# ACT UP: Salvation?

June 5, 2009 By Shawn Decker

**I recently saw the horrible new Terminator movie, which I refused to review for the Hemo2Homo Connection. I'd waited years to see a movie based around that opening action sequence in the original... oh well. At least this funny internet video was born from it.**

In those movies, so much of the plot is around the issue of the past affecting the future, and the future's attempts to meddle in the issues of the past to shape the future. The latter is a quick fix solution that inevitably complicates matters... but, recent events have led me to believe that the future of HIV/AIDS activism may well be its past.

The same month and year that I was diagnosed (March 1987), ACT UP was formed to raise awareness about the epidemic with bold events, political accountability and fearless tactics. The reason for the group's existence was simple: people with AIDS were sick and tired of watching people with AIDS die.

I was happy to hear that former Poz cover boy and ass-kicker Bob Bowers had a hand in forming ACT UP Wisconsin this year, and I really think that, with the internet and the ability to enter peoples' homes without using excessive force or mainstream media, there may be a huge role for the resurgence of the ACT UP mantra.

Today, California HIV/AIDS activists are speaking out against budget cuts in the state that will drastically reduce services to the positoid community. At 5 pm (PST), activists are also planning to close down Santa Monica Blvd. If there's a news program on TV that reports news at 8 pm (EST) on Friday night, I'll be interested to see if either event even makes news.

What's cool about that is that the people making the news will be- hopefully- posting videos on YouTube and other social networking sites. It's the way of the future. It's the way of the past. ACT UP was successful for using what was at their disposal in 1987. There weren't any life-saving HIV medications, but there was a caring ear and hand in the national media, and they did what they had to to get it's attention. Now, the same fists that are waved in defiance are also holding cameras, which can transmit these events to every house that has a computer and internet access.

With the economy in shambles it's important that people with HIV continue to have access to

decent health care.  I know Governor Arnold is in a tight spot, but we can't let him say, "Hasta la vista, baby" to money that is desperately needed for positoids in his state.

As for ACT UP itself, the most famous phrase comes to mind: "I'll be back."

Positively Yours,
Shawn

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