

PERSPECTIVE

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A terrifying spectre

By FRANK BRUNI

Its victims may first notice purplish blotches on or under their skin. They may experience an extreme loss of weight or persistent fever. Glands in their necks, or even their groins, may swell tremendously. But these are just the warning signs, the symptoms, the horrifying prophecy of a slow death which may include as many as two long years of suffering and ailments as devastating as Kaposi's sarcoma and Pneumocystis carinii pneumonia.

The killer is AIDS, its method is to wreck the body's immune systems and

philosophers and physicians, politicians and preachers. The contagious nature of the disease has drawn attention to the more promiscuous homosexuals in America, and all gay men suffer from this new stereotype.

Yet, strangely enough, some people manage to ignore the existence of AIDS. Most Americans do not personally know anyone who has contracted the disease or died from it. The subsequent refusal to confront the disease's existence, a denial found even among gay men, is perhaps more perplexing and potentially dangerous than the hysterical reactions of some when they learn of the disease.

the United States with AIDS by November of 1985 — 46,400 people with a disease which, at present, cannot be cured and which many doctors believe may be impossible to survive.

These staggering statistics make it especially hard for gay men to ignore the suspicions of scientists that AIDS is transferrable through certain forms of sexual contact, such as anal intercourse, and that casual sex with multiple partners greatly increases an individual's chances of contracting the infection.

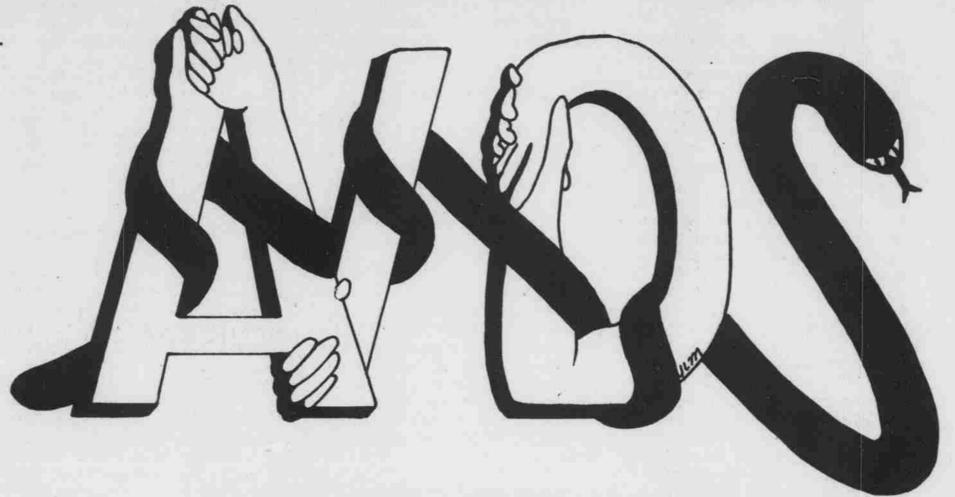
But business at gay bars in the Raleigh-Durham area continues to thrive. The dance floors at such popular gay nightspots as 42nd Street in Durham and the Capital Corral in Raleigh are crowded on weekend nights, and one-night stands have by no means been rendered obsolete by the emergence of AIDS.

According to Jim, property manager at the Capital Corral and a member of the Triangle area gay community, the lifestyles of gay men in North Carolina have changed little since the outbreak of AIDS.

"There's a concern here, but it's nothing gay men think about on a daily basis," Jim explained. "The chances of a gay man walking across the road and getting hit by a car are greater than his chances of getting AIDS from someone he meets in a North Carolina bar. It's a matter of odds. AIDS is an extremely rare disease."

Rare it may be, but it is no stranger to the state of North Carolina. Residents of Raleigh and Durham and even Chapel Hill have indeed contracted the disease.

According to physicians in North Carolina involved in the treatment of infectious diseases, AIDS has arrived in this state. Dr. David Durack of Duke University Medical Center said that the



number of cases reported in North Carolina is up to 15, a majority of which have occurred in the Triangle area.

Local physicians have seen numerous gay patients worried about having had sexual contact with someone who later displayed symptoms of AIDS. These physicians are not treating the issue lightly. They are advising gay men to initiate efforts to decrease the probability of exposure to the infection. They are warning them that AIDS is no longer a disease confined to densely populated areas with notoriously visible gay communities. They are doing their best to see that gay men in North Carolina become aware of the proximity of AIDS and prevent the spread of it in this state.

Still, some gay men see that almost half of the AIDS cases reported originate in the New York City area and another quarter from California, and they think that they are insulated from the threat of the epidemic.

"Almost all of the cases North Carolina has had were contracted out of state," Jim insisted, somehow ignoring the fact that, regardless of where the afflicted North Carolinians contracted the disease, they have returned to North Carolina, their home. Since the incubation period between an individual's contraction of the infection and the detection of symptoms can be as long as 30 months, these same gay men may very well have unknowingly and unintentionally transferred the infection to others.

Where AIDS victims from North Carolina contracted the disease does not matter. What matters is that they returned to the state and lived in its gay community before the symptoms of their deadly disease appeared. Some of these men have died, a few in beds at N.C. Memorial Hospital in Chapel Hill.

In light of this, Jim's sentiments are disturbing. Nearly 1,000 people have died from AIDS and more than three times that

number face the prospect of a likely death from the disease in the next several years. Where human lives are at stake, there is no room for flippant, defiant attitudes. Nor is there room for the political and moral opportunism of anti-gay factions whose attempts to belittle homosexuality in this time of crisis have often triggered the defiance in gay men like Jim.

At present, there is room only for a cooperative effort between the public and the medical community to inform all citizens about AIDS, to prevent its devastating spread, and to allocate energy and finances to the discovery of a cure.

Americans, both gay and straight, need to offer each other mutual support and brace themselves for an increasingly urgent fight against what may well be the most frightening epidemic in this country's history.

Frank Bruni, a sophomore English major from Avon, Conn., is an editorial writer for The Daily Tar Heel.

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Jim, property manager at Capital Corral

leave them open to fatal infections, its victims are primarily homosexual and bisexual men and its death toll stands ominously at 805.

The high-risk groups are homosexual and bisexual men, intravenous drug users, Haitians and hemophiliacs, but there are few Americans who have not been affected by the emergence of AIDS as a national health emergency. With the exhaustive media coverage of its rapid spread, AIDS has quickly become an issue with moral, social and political dimensions.

Americans are scared. Accounts of police officers refusing to administer artificial respiration to members of the gay community, and other such agents of public hysteria are common. The gay community of America is under attack from

Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome was officially given its name in July 1982 after scientists had observed the strange deaths of many homosexual men whose immune systems had mysteriously broken down. Today, little more than a year later, AIDS has reached epidemic proportions. It is a public health hazard so grim that the U.S. Public Health Service has declared the deadly disease its No. 1 health priority and will spend more than \$15 million this year on AIDS research.

As of Aug. 15, 2,094 cases of AIDS had been reported to the Center for Disease Control in Atlanta, and an average of six new cases are being reported each day. If the AIDS epidemic continues to spread as rapidly as the case number currently multiplies, there could be 46,400 people in

Don't forget the struggle

By KERRY DEROCHE

In 1963, the Washington Mall became a sideline for the pursuit of equal rights. On its green lawn, a band of 10 dreamers dared to lead a protest against the nation's racial injustice. They gathered 200,000 from across the country and marched in two lines through the capital's streets.

Then, from a sunlit podium at the Lincoln Memorial, he spoke of a dream, of a "sunlit path" and an "oasis of freedom."

The 200,000 listened and believed.

This weekend marked the 20th anniversary of that historic march. And in celebration, today's civil rights leaders planned a Saturday re-enactment of the mass rally, commemorating the work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Coalitions across the country, as the group of students in Chapel Hill, organized bus trips to Washington. They circulated petitions and wrote brochures. More importantly, they worked to tell the public that the pursuit of "jobs, peace and freedom" is still on; that in this country racial persecution is still the rule, equality merely an exception.

"We feel it is very central to remind the American people of the dream Martin Luther King had and that the dream has not been completely fulfilled," an organizer of this year's march said. "Let's not forget the struggle of people over the last 20 years; let's note the accomplishments we have made, but not forget the struggle."

The struggle first began in the early 1960s, as blacks fought a repressive system unchallenged since the Civil War. At that time, they rode in the back of city buses; they drank at separate water fountains. They were barred from restaurants.

On Aug. 28, 1963, they brought their struggle to Washington. That day, the marchers strolled slowly to the base of the Washington Monument, huddling in groups as they awaited the signal to begin. They signed pledges to the civil rights movement as they registered with march officials. They carried placards reading "An end to bias" and "No U.S. dough to help Jim Crow grow."

Joseph Straley, a member of the Chapel Hill Town Council, was among that crowd. He said in an interview last week that he remembered the tension in the marchers' pacing, the determination on their

faces. They were as the crowds at a country carnival, anxiously trying to catch glimpses of the next exhibit. There was concern and also anger, he said.

For him, the march was the chance to send a message to federal officials that separate water fountains and restricted buses were no longer acceptable. "All of these things struck me as an outrageous violation of the precepts of religion and the conditions under which this country was established," Straley, a former UNC professor of physics, said. "And you can't just lay in the gutter and suffer, you try to get out of that gutter and do something about your conditions."

The marchers strode the mile to the Lincoln Memorial as crusaders, breaking into chants and singing church hymns. "There was a momentum that built up throughout the day, and I guess it climaxed with Dr. King's classic speech," one marcher would say later. "It was a feeling that a new America was being born."

In 1964, Congress would approve a Civil Rights act that promised an end to discrimination and the era of barred doors for blacks. One year later, the Voting Rights Act was signed into law, ensuring minorities a right to the ballot box. Fair housing laws were approved soon after. And Medicaid programs began.

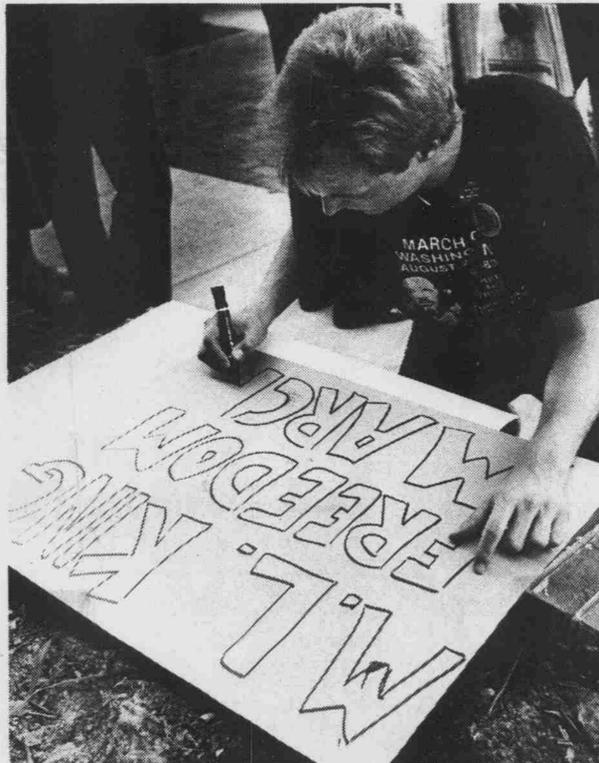
It looked as if the 200,000 had succeeded — that is until the momentum started by the leaders 20 years ago collided with today's news that half of black teenagers are still unemployed; that only 1 percent of today's elected officials in this country are black; that the Reagan administration, through pushing for tax credits to private schools known to discriminate on the basis of race, echoed the Jim Crow practices. And that, yes, a black candidate for mayor won in Chicago, but only after a campaign famous for its buttons with watermelons, and political chants sung to "Bye, Bye Blackbird."

The idealism carried by many marchers 20 years ago had been discarded, as an old placard put away on a shelf.

"I don't think it's accidental that this march is occurring at a time when there's a great deal of suspicion that the federal officials are taking away benefits to the impoverished," Straley said of Saturday's demonstration.

"People aren't going there just because they think 'Martin Luther King is a great guy, and let's go have

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Preparations for Saturday's March on Washington drew interested onlookers and participants last week in Chapel Hill, as well as throughout the rest of the nation. (Photos by Charles W. Ledford)

Newspapers facing new trends, challenges

By BILL RIEDY

The days of the Hearsts and Pulitzers and cutthroat competition in journalism seem to be a thing of the past, although newspapers still face plenty of competition for their readerships and advertising dollars.

More and more cities are becoming one-newspaper towns. This has created an effect that many argue has hurt the profession of journalism because of the lack of healthy competition between rival papers in the same market — a market that previously competed for the same readers by trying to be the first paper to report the breaking news, or by being the paper with the best coverage or best writing. Whatever sort of journalism made that paper, it is no longer as necessary as it once was.

The most common trends in the majority of American cities have been toward one morning and one afternoon paper, usually published by the same company. In addition, afternoon circulations have been slipping for years. With increased technology in other media, more people in our society want the news as soon as they can get it.

Philip E. Meyer, Kenan professor of journalism and former employee of Knight Ridder newspaper chain, said communication technologies have made it possible to deliver advertising in so many ways that newspapers must do it as effectively as possible.

Now, newspapers have to be better than before. They are charging advertisers more than ever but have gone as far as they can. So they take the resources already available to make the best possible product to get everyone to read at least one newspaper a day.

As a result of these new developments, a more common trend in the newspaper industry has been witnessed over the past several years — the merging of staffs of morning and afternoon papers owned by the same publisher.

What this literally means is that one company originally publishes two separate papers but then takes the individual staffs of those papers and merges them into one. This new staff is now putting out the two old papers. The ultimate end of a merger is an all-day newspaper. An all-day paper uses one staff to put out more than one edition of the same paper every day for home delivery. With all-day papers, the purpose is to reach as many readers as possible with just one paper and give them a choice concerning when they receive the news. Net readership is what counts.

Mergers have their critics and supporters. Although most papers are merged for economic reasons, many journalists, such as Alfred Hamilton, associate managing editor of *The Greensboro News and Record* (merged in 1981), say that merged staffs can put out two better papers because of the increased resources available in terms of reporters and other formerly separate areas of the individual papers.

But Dave Butler, metro editor of *The Rocky Mountain News* in Denver and former managing editor of *The Jacksonville (Fla.) Journal*, said that the June merger of *The Journal* with Jacksonville's morning paper, *The Florida Times-Union*, has hurt both papers. "Don't believe the poppycock that you can have two better papers with one staff," he said. "The whole sense of teamwork defeats the individuality of both papers."

Butler said in a market where there is not much duplicate readership, a publisher could put out the same paper twice. However, in Jacksonville, approximately 50 percent of *Journal* subscribers also subscribe to the *T-U*.

"The personalities of the two papers are different," Butler said. *Journal* reporter Gary Sease said the *T-U* is "a bit on the stodgy side" and is a paper of records. He called *The Journal* "the lively alternative."

Sease credited Butler with reviving *The Journal* and reversing its decline in circulation from less than 42,000 in the late '70s, when he joined the staff, to over 45,000 by the time he left before the merger.

Butler said he was philosophically and pragmatically opposed to the merger in the Jacksonville market. "Try as you might, if the same people are putting out two papers you will lose their different perspectives."

He cited *The Kansas City Star* as an example where merging had not really accomplished its goal. A number of years ago, the staffs

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