

A STATEMENT ABOUT THE FILM *HOUSE OF NUMBERS* BY PEOPLE WHO APPEAR IN IT

We are writing to state our strong objections to 'House of Numbers' and the agendas it promotes. We consider the film as being harmful to the best interests of the general public and, in particular, people with HIV infection or at risk for acquiring it.

We all appear in the film, having granted interviews to its Director, Mr. Brent Leung, during the period 2006-2008. Mr. Leung was deceptive in his interactions with us. He informed us that his film was intended to present the true history of AIDS research, and an accurate summary of the science of HIV infection. He also told several of us that he intended the film would expose and counter many of the myths about HIV and AIDS that have been promoted by a small clique of individuals we refer to as "AIDS denialists".

The reality is that his film does none of those things. Instead, it presents the AIDS denialist agenda as being a legitimate scientific perspective on HIV/AIDS, when it is no such thing. His film perpetuates pseudo-science and myths.

AIDS denialists individually or collectively promote several notions that have no basis in science or the facts. Among these views are that HIV either does not exist or is harmless; that therapies for HIV infection are themselves the cause of AIDS; that drug abuse causes AIDS; that HIV was created by the US government to kill Africans and African-Americans as an act of genocide; that diagnostic tests for HIV infection do not work. None of these beliefs is true. AIDS denialism has caused the deaths of hundreds of thousands of South Africans, and many more individuals in the USA and other countries. For more information on the dangers of AIDS denialism and the damage it has caused, we encourage you to review material posted at <http://www.aidstruth.org>.

The scientific facts are: HIV is a natural virus that entered the human population from chimpanzees many years ago. HIV diagnostic assays are highly accurate and reliable. Untreated HIV infection eventually kills most of the people who acquire it, by causing AIDS, but anti-retroviral therapy dramatically prolongs the lives of those who have access to it. While good nutrition is important for general health and well being, it is not sufficient to prevent or treat HIV infection and it cannot cure AIDS. For accurate sources of information on these central points, please refer to material posted at the following sites:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Origin_of_AIDS

<http://www.sciencemag.org/cgi/content/abstract/1126531>

<http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/resources/factsheets/>

<http://www.nlm.nih.gov/medlineplus/ency/article/003538.htm>

<http://www.aidsfactsheet.com/facts.htm>

We have viewed the film's trailer, and we are aware of reports about the film's contents that are circulating on the internet after Mr. Leung gave an advance showing to AIDS denialists (a courtesy he did not extend to us). We believe that 'House of Numbers' presents some of our views out of their proper context. By editing our interviews to suit his preconceived agenda, Mr. Leung attempts to portray AIDS scientists as divided and disorganized, and he seeks to present legitimate differences of scientific opinion on various aspects of HIV/AIDS in a way that disguises the wider and more substantive points on which we all agree and which we have stated strongly, here and elsewhere (<http://www.nature.com/nature/journal/v406/n6791/full/406015a0.html>).

'House of Numbers' is an inaccurate portrayal of the truth about HIV and AIDS. Mr. Leung persuaded us to take part in it by acting deceitfully and unethically. None of us would have agreed to be interviewed for the film had we known it would promote the AIDS denialist agenda, and include members of that small clique as participants of supposedly equivalent credibility.

We register our protest about 'House of Numbers' out of respect for the millions of people who have already died from AIDS. This film could cause more unnecessary deaths, if any of those who watch it are persuaded that it is not necessary to reduce their risks for acquiring HIV infection, or take the appropriate therapies if they do become infected.

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