

If reading for Young Man 5, 6, 7 or 8, please read this monologue.

TRISTAN

(Upon finding out Henry donated money to Donald Trump's presidential campaign.)

You know, I'm not just a physician, Henry. I have also been living with HIV for eleven years.

If America is our body and its citizenry are its cells, than my question would be: What is its immune system? What protects the health of those cells in relationship to each other? See, I think our immune system is our democracy. So, you've got your T cells, which is your first defense against infection. They buzz around the bloodstream, looking for trouble, sounding the alarm at the first sign of infection.

Now unlike most other viruses, which attach themselves to all different kinds of human cells, HIV attaches itself only to the T cells – the very cells which are meant to be guarding against such infections. Now with the T cells compromised, the body's autoimmune system shuts down. SO if America is a body and its citizenry are its cells and its T cells are its democracy, then what about the man you gave money to? Where would he fit in this analogy? You could say that he is HIV. And, like HIV, he is replicating his genetic material from tweet to tweet, from person to person, institution to institution, across the entire nation. Consequently, America is now falling prey to opportunistic infections its immune system had once at least been able to fight: fear, propaganda, sexism, homophobia, transphobia, white nationalism. And so, like any person with untreated HIV, this nation has developed the American Immune Deficiency Syndrome. Maybe we should call it what it is and diagnose it properly. America has AIDS.