

Submitted by e-mail

From: FAIR Foundation [mailto:fair@dc.rr.com]
Sent: Monday, November 30, 2009 7:47 PM
To: Jennie Lambert, Publisher, Gaston Gazette; Hunter Bretzius, Editor, Gaston Gazette
Cc: Colleen Bridger, MPH, PhD Gaston Country Health Director
Subject: Rebuttal

Dear Ms. Lambert and Mr. Bretzius,

To provide balance, I respectfully submit this Guest Column op-ed to you both as Publisher and Editor of the Gaston Gazette in response to the one submitted by Colleen Bridger, MPH, Ph.D., Gaston County health director entitled "[Rethink your assumptions about people with HIV.](#)"

Dr. Bridger's conclusion, "If you've had sex, you are at risk of HIV." is alarmist, lacking in full disclosure and reminiscent of Oprah Winfrey's false statements years ago when she said "AIDS has both sexes running scared. Research studies now project that one in every five--listen to me--one in five heterosexuals could be dead from AIDS at the end of the next three years...It is no longer just a gay disease, believe me."

What Dr. Bridger omitted is the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's definition of those at risk of becoming infected with HIV. These patients include men who have sex with men (MSM), injection drug users (IDUs) and their sex partners, and those engaged in heterosexual sex with partners who have HIV or who are at high risk of having HIV.

A heterosexual has zero risk of becoming infected with HIV if he/she knows that the sexual history of his/her partner is risk-free of having HIV.

Dr. Bridger stated her friend, "Susan" did nothing wrong. I agree it is not "wrong" to marry a man with a history of drug addiction; however not insuring proper protection (condom use) against infection was detrimental to her, and her child's, health.

HIV is virtually 100 percent preventable, a luxury millions of other patients did not have prior to their illness impacting their lives.

"Susan" can be encouraged by the [statement on CNN](#) of, Anthony Fauci, MD, our country's top HIV researcher and the man who oversees our country's \$2.9 billion HIV/AIDS biomedical research budget: "...the scientific advancements that have been made in HIV [research] are breathtaking [with] highly effective drugs to suppress HIV to the point where what was a death sentence in the early eighties to now having patients who look and feel well, who are leading very productive, very gratifying lives..."

Sincerely yours,

Dr. Richard Darling, DDS: [Past National Public Citizen of the Year \(NASW\)](#)
 President and CEO: [The FAIR Foundation](#), a national organization with thousands of members and supporters whose goal is to reverse inequities in NIH research funding and to institute [new organ-donor policies](#) to reverse America's organ-donor crisis
 Founder: [The FAIR Foundation Liver Disease & Transplant Support Group](#)
 Author: [Coma Life](#), an autobiographical memoir of life "within" coma and survival over hepatitis C induced liver cancer, coma, 3 liver transplants, heart attack, diabetes & Muscular Dystrophy (Myasthenia Gravis)
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Disease	2009 NIH Research \$	Deaths Per Disease	\$ Per Patient Death	\$ Per Patient
COPD**	90 Million	126,128	\$ 714	\$ 7
Hepatitis C	107 Million	12,000	\$ 8,916	\$ 20
Cardiovascular Dis.	2.3 Billion	871,500	\$ 2,639	\$ 29
Hepatitis B	42 Million	5,000	\$ 8,400	\$ 34
Diabetes	1 Billion	74,817	\$13,365	\$ 39
Parkinson's Dis.	186 Million	19,547	\$ 9,516	\$ 124
Alzheimer's Dis.	644 Million	71,696	\$ 8,928	\$ 124
Prostate Cancer	344 Million	27,050	\$12,717	\$ 181
HIV/AIDS	2.9 Billion	14,016	\$ 206,906	\$ 2,774
All Cancers	5.5 Billion	559,650	\$ 9,888	\$ 3,830
Breast Cancer	716 Million	40,910	\$ 17,501	\$ 3,967
West Nile Virus	56 Million	121	\$ 462,809	\$ 15,564