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The Register

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*** Debate Preview *** **(Story follows below)**



TALLAHASSEE, FL (The Register) Wednesday, 03 April 1996 - Today, Sarah Weddington visited [The Florida State University](#) to speak in the FSU Lecture Series. The [Florida State Times](#) mentioned her visit [here](#) in their Vol.2. No. 1, June/July 1996 edition.

She is the lawyer who argued in the landmark U.S. Supreme Court abortion case, *Roe v. Wade* in 1973. Weddington told of her epic legal battles and her younger life. She used to play basketball, for example. *The Times* quoted her as saying "At that time (the late '60s) women were often told, 'Women can't, women don't, and women shouldn't,'" in an obvious reference to abortion.

The debate was lively, with the audience being permitted to ask questions, at the end of her talk.

One of the more notable questions was from Florida State Biology and Chemical Science major, Gordon Watts, who later gained fame in almost winning freedom for Terri Schiavo.

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Watts, who has experience at the [U.S. Supreme Court](#), nearly saved Terri's life in [this](#) close 4-3 split decision (actually doing better than Florida Governor, Jeb Bush, who lost the same case [here](#) in a sweeping 7-0 shutout). Mr. Watts asked Weddington about differential treatment of fetuses of the same age as those children who have been born. Paraphrasing Watts, he asked her "if you can kill a fetus at, say, seven months, then why can't you kill a child born prematurely at the exact same age. Why does it have any more rights? Isn't that prejudiced based solely on where the child lives -in the womb or out of it?"

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Weddington replied, "I don't know." At that point, other members of the audience, apparently on the other side of the issue started yelling at Watts. One unidentified female student asked Watts to be quiet, and he yelled back at her that he had a right to ask his questions. Watts then yelled above the crowd to Weddington, that prejudice based on where one lives is wrong, as evidenced by how we don't treat those in the inner city differently, simply because of where they live -and asked why this standard should not apply to babies "inside" the womb like it does citizens "inside" the inner-city. Weddington ignored Watts' question and moved on.

The Register later learned that Watts had given one of Weddington's traveling crew the question in advance. "I didn't want them to be caught off guard. It wouldn't be right." *The Register* is honestly surprised that he was called on to ask a question, even after advance warning that it would end up being so tough as to stump the speaker, but apparently the speaker did not feel threatened by differing viewpoints, much to her credit.

Editor's note: This story is being done slightly after the publication date, due to scheduling conflicts, and is therefore somewhat incomplete. For a more representative story, please see the following news coverage on the AIDS/HIV debate.

TALLAHASSEE, FL (The Register) Tuesday, 20 April 1999 - The debate in question "questions" the generally held beliefs that AIDS is caused by the HIV virus and also makes claims that AZT, commonly used to treat AIDS, is actually responsible for many, if not all, of the symptoms that classify a person as having AIDS.

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Scheduled for 7:00 P.M. at the FSU Moore Auditorium, it features AIDS specialist, Dr. Tom Hicks and Fla Bureau HIV/AIDS official Paul Mozzotta on the "Pro" HIV panel. Arguing that HIV does not cause AIDS are former FSU grad student and national editor of *REAPPRAISING AIDS*, Paul Philpott and former FSU student senator, Jason Nusbaum. The debate will be moderated by Ian Granick, *Pragmatist* publisher.

Since some of the participants of this debate are likely to be homosexual -- due to the nature of the subject, *The Register* feels it necessary to make some clarifications. While the editorial board feels that some of the claims of the "HIV≡AIDS"-theory opponents have merit, it is appropriate to point out that, you, the reading audience, know where we stand on the Homosexual issue: it - along with "straight" deviancies such as cheating on one's spouse and fornication - are inappropriate shortcuts to temporal pleasure, e.g., wrong. (In fact, *The Register* suggests ways in which mate similarities and honesty can help in heterosexual/straight mate selection.) With that said...

Regardless of whether the claims made by Philpott and Nusbaum are correct, *The Register* takes issue with an allegation made by Pat Simmons, director of the HIV/AIDS hotline about Nusbaum. Simmons, as quoted in the March 15-17 1998 front-page story of the *FSView* says, among other things, that: "[Jason] may enable some poor slob to give a rationale for infecting more people with a terrible disease." Excuse me, Ms. Simmons, but did I miss something? I (editor Gordon Watts) was at one of the talks given by Jason, and he did not espouse nor endorse any "free sex" theories. Instead, he said (paraphrase) "this causes AIDS and not that" and also "AZT is a bad treatment, good care of your health is a good treatment." This is what makes people turn off to any debate and ignore the "controversy," Ms. Simmons.

Whatever you may believe, there are some websites reportedly endorsed by Nusbaum's group. You may visit them yourselves and make up your own mind.

Some include:

<http://www.virusmyth.com>

<http://www.heal-la.org>

and

<http://www.aliveandwell.org>.

Here is another link suggested by a recent email from a doctor who I will keep anonymous: <http://www.iol.ie/~gittons/aids/index.htm>. This website is called AIDS Myth, and another link, <http://aidsmyth.com>, apparently was a "hop-off" point, and re-directed my web-browser there. Perhaps that server got too busy, so, I encourage you to write down the other links, since the easy-to-remember ones here like aidsmyth.com may later become outdated links, that is, like a wrong number is to a telephone call!

Considering how the U.S. Government has tried to cover-up the Agent Orange and Gulf War Syndrome events as well as the Tuskegee "tests" (to see if Black men could fend off Venereal Diseases) and a host of other "denials,"... Well, *The Register* takes a critical look at any claims made by the Government, one way or the other. In fact, I [editor Gordon Watts] just recently heard in a biology class this [Spring 1999] semester here at FSU some ongoing controversy about the origins of cancer that reminded me of the HIV-AIDS debate. My instructor, Dr. Kurt G. Hofer, a well-known cancer researcher, informed the class that many mutagens (chemicals that cause DNA changes) ARE NOT carcinogens (chemicals that cause cancer) and many carcinogens are not mutagens. The significance of this statement is that it has been widely held in the medical and scientific communities that cancer is caused by DNA mutations. Well, if that is so, then how do those non-mutagenic agents cause cancer in, say, laboratory rats or petri dish cell/tissue cultures? (Dr. Hofer suggests that it may be a cell re-differentiation problem, which means in plain English, that the cell tries to stop being, for example, a skin cell and tries to become something else, say, a liver cell and thus become a 'rogue,' out of place rebel cell. The cell can do this because every cell in the human body has a COMPLETE DNA complement. That, in fact, is how the single cell of the sheep, "Dolly," was able to grow into a complete new sheep, a clone, which is an identical twin growing up lagging by, generally a few years or months.)

Dr. Hofer suggests that the scientific community is less that quick to embrace this potential new hypothesis due to the fact that many years have been invested (spent) into looking at potential mutation causes of cancer, and that many scientists might be less than willing to either start anew from scratch or admit that they were wrong for so many years. Does this sound familiar -- perhaps like the AIDS debate which is the subject of this article? Well, I asked Dr. Hofer his opinion on the theory that HIV does not cause AIDS. He said that he heard a lecture that espoused the non-HIV theory (held by Nusbaum and Philpott and others), and that the lecture was very convincing; nonetheless, he felt that the evidence still is convincing that HIV does cause AIDS.

Even though a lot of "respectable scientists" are reported to have jumped on the non-HIV bandwagon (and I do not notice any denial of this by the scientists in question or critics of this new "non-HIV" theory), still one testimony seems to stand out above the rest. That would be the personal testimony of Christine Maggiore, whose excerpt appears below. I feel that practically NO apparently healthy person would claim to have the "AIDS" antibodies present in his or her body unless it were true. (False claims would get an immediate 'fear' reaction from the community!) Thus, the claim that someone could have the antibodies normally associated with AIDS and still be healthy seems true. Below is the excerpt off the www.heal-la.org site listed above:

"Please visit our new web site at www.aliveandwell.org.

Our phone numbers are the same with the addition of a new toll free number 877/92-ALIVE. Our new e mail address is alivela@best.com.

Thanks for your understanding and continued support.

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Christine Maggiore
Founder of The Organization Formerly Known As HEAL Los Angeles
Director of Alive & Well
HIV positive and naturally healthy since 1992"

Alive and Well with an HIV positive reading, eh, Christine? Well, see below for coverage of the event.

Debate Coverage

Beginning at slightly after 7 p.m., the forum/debate featured Nusbaum and Philpott on the "Anti" HIV-cause side. For the "Pro" HIV-cause panel, Mr. Mozotta and Dr. Hicks were joined by Ms. Pat Simmons whose quote appears above. I got a chance to ask Ms. Simmons about her quote. Both she and Nusbaum concurred that the quote in question was correct. They also both concurred that the quote was taken from an e-mail that Simmons had sent to an unidentified third party or parties about Nusbaum. She did not elaborate on her motives, but all five participants on both "sides" affirmed that they supported the quest to find a cure to AIDS either explicitly or implicitly. Likewise, participants on both sides were quick to point out that they did not support "unsafe" sex. Nusbaum added that he supported safe sex and that the AIDS debate was not about being gay or straight. In support of this claim, his panel showed statistics for groups not normally associated with gayness such as drug users and women with AIDS. Philpott claimed that, as a graduate student at , he was kicked out of the Biological Science program for espousing views that HIV does not cause AIDS. He made allegations of free speech and academic freedom suppression, adding that he did not want to see this happen to anyone else.

The opposing panels were remarkably polite to one another. In Mr. Mozotta's introduction, he agreed with Nusbaum's statements that listeners should not take their word but instead look up the information. He went on to claim that Nusbaum and Philpott misinterpreted their sources to mislead the audience, a theme echoed by a later question from a member of the audience whose drug company used studies to say whatever they wanted them to in order to sell other companies their pharmaceutical drugs. Mozotta said that people desperate with AIDS would be susceptible to any new theory that said they might not have a deadly illness. Dr. Hicks related anecdotal and personal experience with AIDS victims, claiming AZT has a positive effect on their symptoms.

After the introduction, listeners were given a chance for questions. The first questioner, *Register* reporter, Gordon Watts, asked Dr. Hicks' panel how they could dispute the findings and results of the studies from the peer reviewed "scientific literature" could be refuted and where were their citations and references? "Scientific literature" is generally understood to mean journals accepted by the scientific community, not popular magazines like the *National Enquirer* or even the "somewhat" scientific *National Geographic*. He also asked the other panel for a copy of their references, some of which they displayed on an overhead projector. Nusbaum assured Watts that references would be provided, later claiming that they could be found on certain websites. Another questioner criticized Dr. Hicks' panel of coming without any scientific references, to which Hicks responded that the question was not important, as the issue had been sufficiently analyzed by this point.

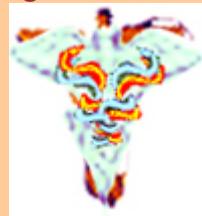
Philpott claimed that AIDS is the only virus that flunks all the tests for it to be classified as a pathogenic disease and is still classified as such. He mentioned as an example that a virus, to be classified as such, must in some of its victims display a "signature" symptom or characteristic at the onset of infection, such as pock marks or fever. AIDS does not, he says. Further, he showed statistics of AIDS patients without the HIV virus, claiming that as proof that HIV could not cause AIDS. He elaborated on how 'weak' and harmless the virus is even in a virus culture, where scientist supply the virus with easier living conditions.

Dr. Hicks claimed that there has never been a case of a person with HIV antibodies who did not have the HIV virus. He claimed that the virus would always be detectable, even if it were in small quantities. Philpott countered this claim, stating that we do find cases of people who test positive for the HIV antibodies and symptoms, thus being classified with AIDS but without the virus itself. He thus claims that the virus can not cause AIDS.

The Conclusion?

I have checked with my professor, Dr. Hofer, once more on some of these sticky problems. Specifically, I asked him why the HIV test was allowed to fail the "gold standard" test based on the Koch's Postulate that stipulates that: "The germ must not be found in other diseases or healthy people." He replied that some people, about 1 in 100 HIV positive people, I recollect, somehow have a spontaneous healing by means as yet unknown to science. Science, he said, is beginning to rethink some of these concepts and definitions.

The bottom line is this: *The Register* would love to take a stance on the issue, but we do not feel that there is enough evidence one way or the other to say either that AIDS *is* caused by HIV or *is not*. (Or, if there is, even still, we are only students: real scientists get confused over these issues and disagree with one another. We are doing well to just bring the news to you on this!) However, we do feel that the issue is both interesting and important enough to warrant further attention and study. With that, we hope that we have given you some interesting things to think about. *



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