



AIDS & ANTHROPOLOGY

BULLETIN

The Newsletter of the AIDS and Anthropology Research Group

Vol.4 No.4 April 1993

POSITION PAPER ON HIV VACCINE TRIALS TO BE RELEASED

The American Anthropological Association Task Force on AIDS has prepared a major position paper on HIV vaccine trials which will soon be released, pending final approval. In the paper, the Task Force recommends the following:

1. Ethnographic fieldwork should be initiated immediately where vaccine trials are currently planned with the goal of identifying values, social structures, beliefs, knowledge, and practices that will affect vaccine trials.
2. Populations to be sampled should be defined by risky practices and relationships, not geography, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or profession.
3. Researchers should work with communities, not just national governments, to design and implement trials.
4. Clearly stated ethical guidelines that are sensitive to local values and relations must be developed.
5. To insure the proper consideration of cultural issues in research design, anthropologists or equivalent social scientists with relevant expertise should be included on panels reviewing vaccine trial proposals.
6. Social scientists with appropriate expertise, including field research experience in health-related issues, should be part of the project staff.

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PLANNING GROUP FORMED AT AAA

The American Anthropological Association has formed a planning group to discuss AIDS-related issues. The planning group will explore what new initiative the AAA might consider in addressing these issues and how to best coordinate various efforts. The group will be meeting at the new AAA headquarters in Arlington, Virginia this month. A second planning group to discuss lesbian and gay issues was also formed and will be meeting this month, as well.

CLARIFICATION FROM AAA PRESIDENT

American Anthropological Association (AAA) President, Annette Weiner, clarified in a widely disseminated letter dated February 16th to Stephen O. Murray (Institute Obregon) the process used in permitting the controversial panel "AIDS and the Social Imaginary" to be scheduled at the AAA annual meeting in San Francisco last December. Dr. Murray and Ralph Bolton (Pomona College) strongly criticized the

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VACCINE TRIALS

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The paper states, "If the sociocultural contexts in which vaccine trials are planned are studied before trials begin, adaptations in research design can be made to optimize scientific productivity and reduce adverse effects." The paper continues, "Lay perceptions of HIV vaccine trials are determined by culturally influenced factors such as gender and sexuality, health beliefs and practices, and the socioeconomic structure and power relations in particular communities."

Three principles are proposed as fundamental requirements for the conduct of HIV vaccine trials:

- A. Education and intervention programs to promote behavioral risk reduction remain essential to the prevention of HIV transmission and must be a top priority.
- B. Vaccine trials must be undertaken for the benefit of all peoples, regardless of their ethnic, economic, or political status. [The Task Force on AIDS opposes] the conduct of trials among economically and politically underprivileged peoples when such trials ultimately only benefit those who can afford the vaccine.
- C. The urgency of the global AIDS crisis does not permit wasted time and effort on projects that are doomed from the outset due to insufficient and inappropriate planning. Therefore, the Task Force urges implementation of appropriate ethnographic work in target locations in advance of vaccine trials and the use of these data in all stages of the trials.

The position paper was edited by Janet W. McGrath (Case Western Reserve University) and written by Dr. McGrath, Patricia Marshall (Loyola University of Chicago), Barbara deZalduondo (Johns Hopkins University), and Stephanie Kane (SUNY at Buffalo). Copies of the paper after it is formally released may be obtained from Dr. McGrath at the Department of Anthropology, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH 44106 USA; (216) 368-2287.

CLARIFICATION

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panel following the panelist presentations.

Dr. Weiner writes:

"In January [1992], Nancy Scheper-Hughes [co-chair of the panel] requested a lifting of the one paper per participant rule, which Martha Ward, Program Chair, turned down. (Indeed, she had no authority to lift the requirement). No session was proposed; no papers or abstracts were submitted, reviewed, and or rejected.

"Subsequently, in the normal process of submitting proposals for the annual meeting, Dr. Scheper-Hughes submitted a proposal for a discussion session to be held during a special events (that is, non-scientific) time slot. The submission was entirely within the rules of the Association. That is, participation in a Special Event (including discussion session), is not precluded by the one paper rule; no papers were submitted for review, since no papers were to be given.

"The category of 'discussion' session has been part of the AAA meetings for more than 20 years, without controversy. These sessions have been a vehicle for units, informal groups, and members to come together for a wide range of reasons other than for formal presentations of scientific material. As in the past, discussion sessions

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CLARIFICATION

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were scheduled as time and space permitted. This past year, it was possible to schedule all the requests for a Special Event (i.e.: business meetings, discussion sessions, etc.). Therefore, consistent with past practice, 'AIDS and the Social Imaginary' was scheduled as a discussion session."

NEW AAB EDITOR NAMED

Claire Sterk-Elifson (Georgia State University) has been named by Norris G. Lang, AARG Chair, as the new Editor of the AIDS and Anthropology Bulletin effective with the next issue (July 1993). Dr. Sterk-Elifson's interests include AIDS and substance abuse, HIV risk behaviors, health care utilization, and HIV-related interventions in the United States and Western Europe. The new Editor will serve a three year term.

Douglas A. Feldman (University of Miami) founded the newsletter, and served as Editor from 1988-89 when it was the AARG Newsletter, and from 1991 to the present under its current name. Dr. Feldman has commended Dr. Lang for his excellent selection of the new Editor and wished Dr. Sterk-Elifson best success in her task. Dr. Lang served as the Editor during 1990.

All information for the next issue of AAB should be sent to: Claire Sterk-Elifson, Ph.D., Department of Anthropology, Georgia State University, Atlanta, GA 30303 USA; phone: (404) 651-2255; fax: (404) 651-1032. The next deadline for submission of all copy is June 15, 1993.

1993 AARG PAPER PRIZES

The deadline for the second annual AARG paper prizes will be September 30, 1993. The purpose of the awards is to encourage HIV-related research and publications by anthropologists. Papers should be original, 15-30 double-spaced typed pages, and the sole or first author must be an anthropologist, anthropology graduate student, or undergraduate anthropology major. It is no longer necessary to be an AARG member in order to submit. Previous winners are no longer eligible. All papers need to be in press, submitted to press, or

unpublished at the time of submission.

Send four copies to the new committee chair: Janet McGrath, Ph.D., Chair, AARG Paper Prizes Committee, Department of Anthropology, Case Western Reserve University, 11220 Bellflower Road, Cleveland, OH 44106 USA. Please indicate whether it is for the AARG professional or student prize. A \$100 award will be given for each prize.

The winner of the first annual AARG professional paper prize was Ralph Bolton (Pomona College) for his paper (co-authored with John Vincke and Rudolf Mak), "Gay Baths Revisited: an Empirical Analysis." The winner of the first annual AARG student paper prize was Margaret M. Connors (Project Change) for her paper, "Stories of Pain and the Problem of AIDS Prevention: Injection Drug Withdrawal and Its Effect on Risk Behavior."

AIDS SYLLABI AVAILABLE

The AAA Task Force on AIDS has published The Anthropology of AIDS: Syllabi and Other Teaching Resources. Edited by Ralph Bolton and Erika Kempler, this publication is free to those who request it. Write to: AAA, 4350 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 640, Arlington, VA 22203 USA. The volume contains syllabi of courses taught by anthropologists and bibliographic material on AIDS/HIV.

POSITION OPEN

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) and the Florida Department of Health and Rehabilitative Services (HRS) are searching for an ethnographic researcher for their Belle Glade Project. Previous field work experience and both qualitative and quantitative research skills are required. An ability to work as part of a large research team, including physicians, state health officials, and local field staff, is essential. This is a community-based HIV/AIDS three to five year research and intervention project in rural south central Florida, which will look at how behaviors that place men at risk for HIV infection are associated with group membership and social settings. Immediate start-up is required. Contact: Kate MacQueen, Ph.D., Division of HIV/AIDS, CDC, 1600 Clifton Road, Mailstop E-45, Atlanta, GA 30333 USA; phone: (404) 639-6143, fax: (404) 639-6118.

AIDS AND IMMIGRATION POLICY

At the AARG Roundtable Discussion, held at the Society for Applied Anthropology (SfAA) meetings in San Antonio, Texas last month, it was decided to draft a resolution on AIDS and immigration policy to be submitted to SfAA for their action and approval. Michael Quam agreed to draft the resolution with the input of AARG members. Please send ideas to: Michael D. Quam, Ph.D., M.P.H., Sociology/Anthropology, Sangamon State University, Springfield, IL 62794-9243 USA; fax: (217) 786-7188. A draft of the resolution will be published in AAB.

AIDS AND TOURISM

The Society for Applied Anthropology has proposed that AARG have a session on "AIDS and Tourism" at the next SfAA meetings in Cancun, Mexico in March 1994. Douglas A. Feldman has agreed to chair the invited session, and would like to hear from anthropologists and other social scientists who would like to participate in this session. Please contact: Douglas A. Feldman, Ph.D., Department of Epidemiology and Public Health, University of Miami School of Medicine, R-669, P.O. Box 016069, Miami, FL 33101 USA; phone: (305) 547-6559; fax: (305) 547-3384.

AIDS AND ANTHROPOLOGY RESEARCH GROUP

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AIDS and Anthropology Bulletin

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COMMENTARY: AIDS AND THE SOCIAL IMAGINARY
by Douglas A. Feldman
University of Miami School of Medicine

The "AIDS and the Social Imaginary" panel held at the American Anthropological Association meetings in San Francisco last December has truly galvanized anthropologists unlike any other panel on AIDS and anthropology before. The attacks prior to the panel, mostly by phone, and the attacks since the event, mostly by letter, have often been vitriolic. Some have held that the panelists had no right to speak, since they had little HIV-related research experience. Clearly, anyone has the right to speak on any topic, and I (for one) welcomed new ideas about AIDS from the uninitiated. Others have sharply criticized the panel for not having a person with HIV or at risk for HIV on the panel. While I feel that such a panelist would have undoubtedly strengthened this discussion, I have frequently attended scientific or policy sessions on HIV where there was no such individual, but the participants remained sensitive to the issues and needs of persons living with AIDS or at risk.

Others have maintained that the AAA should never have allowed the panel to be held in the first place, since it was not reviewed as a scientific session through the Program Chair and some of the participants were already committed in more than one session. I believe, however, that the AAA was correct in permitting the panel to take place. The role of Special Events at the AAA (see related story on page 1) has enabled anthropologists to engage in fruitful discussion in the past, and should be encouraged in the future. The problem here, as I see it, is that the co-chairs replaced what should have been an impromptu discussion among panelists and the audience with prepared texts which monopolized the energies of the "panelists," further alienating and antagonizing an already volatile audience. It was scheduled as a panel discussion, but was inappropriately transformed into a paper session.

Quite frankly, I had attended the panel, pen and pad in hand, with the sincere intent of learning something new: perhaps a postmodern synthesis of the anthropology of AIDS. Maybe the scores of anthropologists who have been working in the area of AIDS had missed the point. Maybe we needed a fresh perspective. I approached the panel with an open mind, prepared to take notes. By the end of the 90 minutes, I was wholly disappointed. With the exception of Nancy Scheper-Hughes' paper, which was based on some very preliminary

research in Brazil, no new information or concepts were offered. From the AIDS-out-of-Africa-as-racism material to the other-diseases-as-a-metaphor-for-AIDS analysis to the let's-not-forget-poor-women-and-street-children plea, it was all very old stuff. I've heard it all before, mostly back in the mid- and late 1980s. The very well-spoken panelists gave us good theater, but with very little new substance.

I did find Dr. Scheper-Hughes' paper rather disconcerting. Certainly, I agree that the vulnerability of heterosexual women, street children and transvestites in Brazil needs to be explored in light of the irrelevance of the poorly targeted or nonexistent AIDS education programs in that country. But by blaming the Brazilian gay community for being "elitist" and for not taking the responsibility of developing targeted AIDS education programs for nongay populations, she misses the point. It is not the gay community's failure to develop these programs; it is the Brazilian government's failure.

Dr. Scheper-Hughes's support for the Cuban policy of quarantining persons with HIV, though subdued during the panel presentation, appears based on the premise that the good of the whole outweighs the rights of the individual. I could not disagree with her more. Being HIV positive is not a crime, and it should not be treated as such.

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COMMENTARY

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There are those who argue that "AIDS and the Social Imaginary" did more harm than good, that it would be best for us to forget the whole thing. I disagree. Compared with the richness in ethnographic detail and conceptual approach of some of the other HIV-related sessions held at the last AAA meetings, this panel provided a good contrast and reminder of how far anthropologists working on AIDS have come in the past few years. More importantly, the panel has created a new interest in AIDS and anthropology among many in our profession who have previously given the subject little thought. We now need to build upon that excitement and enthusiasm to mobilize a broader base of support and concern within anthropology.

CONFERENCES

May 6-8, 1993: Second International Symposium on AIDS and Reproduction, Nice, France; contact: Direction du Development, Service Gestion des Congres, 1 Esplanade Kennedy, BP 83-06302, Nice cedex 4, France; (+33) 92 00 32 89.

June 4-5, 1993: AIDS and Reproductive Health Network annual meeting, Berlin, Germany; contact: Francois-Xavier Bagnoud Center for Health and Human Rights, Harvard School of Public Health, 665 Huntington Avenue, Boston, MA 02115 USA; phone: (617) 432-0656; fax: (617) 432-4310.

June 7-11, 1993: Ninth International Conference on AIDS, Berlin, Germany; contact: Der-Congress, Congress Organisation, Bundesallee 56, D-1000 Berlin 31, Germany; phone: +49-30-857903-0; fax: +49-30-857903-27.

June 20-23, 1993: National Council for International Health 20th annual conference, Arlington, VA USA; contact: Brit Saksvig, NCIH, 1701 K Street NW, Suite 600, Washington, DC USA; phone: (202) 833-5903; fax: (202) 833-0075.

July 21-25, 1993: 11th annual AIDS/HIV Forum and 15th National Lesbian and Gay Health Conference, Houston USA; contact: Daniel Reichard, George Washington University Medical Center; (202) 994-4285.

July 28 - August 5, 1993: IUAES 13th Congress, Mexico City,

Mexico; contact: Linda Manzanilla, Instituto de Investigaciones Antropologicas, UNAM - Ciudad Universitaria, Circuito Exterior, 04510 Mexico DF Mexico; (5) 5-48-78-28 or 5-50-53-13.

October 24-28, 1993: American Public Health Association annual meeting, San Francisco USA; contact: APHA, 1015 15th St. NW, Washington DC 20005 USA; (202) 789-5600.

November 4-7, 1993: Society for the Scientific Study of Sex 36th annual meeting, Chicago USA; contact: Howard J. Ruppel, Jr., M.A., Executive Director, SSSS, P.O. Box 208, Mount Vernon, Iowa 52314 USA; phone: (319) 895-8407; fax: (319) 895-6203.

November 12-17, 1993: Seventh International Conference on AIDS Education, Chicago USA; contact: ISAE Executive Office, University of South Carolina, School of Public Health, Columbia, SC 29208 USA; (803) 777-6217.

November 17-21, 1993: American Anthropological Association 92nd annual meeting, Washington DC USA; contact: AAA, 4350 North Fairfax Drive, Suite 640, Arlington, VA 22203 USA; (703) 528-1902.

December 12-17, 1993: Eighth International Conference on AIDS in Africa, Marrakech, Morocco; contact: Societe Africaine Anti-SIDA, Secretariat de la Conference, 1 Place Charles, Nicolle, Casablanca, Morocco; phone: 20 01 04; fax: 26 09 57.

HIV AND INTIMACY: WORK IN PROGRESS

by Dwayne C. Turner
(AIDS Project Los Angeles)

Kanouse, *et al.* (1991) reported that many Los Angeles gay and bisexual men infected with HIV were not practicing safer sex. They also found that knowing one's HIV serostatus was not related to unprotected oral or anal sexual activity. This study shows the need for secondary prevention. However, prevention programs targeting HIV-infected individuals often emphasize the need to reduce the rate of new HIV infections, instead of the health benefits of safer sex for persons living with HIV. Exposure to variants of HIV and other STDs can speed up disease progression in HIV positive individuals (Coates 1990).

Furthermore, most prevention studies lump all people with HIV into one category, or focus upon asymptomatic persons with HIV (Cleary, *et al.* 1991). Little attention is given to the sexuality of individuals who have AIDS or are progressing toward AIDS. There is a tacit presumption that they must be asexual, which is contrary to conservative political dogma in which people with AIDS (PWAs) are suspected of maliciously spreading HIV.

At AIDS Project Los Angeles (APLA), we are currently addressing sexuality issues of PWAs. As part of a health education needs assessment, informal interviews were conducted with mostly gay men during a two day period last January. APLA was founded in 1982, and now serves 3,500 clients with over 20 programs addressing diverse AIDS/HIV needs from dental services, to case management to HIV prevention. APLA's food bank, which distributes free groceries and other items to 1,000 clients, was selected as the site for the research study.

During the interviews, clients were asked what kinds of workshops would they like to attend. Most mentioned workshops on AIDS treatments, nutrition, and financial assistance, but no one expressed interest in a workshop on safer sex practices. Many became angry and emotional over the topic:

I haven't been interested for almost a year. I've got no urge for sex. I don't even want to think about it.

I've taken myself out of the meat market. There is no HIV infected sex. Is there?

I ended my relationship with my lover because of my HIV status. I'm really not interested in seeing anyone else.

I'm really too ill. Can't get myself up to it. I don't even know what an erection is.

I can't find a partner. [Pointing to Kaposi's sarcoma lesions] No one wants to date you if you have AIDS.

I don't want to take the time to find out if they [potential sexual partners] are HIV positive, or explain my HIV status to them.

I can't find a drug or alcohol free partner. I was a user. I just can't deal with it.

I have a lover, but it's strictly platonic.

These responses should prompt researchers and program planners to rethink secondary prevention needs. Some may need risk reduction education with an emphasis on their own health. Others need prevention workshops which teach safe forms of sexual intimacy. These workshops could also serve as a place to find safe sexual partners. Based upon these preliminary findings, it appears that two programs (one focusing on risk reduction and the other on sexual intimacy) will need to be developed.

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INTIMACY

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References Cited:

- Cleary, P.D., Van Devanter, N., et al.
1991 Behavior Changes After Notification of HIV Infection. American Journal of Public Health 81(12):1586-90.
- Coates, T.J.
1990 Strategies for Modifying Sexual Behavior for Primary and Secondary Prevention of HIV Disease. Journal of Consulting and Clinical Psychology 58:57-69.
- Kanouse, D.E., Berry S.H., et al.
1991 Response to the AIDS Epidemic: a Survey of Homosexual and Bisexual Men in Los Angeles County. Rand Corporation: Santa Monica CA.

TASK FORCE ON AIDS MEETS IN SAN ANTONIO

The AAA Task Force on AIDS met in conjunction with the Society for Applied Anthropology meetings in San Antonio on March 10th. Merrill Singer (Hispanic Health Council) chaired the meeting. Among the topics discussed were the completion of the position paper on vaccine trials (see story on page 1), progress on pending Task Force publications, plans for requesting a three year extension by the AAA for the Task Force, plans for future position papers, and the completion by Janis Hutchinson (University of Houston) of an international data file of 400 anthropologists who are conducting or interested in AIDS research.

Margaret M. Connors (Project Change) and Robert T. Trotter II (Northern Arizona University) were welcomed as the two newest members. Stephen L. Eyre (University of California, San Francisco), Martin F. Manalansan IV (Gay Men's Health Crisis), Michele G. Shedlin (Sociomedical Resource Associates), and Dooley Worth (Montefiore Medical Center) have been appointed to the Task Force. Newly nominated members to be appointed, pending their acceptance, are Vincent E. Gil (Southern California College), Stephen Koester (University of Colorado School of Medicine), Susan Scrimshaw (University of California, Los Angeles), and Clark Taylor.

AIDS SESSIONS AT SFAA

AARG held its semi-annual roundtable discussion, business meeting, cash bar reception, and steering committee meeting at the Society for Applied Anthropology meetings in San Antonio last month. Other HIV-related sessions were "Ethnographic Approaches to HIV Risk Prevention in Hard to Reach Populations" chaired by Robert T. Trotter II, "The Political Economy of Risk" co-chaired by Stephen Koester and Robert G. Carlson (Wright State University), "AIDS/HIV" chaired by Rochelle Shain (University of Texas Health Science Center), and "Use of Ethnographic Data in STD/AIDS Research" chaired by Rochelle Shain and Reyes Ramos (University of Texas Health Science Center).

AIDS AND ANTHROPOLOGY IN EUROPE

The British Association for Anthropology in Policy and Practice held a conference on "HIV and AIDS in Europe: the Challenge for Anthropology" at South Bank University in London, United Kingdom on February 19th and 20th. Topics included theoretical issues, AIDS policy, a critique of the concepts of "culture" and "community," and ethical problems. Sandra Wallman (University of Hull) gave the opening address and Ronald Frankenberg (University of Keele) gave the closing remarks. The conference was sponsored by the Economic and Social Research Council.

AARG

AARG is a Special Committee of the Society for Medical Anthropology, a unit of the American Anthropological Association. **AAB** is published quarterly and is the official newsletter of AARG. To contact the Chair of AARG, write: Norris G. Lang, Ph.D., C.S.W., Department of Anthropology, University of Houston, 4800 Calhoun Road, Houston, TX 77004-5882 USA; (713) 743-3781. To contact the new Editor of **AAB**, see article on page 3 of this issue. Obituaries of anthropologists who have died of AIDS and/or of AARG members should be sent to the **AAB** Editor. Submissions for letters to the editor (under 200 words), research reports (300-600 words), think pieces (200-500 words), announcements, requests for cooperation, employment opportunities, positions wanted, and startling discoveries are strongly encouraged.

To become a member of AARG and receive **AAB**, send a check or money order for US \$15 payable to AARG to: AARG, c/o Moses B. Pounds, Ph.D., Treasurer, 5224 Even Star Place, Columbia, MD 21044-1832 USA. Please include your name, title, address, phone, and topical and geographical key words for publication in our semi-annual revised membership list. Membership is free for anthropologists residing in developing countries, unemployed anthropologists, or graduate students actively involved in AIDS research or activities. The newsletter is sent without charge to selected policy makers and journalists in order to keep them informed of the HIV-related research and activities of anthropologists.

PUBLICATIONS

SANscript is the quarterly newsletter of the Sociologists' AIDS Network. Membership in SAN, which includes the newsletter, is US \$10 (US \$5 for students and unemployed). Write to: Debbie Indyk, 662 Queen Anne Road, Teaneck, NY 07666 USA.

AIDS & Society is a quarterly newsletter focusing on international and policy aspects of AIDS. Subscriptions are US \$18. Write to: African-Caribbean Institute, 4 West Wheelock Street, Hanover, NH 03755 USA.

Lessons & Legacies: the Final Report of a Grants Program for HIV/AIDS Prevention in Africa documents the experience and lessons learned with five non-governmental organizations in seven African nations. The cost is US \$3 (US \$6 outside the

United States). Write to: The HAPA Support Program, The JHU Institute for International Programs, 103 East Mount Royal Avenue, Baltimore, MD 21202 USA.

MISSING DATA

The semi-annual membership list will be sent out with the next newsletter in July. Please send any corrections by June 15th to Moses B. Pounds at his address indicated in the adjoining column. The bibliographic update will also be included with the next issue. Please send your updated list of publications to Ralph Bolton, Ph.D., Pomona College, Department of Sociology and Anthropology, Claremont, CA 91711 USA.

BOYCOTT IN COLORADO

Ralph Bolton has urged a boycott of anthropology conferences in Colorado, where anti-gay legislation was recently passed. The American Association of Physical Anthropologists is planning to meet in Denver in 1994. In a letter to Michael Little (AAPA Chair), Dr. Bolton writes: "When our communities are already in a life and death struggle because of AIDS, we cannot afford the time, energy, and resources that will be required to fight these battles." A resolution for AARG to support the boycott in Colorado and Tampa, Florida (where similar legislation was passed) will be voted on at the next AARG meeting in November.