The Viral Lowdown: News Flash: The Sky Isn’t Falling!

December 1, 2000 By Andrew Sullivan

The success of HAART must rank as the year’s deepest denial as the activist crazies whine on, shamelessly and mindlessly, about drug failure. What failure? No one said HAART was a cure -- no one. We all know it is a difficult treatment, and that we need to improve it and add new weapons. But that doesn’t mean it is useless, or “poison,” or that every HIVer is going to die soon. (It’s typical that those who screamed in 1996 about “AIDS is over” press are now crying that HAART isn’t the cure. My advice: Grow up.)

So why the hysteria? Death rates are still down, and so are AIDS diagnoses. Some seem almost nostalgic for the days when we were dying en masse, and they had microphones as big as their egos. Well, we aren’t dying -- and won’t die any time soon if we don’t give in to the hysteria. Meanwhile, many AIDS activists are busy working for Al Gore, whose policies will turn the free market in drugs into a government-run, price-controlled circus, ending the golden era in research that has saved our lives.

Mercifully, most HIVers don’t buy the anti-HAART or anti-drug company hype championed by the left-wing ideologues who still, sadly, dominate AIDS activism. Most of us work through our own treatments, cope and improvise with side effects -- and survive. I was told gleefully by the crazies in 1996 that in four years, with my own virus rebounding and no drug options left, I would eat my “Twilight of AIDS” words. Guess what? My numbers came back this week as undetectable, with my highest T cell count ever. And I’m not alone.

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