



Election Night Results and This Week

November 11, 2006 By [Shawn Decker](#)

Election night results: The Democrats have taken the House, the Senate, and the President's starfish!

I'm a little late, but this is hardly a political blog. I just hope the Dems can handle the influx of power. They've hit puberty, they've been given a driver's license. They've had the sex education class and their parents have given them a roll of condoms. Let's hope they make curfew and don't fuck everything up.

This week I met with the [National Hemophilia Foundation](#), and will be working with them to raise awareness about bleeding disorders. Who knows, maybe for the next election I'll head up a get-out-the-vote initiative for the community called Choose or Bruise. I'd go around after the election and visit thinbloods, and anyone who hasn't voted gets punched in the arm, the bruise a reminder of the fact that they didn't exercise their American right and privilege.

 I learned a lot about what the NHF is doing, and when Gwenn and I speak at colleges we'll be spreading the word about [Project Red Flag](#). It's estimated that over two million women are living with an undiagnosed bleeding disorder in this country alone.

While on the road, I got some great news about the book: it's been nominated for an award given by Books For A Better Life, an annual event that raises awareness and funds for the Multiple Sclerosis Society. I'm up for the [Suze Orman First Book award](#), given to a first-time author... I'm one of five finalists chosen from over 450 submissions, so wish me luck! (I find out in late February, but already feel like a winner.)

This week I went to a conference in Anaheim to speak to peer health educators. It's the first time in over seven years that I spoke alone, and I was more than a bit nervous about how I'd fare. You see, Gwenn is the much better speaker than I. Often times, when I talk myself into a corner, she is there to bail me out. So, going it alone for an hour was a bit daunting.

But I managed to survive. I read from a few sections of the book, talked about Gwenn and I's relationship, and encouraged students to look out for their generation. In addressing the Just Say No, Wait Until Marriage sex ed that a lot of young people are getting, I mentioned Mr. Haggard's recent scandal. "I bet she waited until marriage, and was more than a little shocked to find out that her evangelical husband was having meth-fueled sex with a male prostitute."

In closing I mentioned my generation of thinbloods. Not a lot of guys survived who were born around the time that I was, when the blood-treatment rainbow reshifted its ending point from the pot of gold, only to root itself in the thick of the AIDS crisis. When I was flying home from the west

coast, I was speaking with the man beside me on the plane as we were touching down (landing in Charlotte, not fooling around).

He asked, "So what do you do?" I did the whole vague "sex education" thing, but disclosed my status because the guy was amiable enough and I'd had a good nap on the flight. "Oh, wow," he said. "My nephew died from AIDS twenty years ago. He'd gotten a blood transfusion just after he was born." He went on to tell me that the family told their friends that he died from something else.

Twenty years ago, you just wouldn't disclose your status to a stranger on a plane, unless you wanted the kind of panic that Samuel L. Jackson encountered in *Snakes on a Plane*. The guy and I even made a joke about that fact, "Oh my God, we shared an armrest!"

We've come a long way and I'm fortunate that I've lived to see it.

Positively, Shawn



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