

# The Toronto Sun

## Letters to the Editor Column

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Page: 16

Section: Editorial/Opinion

Column: Letters to the Editor

### AIDS AWARENESS?

Re "New trial expected for jail rape case" (Jan. 2): I was shocked to read of this trial in a Barrie courtroom, when a judge ordered a witness who has HIV and hepatitis C be masked or testify electronically from another courtroom -- and that court staff donned rubber gloves and placed exhibits touched by the witness in sealed plastic bags. HIV and hepatitis C can only be transmitted through direct contact with certain bodily fluids; they are not airborne or otherwise casually communicated. We should be long past the point where this kind of ignorance about such basic facts can exist. Such an embarrassing display of ignorance is all the more troubling when it comes from someone whose job it is to ensure justice is done. How can justice be done, or be seen to be done, if this kind of discrimination is practised or tolerated in a courtroom? It seems some members of the judiciary could benefit from some basic education about HIV and about human rights.

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(Surprising to say the least)