

New AIDS virus evidence

Researchers in France and the United States have recently discovered evidence that a virus which attacks the white blood cells that are defective or missing in AIDS and pre-AIDS patients may be the cause of the disease.

The scientists cautioned that the evidence does not prove the virus is the cause of AIDS

but they feel that the evidence is very strong because the virus appears in 80 percent to 90 percent of both AIDS and pre-AIDS patients.

The discovery of the cause of AIDS would not constitute a cure but it is a necessary first step that could speed the development of a treatment of an anti-AIDS vaccine.

Lesbian wins Army reinstatement

In what is believed to be the first ruling that

homosexual status alone is not sufficient grounds for military discharge, a U.S. District Court judge ruled that a lesbian who was "disenrolled" in 1981 from the Army's Reserve Officer Training Corps at the University of Maine must be reinstated.

Sergeant Diane J. Matthews of South Portland, Maine was ordered to be reinstated in the ROTC program from which she was dismissed after she identified herself as a lesbian to her commanding officer.

Matthews has served for seven years in the Army and has received many citations and commendations for outstanding service.

Matthews' trouble began when she asked for a schedule change so she could attend a meeting of a lesbian and gay student organization. Her commanding officer asked why she wanted to attend the meeting and she told him she was a lesbian.

In a 41-page decision Magistrate D.B. Hornby wrote that Matthews' ouster "as a result of her declaration of homosexuality without any evidence of homosexual conduct" did violate her First Amendment rights to freedom of expression. Hornby also commented that a military regulation which allows the discharge of persons with "homosexual propensity" is unconstitutional because it violates the right to freedom of expression.

Hepatitis vaccine breakthrough

A recently discovered viral protein, present on the surface of the hepatitis B virus, may provide a low-cost vaccine against the disease.

The protein, or peptide, triggers the body's natural defenses against the disease. Researchers at the New York Blood Center were able to manufacture the protein in their laboratory. If further experiments are successful, the synthetic peptide could be used as a synthetic vaccine at a fraction of the cost of present immunizations.

Hepatitis B afflicts more than 1 million people in the United States and is a major health problem around the world.

Boy George banned

Officials at Brigham Young University in Provo, Utah, said last week that a student band which had appeared last month under the name The Club, featuring "Guy George" as lead singer had been banned from further performances on the university campus. The group was banned, according to a student information coordinator, because the costume worn by Ray Carter (Guy George) portrayed transvestism and homosexuality.

A student who had planned to use Culture Club as a theme for her candidacy for a student office was told to delete from her poster a photograph of herself posed with several other people dressed like members of Culture Club. An official of student programs at BYU said the action was taken because Culture Club promotes homosexuality.

And, Culture Club record albums were pulled from the shelves of the BYU Book Store pending a review to determine whether they are appropriate for sale to students.

BYU officials said that the reference in the name Culture Club is to "a culture that is not a normal culture."

Custody battle results in jail

A Colorado fundamentalist christian woman is in jail for refusing to reveal the whereabouts of her son whom she has hidden from her gay ex-husband, the boy's legal guardian.

The Colorado Supreme Court denied the woman's petition to end her imprisonment. The seven justices voted unanimously and without comment to let stand a lower court order placing Betty Lou Batey behind bars until she has church friends bring her son to court.

The father, Frank Batey, has not seen his son since his ex-wife disappeared with the boy over 18 months ago.

Last week the boy, Brian, 12, appealed to President Regan for help in his bid to live with his mother. There was no comment from the White House on the matter.



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