergalis
The Floridian college student, 22, testifies before Congress about allegedly contracting HIV from her dentist during a routine procedure. Asserting "I did nothing wrong," the frail but furious Bergalis becomes the patron saint of the right's anti-PWA sect, urging mandatory testing of health care workers and other repressive measures. The self-proclaimed "innocent victim" dies three months later. **9.26.91**

52. Contract with America
Newt and his antigovernment goons hit HIVers hard. The lasting legacies are the Personal Responsibility Act, which forces even ailing PWAs on public assistance to work, and the Immigrant Responsibility Act, responsible for dropping many HIVers in detention centers or booting them out of the country. **8.96**

53. Arthur Ashe
When a high-school pal and *USA Today* reporter asks Arthur Ashe if he has AIDS, the tennis great demurs. With the paper digging for confirmation, Ashe holds a press conference announcing that he is "100 percent sure" he got HIV from a tainted transfusion. He also slams the media for outing him. With less than a year to live, an ailing Ashe avoids the spotlight, but his posthumous *Days of Grace* fingers Magic Johnson for promoting racial stereotypes about promiscuity. **4.8.92**

54. *Rent*
The rock-opera by Jonathan Larson, 35, who dies suddenly after the final dress rehearsal, is an overnight sensation. A mix of *La Boheme*, AIDS and millennial madness, *Rent* becomes a Broadway blockbuster, attracting sellout crowds as well as a lawsuit by its librettist and plagiarism charges by Sarah Schulman, author of the 1990 novel, *People in Trouble*. **2.13.96**

55. Tom Hanks
Tom Hanks' operatic performance as a gay lawyer with HIV in *Philadelphia*, Hollywood's first AIDS flick to become a critical and commercial success, is still less dramatic than his Oscar speech. "The streets of heaven are too crowded with angels," he says of PWAs. "The number a thousand for each red ribbon that we wear tonight." **3.23.94**

56. Susan Sarandon

As part of a two-year campaign including civil disobediance and a lawsuit. Susan Sarandon and Tim Robbins issue a plea during their Oscar presentation on behalf of 266 hunger-striken Haitain refugees detained at a US naval base in Guantanamo, Cuba, because the have HIV. “We’d like the government to admit that having HIV is not a crime, and to let them in,” Sarandon tells 29 million U.S. viewers. **3.29.93**

57. Donations Down

“AIDS is over” media hype and an “AIDS is *not* a special disease” backlash prompts private-sector donations to ASOs to nosedive. The grandaddy of them all, New York City’s GMHC, lays off one-third of its ’96-level staff by decade’s end.

58. Hemophilia Reparations

The Committee of Ten Thousand, a hemophiliac-activist army, files a federal class-action lawsuit against the four major drug companies that make clotting factor, claiming that negligence led to some 10,000 avoidable infections. HIVers later win $100,000 a head—a fraction of their medical costs. **9.93**

59. Paul Monette

Becoming a Man, the former screenwriter’s coming-out prequel to his 1987 AIDS memoir *On Borrowed Time*, snags the 1992 National Book Award. “It is not enough to be an artist,” Monette says in his Library of Congress speech. “If you live in cataclysmic times, then all art is political.” **11.18.92**

60. Joycelyn Elders

Two flaps deliver the coup de grace to Surgeon General Joycelyn Elders: Her public musing that drug decriminalization should be studied and her private efforts to lift the ban on needle exchange. With Gingrichite attacks mounting, Clinton seizes on a pretext—Elders’ yes to masturbation as a safer-sex technique for kids—to boot her bold bully-pulpit. **12.9.94**

61. Teen Prevention

New York City’s Coalition of Peer Educators organizes its first-ever youth-only confab. The event, infiltrated by a teen emissary of the Christian Right, ignites controversy over GMHC’s explicit “Lesbian Safe Sex Handbook,” causing the adult advisor at the city board of education to lose his job. **2.94**

62. The Military

After much back-and-forth on the ’97 $267 billion defense spending bill, Congress passes an amendment that would discharge troops with HIV within six months of testing positive. Some 1,000 service members prepare to get the ax—without disability benefits—until lawmakers successfully push to repeal the measure. **7.30.96**

68. Concorde Trial

At the Ninth International AIDS Conference in Berlin, the results of the largest and longest AZT trial ever show that the first treatment approved to fight HIV is a bust. While effective in the short term,

by year three, people on AZT are dying faster than those on no drug at all. After fighting for years for a drug—and neglecting basic research—scientists and activists alike register despair. **6.8.93**

69. The Berlin Patient
The case of a German who repeatedly goes off his antiretroviral combo yet maintains an undetectable viral load offers the first evidence of "self-vaccination," or using HIV to trigger an immune response sans drugs. **5.98**

70. Political Funeral
A dying Tim Bailey asks ACT UP to hold a political funeral—a ritual of blacks in apartheid South Africa—and deliver his body to the White House. What ensues, however, is a nasty confrontation with 10 police agencies that try to confiscate his body, and then escort the cortege out of town with sirens wailing. Activists assert that the government did more to keep Tim's corpse from sight than to keep him from dying. **7.1.93**

71. AIDS Rides
The AIDS Rides, the biggest AIDS money-maker in history, blow up in impresario Dan Pallotta's face. In Philadelphia, AIDS groups end up with only 22 percent of the take, a dismal ratio that provokes an investigation by the state AG. The '96 Florida ride clears just 18 percent, and 8 percent in '97, prompting the firing of failed rainmaker Pallotta.

72. Lymph Nodes
During a speech at Amsterdam's Eighth International AIDS Conference, TAG's Mark Harrington shows slides of his own HIV-infected lymph nodes. This offers early confirmation that the virus hides in compartments—and that whatever goes on in a milliliter of blood is far from the whole story. **7.24.92**

73. Kiss Scare
The CDC announces that a man may have infected a woman with HIV while "deep kissing." The study's detail that the man's bleeding gums may have been at fault goes unmentioned in the panicky "AIDS Kiss" headlines. **7.11.97**

74. Prime-Time AIDS
Jeanie Boulet (Gloria Reuben), a physician's assistant on *ER*, finds out that her ex-hubby's flu is really PCP. A cliffhanger HIV test leaves her fate subject to summer hiatus, but the fall premiere brings a poz result. In future episodes, Jeanie gets fired, sues and gets rehired, has mixed luck on her combo, dates and mates, even catches hep C. Here's to must-see TV for showing a celluloid positoid living like a real HIVer. **9.26.96**

75. Needle Exchange
Acquitting eight ACT UP needle-exchangers of criminal possession of syringes and giving the cause a shot of legitimacy, a judge writes, "The distinction is death by using dirty needles versus drug addiction by using clean needles. The defendants' actions sought to avoid the greater harm." **6.25.91**

76. *Angels in America*
This phantasmagoric journey into the dark heart of AIDS dominates Broadway in the mid-'90s. A swirl of history and dreamscapes with a cast including Emma Goldman, Roy Cohn and a Mormon-turned-angel, Tony Kushner's two-part opus is a cathartic revelation for many devastated by AIDS. **5.4.93**

77. Pedro Zamora
MTV debuts the Cuban-born heartthrob as the HIV positive cast member for its vérité soap, *The Real World*. Zamora, who tested poz at 17, is a welcome addition to the narcissistic show. Watching him fall in love, get pneumonia and correct his roommates' casual-contact HIV fears, a generation is transfixed by the image of an empowered gay man of color battling AIDS. On the final night of the show's original airing, Zamora, 22, dies in Miami. **6.23.94**

78. Female Condom
The first woman-controlled condom gets the FDA seal of approval, but feds—citing sodomy laws—refuse to authorize its use by men. By '96, many clinics offer the polyurethane sheaths free to gay clients for anal sex. A deal between the manufacturer, Female Health Company, and UNAIDS distributes millions to women in Africa and Asia for about a dollar each, less than half of the U.S. cost. **5.10.93**

79. Cure '94
Twenty-six cosponsors introduce a bill to implement ACT UP's AIDS Cure Project, calling for a PWA-controlled institute to unite scientists in finding a cure. Clinton, who had promised "a Manhattan style project," refuses to sign on. **5.10.94**

80. Greg Louganis
The four-time gold medalist, 35, delivers a double whammy to *20/20*'s Barbara Walters—the truth about both his sexuality and his HIV status. The media shifts into "blame the victim" mode, replaying the "blood in the water" scene after the diver hit his head on a springboard at the '88 Olympics in **Seoul. After that nastiness, he's shy about speaking as a PWA advocate. 2.24.95**

81. Day of Desperation
As the media grows bored with ACT UP, the group escalates with a series of strikes on the Big Apple, including a march through the financial district, Harlem traffic-blocking and a rush-hour disruption of Grand Central. The previous night, some activists interrupted *The CBS Evening News*; others, on *MacNeil/Lehrer*, chained themselves to MacNeil's desk. **1.22.91**

82. Lipodystrophy
Paunches and bellies and humps….Oh, my! How or whether protease and nukes produce this bizarre redistribution of fat remains a mystery, but lipo has introduced a new—and unwanted—look for HIVers. **1997**

83. The Rest of the World

With “bridging the gap” its theme, the Twelfth World AIDS Conference in Geneva forces a cold-eyed look at the savage inequalities between the developed and the developing world. While the focus remains on treatment and data, UNAIDS gets several firms to slash drug prices for PWAs in a handful of poor countries. **6.98**

84. The Morning Party
After its bittersweet 16th birthday passes under a black cloud of drug arrests, ODs and bad press, the big-buck bovine is put out to pasture by New York City’s cash-strapped GMHC. **8.16.98**

85. The Future
The World Health Organization reports that AIDS has moved up to become the leading cause of death in Africa and kills more worldwide than any other infectious disease. ”Even if we stopped HIV today,” says UNAIDS’s Peter Piot, “because of the millions of people now infected, the burden of AIDS will continue to be severely felt. This is only the tip of the iceberg.” **5.11.99**

86. Hepatitis C
The FDA approval of ribavirin for hepatitis C marks the coming of age for this shadow epidemic, which hits 40 percent of HIVers. The liver-poisoning virus finally comes to public awareness due to better tests, a federal campaign and activism. In a culture primed by HIV, hep C now looms as the coming plague. **6.98**

87. Day Without Art
(see "A Day Without" from this December 1999 issue) **12.1**

88. Community-Based Research
Dr. Joseph Sonnabend, who pioneered the practice of including PWA input in research decisions and running studies out of doctors’ offices and clinics, resigns as medical director of the flagship Community Research Initiative on AIDS. The move, which some say was sparked by the board’s push for drug company–funded large-scale trials, signals the end of this once-innovative approach to research. **1997**

89. One World, One Grief
Mobilization Against AIDS, a San Francisco–based nonprofit, presents “the world’s largest annual grassroots AIDS event”—a day of action and tribute—each May. In ’94, expansion of the 11th International AIDS Candelight Memorial and Mobilization into the developing world allows 460 cities to participate. **5.15.94**

90. Mandatory Testing
In the name of saving “innocent” babies, New York state takes the lead in testing newborns for HIV, whether mothers want it or not. The law turns out to be nearly useless as implemented, because many moms get the test results too late to intervene in HIV transmission (via breastfeeding) to their newborns. **2.97**

91. Tuskeegee Apology

The infamous federal syphilis study that tracked—but withheld treatment from—400 black men for 40 years casts a long shadow on efforts to fight AIDS. With many African Americans rejecting either testing or treatment for HIV, the National Association of PWAs lobbies for a government apology for Tuskeegee. President Clinton, who has called for a national dialogue on race, delivers it. **5.16.97**

92. Storm the N.I.H.
After making the FDA speed up the end of the drug pipeline, ACT UP targets the *beginning* bottleneck, demanding more diverse research, drugs for OIs and women's studies. Some 1,000 rowdies invade the sedate N.I.H. campus with colored smoke bombs, guerrilla theater and office assaults. The results: The august halls of AIDS research open to community input, and priorities shift. **5.21.90**

93. Survivor Guilt
Like Lazarus syndrome, only for the HIV negative.

94. "It's The Virus, Stupid"
Dr. David Ho's discovery that, from the moment of infection-on, the immune system churns out billions of T cells to defend against HIV overturns the dogma that the virus remains "dormant" for years. **1.12.95**

95. Cover Stories
Three pieces of journalism finger the zeitgeist: *The New York Times Magazine*'s "Whatever Happened to AIDS?," the post-humous crie de couer of *Times*' AIDS reporter Jeffrey Schmalz. 11.28.93 *The New York Times Magazine*'s "The Twilight of an Epidemic," Andrew Sullivan's paean to protease. 11.10.96 Laurie Garrett's *Esquire* cover story, "The Virus At the End of the World," which predicts the imminent collapse of HAART and a surge in deaths in the new millennium. **3.99**

BONUS: 100. Reagan's Apology
Former prez "Dutch" Reagan issues a Pediatric AIDS Foundation PSA, saying you can't get HIV from hugs and calling for compassion from PWAs. The media reports this as "an apology" for his indifference to the epidemic while in office. Sorry? Only those who died can forgive. **2.4.90**

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