



AIDS & ANTHROPOLOGY

BULLETIN

The Newsletter of the AIDS and Anthropology Research Group

Vol. 7 No. 1 January 1995

AIDS/HIV Related Workshops at the 1994 Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association: AAA-CDC

At the 1994 Annual Meeting of the American Anthropological Association (AAA) representatives from the AAA and the Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) joined forces to address a variety of public health issues. AIDS/HIV related topics discussed in the workshop included substance abuse and ethnographic methods in health research. What follows are summaries as provided by the chairs of these two seminars:

WORKSHOP ON SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Prepared by Merrill Singer

The participants consisted of six CDC representatives and eight anthropologists. The topic of the workshop was substance abuse. The discussion, which was lively and never lagged in enthusiasm, addressed several topics. All participants shared the opinion that we need to go beyond individualistic and psychological levels of understanding and explanation of both substance abuse and HIV/AIDS. In order to move research and intervention to the next level, we need to include a focus on various social levels. Several different social levels were discussed in terms of increasing social complexity, as follows: social networks, micro-environments (e.g., neighborhoods), local contexts (e.g., individual towns, cities, etc.), social structures (e.g., police, the courts, etc.), and political economy (e.g., class, gender, racial relations). It was recognized that there is a need to develop explanatory models that address these various levels

MEMBERSHIP LIST ON DISKETTE

AARG has reorganized its member data base in a new computer system. As you will see on our new membership form is included in this issue; it allows for identifying five key areas of interest for each member. The list can be searched and sorted using these key words. This new data base not only makes it easier for us to keep track of you, but also makes our list more useful to our members. To this end, we are making the electronic list available to you on diskette if you wish to make searches. The file will be available in ASCII format. All members will continue to receive the full membership list in the AARG Bulletin. If you would like a copy of the diskette, please send a DOS diskette (either high or low density) with a self-addressed stamped return envelope to: Janet W. McGrath, Department of Anthropology, Case Western Reserve University, Cleveland, OH, 44106-7125. Please allow several weeks for processing.

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL SEEKS RESEARCH ON AIDS MORTALITY AND FERTILITY INTENTIONS

The Committee on Population of the National Research Council is proposing to hold a workshop in August 1995 entitled: "*Reevaluating the Link Between Infant and Child Mortality Decline and Reproductive Changes.*" As part of the process, they will be commissioning papers on the impact of perceptions of mortality decline on fertility intentions. They are also seeking any work that has been done on how perceptions of increased mortality, due to AIDS, have influenced fertility intentions. If you have been working in this area and would like to find out more about the NRC project, please contact: Barney Cohen, Research Associate, National Council, Commission on Behavioral and Social Sciences and Education, Committee on Population, 2101 Constitution Avenue, Washington, DC 20418, USA. Phone: (202) 334-3167; fax (202) 334-3768.

SEXUALITY, CULTURE, AND SOCIETY Presented by The American University Amsterdam, July 17-August 11, 1995

Join a faculty of leading men and women anthropologists from the United States and the Netherlands in this unique institute this summer. Students may earn six graduate or undergraduate credits. You will be able to participate in a field study of historical and contemporary sexual subcultures of Amsterdam and engage in small classroom seminars with American and Dutch students while choosing from courses ranging from the anthropology of sexuality, language and sexuality, sex/gender and society, and an advanced seminar on culture theory and sexuality.

Classes will be held four days per week with weekends free for travel and study. Housing will be provided within Amsterdam, and classes will meet at the historic University of Amsterdam in the heart of the city.

Participating Faculty Include: Gilbert Herdt (University of Chicago), William Leap (American University), Ellen Lewin (San Francisco, CA), Mirjam Schieveld (University of Amsterdam), Han ten Brummelhuis (University of Amsterdam)

To receive more information, please contact: Institute on Sexuality, Culture, and Society, c/o Department of Anthropology, The American University 4400 Massachusetts Avenue, NW, Washington, DC 20016 (202) 885-1831 fax (202)885-1837

AIDS RESEARCH ARCHIVES

The AIDS Research Archives provides articles drawn from sources reporting the spread and treatment of AIDS from the extensive clipping files of the Gay Men's Health Crisis in New York. Items are drawn from over 150 newsletters and papers published by gay organizations, the gay press, health clinics, and research groups. If you are interested in having your library place an order or if you want more information, contact: Jerry Alper, Inc. 271 Main Street, PO Box 218, Eastchester, NY 10707 Phone: (914) 793-7811.

AARG SUPPORTS AAA RESOLUTION TO MEET IN ANTI-GAY STATES

At its Annual Business Meeting held December 1 in conjunction with the annual meetings of the AAA, the AARG membership voted unanimously to support a resolution directing the AAA not to hold its annual meetings in any state or locality with anti-sodomy or other laws which exclude gay, lesbian, or bisexual people from civil rights protection. The resolution was made by the AAA Commission on Lesbian and Gay Issues in Anthropology. The Resolution reads as follows: "Whereas the discipline of anthropology is the study of human commonalities and diversities; and Whereas anthropology recognizes, accepts, and values human diversity; and Whereas anthropology rejects all pejorative discrimination based on human differences; and Whereas some states and local municipalities have antisodomy laws and/or laws which exclude gay, lesbian, and bisexual people from civil rights protection; Therefore, be it resolved that the American Anthropological Association will henceforth sign no contracts for any of its annual meetings in any state or local municipality which has such laws or policies discriminating against lesbian, gay, and bisexual persons at the time of the signing of the contract."

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AIDS and Anthropology Research Group (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 Editor of *AAB* write: Claire Sterk-Elifson, Ph.D, Department of Anthropology, Georgia State University, Atlanta, Georgia, 30303, USA.

To become a member of AARG and to receive *AAB* mail the membership form to Janet W. McGrath, Ph.D., Case Western University, Dept. of Anthropology, Clevelan OH 44106-7125.

Deadline for next issue: March 10, 1995.

This resolution will be sent to the AAA membership for a mail ballot. The resolution passed by the AARG is as follows: "...As the largest group representing AIDS researchers within the AAA, the AARG finds that anti-sodomy and other discriminatory laws seriously impede HIV and AIDS prevention efforts. For this reason, we strongly support this resolution NOT to meet in any locality which has such laws."

As anthropologists involved in the fight against AIDS, it is critical that we support all efforts to fight anti-homosexual attitudes and laws. These laws have stopped education and prevention efforts and therefore, have directly contributed to the mounting death toll. We encourage all AARG members to vote for this resolution.

NEW NEWSLETTER EDITOR SOUGHT

The Editor of the *AAB*, Claire Sterk-Elifson, has announced that she will be completing her term as Editor in 1995.

Candidates for the position should send a letter of intent to Michael Clatts, NDRI, Inc., 11 Beach Street, New York, NY 10017.

and the complex influences on behavior in any setting and between levels. Research is needed to develop our understanding of the effect of these various levels on substance abuse.

Secondly, the group addressed the need for greater anthropology/epidemiology collaboration across the full range of research phases. Examples of contributions include: findings from formative and research, assist in the development of survey instruments to avoid missing critical issues, assist in the analysis and interpretation of survey results, and contribute to policy and program development based on research findings

The group also discussed the importance of developing a number of field stations across the country (perhaps in conjunction with NIDA) where ongoing ethnographic and other studies of drug use and HIV would be conducted.

WORKSHOP ON ETHNOGRAPHIC METHODS IN HEALTH RESEARCH

Prepared by Robert T. Trotter

The purpose of this meeting was to discuss ethnography, ethnographic methods, and to provide some information on the use of ethnography in AIDS research, as the session combined ethnographic methods and AIDS issues. The group session provided the following discussions and insights:

It was recognized that there is a need for solid baseline ethnography for rapid ethnographic techniques to be a viable adjunct to public health research. Given this baseline, the group identified areas in which standard (key informant interviewing, focus groups, direct observation), rapid, and advanced ethnographic (domain analysis, network analysis, etc.) techniques can be applied to rapidly evolving public health concerns.

Purpose can be considered a tension for situations in which the direction, purpose, or normal conduct of ethnographic research, especially in terms of expected outcomes, do not match the common

expectations or expected outcomes in public health research.

Finally, there are cases of conflicting assumption, values, and approaches that occur when mixing ethnographic methods with public health research needs. These can include differing orientations to validity and reliability issues, areas of quantification of data, and issues of conflicting needs for replicability and generalizability.

The group came to the consensual conclusion that all of the tensions can be successfully resolved and that ethnographic methods are a valuable set for tools for public health research. Ethnography is a multi-method approach and does not rely on single data collection or single source information to accomplish its goals. Its findings provide the context for quantitative data and ethnography allows to contextualize and localize issues, conditions, processes, and measures. Ethnography provides an insiders' perspective.

The participants identified methods that can be used in specific public health contexts, e.g., participant observation, domain analysis, and ethnographic interviewing.

SfAA AIDS ADVISORY COMMITTEE UPDATE

by Douglas A. Feldman

The Society of Applied Anthropology's AIDS Advisory Committee (AAC) was successful in getting the SfAA Executive Committee to agree to no longer hold its annual meetings, beginning in 1997, in states that still have a sodomy law. That excludes about half of the states in the nation. It is the view of the AAC that sodomy laws are blatantly discriminatory and place AIDS educators who advocate the issue of condoms during oral and anal sex in potential legal jeopardy. A similar measure, sponsored by the Society of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists, passed at the most recent AAA business meeting in Atlanta but must now be ratified by its members before taking effect.

At the final meeting of the AAA Task Force on AIDS in 1993, most of the members vowed to continue on with the Task Force one way or another. Yet when the 24 former members were polled last summer, only three indicated that they believed that the Task Force should be reinstated within SfAA, and only two of them agreed to serve. Given the poor response, the idea has been dropped.

The AAC met at the AAA meeting in Atlanta in December and decided on two important actions:

1. We will be drafting a letter to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention commending them for their fine work in utilizing psychological models in HIV prevention but also to alert them to the value of anthropological and sociological models as well.
2. Pending authorization from the SfAA Executive Committee, we will be preparing a white (position) paper on HIV immigration policy. The ad hoc paper group will consist of both selected AAC members and other SfAA

ANTHROPOLOGICAL CONTRIBUTIONS TO SUCCESSFUL HIV/AIDS PREVENTION"

This four-hour session at the 1994 AAA meeting was comprised of eleven rich and varied presentations. All speakers have spent a minimum of 5 years working earnestly on the problems on HIV-prevention/intervention. The session was fortunate to have as discussants Dr. Richard Needle, Director of the Community Research Branch of the NIDA, and Dr. Paul Farmer, of Partners in Health and Harvard Medical School. Both discussants have spent more than a decade grappling with the social, economic, and political dilemmas of the AIDS epidemic.

Carl Kendall and Margaret Connors convened this session to discuss anthropology's contribution to successful HIV prevention projects in the US and abroad. Despite the fact that HIV continues to spread, that funds for prevention are far from adequate to deal with the growing numbers of infected, and that a complex set of circumstances contribute to the overall failure of many countries to curb the spread of HIV, there are isolated examples of

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successful prevention efforts. The primary focus of this session was on the particulars of ethnography that have made a difference, rather than to discuss inadequacies that prevail. This allowed for clearly identifying theoretical orientations, practical solutions, and model programs that have proven effective in reaching and educating the populous about HIV. Because our work is so often linked directly with communities of suffering, more and more anthropologists feel the mandate to develop interventions that make a difference.

Both the National Commission on AIDS 1993 Report and the July Report of the National Academy of Sciences have called for a need to integrate a behavioral and social science research agenda into an overall plan for AIDS research and prevention. By the end of the session, speakers had clearly identified that a paradigm shift is occurring in the discipline--away from conventions of prevention proposed by public health and towards a rethinking of the problem of AIDS on a more structural level. Presenter Richard Parker questioned the meaning of "successful intervention," by proposing that rather than intervening at the level of change, anthropologists (as promoters of change) should intervene at the level of representation. Our orientation towards affecting behavior change is most successful when it is not focused on behavior but, instead, at the level of consciousness. Terry Mason addressed the differences in the public health approach to tobacco control as compared to HIV/AIDS preventions. As discussant, Paul Farmer brought into relief many of the explicit and underlying points made by presenters: our shift to focusing on institutions rather than culture to explain why HIV continues to spread uncontrollably among the poor and (2) our shift to focusing on individual risk and responsibility to identify sources of vulnerability and the institutional and ideological mechanisms that perpetuate conditions of vulnerability among those most at risk for contracting HIV/AIDS. Richard Needle, of the National Institute on Drug Abuse,

highlighted anthropology's contribution to HIV prevention among injection drug users, citing the works of Koester, Carlston, and Clatts (among others) and promised continued space and funding for our unique contribution to HIV/AIDS prevention.

Other sessions with a focus on AIDS included sessions on the role of needle exchange programs in AIDS prevention, women, sex, and power in the time of AIDS, the social cost of AIDS, a poster session on living with AIDS/HIV, a roundtable discussion on the research directions for the next decade, and a HIV support group for anthropologists.

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members. White papers on other AIDS-related topics have been prepared by the AAA Commission on AIDS Research and Education.

The members of the AAC are Douglas A. Feldman (Chair), Michael C. Clatts, Doug Goldsmith, Norris Lang, Bill Leap, Patricia Marshall, Janet McGrath, and Michael Quam. The AAC is planning a public meeting the next SfAA meeting in Albuquerque, New Mexico in March. All conference attendees are cordially invited!

AIDS IN PRISONS, JAILS, POLICE DEPARTMENTS, AND COURTS

A Special Issue of *AIDS and Society: International Research and Policy Bulletin*

We are soliciting short articles and information for a special issue on how prevention and care of AIDS is being managed internationally in the various institutions of the criminal justice system. Possible topics include reports on regulations and conditions for the care of PWAs; educational programs; judicial perspectives; court cases involving intentional transmission or sexual assault; laws and policies regarding prostitutes and drug users; mandatory testing; quarantine; prisoner's rights; and confidentiality. The special issue on this topic is scheduled for March 1995.

Please send typed, double-spaced submissions as soon as possible to Stephanie Kane, Ph.D., Associate Editor, Department of Criminal Justice, 302 Sycamore Hall, Indiana University, Bloomington, IN 47408. (Phone: (812) 855-9325; FAX: (812) 855-5522; E-mail: STKANE@INDIANA.EDU)

AARG PAPER PRIZE

Margaret Connors, Chair Paper Prize Committee

The Paper Prize Committee announced at the AARG Business Meeting that Robert Carlson's paper "*Ethnography, Epidemiology, and Public Policy: Needle Use and HIV-1 Risk Reduction Among Injecting Drug Users in the Midwest*" was selected as the winner for 1994. Robert Carlson is an assistant professor at Wright State University School of Medicine in Dayton, Ohio. His paper is forthcoming as a chapter in *Global AIDS Policy*, edited by Douglas Feldman and published by Bergin and Garvey, 1995. CONGRATULATIONS Robert!

No award was made for the Student Prize this year. We also acknowledge the three judges for

their fine job of reviewing papers: Terry Mason, Susan McCombie, and Mitchell Ratner.

Next year's Prize Paper Chair is Stephanie Kane. Information about submission for the 1995 Prize will be forthcoming in the AARG newsletters and the AAA newsletter. We encourage quality submissions from students and professionals in the field of AIDS/HIV.

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TIME TO RENEW

It is time once again to pay your dues and renew your membership form enclosed in this issue and send it in with you check today.

As additional information with your renewal, please indicate whether you are interested in receiving a copy of the AARG Bulletin electronically. The Steering Committee is looking into the possibility of providing on-line copies, and we are seeking input from the membership regarding the level of interest in this. Please check the box on your renewal form if you would be interested in receiving an electronic newsletter should it become available.