



Back From Tour

October 6, 2006 By [Shawn Decker](#)

Though it probably wasn't as exciting as a KISS tour circa '78, the My Pet Virus book tour went off without a hitch. I met a lot of people—online friends from the forums and MySpace—, bookstore owners, old friends whom I haven't seen in ages, Jim McGreevey (who was reading around the corner at the same time I was) and strangers who have read the book.

✖ And now I'm back home after 11 days out, and I'm catching up on some sleep. Have I ever written about how much I love sleep? I think being able to do so easily is one of the reasons for my longevity. I think my next book will be *The Art of Napping: A Pillowhead's Guide to Dreamland*.

Since I was lame and didn't have my blogging info on the road, I am now left with the task of summarizing the experience all at once. So I'm going to use a word that I took great pains to keep out of the book: amazing. I went to NYC, DC, San Francisco, Albuquerque, LA, Ann Arbor and Chicago. The response has been more than I could have hoped for.

Along the way, a writer was explaining to me how the book brought back her own high school experience. The best part of this for me has been the wide array of reactions, and how many of them have nothing to do with my pet virus the entity. HIV's role in my life has been immense, and I've definitely been shaped in ways I don't even understand by my diagnosis at age 11.

But now, twenty years later at 31, I'm realizing that I could very well have been the same compassionate person without HIV, which I credit for opening my eyes up to discrimination at an early age based on what I went through (getting kicked out of school, not allowed to spend the night with certain friends anymore, etc). Those experiences with HIV are one of the reasons why I have no tolerance in my life or soul for homophobia and racism.

Still, a lot of my friends got there without the lightening rod of HIV. I like to think that perhaps I would have, too.

Positively Yours,
Shawn