

AIDS

continued from page one

caption on the screen informs the audience that what killed the village was not AIDS, but it was related and a sign of things to come.

The scene switches to Copenhagen, Denmark, in 1977, where the first known AIDS death occurred, even though no one understood at the time what the disease was. A woman in a hospital there baffles doctors by dying of some kind of pneumonia, an event made even more disturbing by seeing it in hindsight and knowing how far the disease has permeated almost every country on the face of the earth.

The movie then moves to Atlanta and the Center for Disease Control in 1981 where investigations into what America was calling the "Gay Cancer" were beginning. Matthew Modine's character is involved with these investigations, and with very little funding he and the committee start putting together the pieces of the disease that as far as they know is killing only gay men. For the next two years, research proves that not only is the disease (GRID—Gay Related Immune Deficiency—as the media called it) not exclusive to gays, it can be transmitted sexually, by blood transfusions and by dirty hypodermic needles. Eleven infants in a Bronx hospital died of it, there was an outbreak of the disease among Haitian refugees, and hemophiliacs began to die as well. The

impression that many right-wingers had during this time that God was punishing gays for their "unnatural" ways was proven medically wrong when several hospitals were found guilty of knowingly giving transfusion patients tainted blood. A chilling 89 percent of hemophiliacs who received transfusions became infected during this time.

As the movie progresses, it documents January 4, 1983. Modine and his committee argue for extra funding and tempers rise, and a member of the financial panel exclaims that it is unlikely that the government would spend millions of dollars researching a disease that didn't even have a name yet. He suggests calling it Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome, and the faceless disease finally has an identity. During the course of these discussions, another member of the financial board argues the cost effectiveness of AIDS education and altering hospital policy. In what is possibly the most moving moment of the movie, Modine stands up and demands, "How many people will have to die before this research becomes cost effective for you people?" Even ten years later, this statement still carries a lot of significance, even though more money has been allotted.

According to the movie, the French were the first to pinpoint the cell that causes AIDS, but they share the credit with American doctor Robert Gallo. The film portrays the French scientists as working towards a cure for the common good, but Gallo is shown as self-serving and egocentric, wanting to find

the cell to further his own career. The message, even if prejudiced, is clear: AIDS is something we all have to work on together. None of us can afford to stand alone in front of such a deadly disease.

Thanks to amazing performances by Matthew Modine, Alan Alda (Gallo), Phil Collins, Richard Gere, Steve Martin, Angelica Huston and Lily Tomlin, Hollywood made what NBC heralded "the most important movie of our time." Even before *Philadelphia*, the entertainment industry has banded together to inform the rest of us about AIDS' history.

But what about AIDS' future? According to statistics run after the film, 25,000 Americans had died of AIDS even before President Reagan made his AIDS awareness speech in 1985. As of July 1993, 194,344 Americans had died, and experts speculate that at these rates, at least 40 million people world-wide will be infected with HIV by the turn of the century. Right now, one in 250 Americans is infected with the HIV virus. Those odds are frightening. Until a cure is found, I applaud every organization and media branch that is helping to educate our society. In this case, ignorance is not bliss—it's deadly.

Le Commissaire Est Bon Enfant

may seem foreign to you, in fact it is. It's French. It's a French play, it's funny and it's a must see. If you don't know French, come to relax and be entertained. The lead is being played by Dr. Jacques Comeaux. The other roles are being performed by professors and students.

So be sure and mark your calendars for Thursday, April 7 at 7:00 p.m. in the Cate Center.

What is Lurking in the Shadows?

You don't have to be a victim!

Capstone 945 presents video and lecturer

Mr. Jeff Landreth

Vice president of security Glaxo, Inc.

Wednesday, April 13
6:30 p.m. in 103 Joyner

CLASSIFIED ADS

••**Extra Income '94.** Earn \$200 - \$500 weekly mailing 1994 Travel brochures. For more information send a self-addressed stamped envelope to: Travel Inc., P.O. Box 612530, Miami, FL 33161.

• I am looking for a responsible student to care for my daughters (ages 4 and 9) this summer. We live in

a nice neighborhood in North Raleigh with a community pool and tennis courts. The job would begin when public schools dismiss for the summer and would last until their school starts in the fall. The salary would be \$150 per week. Hours would be from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday and

8:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. on Friday. If you are interested, please call Nancy at 847-6870. Please leave a message if we are not in.

••**Greeks and Clubs Earn \$50-\$250 for yourself plus up to \$500 for your club.** This fundraiser costs nothing and lasts one week. Call now and receive a free gift. 1-800-932-0528, ext. 65.