



Diseased

C e c e l i a M e s e r v e



It's been three weeks since the day I started coughing. At first I wasn't worried, people get coughs- its part of life- but it kept getting worse, rubbing my throat raw. Then the fatigue, I'm so tired it's painful to get out of bed earlier than noon.

More symptoms followed, fever and chills (mostly at night), I'm losing a ton of weight and insanely crazy night sweats. It's pretty gross.

Finally I had enough. Today I went to the hospital and the doctors say that I may have tuberculosis!

Tuberculosis, they said, is a disease mostly transmitted my coughing and sneezing. Many people get it but not many get tuberculosis *disease*. It can be very dangerous.

Cece Meserve

August 28, 2008

August 31 2008

I am in so much discomfort I can barely type these words. I'm so tired that I keep falling asleep at the most random and inconvenient times.

N dsljgbdls!!fndisogs.

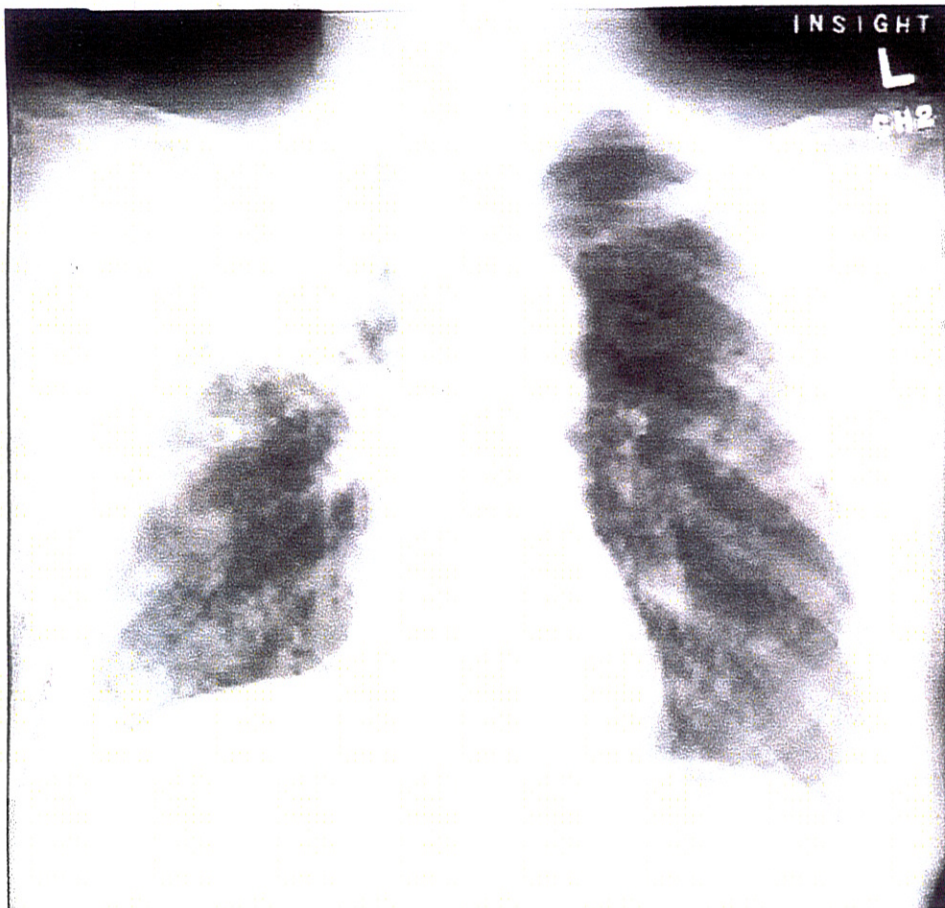
See, I just fell asleep again and that's my head hit the keyboard.

I feel asleep while I was eating at Noodles and Company today and I had to take three showers before I got all of the pesto out of my hair. I fell asleep in the shower to so that wasn't very good.

I need to take a Nap so I think I will.

Feeling
Tired



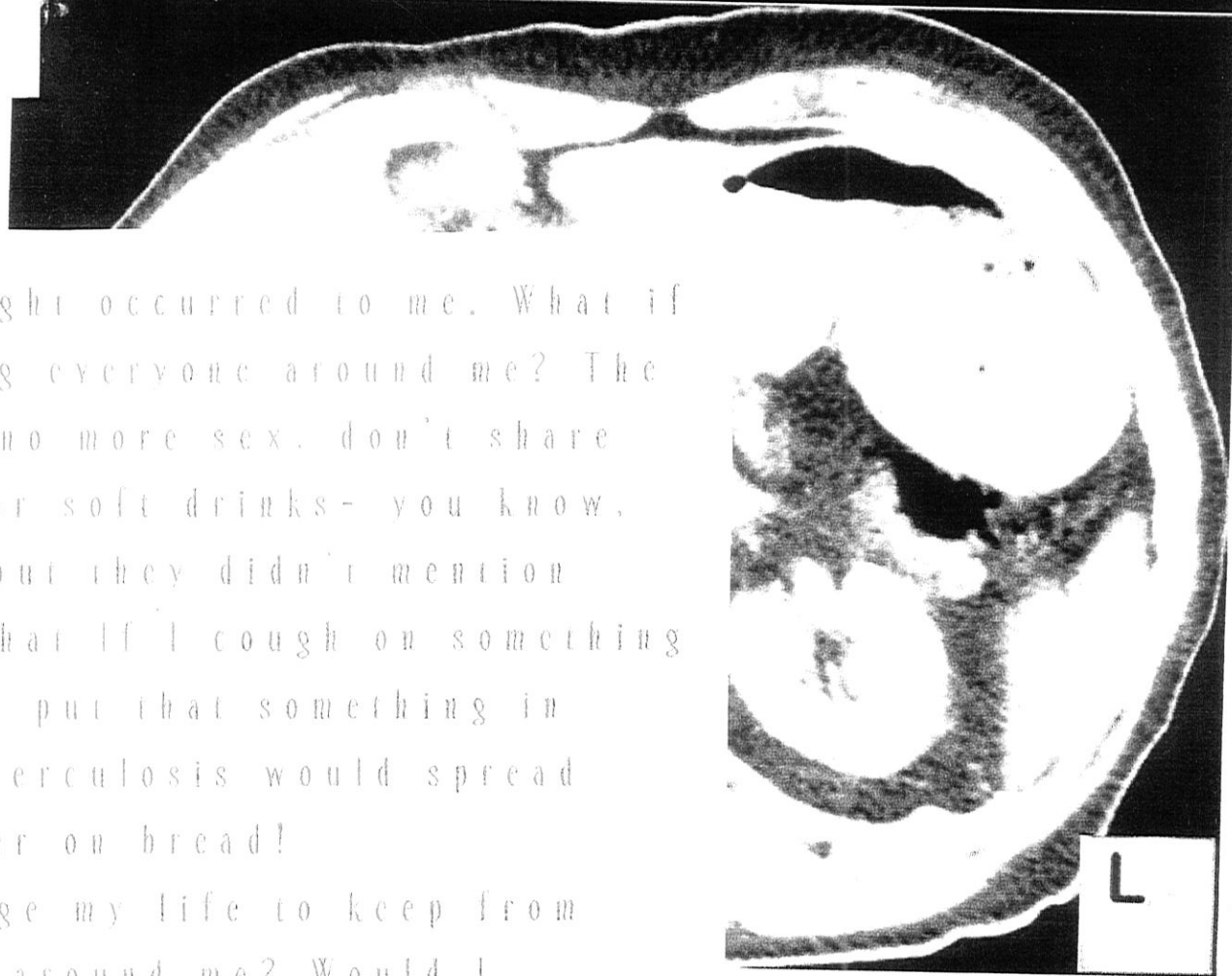


Well, I defiantly have tuberculosis. I hauled myself over to the doctors to see my results and they're certain, so that sucks. I've been really depressed all day. I really don't want to die. I really don't.

Well, I've been taking a lot of drugs for it and they all have ridiculously long names- Isoniazid, Pyrazinamide, Rifampin and Ethambutol. The bottles say that side affects may include Nausea, Poor appetite, Tiredness, Yellowing of the eyes or urine or easy bruising, Pain or swelling of the joints, Changes in vision, Rash, itchiness and Numbness or tingling in hands and feet. I think I have them all.

Cece Meserve
September 2, 2007



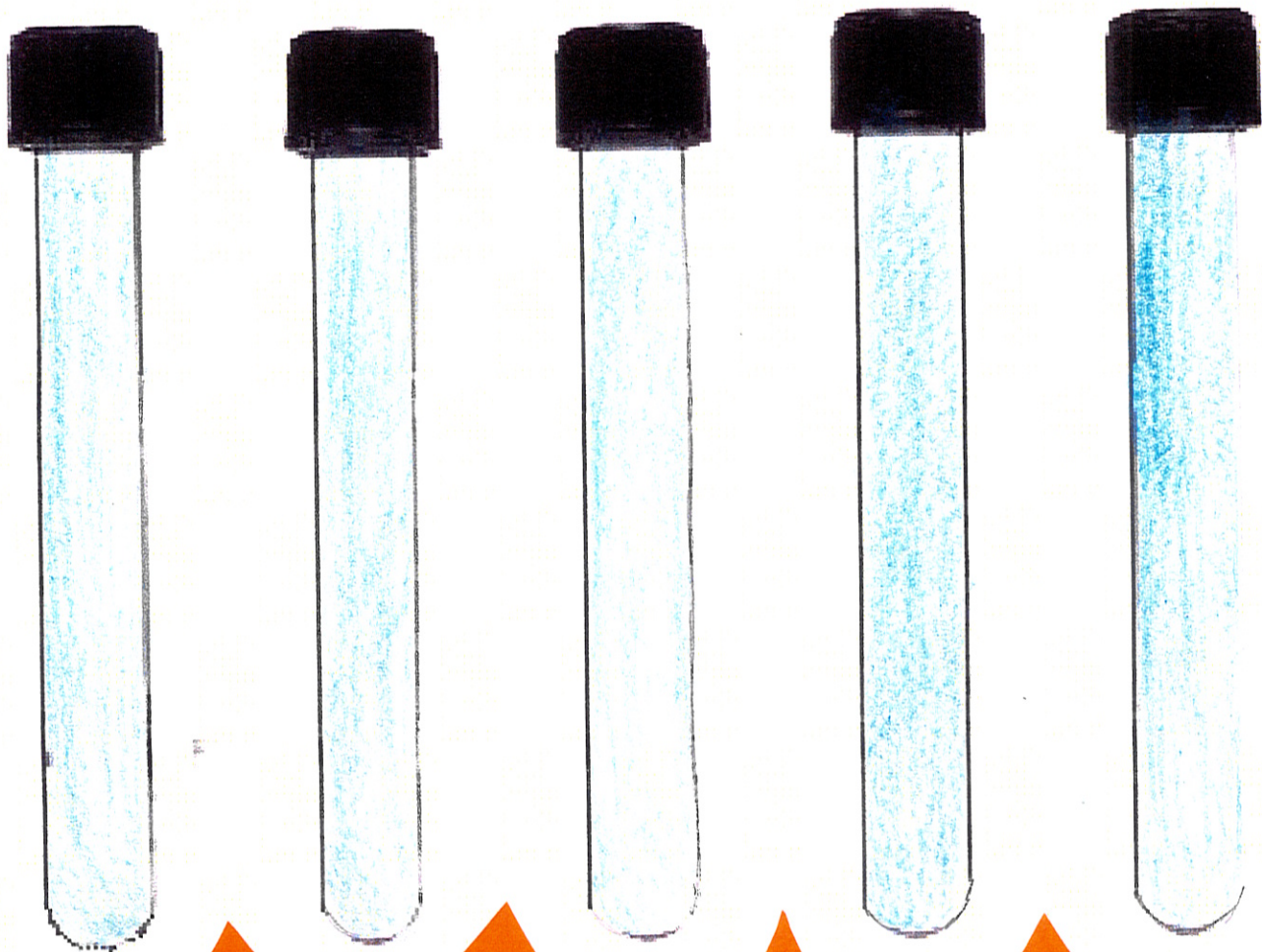


Cecelia Meserve
September 2007

Today a thought occurred to me. What if I'm contaminating everyone around me? The Doctors told me no more sex, don't share needles, fluids or soft drinks- you know, the usual stuff but they didn't mention anything else. What if I cough on something and then someone put that something in their mouth? Tuberculosis would spread like peanut butter on bread!

Would I change my life to keep from infecting people around me? Would I purposely contaminate someone?

I don't think so. I don't despise anyone that much. Sure there are a few blocks I'd like to see puck blood but not perish slowly and painfully at my diseased hands.



There is a rumor going around the neighborhood that someone in the area has aids. Well, I'll be honest here, I've gotten busy with a few people in the area (some crazy parties- you know) and this could be very bad news for me- depending on who it is.

What if I had aids? Since I'm already may-be-dying I'm not sure if it would make a difference but it certainly wouldn't increase my chances of living either. Plus, I might end up fine but if I had aids it would never go away.

I'd be scared that people would treat me differently. Be afraid to get to close- physically or emotionally. If one of my close friends got aids would I be afraid? Not want to get to close? I don't think so but maybe I would treat them with unusual caution. I suppose that would be fear acting out.

Cece Meserve

September 10, 2007

The Doctors are fairly certain I have tuberculosis but now I might have aids! Maybe that how I got Tuberculosis in the beginning- I was vulnerable to the disease. I think I must have aids because I feel like I have the flu which I read is a symptom.

Today I slept most of the day, ate a little bit of Lucky Charms and then threw it up. That wasn't at all fun.

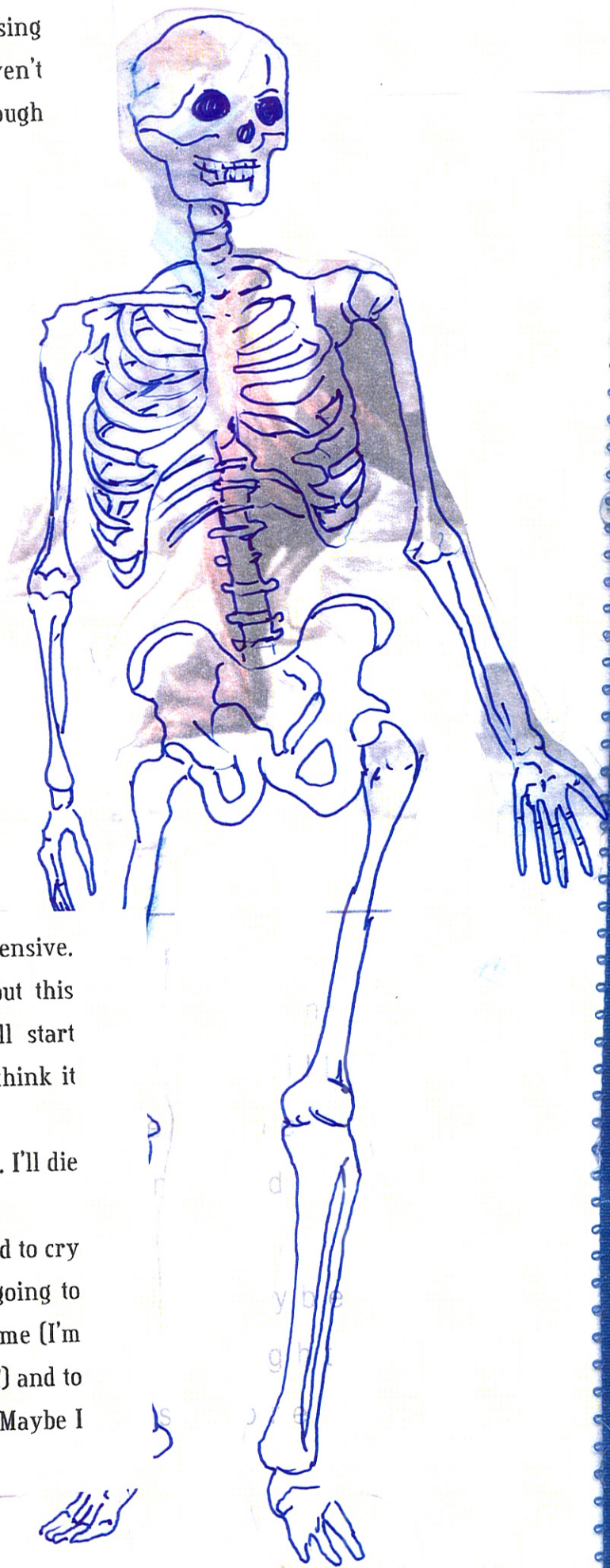
I really think I'm dying which is something so very depressing I prefer not to think about it at all. I'm surprised I haven't started cutting myself yet except that I really am in enough physical pain at the moment.

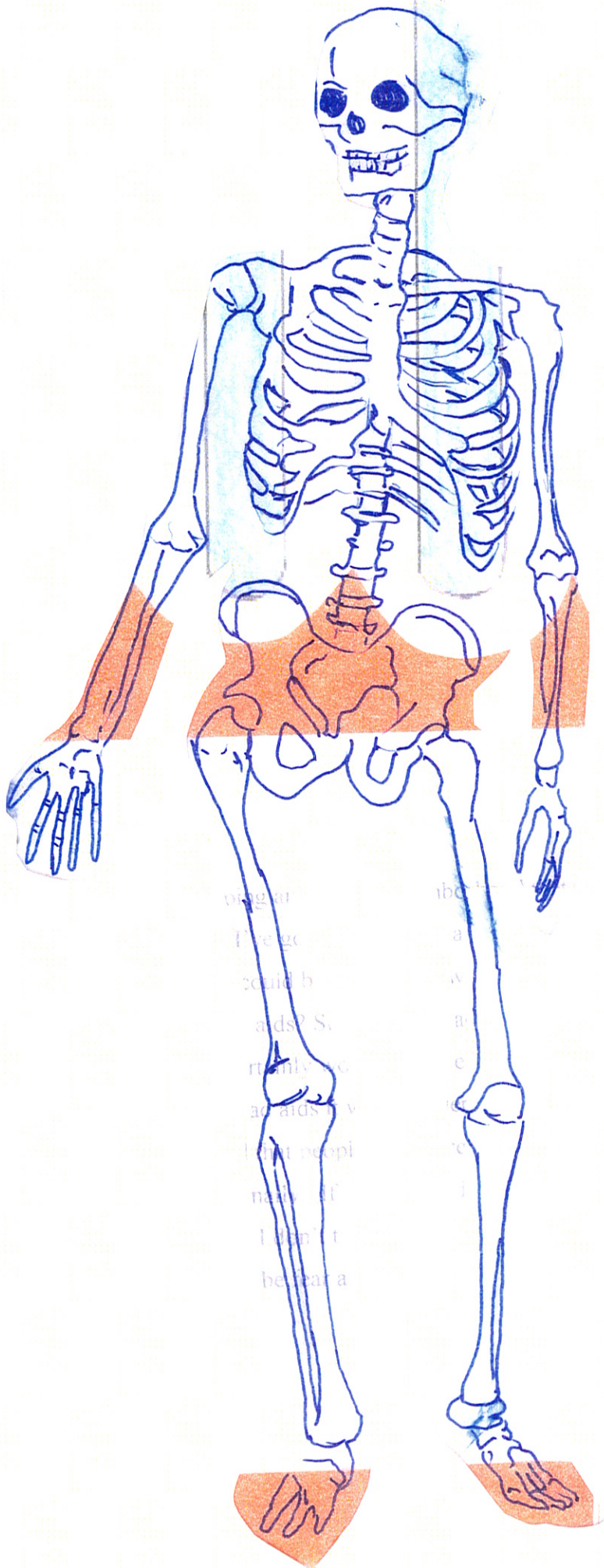
Cecelia Meserve
September 11, 2007

Cecelia Meserve
September 12, 2007

I need treatment, the Doctors said so. But it is very expensive. My family isn't struggling with money or anything but this might be the start of a struggle. My Mom said she'll start working is she needed too which is very sweet, but it think it would be easier to accept my death and let it happen. Right, so I've decided to take the optimistic point of view. I'll die and be happy about it!

The family is having a hard time letting go. Mom started to cry when I told her that I wanted to be cremated. (I was going to donate my organs to science but science has forsaken me (I'm dying!) so they don't get my liver or nothing! Take that!) and to give my sister that pair or shoes I love so very much. Maybe I need to be more sensitive towards their emotions.





origi
I reg
could b
ards? S
rmi
ar ards
l for peopl
nary of
I can't
be far a

ibe
a
w
a
e
c
e



Death is haunting me. Or rather, the thought of death. It puts life in a new whole new perspective. I still haven't tried sushi or watched The Godfather or owned a dog- and I'd like to. Mostly though, I'd like to travel the world, write a book maybe and be able to stick around. I might miss so much- that thought is more frightening than death.

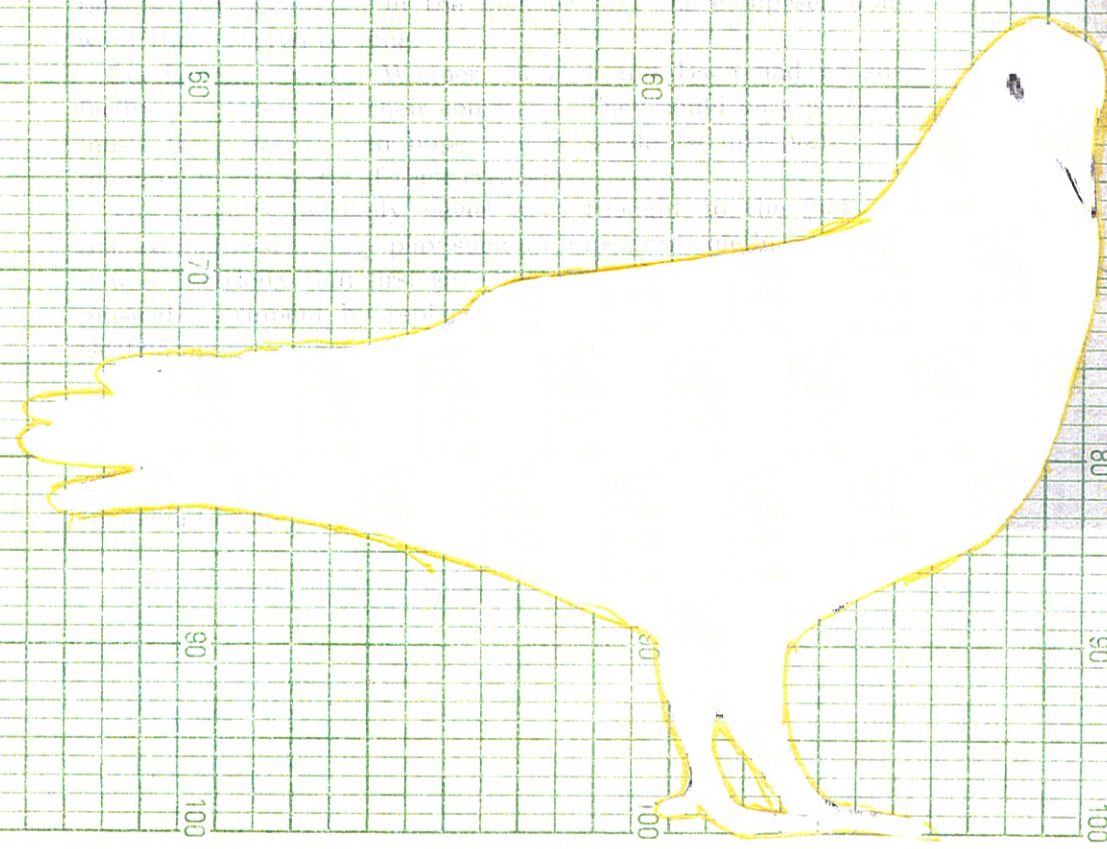
Cecelia Meserve
September 2007

September 16, 2007
Cecelia Meserve

I officially have HIV now, the tests came back positive yesterday and the doctors are positive. So, here's what's happening to my body on a cellular basis, HIV infects the body's T cells which are very important to the immune system. With the number of T cells reduced, the immune system is seriously weakened. That's why I also have Tuberculosis and Histoplasmosis, because, with a weak immune system, I'm a lot more vulnerable to catching other diseases.

A good thing is that it can take several years for this whole process to take place, but with Tuberculosis and Histoplasmosis, there's really no way I can survive this.

1. The B Cell finds an antigen that matches its receptors
2. It waits until its activated by a helper T cell
3. The B cell splits into plasma cell and memory cell.
4. Plasma cells produce antibodies and they attach to the invader
5. "eater cells" eat marked intruders



Histoplasmosis is sometimes spread through bird droppings



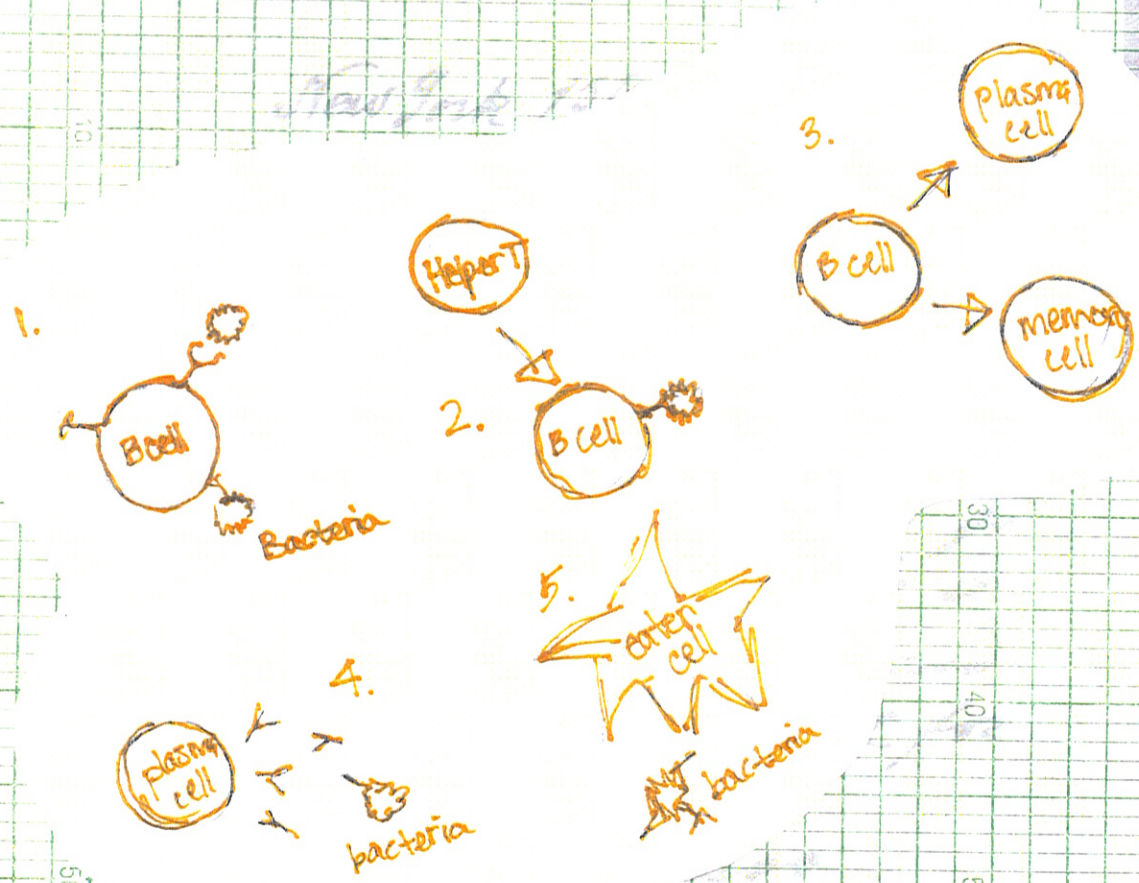
LEEDS & NORTHROP CO., NORTH WALES, PA. MADE IN U.S.A.

NO. 990912

LEEDS & NORTHROP CO., NORTH WALES, PA. MADE IN U.S.A.

NO. 990912

LEEDS & NO



September 20, 2007

Cecelia Meserve

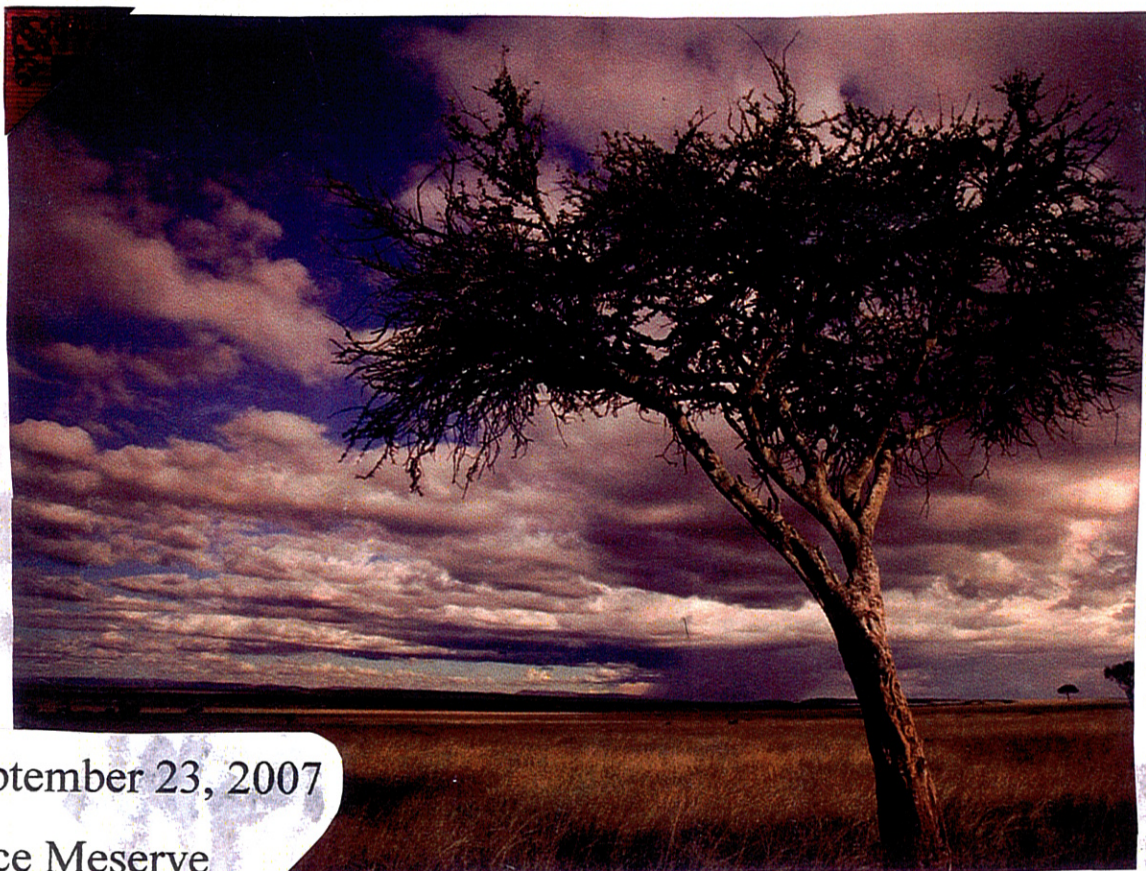
My friends have been really amazing and supportive throughout this whole thing, but when I told them I had HIV, they started behaving differently. Mostly it's very subtle, some of them purposely went out of their way to touch my arm and prove they weren't scared of me- but if I made any movement towards them they flinched. I still get visitors but things have grown awkward now. A few friends have stopped coming altogether. I can't help but be angry at them though I understand their caution.

I finally understand what people with HIV and AIDS are going through- seeing as I'm one of them. I sometimes wonder if it would be easier to hide it from the world, pretend I'm fine, then I wouldn't have to deal with this prejudice, but someone has to educate them.

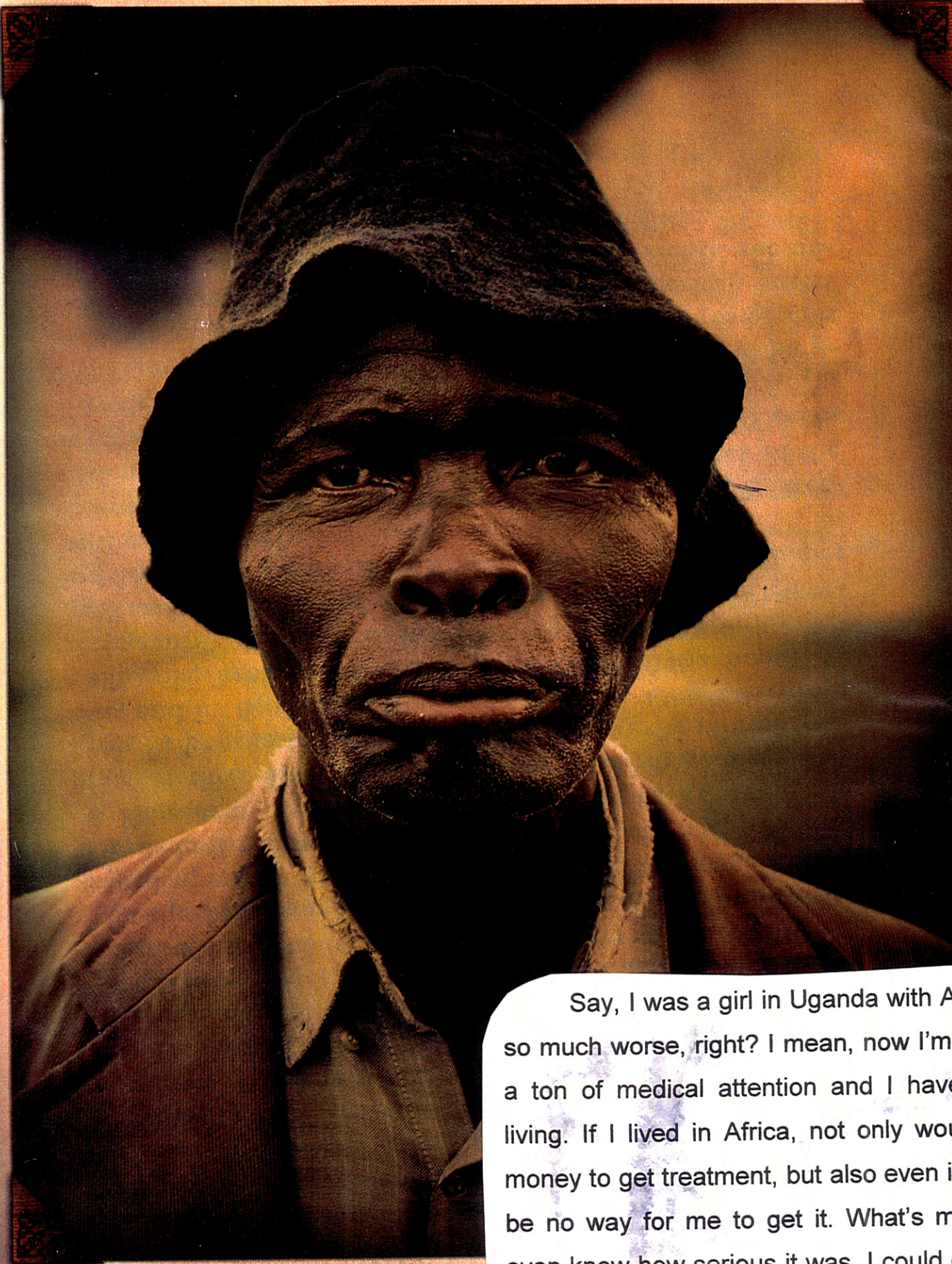




I think that if everyone could just learn about HIV they wouldn't be so scared of us. If I wasn't feeling so horrible, maybe I would go to schools or something and tell them about it, but I'll have to leave that to someone else. Maybe I could write something in my few days left about what it's like to live with HIV and what it does to your body. I could talk about how it's nothing to be afraid of. I can try to just spread the news- its okay.



September 23, 2007
Cece Meserve



Say, I was a girl in Uganda with AIDS that would be so much worse, right? I mean, now I'm getting treatment—a ton of medical attention and I have chance to keep living. If I lived in Africa, not only would I not have the money to get treatment, but also even if I did, there would be no way for me to get it. What's more is I might not even know how serious it was. I could go on living my life as I always had and I might be spreading the disease. They have next to no sexual education in some parts of Africa and they start making babies a lot younger than most people here. Things like condoms cost money and they might not even have access to them.

Yeah, Things could be worse.

September 24, 2007

Cecelia Meserve

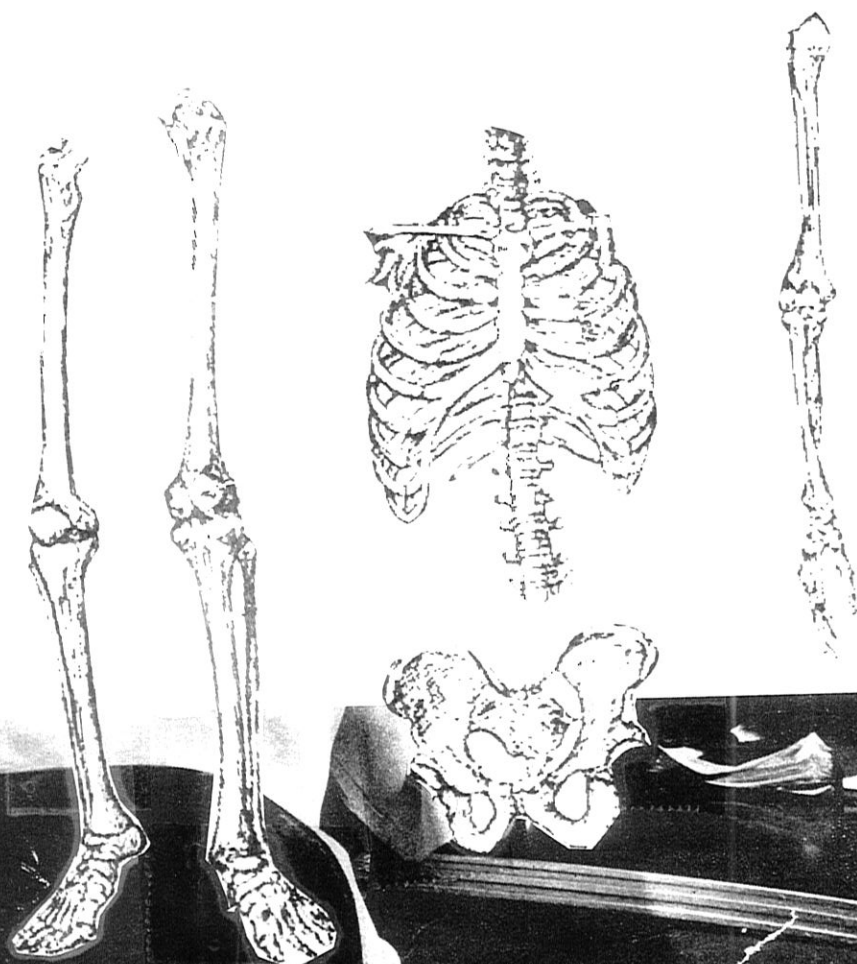


Cecelia Meserve

October 11, 2007



There are tons of alternative treatments for HIV and opportunistic infections that can come with it. Homeopathy, herbal medicine, acupuncture, diet and nutrition, mind body therapies and massages. These are all unconventional, complimentary therapies. Many people are skeptical about them, but I think that they can't hurt. Things like Diet and Nutrition and certain types of massages I doubt will actually save my life but living healthier altogether might give me more time.



RADIO CORPORATION OF AMERICA has its roots deeply embedded in the history of radio communications and science and art and industry. Through research and engineering in the past thirty-eight years, it has pioneered and put into practice many of the most important business and technical ideas of the Marconi Wireless Telegraph Company of America. These rights were acquired by the Radio Corporation of America. When General Electric turned over certain rights under its own radio patents to the new company, which was organized for the purpose of conducting radio communications as well as to manufacture apparatus.

Who has AIDS in U.S.A.?
msm/idu/other

3% Heterosexual (HS)

Cecelia Meserve
October 15, 2007

The official HIV test was horrifying.

I didn't think there was a huge chance I was actually infected but as I entered the Colorado AIDS Project I was anxious anyway.

The woman who tested me was a lady called Susan. I was going to do the finger prick test; I could get the results back in twenty minutes. While I waited for the results, I talked to Susan.

"AIDS and HIV isn't the same thing," she said in response to some ignorant comment I had made.

"AIDS are the last stage of HIV. There are four stages, it starts with the Infection, then goes to the Asymptomatic phase- the time where you carry the infection but don't show symptoms, then the symptomatic phase where you show your symptoms and lastly you get AIDS."

"And then you die." I said.

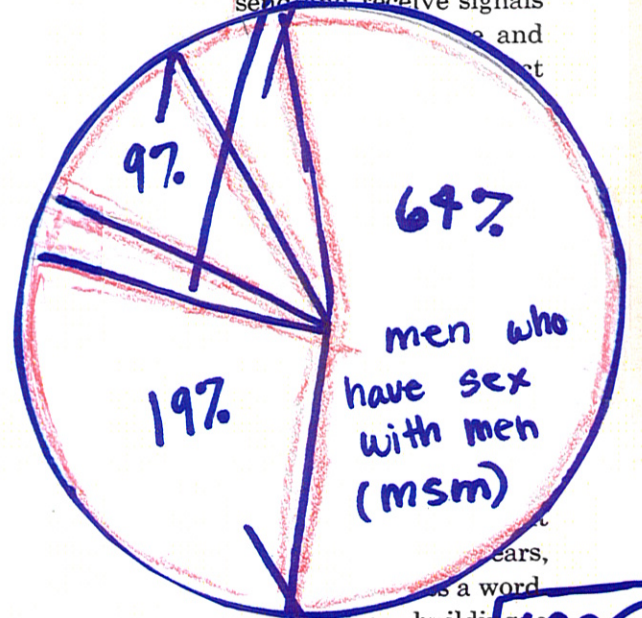
"Well, AIDS doesn't kill you, opportunistic infections kills you."

"How do you get HIV?" I asked. I knew that it was transferred through sex but not much else.

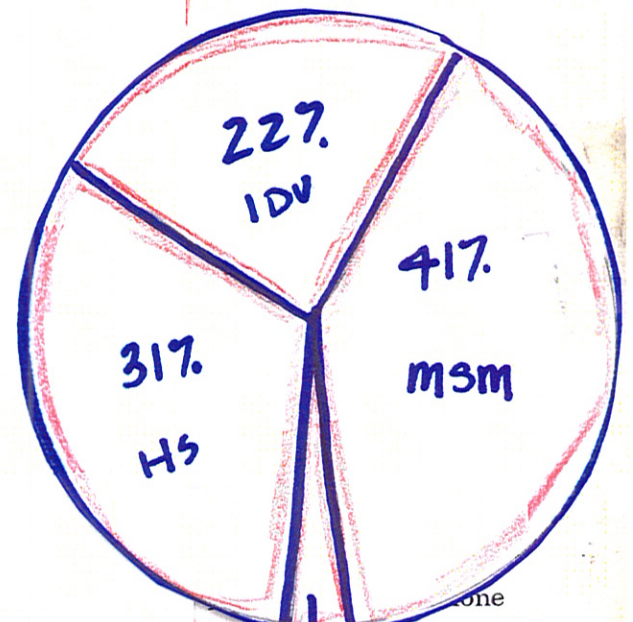
"There are four body fluids that the infection is transferred through, Blood, Semen, Vaginal Fluids, and Breast Milk."

My test was finally done. I looked on the little machine, if there was one line on the tiny screen it meant I was negative, two lines, I was positive. I held my breath, crossed my fingers and bit my tongue.

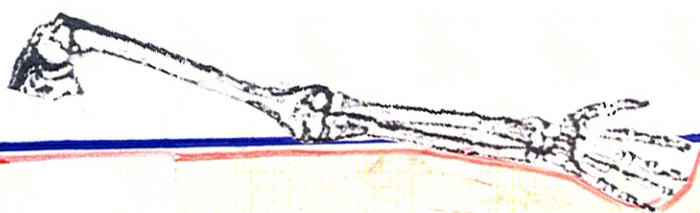
Two Lines.



1985
Injection Drug Use (IDU)



2004
msm/idu



WISDOM

THE MAGAZINE OF KNOWLEDGE AND EDUCATION

