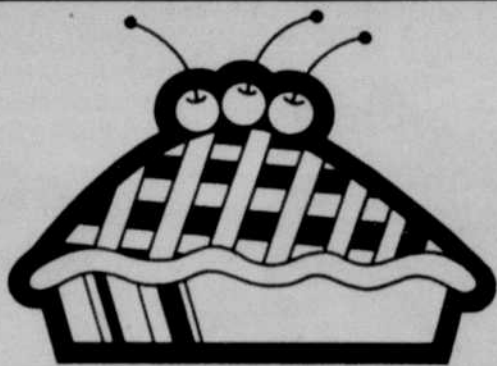


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Doctor addresses AIDS on campus

By Kathy Proffit
 Emerald Contributor

An AIDS task force official speaking on campus Wednesday presented information that, for some, dispelled myths, calmed fears, and encouraged awareness of and support for the AIDS epidemic.

Dr. Richard Keeling, director of the University of Virginia's Health Center and chairman of the American College Health Association's Task Force on AIDS, is considered by many the foremost AIDS expert on the nation's college campuses.

Keeling's slide presentation and accompanying commentary was concise, sincere and often humorous.

"You see evidence of AIDS everywhere," and the epidemic suffers from poor media coverage that promotes unnecessary fear, he said.

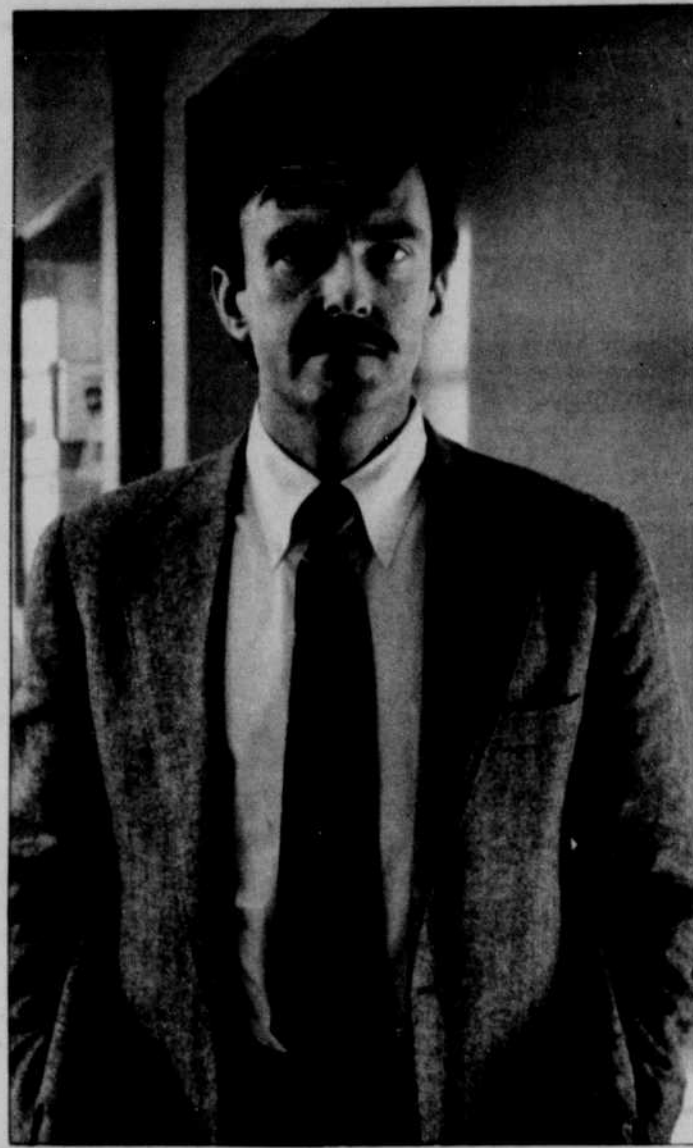
Keeling said there also exists an "epidemic of legislation," in which many organizations attempt to limit the spread of the disease by lobbying for laws against people with AIDS.

"The point is that the face of AIDS in America is changing, and that this is no longer somebody else's problem," Keeling said. "That is what makes it so much of a concern on college campuses today."

Public reaction to AIDS has resulted in situations where victims of the disease have been rejected from society, he said, and discrimination as such contributes to the pain and the suffering of people with AIDS.

Keeling's slides showed the simplicity and fragility of the human immunodeficiency virus that causes AIDS. Because of this, it is a difficult disease to transmit, he said.

Despite the characteristics of the virus, it attacks the human T-Lymphocyte helper cells. When these are completely destroyed, the immune system is rendered in-



Dr. Richard Keeling

operable, and the body loses its ability to defend itself from "the most common parasites," Keeling said.

"The end result of the infection of full-blown AIDS is something that everybody thinks they know about," he said, adding that it's incurable and most likely fatal.

Keeling said 42 percent of the people who have AIDS are still alive, but whether or not they will be "long-term survivors" is unknown, he said.

"On the one hand, you should be pretty worried," he said, alluding to an increasing number of cases.

Keeling said the Center for

Disease Control predicted in 1986 that 42,000 cases of AIDS would be reported by Oct. 1 of this year. As of Oct. 8, there were 42,166 reported. This indicates that future predictions — that 300 to 400 thousand cases will be reported by the end of 1991 — are likely to be accurate, he said.

"This means that more people will die from AIDS by 1991 than will die in motor vehicle accidents," Keeling added.

Despite these projections, there are a lot of people infected with the virus who won't be identified, he said.



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