

An exclusive interview: AIDS and Black people

By DOUG HENDERSON
Special to the AmNews

The recent screening of the controversial AIDS documentary "Pain, Profits and the Politics of AIDS," produced by nutritional expert and WBAI radio talk show host Dr. Gary Null, has caused quite a stir — particularly in the Black community.

In an exclusive interview with the *Amsterdam News*, Null answers questions which directly impact the Black community.

Amsterdam News: Why does AIDS seem to affect a disproportionate number of Black people?

Gary Null: Black Americans are divided into two primary groups: those who have an education and are upwardly mobile, or

economically stable, and, hence, have the capability of understanding how to integrate their beliefs, their attitudes, their diet into mainstream America.

Those people have more opportunities to know what their bodies require. Statistically, they are not a part of the high-risk group factor. And you do not see them with the massive infections.

On the other hand, those economically disadvantaged Blacks without education and without any power within the community are invisible. They are not counted upon for anything. In effect, they don't count. These people eat the worst foods. They eat fried foods, salty foods, sugary foods.

They have a disproportionate

amount of obesity, diabetes, hypertension ulcers, mental disorders, and without exception there is massive malnutrition — which is, itself, immuno-suppressive.

You'll find more parasites, you'll find more drug addiction, you'll find more medication abuse, you'll find more degeneration, even in the younger group of Blacks who are in the lower socioeconomic strata than any other part of the Black community.

AmNews: Is there a correlation between the outbreak of tuberculosis and AIDS?

Null: Tuberculosis and AIDS are completely related. In fact, the primary vectors of tuberculosis are AIDS. And I'm stating AIDS, not HIV-AIDS or ARC (AIDS Related

Complex) individuals, people whose systems are so destroyed that their bodies have no capability of healing, or rejuvenation.

As a result, they become a walking Typhoid Mary. They can transmit various diseases, not just blood to blood, but you can transmit tuberculosis, syphilis, herpes. These can be transmitted through mucous and through coughing. Parasites can be transmitted from kissing.

As a result, these people are not getting proper treatment until they walk into a hospital or until after they have died and an autopsy reveals they had syphilis. They had everything and so did every one they came into contact with.

Let's face it, the average street junkie, that represents the highest percentage of people with TB, is not engaging in life with an upwardly mobile Black person. A person who is responsible, educated, is not going down to 42nd Street and Times Square, to socialize, to have anal intercourse and to share drugs with one of these people.

But those people are sharing it with one another within that community. So when you test a group of people from a particular community, the street people, you find that those people all have the same diseases. About 20, 30 different diseases. All of which, now, can be listed as AIDS. They are all

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immune dysfunctional, they have low T-cells, they have opportunistic infections. Some have the HIV virus, some don't. But they can still be classified as having AIDS, because they are all immuno-compromised.

Is that happening in middle America? Absolutely not. That's what we have to be aware of. TB, syphilis and hepatitis are rampant in people who do not practice proper hygiene, proper nutrition and proper lifestyle.

AmNews: If someone has a very strong immune system and that person has straight, heterosexual sex without a condom, with someone else who has the HIV virus, are the chances

miniscule he or she will become infected with the HIV virus?

Null: The chances are slight, based upon the lack of semen infected with HIV. But it is insane and suicide to be having unprotected sex today because of all the viruses, including syphilis, which you can contract very easily. You can contract syphilis, the first time or the second time with a person who is infected. Even if someone is not infected with the Epstein-Barr virus (in the Herpes family), there are forms of it that reside in a person's throat that are shed- ding which could be transmitted as a direct result

of deep throat kissing. So if you're having unprotected sex, or kissing someone who has the disease, there is a 90 percent probability that you're going to walk away with a disease which is immuno-suppressive.

Anyone having unprotected sex should realize they are having death sex.

AmNews: Is a condom enough?

Null: A condom is not enough if a person has multiple infections because vaginal fluids and semen are only one route of transmission. Saliva is another. And simply breathing on someone up close is enough to infect them if you have TB or some of the other infections.

We have to realize that kissing has become a major health risk. We've done a good job on getting people aware of condoms; now let's get them aware of kissing. You can pass herpes to a person by kissing them. If you have oral herpes and perform oral sex on a woman, you can pass the herpes into her, vaginally.

If a woman has oral herpes and you don't, and she performs oral sex on you, her saliva will go into your urethra. That urethra goes right into your bladder, prostate gland and testicles. You can infect your entire genital-urinary tract with a woman who has infection in her throat.

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