1999 ANNUAL REPORT

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Faculty of Health Sciences

LA TROBE UNIVERSITY

VicHealth

A COLLABORATING CENTRE TO THE NATIONAL CENTRE IN HIV SOCIAL RESEARCH
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BACKGROUND AND AIMS
The Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society opened in February 1993 as an independent unit within the Faculty of Health Sciences at La Trobe University. The Centre is funded by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, La Trobe University and research project grants from external agencies. ARCSHS is a collaborating Centre to the National Centre in HIV Social Research and is affiliated with The University of Melbourne.

The aims of this multidisciplinary research centre are to:

• undertake research into social, psychological and cultural aspects of human sexuality and sexual health;
• provide research leadership at State, National and International levels;
• provide knowledge, skills, and resources to assist other organisations in health promotion, service delivery and the formulation of public policy.

STAFF
The Centre has a multidisciplinary team of researchers with qualifications and expertise in psychology, anthropology, sociology, public health, health promotion, methodology, epidemiology, education, women’s health, consumer advocacy and health policy.

Research Staff
Doreen Rosenthal, BA(Hons), PhD, MAPS, FASSA
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Senior Research Fellow
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Michael Bartos, BA(Hons), MEd
Research Fellow
Murray Couch, BA
Research Fellow
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Research Fellow
Ben Haste, BA(Hons)*+
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Kelley Johnson, BA(Hons), Dip Ed, MA, PhD*+
Research Fellow
Maggie Kirkman, BA(Hons), DipKTC, PhD, MAPS+
Research Fellow
Liam Leonard, BA(Hons), BSc(Hons)
Research Fellow
Liz McDonnell, BA, MA, GradDipCrWrtg*
Research Fellow
Mary O’Brien, BA, PhD*
Research Fellow
David Wain, BA, DipEd*
Research Fellow
Jon Willis, BA, MLitt, PhD*
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Postdoctoral Fellows
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Executive Officer
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Administrative Officers
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Lisa Kennewell*
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*part-year, +part-time

Seminar Series Coordinator
Dr Jo Lindsay

Postgraduate Coordinator
Dr Anne Kavanagh

Postgraduate Elective Convenor
Dr Lynne Hillier

Research Associates
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Medical Epidemiologist, Macfarlane Burnet Centre for Medical Research

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School of Psychology, Deakin University

Professor Susan Moore, BSc(Hons), DipEd, MEd, PhD
Department of Psychology, Swinburne University of Technology

CENTRE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The Advisory Committee assists the Director in matters pertaining to the Centre, and its membership reflects a broad range of academic and community interests.

Members
Professor Stephen Duckett [Chair]
Dean, Faculty of Health Sciences, La Trobe University

Professor Lenore Manderson
Director, Key Centre for Women’s Health in Society, The University of Melbourne

Dr William Hart
Chief, Health Intelligence & Disease Control, Department of Human Services

Mr Joseph O’Reilly
Member, Victorian AIDS Council/Gay Men’s Health Centre

Ms Jacqui Randall
Research Project Officer, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

Professor Chris Pratt
Head, School of Psychological Sciences, La Trobe University

Professor David de Kretser
Director, Institute of Reproduction & Development, Monash University

Associate Professor Ian Anderson
Centre for the Study of Health & Society, The University of Melbourne

Ms Colleen Murphy
Student Welfare Support Branch, Department of School Education

Mr Martyn Goddard
Australian National Council on AIDS & Related Diseases

Professor Susan Kippax
Director, National Centre in HIV Social Research

Mr Eamonn Murphy
Director, HIV/AIDS & Hepatitis C Section, Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care
1999 brought considerable changes to the Centre. Our new name signalled more clearly our broad interests in sexuality and sexual health, and our new location saw us enjoying well-planned facilities as well as having all staff and students situated on the same floor enabling greater ease of communication within the Centre.

Once again, the Centre was exceptionally successful in attracting external funds. This year we won 10 per cent of the University’s competitive grants, making us one of the leading groups at La Trobe University for the fourth year in succession. Particularly pleasing was a grant awarded by the US National Institute of Mental Health for a five-year longitudinal study of homeless young people and service providers, carried out in collaboration with colleagues at the University of California Los Angeles. The high standard of research at the Centre was confirmed when one of its projects received a Public Health Research Award, the second such award in three years. The ground-breaking Same-Sex Attracted Youth Project, led by Lynne Hillier and Lyn Harrison, has been highly commended by educators, service providers, policymakers and researchers, and is an excellent example of the innovative research carried out at the Centre.

We welcomed Professor Graham Hart from the University of Glasgow, who visited the Centre as the Rio Tinto/La Trobe University Distinguished Visiting Fellow during February and March. Graham’s visit provided us with the opportunity for exchanging ideas and developing collaborative projects. One of these, a study of male sex workers, is now underway with the help of a Faculty of Health Sciences Research Grant to Jon Willis.

Two staff members of the Centre were awarded NHMRC Postdoctoral Fellowships. Lynne Hillier will continue her work on same-sex attracted young people and Maggie Kirkman will take up her Fellowship at The University of Melbourne in 2000. The year also saw Jeffrey Grierson and Mary O’Brien being awarded their PhD degrees and Jeanette Pope submitting her thesis for examination. At the same time, our group of PhD students was enhanced by the enrolment of three new students, Karalyn McDonald, Deborah Dempsey and Deana Leahy. All of these students were awarded scholarships, reflecting the high quality of our students. It is noteworthy that Karalyn and Deborah have followed the path taken by other PhD students at the Centre, having joined us initially as research assistants.

The Community Liaison Unit continues its commitment to ensuring that the work of the Centre meets the needs of community groups and that the outcomes of Centre research are taken back to those who are able to use them either in practice or in policymaking. The high regard in which the Centre’s model of community liaison is held was attested to by a series of research consultancies sponsored by the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care. These focus on education in schools about blood-borne viruses (BBV) and sexually transmissible infections (STI), and encompass the development of a framework for BBV and STI education in schools, professional development in this area for teachers, and a resource for parents, Talking Sexual Health. Next year, the Centre will be developing a set of curriculum materials for classroom teaching around BBV and STI.

1999 brought a changed relationship to the National Centre in HIV Social Research and the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care. In line with a recommendation of the NCHSR Review Committee, ARCSHS became a Collaborating Centre to the NCHSR, a change that resulted in a shift in focus for the Centre’s research program. The substantial research with people living with HIV/AIDS has continued as the ‘Living with HIV’ program. A key project in 1999 was the HIV Futures II study, which included core modules from HIV Futures I and extended areas of enquiry to include mental health, drug use, treatment interruptions and social support. The HIV Futures II report will be launched early in 2000.

The new arrangements also coincided with staff changes in the program. Lynne Hillier began working on her Postdoctoral Fellowship and Lyn Harrison left the Centre to take up a position at Deakin University. Two new staff members, Jon Willis and Mary O’Brien, were appointed to take responsibility for projects with indigenous people and with at-risk young people respectively. Jon Willis and Michael Bartos were successful in obtaining an ARC grant for a study of Aboriginal men’s constructs of risk and health, in collaboration with Ian Anderson. Thus, the work of the Commonwealth HIV/AIDS-focused program continues but with a somewhat changed agenda.

Our international program continued its expansion mainly through the work of the Deputy Director, Gary Dowsett, and the International Fellow, Murray Couch. Among other activities, Gary Dowsett was invited to act as a reviewer of HIV programs in Bangladesh and as the external social scientist on the Scientific Review Committee of the Ontario HIV Treatments Network in Toronto, Canada. Three research projects are in train,
including one in Fiji and two in Vietnam. I was fortunate to be able to travel to Hanoi to assist in setting up one of these projects and to meet with key people at the Institute of Sociology who are keen to continue and extend our collaborative relationship.

As is always the case, each year brings staff changes. In 1999 we farewelled Lyn Harrison, Paul Horowitz, Jennie Kendrick, Lee Marquardt, Jan Watson and Weiliang Zhang. We welcomed Clive Aspin, Ben Haste, Michael Hurley, Kelley Johnson, Anne Kavanagh, Liz McDonnell, Sebastian Misson, Katrina Newnham, Mary O’Brien, John Ryan, Craig Vole, David Wain and Jon Willis.

1999 is also the year in which I decided to leave this Centre which has been so much part of my life since I established the Centre in October 1992. It has been an exciting, challenging and rewarding time, with never a dull moment. I am immensely proud of our achievements and of the dedication and commitment of staff and students who have worked here in the past seven years. I am especially proud of the reputation we have established for making a difference by ensuring that the outcomes of our research are useful and used. It has been a great privilege for me to work with such dedicated researchers, members of community organisations and policymakers, and to see what we have been able to achieve through working together. But, in truth, none of what we have accomplished would have been possible without the initial vision and continuing support of VicHealth and the strong support of the Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care. La Trobe University has always provided, through the Vice-Chancellor, Professor Michael Osborne, and the Dean of the Faculty of Health Sciences, Professor Stephen Duckett, a supportive and facilitating environment in which the Centre has been able to flourish and grow. Finally, I would like to express my gratitude to my two Deputy Directors, Sandy Gifford and Gary Dowsett, for their enduring faith and their help in finding the right path.

Professor Marian Pitts from the University of Staffordshire has been appointed Director and will take up her position from mid-2000. Until then, Gary Dowsett will be Acting Director. I wish them both well as they take ARCSHS into the new millennium.
The framework in which the Centre’s research program is conceived has three major domains of activity: understanding sexual health, optimising sexual health outcomes and informing policy and health systems. This framework includes collaborative research with outside individuals and institutions, thus providing a comprehensive picture of the Centre’s research activities.

1. UNDERSTANDING SEXUAL HEALTH
This research program seeks to understand human sexuality as a social and cultural practice. It explores the meanings, experiences and motivations that are brought to, and carried from, the enactment of sexual practices and identities. By elucidating people’s experience of sexuality and their understandings of that experience, the research explores sexual health and provides the framework necessary to maximise sexual health outcomes.

The four key aspects of this research program are:

- examining social and behavioural aspects of the prevention of sexually transmissible infections within a broader sexual health context;
- understanding the context, character and meaning of sexual and other practices relating to sexual health;
- understanding the consequences of social and sexual risk for health;
- identifying and evaluating the method, content and effectiveness of health promotion activities.

Adolescent trajectories for homelessness and risk for HIV
Doreen Rosenthal and Mary-Jane Rotheram-Borus (Neuropsychiatric Institute, UCLA Centre for Community Health), with Nan Corby, Martha Lee, Naihua Duan Borus (Neuropsychiatric Institute, UCLA Centre for Community Health), Gary Dowsett, Jeffrey Grierson and Lynne Hillier

Project i: Home Base is a five year comparative study of homeless young people ages 12 to 17 years in Melbourne and Los Angeles. The research focuses on the health, social well-being and risk of HIV of homeless young people, particularly those who have recently become homeless for the first time. We are interested to learn more about the personal and social issues, the services, and the organisational and government policies that influence young people’s pathways into and out of homelessness.

Funding: National Institute of Mental Health, USA
Status: In progress

Mortality, masculinity and risk
Michael Bartos with Susan Kippax (National Centre in HIV Social Research)

This project investigates the impact of premature mortality on men’s notions of health and risk. Gay men close to the HIV/AIDS epidemic will be compared with heterosexual men. The project aims to reconceptualise the relationship between risk, health and mortality. It posits that mortality has a fundamentally problematic relationship to masculinity.

Funding: Australian Research Council Large Grant
Status: In progress

People with intellectual disabilities: living safer sexual lives
Lynne Hillier and Kelley Johnson with Lyn Harrison (Deakin University)

In the past, the sexuality of people with intellectual disabilities has been regarded as a problem to be controlled and forgotten. Knowledge about the sexuality of this group has mainly come from carers and workers. The aim of this project is to give a voice to this previously silent group. During phase one of this project, 12 men and 12 women with an intellectual disability told stories about their lives. This was carried out using an in-depth encounter method in which the participants met with researchers on at least three occasions to talk about friendships, family, sexual relationships, access to sexual health services and sexuality information. By July 1999, all of the encounters and the transcripts were completed. In phase two of the project, the transcripts from phase one are being written into short plain language versions and full-length versions of each story. We aim to use the plain language stories in a number of ways: producing booklets and tapes for use by people with intellectual disabilities, families and workers; workshopping the stories with families, workers, community visitors and with people with intellectual disabilities; documenting the workshops as a package for the further use of the stories.

Funding: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation
Status: In progress

Sexual subcultures and HIV/AIDS prevention in the Western Pacific: an ethnographic study of men who have sex with men in Suva, Fiji
Gary Dowsett and Murray Couch

This small qualitative project is being undertaken in collaboration with the AIDS Task Force of Fiji and the University of the South Pacific, Suva. The project consists of a set of in-depth interviews with men who have sex with men in Suva to supplement a large survey of such men being undertaken by the AIDS Task Force to assist in the development of its HIV prevention education activities.

Funding: La Trobe University, Faculty of Health Sciences Research Grant
Status: In progress
Clients of sex workers in Hanoi, Vietnam: a study of cultural meanings and sex practices in relation to HIV/AIDS and sexual health

Murray Couch

This study is concerned with the cultural meanings and sex practices in relation to HIV/AIDS and the sexual health of clients of sex workers in Hanoi and is being undertaken in collaboration with Dr Khuat Thu Hong at the Institute of Sociology in Hanoi. This project is being conducted within the context of public health efforts to improve sexual health and an emerging HIV epidemic in Vietnam. Interviews have been conducted with men who are, or have been, clients of sex workers, and joint analysis is proceeding, involving the researchers at ARCSHS and Institute of Sociology.

Funding: La Trobe University, Faculty of Health Sciences Research Grant
Status: In progress

Into the net: finding community, information and intimacy in cyberspace

Lynne Hillier
Deborah Dempsey (Research Assistant)

The 1998 national project with same-sex attracted youth (SSAY) documented the extent to which young people are denied information and support from the usual trusted sources (parents and schools) and the risks they take when seeking such support from friends and peers. Given this knowledge and support vacuum, the Internet provides an important space within which young people of both sexes could more freely explore sexuality issues.

Specifically, the Internet provided access to a lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community, a forum for knowledge, exchange and a rehearsal space for ‘coming out’ to significant others in the ‘real’ as opposed to the ‘virtual’ world. In this project we want to explore further the ways these young people use the Internet and how it addresses the issues they face in the real world. We are particularly interested in relationships (sexual and other) that are established on the Net and their difference from, and contribution to, real life. This is a two-stage project beginning with focus groups to inform a mainly qualitative questionnaire.

Funding: CARG Collaborating Centre Grant, Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care
Status: In progress

Supportive cultures and the sexual and emotional health of same-sex attracted youth (SSAY)

Lynne Hillier

Research shows that same-sex attracted youth are at a far greater risk of sexually transmissible infections and other blood-borne viruses, and are also more likely to use drugs and to suffer from depression and suicide. This occurs partly because these young people are engaging in risky practices, and also because alienation brought about by invisibility, discrimination and abuse exacerbates and increases the risk factors for disease. Earlier work with same-sex attracted youth has revealed the existence of a number of supportive cultures which, while not necessarily being gay/lesbian-identified, have provided a safe and affirming environment for these young people. This research aims to explore and document these cultures, their histories, their dynamics and the ways in which they support these young people.

Funding: National Health & Medical Research Council Postdoctoral Fellowship
Status: In progress

Establishing prevalence of STDs among homeless young people: assessing a new method for diagnosis and treatment

Jenny Walsh and Doreen Rosenthal with Carol Edwardes, Sandra Gregson, Kim Raynor, (Inner South Community Health Service), Christopher Fairley (Monash University), Suzanne Garland and Sapehr Tabrizi (Royal Women’s Hospital).

This two-year project assesses the feasibility of using self-administered tampon/first pass urine samples for the detection of STIs among homeless young people and to assess the feasibility of a procedure for providing treatment for individuals diagnosed as positive for an STI by this method.

Funding: Australian Research Council Small Grant
Status: Completed
Changes in university undergraduates’ HIV-related knowledge, attitudes and behaviour, 1989-1999

Anthony Smith and Doreen Rosenthal with Susan Moore (Swinburne University of Technology)

This study documents changes in first year university undergraduates’ HIV-related knowledge, attitudes and behaviours. It is a partial replication of studies done in 1989 and 1994 and offers the opportunity of charting important changes over the last decade. The study also explores the knowledge, attitudes and behaviours related to the emerging public health problem of hepatitis C.

Funding: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society
Status: In progress

Parents’ communication about sexuality: adolescent and parent perspectives

Doreen Rosenthal and Shirley Feldman (Center on Adolescence, Stanford University, USA) with Maggie Kirkman, Teresa Senserrick (Research Assistant)

The parent-adolescent communication study examines communication about sexuality between teenagers and their parents. The aims are to assess both adolescents’ and parents’ perceptions of the nature, context, and style of their communications about sexuality and to locate difficulties and barriers to communication as well as factors that facilitate communication. A long-term goal is that this information be used to develop educational packages both for schools and other educational bodies, and for parents to enable them to communicate more effectively about sexuality with their adolescents. The study has two aspects: first, a survey of students and their parents; and second, observations of communication between parent and adolescent, using a role-playing technique. In 1997 Year 10 students and their parents were surveyed. In 1998 the observations of selected parent-adolescent pairs took place. The survey was repeated in 1999 for Year 8 students and interviews were conducted with parents and adolescents.

Funding: Australian Research Council Large Research Grant
Status: In progress

Why do gay men repeatedly undergo HIV testing?

Anthony Smith with Matt Dixon, Vanessa Wood, Peter Hayes and Virginia McHarg (Melbourne Sexual Health Centre) Louise Keogh (Research Assistant)

Some gay and homosexually active men repeatedly undergo antibody testing for HIV. While some of this testing relates to specific events such as condom breakage, the majority of men appear to have a time-related pattern of testing and undergo testing at regular intervals. This study focused on these men and through the use of both interviews and questionnaires explored the function that such testing has in the lives of these men.

Funding: La Trobe University, Faculty of Health Sciences Research Grant
Status: Completed

National prevalence study of sexual health behaviours and attitudes

Anthony Smith and Chris Rissel (Central Sydney Area Health Service) with Louisa Jorm (NSW Department of Health), Sandy Gifford (Deakin University), Andrew Grulich (National Centre in HIV Epidemiology and Clinical Research), Juliet Richters (National Centre in HIV Social Research), Aileen Plant (University of Western Australia) and Jeanette Ward (Central Sydney Area Health Service)

This project involves a survey of a representative national population-based sample of 20,000 Australian adults. It will document the prevalence of sexual behaviours and injecting drug use among Australian adults, identify the frequency and extent of STI and HIV risk practices, and the socio-demographic and behavioural characteristics associated with these sexual practices. It will also identify the attitudes, values and current levels of knowledge regarding STIs and AIDS, as well as the social contexts of and interactions of sexual encounters in Australia.

Funding: National Health & Medical Research Council
Status: In progress

HIV futures survey II

Jeffrey Grierson and Michael Bartos
Richard de Visser and Karalyn McDonald (Research Assistants)

This is a core project of the Living with HIV program. Data collection in this study is undertaken every two years using a self-completed questionnaire. Core modules of the questionnaire include health status, treatments, service utilisation, social support, information management, and sexual practice. Additional modules in the 1999 data collection included mental health, drug use, treatment interruptions (drug holidays), and social support. The second HIV Futures survey was conducted in...
1999, resulting in a sample of 924 HIV positive men and women. The data are in the process of being analysed. The project has enjoyed strong support from the community and health sectors and is supported by the National Association of People with HIV/AIDS (NAPWA) and the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO).

**Funding:** CARG Collaborating Centre Grant, Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care  
**Status:** In progress

**HIV Futures: in depth qualitative components**  
**Michael Bartos, Jeffrey Grierson and Mary O’Brien**  
**Richard de Visser, Karalyn McDonald and Katrina Newnham (Research Assistants)**

This component of the HIV Futures study examines emerging issues in depth. Subjects are recruited through the HIV Futures survey. In 1999 analysis of interview data collected in 1997-98 continued. Studies planned in 1999 for 2000 include sex and relationships, which partly repeats the theme of one of the 1997-98 interview studies, and a new focus on recreational drug use. These projects will involve semi-structured interviews with a small sample of PLWHA in at least two States or Territories per study. The design of the interview schedule for the studies allows for the exploration of overarching themes as well as a more specific focus on particular aspects of the lived experience of HIV. The qualitative studies will enable analysis over time of some key questions, including optimism/scepticism about treatments and its impact on sexual practice, and changing HIV identities in relation to illness trajectories.

**Funding:** CARG Collaborating Centre Grant, Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care  
**Status:** In progress

**Return to work**  
**Jeffrey Grierson**  
**Richard de Visser (Research Assistant)**

This study comprises two arms: a retrospective series of interviews, and a small cohort study. The retrospective component involves semi-structured interviews with People Living With HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) who have returned to work as a result of new treatments. The cohort arm of the study is tracking a small number of PLWHA returning to the workforce after an extended absence. Data collection in the cohort component will involve semi-structured interviews linked to a six-month, self-completed diary. The study examines psychological, social and systemic factors that enhance and inhibit this process. It also identifies barriers and strategies in career change and re-establishment experiences and practices.

**Funding:** CARG Collaborating Centre Grant, Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care  
**Status:** In progress

**‘Sex in the city’**  
**Jeffrey Grierson, Mary O’Brien, Anthony Smith**  
**Katrina Newnham (Research Assistant)**

This was a survey of 2500 adults attending the Melbourne Sexpo99 Exposition at the Melbourne Exhibition Centre. Sexpo is accessible only to adults over 18 years old and, as such, offers an opportunity to access sexually active adults who may be more likely to be ‘sexually adventurous’ or engage in a wider range of sexual practices. This project surveyed a sample of Sexpo99 attendees regarding: their sexual practices (including safe sex and contraception use); their experiences and knowledge of sexually transmissible infections; their use of the Internet for sexual activities; their use of commercial sex work venues; and their use of non-violent erotica. Information on the demographic and sexual practices of participants from this survey will be compared with the national survey, ‘National prevalence study of sexual health behaviours and attitudes’. This study will provide information on opportunities for the promotion of safe sex and awareness of sexual health issues.

**Funding:** Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society  
**Status:** In progress
‘positive Health’
Jeffrey Grierson, Garret Prestage (National Centre in HIV Epidemiology & Clinical Research, The University of NSW) and Kane Race (National Centre in HIV Social Research, The University of NSW)
Mel Irenyi, Richard de Visser, Karalyn McDonald and Katrina Newnham (Research Assistants)

This collaborative project is a cohort study of HIV positive people with particular emphasis on the social aspects of treatments, side effects, dosing and drug interactions. Data collection is by an interviewer-administered questionnaire. Data from the positive Health and HIV Futures instruments will be linked for a subset of study participants in both Melbourne and Sydney. Supplemental recruitment each year will ensure an optimal size for the cohort.

Funding: CARG Collaborating Centre Grant, Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care
Status: In progress

Social and psychological impacts of viral rebound and treatments failure
Michael Bartos
Richard de Visser (Research Assistant)

In order to assess the impact on individuals with HIV/AIDS of sub-optimal experience of anti-viral treatments, an analytic frame has been established, initially using data from the HIV Futures I survey and refining it in HIV Futures II. It enables comparison between those whose viral load has responded to anti-viral treatment and has been sustained at levels below detection, those whose viral loads have failed to respond to therapy, and those whose viral loads have reduced to below detection but have since rebounded. Each of these groups has been analysed in relation to demographic, illness history, self-reported treatment compliance and service use variables. In 1998-99 initial analysis was conducted on HIV Futures I data suggesting that poverty and lower education levels were significant independent predictors of treatment failure. No data were available about the mediating influence of service providers (especially characteristics of treating physician/s). Additional information was collected in the HIV Futures Survey II in 1999 to allow more confident analysis to be made. Initial indications suggest that lower education levels continue to be associated with treatment failure, independent of other measures.

Funding: CARG Collaborating Centre Grant, Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care
Status: In progress

Sex, drugs and drinking: an investigation of health risks in the sexual and social lives of young workers
Jo Lindsay

This research investigates health issues in the social and sexual lives of young workers. The focus is on working-class people in their 20s, a group largely neglected by previous research. The major aims are to provide information about the social context of risk-taking practices by this group, to examine barriers to healthy practices, and to identify more effective and appropriate public health interventions. The first stage of the research has been completed. Four hundred young people working in the hospitality, manufacturing, sales and service industries participated in the survey. The major health issues identified through the research were excessive alcohol consumption followed by high levels of tobacco smoking. Substantial numbers were using illicit drugs and almost half were putting their sexual health at risk. The young men took more risks with their health than the young women and there were marked industry differences. The findings are outlined in the report ‘Young workers, health and social life: first report’.

Funding: National Health & Medical Research Council Postdoctoral Fellowship
Status: In progress
Hepatitis C prevention among gay men who inject drugs in Melbourne’s gay community

Gary Dowsett and David Wain with the Victorian AIDS Council/Gay Men’s Health Centre
John Ryan (Research Assistant)

This project is developing an ethnography of gay men who inject drugs and who are part of the Melbourne gay community. The project aims to assist VAC/GMHC in its Hepatitis C prevention efforts among gay men in Melbourne.

Funding: National Health & Medical Research Council and the Australian National Council on AIDS & Related Diseases
Status: In progress

2. OPTIMISING SEXUAL HEALTH OUTCOMES

This research program builds on research in the first domain, Understanding sexual health. It involves the critical examination of social and cultural responses inherent in gaining and maintaining sexual health. This occurs at both the individual and programmatic level. The research focuses on factors that contribute to greater individual and community capacity to respond to challenges to sexual health, and the development and enhancement of these responses.

The four key aspects of this research program are:

- understanding the impact of adverse sexual health outcomes;
- investigating the uptake of successful individual and social responses in sexual health;
- improving health management and maintenance at the individual and community levels;
- examining the process, context and enhancement of professional health practice.

Australian secondary teachers’ preparedness for Hepatitis C prevention education

Doreen Rosenthal, Ben Haste, Anne Mitchell and Debbie Ollis

Australian secondary teachers from the health and physical education disciplines were examined about their knowledge of hepatitis C, their current teaching practice, their need for resources and their sense of the important issues in relation to teaching hepatitis C prevention in schools. This project built on the previous year’s work of developing a national policy framework for the teaching of HIV/AIDS, STIs and blood-borne virus prevention. Training materials were prepared based on Centre research and designed to enable teachers to teach all aspects of the areas covered by the national framework.

Impact of positive HSV2 serology among asymptomatic individuals

Anthony Smith with Ian Denham, Don Jacobs, Alex Marceglia, Vanessa Wood and Virginia McHarg (Melbourne Sexual Health Centre)
Louise Keogh (Research Assistant)

It has recently become possible to undertake type-specific serological testing for herpes simplex virus. We can now easily distinguish between infections with the viruses commonly associated with cold sores (HSV1) and recurrent genital herpes (HSV2). The availability of this test for the first time allows the type-specific identification of infection in individuals who have never experienced any symptoms. This project examined the psychosocial impact of testing positive to HSV2 on 180 individuals who had never knowingly experienced symptoms of herpes infection. Approximately 12% of participants were HSV2-positive and the impact of testing positive was assessed at three and six months after diagnosis.

Funding: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society
Status: Completed
World Health Organization - Quality of Life study: WHOQOL HIV/AIDS module

Michael Bartos
Karalyn McDonald (Research Assistant)

In 1997 WHO commenced development of an HIV-specific quality of life assessment module to sit alongside the generic instrument developed by the WHO Programme on Mental Health. Eight sites are participating in the HIV/AIDS module development: Australia, Brazil, Hong Kong, India (two sites), Thailand, Zambia and Zimbabwe. Pilot testing of the module at each site was completed in 1999 and initial analysis of aggregated data from all sites was presented at the meeting of the International Society for Quality of Life Research in Barcelona in November. On the basis of psychometric results, the instrument will be revised in preparation for field testing among different groups of HIV-positive people and matched HIV-negative groups in 2000.

Funding: CARG Collaborating Centre Grant, Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care
Status: In progress

World Health Organization - Quality of Life study: WHOQOL spirituality module

Michael Bartos
Karalyn McDonald (Research Assistant)

In 1998 the World Health Organization commenced development of a module concerning spirituality, religiousness and personal beliefs in relation to quality of life. Fifteen sites around the world will participate in the study. In 1999 the Centre assisted in the development of the module through the conduct of focus groups. In 2000 this will be followed by pilot and field testing of the instrument. In Australia, focus groups for development of the module have been conducted among people with AIDS and with comparable groups not facing terminal illness (mainly HIV-negative gay men), together with a range of health professionals.

Funding: CARG Collaborating Centre Grant, Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care
Status: In progress

Mount Alexander Shire audit

Anton Mischewski and Anthony Smith with Jean Wyldebo (Central Victorian HIV/AIDS Information, Resources & Support Group)
Helen Stewart-Stevens (Research Assistant)

This pilot project examined the availability of safe sex and injecting products in a rural shire in Central Victoria. The study mapped the distribution and audited the availability of condoms, water-based lubricants, needles/syringes and disposal units to provide base-line data on the access and availability of these products, directly connected with HIV, STI and blood borne virus prevention. Clear disparities were observed in the availability and pricing of safe sex/safer use materials between regional centres and outlying areas in the Shire. The findings make clear the importance of overcoming structural impediments to the adoption of safe sex/safe injecting practices.

Funding: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society
Status: Completed

Community-based health promotion in HIV/AIDS and related diseases and national public health partnerships

Gary Dowsett and David McInnes (University of Western Sydney) with Liz McDonnell
Sebastian Misson (Research Assistant)

Known as the Community Education and Workforce Training (CEWT) project, this is a two-stage study which is exploring the national workforce of health educators working in HIV/AIDS, hepatitis C and sexually transmissible infections in non-government and/or community sector agencies or programs. The first stage involves a national survey of community-based educators focusing on: their education and work histories; demographic information; day-to-day educational activities; and the broader issues that impact on educational practices. Phase two will involve six action research projects in agencies/programs across Australia. Interviews with educators and key stakeholders and documentation of the formal and informal processes that shape community health education in practice, will form the basis of the case studies.

Funding: National Health & Medical Research Council
Status: In progress
The Researchers-in-Residence Program
Michael Hurley and Clive Aspin (ARCSHS), Robin Gorna and Alan Brotherton (AFAO), Doreen Rosenthal, Gary Dowsett and Michael Bartos (ARCSHS)

1999 saw the beginning of an innovative research program undertaken jointly by the Centre and the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO). The researchers are employed by La Trobe University through the Centre and in that sense are independent researchers. However, the joint nature of the program is seen both in its location at AFAO’s offices in Sydney and in the close relations between the research agenda and community needs. In that very important sense, it is a program that negotiates putting practice into research. The nexus between practice and research and the social relations affecting the nature of the project are themselves part of the project’s object of analysis.

While several models of collaborative social research have made significant contributions to the content of practice, a focus on either educational or policy issues as subjects of investigation distinct from HIV prevention or clinical research is relatively rare. The challenge for this program is to contribute to a shift in community-research sector social relations, first, in ways that facilitate the identification of practice and practitioner based research agendas, and, second, in order to develop community and research sector capacity to relate creatively, respectfully and productively.

This program consists of two projects which liaise closely with AFAO and the community sector:

**HIV treatments education project**
Michael Hurley

**Advocacy, policy and health outcomes project**
Clive Aspin

**Funding:** CARG Collaborating Centre Grant, Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care
**Status:** In progress

3. INFORMING POLICY AND HEALTH SYSTEMS

This research program takes a broader view than the preceding programs. The focus is on a rapidly changing public policy context and the ways in which this impacts on appropriate outcomes in policy and the delivery of health services. An important aspect of this work is the exploration of the processes by which definitions of ‘health’ become adopted and modified, in relation to achieving national sexual health outcomes through our health delivery systems.

The four key aspects of this research program are:

- examining the theorisation and conceptual underpinning’s of health and health issues;
- investigating the policy development process;
- evaluating the impact of policy on health systems and health outcomes;
- investigating systems of health-related service delivery.

The national schools project: talking sexual health
Doreen Rosenthal, Anne Mitchell, Debbie Ollis and Jan Watson

The aim of this consultancy was to develop a resource for teacher training to prepare teachers for teaching the health curriculum outlined in the Framework developed from Centre research in 1998. ‘Talking sexual health’, a professional development resource for teachers implementing the national framework for education about STI, HIV/AIDS and blood borne viruses in secondary schools was completed in 1999.

**Funding:** Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care, Australian National Council on AIDS and Related Diseases
**Status:** In progress
development of theoretical tools. Links are being established with State-level policy initiatives in selected States.

Funding: CARG Collaborating Centre Grant, Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care
Status: In progress

Health care and risk in the juvenile justice system
Mary O’Brien
Katrina Newnham (Research Assistant)
This study is investigating the perspectives of a broad cross-section of workers who have responsibility for the care and supervision of juvenile justice clients. The study focuses on workers’ experiences and perspectives of dealing with juvenile justice clients, with a particular emphasis on the issues related to health risks including STIs and blood borne viruses. A primary objective of the study involves documenting the perspectives of workers in different roles and different institutional contexts in regard to the health care needs of their clients. It will undertake a comparison of core health staff experiences and views with those of non-health staff as well as looking at issues for workers in both institutional and community settings.

Funding: CARG Collaborating Centre Grant, Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care
Status: In progress

Using breast density to improve the accuracy of mammographic screening
Anne Kavanagh, Jennifer Cawson (St Vincents BreastScreen), Graham Giles (Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria) and John Hopper (The University of Melbourne)
Georgina Marr (Research Assistant)
Use of hormone replacement therapy increases the amount of fibroglandular tissue in the breast. This tissue looks white on mammography (high breast density), which theoretically makes it harder to detect abnormalities on mammography. It is also more likely that women on HRT will be recalled for assessment even if they do not have cancer. In this study we scan over 14,000 mammograms to examine the effect of high breast density on mammographic sensitivity and specificity. We also examine to what extent the reduction in sensitivity and specificity of mammography found with HRT use can be attributed to increases in breast density. This study is expected to inform policies for the screening of women on HRT or with high breast density.

Funding: Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Kodak Australia, Department of Human Services & Health, Victoria
Status: In progress

The management of screen-detected abnormalities of the cervix
Anne Kavanagh and Jane Gunn (The University of Melbourne)
Kate Morris (Research Assistant)
This project involves individual interviews with GPs and pathologists about how they make decisions about minor screen-detected abnormalities of the cervix. In particular, we were interested in whether they followed National Health & Medical Research Council guidelines for the management of screen-detected abnormalities. The research showed that, on the whole, GPs and pathologists made recommendations that were more cautious than the guidelines and the reporting of abnormalities was subjective. Also many of the NH&MRC categories overlapped. Clinicians’ fear of being sued caused them to practise more cautiously than the guidelines because this practice would minimise the possibility of missing a more serious abnormality.

Funding: Department of Human Services & Health, Victoria
Status: Completed
Publications

REFEREED JOURNALS


de Visser R & Smith AMA (1999). Predictors of heterosexual condom use: characteristics of the situation are more important than characteristics of the individual. Psychology, Health & Medicine, 4, 265-279.


Dowsett GW (1999). Different social attitudes to HIV testing result in different policies. Evidence-based Health Care, 3(4), 108.


REFEREED JOURNALS (IN PRESS)

Bartos M & McDonald K. HIV as identity, experience or career. AIDS Care.

Dempsey D, Hillier L & Harrison L. Gendered [s]explorations among same-sex attracted young people in Australia. Journal of Adolescence. (Special Issue on gay, lesbian and bisexual youth).
de Visser R & Smith AMA. When always isn’t enough: implications of the late application of condoms for the validity and reliability of self-reported condom use. AIDS Care.


Kirkman M, Harrison L, Hillier L & Pyett P. ‘I know I’m doing a good job’: narratives from teenage mothers. Feminism & Psychology.

Kirkman M. I didn’t interview myself: the researcher as participant in narrative research. Annual Review of Health Social Sciences.


Lindsay J, Smith AMA & Rosenthal DA. Safe from what? Australian adolescents’ use of condoms or the oral contraceptive pill. Family Planning Perspectives.

McDonald K, Bartos M & Rosenthal DA. Differences between women and men in antiretroviral uptake among HIV-positive Australians. AIDS Care.


BOOK REVIEWS


PAPERS UNDER REVIEW


Cawson JN, Law EM & Kavanagh AM. Invasive lobular carcinoma: sonographic features of cancers detected in a BreastScreen program.

de Visser R & Smith AMA. When always isn’t enough: implications of the late application of condoms for the validity and reliability of self-reported condom use.

Giles G, Russell I, Reid R & Kavanagh AM. The in-situ and small breast cancer register.

Hillier L, Harrison L & Dempsey D. Discovering the fault lines: same-sex attracted youth, resistance and change.


Kavanagh AM, Mitchell H, Cawson J & Giles G. Symptomatic status and the accuracy of screening mammography.

Kirkman M, Harrison L, Hillier L & Pyett P. 'I know I'm doing a good job': canonical and autobiographical narratives of teenage mothers.

Stewart FJ, Mischewski A & Smith AMA. 'Ain't misbehavin': troubling the divides of sexual identities.

Rosenthal DA, Senserrick T & Feldman SS. A typology approach to describing parents as communicators about sexuality.

NON-REFEREED JOURNALS


EDITED VOLUMES


CHAPTERS IN BOOKS


Willis JM (1999). Did he fall or was he pushed? Inquiring into Pitjantjatjara deaths. In D Manderson (Ed), Courting Death. London: Pluto Press, 128-47.
CHARTERS IN BOOKS (IN PRESS)

Dowsett GW. HIV/AIDS and Homophobia: subtle hatreds, severe consequences and the question of origins. In G Herdt & T Van der Meer (Eds), Beyond Homophobia.


Dowsett GW. Wusses and willies: masculinity and contemporary sexual politics. In S Tomsen & RW Connell (Eds), [no title], Sydney: Pluto Press.


Willis JM. ‘If any man tried to do that to me’: homophobia and heterosexism in a traditional Aboriginal Society. In G Herdt & T Van der Meer (Eds), Beyond Homophobia.


REPORTS


Living with HIV Program (1999). HIV Futures Regional Reports: Western Australia. Monograph Series Number 10. Melbourne: Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society, La Trobe University.


INTERNATIONAL


Dowsett GW. USAID Workshop on HIV/AIDS stigma in developing countries. San Francisco State University, San Francisco, April 1999.


Dowsett GW. HIV and homophobia: subtle hatreds, severe consequences, and the question of origins. Plenary presentation to Beyond Homophobia: Rethinking Anti-Gay Violence, Heterosexism and Homophobia in Multiple Perspective, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, April 1999.


Smith AMA. HIV research priorities into the next decade: ethics in research. Fifth International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific, Kuala Lumpur, October 1999.

Willis J. ‘If any man tried to do that to me, I’d pull his penis out and spear him’: heterosexism and homophobia in traditional societies. Plenary presentation to Beyond Homophobia: Rethinking Anti-Gay Violence, Heterosexism and Homophobia in Multiple Perspective, San Francisco State University, San Francisco, April 1999.

AUSTRALIAN


Kirkman M. Revising the plot: autobiographical narratives after infertility. International Conference of the Association for Qualitative Research, Melbourne, July 1999.


Grierson J, Bartos M, de Visser R & McDonald K. HIV Futures II: a report from the other side of HAART. Eleventh Annual Conference of the Australasian Society for HIV Medicine, Perth, December 1999.


Kavanagh AM & Daly J. How do research methods shape public health? Public Health Association of Australia, Darwin, September 1999.


Kirkman M. ‘What’s going to happen next month?’ Why some infertile childless women may not rewrite their autobiographical narratives as non-mothers. Story, Narrative and the Clinic: Theory, Therapy & Health Care, La Trobe University, Melbourne, February 1999.


Willis JM. ‘If any man tried to do that to me’: homophobia and heterosexism in a traditional Aboriginal society. Keynote Address, Queensland Sexual Health Society Conference, Brisbane, August 1999.
NEW PROJECT GRANTS RECEIVED DURING 1999

EXTERNAL

CARG Collaborating Centre Grant, Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care
The National Schools Project
Doreen Rosenthal, Anne Mitchell, Debbie Ollis and Jan Watson
1999: $199,000

Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care, Australian National Council on AIDS and Related Diseases
Australian secondary teachers’ preparedness for Hepatitis C prevention education
Anne Mitchell and Doreen Rosenthal
1999: $49,361

INTERNAL

La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences Research Grant
Clients of sex workers in Hanoi, Vietnam: a study of cultural meanings and sex practices in relation to HIV/AIDS and sexual health
Murray Couch with Gary Dowsett
1999: $10,000

La Trobe University Faculty of Health Sciences Research Grant
Sexual subcultures and HIV/AIDS prevention in the Western Pacific: an ethnographic study of men who have sex with men in Suva, Fiji
Gary Dowsett and Murray Couch
1999: $7,000

CONTINUING RESEARCH GRANTS

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation - Centre of Excellence Grant
A program of research relating to the prevention of STIs
Doreen Rosenthal
1999-2002: $1,700,000

CARG Collaborating Centre Grant, Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care
A program of HIV/AIDS and related diseases research
Doreen Rosenthal
1999-2003: $4,000,000

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation - Community Health Program
People with intellectual disabilities: living safer sexual lives
Lynne Hillier and Kelley Johnson with Lyn Harrison (Deakin University)
1998-1999: $124,000

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Department of Human Services & Health, Kodak Australia (based at the Anti-Cancer Council of Victoria)
Using breast density to improve the accuracy of mammographic screening 1998-2000
Anne Kavanagh
1999: $220,000

National Health & Medical Research Council
National prevalence study of sexual health behaviours and attitudes
Chris Rissel and Anthony Smith
1999: $745,979
### RESEARCH GRANTS AWARDED DURING 1999

#### Victorian Health Promotion Foundation

**Impact of condom use promotion on unintended pregnancy**
Anthony Smith and Julia Shelley (Centre for the Study of Mothers’ & Children’s Health)

1999-2000: $132,667

**How do research methods shape public health?**
Anne Kavanagh, Jeanne Daly and Damien Jolley (Deakin University)

2000-2002: $193,701

#### Australian Research Council

**Dealing with homophobia**
Lynne Hillier and Lyn Harrison (Deakin University)

2000: $19,000

**The impact of premature mortality on Aboriginal men’s constructs of risk and health**
Michael Bartos, Jon Willis and Ian Anderson (The University of Melbourne)

2000: $47,000

#### INTERNAL

**Legal responses to claims of negligence in cervical screening**
Anne Kavanagh and Linda Hancock (The University of Melbourne)

2000: $10,837

**Knowledge, attitudes and practices concerning sex and sexual health among secondary students in Vietnam**
Anthony Smith and Doreen Rosenthal

2000: $12,360

**HIV=community? The structure and meaning of HIV-positive community and HIV social identity among HIV positive gay men in two Australian cities**
Jeffrey Grierson with Anthony Smith

2000: $10,000

### FELLOWSHIPS

#### National Health & Medical Research Council Postdoctoral Fellowship

**Supportive cultures and the sexual and emotional health of same-sex attracted youth**
Lynne Hillier  
(Advisor: Doreen Rosenthal)

1999 - 2003: $218,211

#### National Health & Medical Research Council Postdoctoral Fellowship

**An investigation of health risks in the sexual and social lives of young workers**
Jo Lindsay  
(Advisor: Doreen Rosenthal)

1998 - 2001: $203,874
Male sex work: health, culture and masculinity
Jon Willis with Gary Dowsett
2000: $10,000

Blood, football and risk: an examination of the implementation and significance of blood borne virus prevention policy in Australian Rules football
Mary O’Brien with Gary Dowsett
2000: $10,000

The politics of strategic development of HIV/AIDS policy in Australia
Clive Aspin with Gary Dowsett
2000: $9,771

SCHOLARSHIPS & POSTGRADUATE SUPPORT

Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society PhD Scholarship
Queer Family Values in Australia, 1980-2000
Deborah Dempsey

Commonwealth AIDS Research Grant Postgraduate Scholarship
Sexuality education in primary schools
Marg Hay

La Trobe University, Postgraduate Research Scholarship
Dominant and contesting discourses in sexuality education
Deana Leahy
Desirable disciplines: gay men, desire and sexual practices
Anton Mischewski
Research Consultancies

COMMONWEALTH DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & AGED CARE

Update of Australian National Council on AIDS & Related Diseases Bulletins
Doreen Rosenthal and Anne Mitchell
A complete review and update of all previous ANCARD Bulletins was carried out as well as several new ones being written.

CARE INTERNATIONAL

Review of HIV/AIDS research programs for men who have sex with men in Bangladesh for CARE Bangladesh
Gary Dowsett
The aim of this project was to investigate existing initiatives by CARE Bangladesh to develop HIV prevention interventions for men who have sex with men in Dhaka, Bangladesh, with a view to recommending further research and program development.

AUSTRALIAN FEDERATION OF AIDS ORGANISATIONS

Review of the international literature on HIV/AIDS compliance education
Gary Dowsett
The review was commissioned by the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations to support its National Compliance Education Project.

Awards

The Victorian Public Health Award for Excellence and Innovation in Research was awarded to the Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society for its high quality and original research on the Same-Sex Attracted Youth project. The Same-Sex Attracted Youth project which was completed in 1998 by Lynne Hillier and Lyn Harrison (Deakin University).

The People Living With HIV/AIDS (Victoria) Research Progress Award was presented to Karalyn McDonald for her work on the HIV Futures I Women’s Project, which culminated in a report ‘Standing on Shifting Sand: Women Living With HIV/AIDS in Australia’, a national survey on women living with HIV/AIDS. The report was published in 1998 with Michael Bartos, Richard de Visser, Douglas Ezzy and Doreen Rosenthal from the National Centre in HIV Social Research based at La Trobe University.

The La Trobe University Graduate Research Prize (Masters by Research/PhD) was awarded to Maggie Kirkman for completing the most outstanding thesis in the Faculty of Health Sciences in 1998. Maggie was awarded the prize for her PhD thesis, ‘Plots and disruptions: narratives, infertility and women’s lives’ completed under the supervision of Doreen Rosenthal.
RIO TINTO/LA TROBE UNIVERSITY DISTINGUISHED VISITING FELLOW

Professor Graham Hart

Medical Research Council, Public and Social Health Services Unit, University of Glasgow, Scotland.

Professor Graham Hart, Director of the Medical Research Council, Public and Social Health Services Unit, University of Glasgow, visited the Centre as a Rio Tinto/La Trobe University Distinguished Visiting Fellow during February and March 1999 to become familiar with the research program and to develop possible collaborations between the two Centres.

He has been working at the cutting edge of sexual health research for the past 12 years. His unit in the University of Glasgow carries out research at the forefront of the social science field within the medical research area. His long experience and expertise in the area of HIV/AIDS prevention is wide reaching and is recognised internationally. He has worked in such diverse areas as examining the role of needle exchanges in the prevention of blood borne viral infections, HIV prevention strategies for gay men, and HIV prevention interventions in secondary schools.

While at the Centre, Professor Hart worked with individual researchers to lend his expertise to developing projects. He also gave the opening seminar of our 1999 program on ‘Control, secrecy and sexual pleasure: female-controlled methods of STI prevention in South Western Uganda’.

Professor Hart’s visit led to the development of a collaborative research plan to undertake comparative studies of the male sex work industry in Australia and Britain. As a result of that initial planning work, Research Fellow Jon Willis applied for and received a Faculty of Health Sciences Research Starter Grant to undertake exploratory research on Melbourne’s male sex work industry in 2000. With Professor Hart and Gary Dowsett, Jon Willis also began developing a major research grant application to the ARC in early 2000, based on Professor Hart’s initial plan. This project will investigate general physical and mental health status of the growing number of men working in the sex industry. The aim will be to shed light on the health needs of this group by means of sociological investigation of the culture, communities and identity formation of these sex workers. As well as comparisons across sectors of the sex industry, a comparison between sex workers in the UK and Australia will be made to determine the extent to which nationally determined structural factors play a significant role in the health status of the men.

The Centre is very appreciative of the Rio Tinto program and the opportunity to have had access to Professor Hart’s skills and experience in shaping our research program for the future.

Dr John Lynch

Department of Epidemiology, School of Public Health, Institute for Social Research, The University of Michigan, USA.

Dr Lynch has a joint appointment at the Department of Epidemiology in the School of Public Health and at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan. He has published a variety of research papers in the world’s leading public health, medical, cardiovascular and epidemiological journals. His scientific contributions have been recognised with prestigious awards from the American Heart Association and the International Society for Behavioural Medicine. Dr John Lynch, was invited as a visiting fellow by the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation and had the opportunity to visit ARCSHS to discuss the possibility of a collaborative research project with staff.
The Centre’s International Program continued to develop throughout the year, coordinated by the Deputy Director, Gary Dowsett and through the work of Research Fellow (International Health), Murray Couch.

Research initiatives in the International Program include the successful undertaking of two new research projects in 1999 and the funding of a third project for 2000.

The first study, ‘Sexual subcultures and HIV/AIDS prevention in the Western Pacific: an ethnographic study of men who have sex with men in Suva, Fiji’ is funded through a Faculty of Health Sciences Research Grant to Gary Dowsett and Murray Couch. The study is being undertaken in collaboration with the AIDS Task Force of Fiji, a major non-governmental organisation based in Suva, and the University of the South Pacific.

The second study concerns the ‘Clients of sex workers in Hanoi, Vietnam: a study of cultural meanings and sex practices in relation to HIV/AIDS and sexual health’ and is being undertaken in collaboration with Dr Khuat Thu Hong at the Institute of Sociology in Hanoi. This project was undertaken with the assistance of the Faculty of Health Sciences Starter Research Grant to Murray Couch with Gary Dowsett.

The third study focuses on the ‘Knowledge, attitudes and practices concerning sex and sexual health among secondary students in Vietnam’ and is funded for 2000 by a Faculty of Health Sciences Research Grant to Anthony Smith and Doreen Rosenthal. Preliminary work for this project began in Hanoi in October 1999. This project is also being undertaken in collaboration with Dr Khuat Thu Hong.

As part of the development of what is hoped will be an ongoing collaboration with our colleagues in Vietnam, Doreen Rosenthal visited the Institute of Sociology, which is part of the Vietnam Academy of the Social Sciences and Humanities, Hanoi, from 30 October to 6 November. While in Hanoi with Murray Couch, Doreen Rosenthal conducted workshops on adolescent sex and sexuality. This successful visit also enabled some preliminary planning for further collaboration with the Institute in 2000, particularly focused on school-based sex education and sexual health issues.

In April, Gary Dowsett was commissioned by the non-governmental organisation CARE International (Bangladesh office) to undertake a review of its HIV/AIDS research and intervention programs for men who have sex with men and for transsexual sex workers in Dhaka, Bangladesh. Also in April, Gary was invited to participate in a ‘Workshop on HIV/AIDS and stigma in developing countries’, organised by USAID in San Francisco. This visit to San Francisco coincided with an international conference entitled ‘Beyond homophobia: re-thinking anti-gay violence, heterosexism, and homophobia in multiple perspective’, convened by the Human Sexuality Studies program at San Francisco State University. Gary presented a keynote address at that conference focusing on HIV/AIDS-related discrimination in Australia and in Bangladesh. Later in April, Gary was invited to speak at the ‘HIV/AIDS Conference: resistances to behavioural change to reduce HIV/AIDS infection in predominantly heterosexual epidemics in Third World Countries’. This international conference was organised by the Health Transition Centre, based at the National Centre for Epidemiology and Population Health, Australian National University, Canberra, and funded by the Swedish International Development Agency and the Australian Agency for International Development.

Gary Dowsett’s appointment in October 1998 as the external social scientist on the Scientific Review Committee of the Ontario HIV Treatments Network in Canada was extended to a three-year term in 1999. As part of the OHTN program of HIV/AIDS research funding and development, Gary presented the keynote address at the OHTN Annual Research Day held in Toronto in December, entitled ‘Community and Academy: Critical collaboration and making ends meet’.

With administrative coordination provided by Administrative Officer Jennie Kendrick, the Centre again hosted a successful short course in Research Design in Qualitative Social Inquiry in October. The course was convened by Gary Dowsett and co-taught with Murray Couch. The short course continued to provide the curriculum basis for other research design consultancies undertaken by Murray Couch at the University of South Australia, and Shine SA, a non-governmental sexual health organisation in Adelaide.

Finally, Jane Koerner, a postgraduate student pursuing a Masters in Health Sciences in the School of Public Health at La Trobe University, is undertaking research on Japanese public health policy in relation to young people and HIV/AIDS, supervised by Gary Dowsett and supported by a Japanese Government Monbusho Research Scholarship. Jane has been based at Tokyo University throughout 1999.
INTERNATIONAL VISITORS TO THE CENTRE

Dr Ayoade Olatunbosun-Alakija
Fiji School of Medicine and Medical Director, World Health Organization Sexual Health Clinic, Suva, Fiji.

The Centre received a visit from Dr Ayoade Olatunbosun-Alakija, Fiji School of Medicine and designated Medical Director of the newly funded World Health Organisation Sexual Health Clinic to be established in Suva with the AIDS Task Force in Fiji, to explore research possibilities in which the Centre might assist. Visits to Fiji in early 2000 by Centre staff will continue this planning.

INTERNATIONAL COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

International Scientific Review Committee, XIII International AIDS Conference, Durban (Gary Dowsett, Doreen Rosenthal, Anthony Smith)

International representative, Society for Research on Adolescence, USA (Doreen Rosenthal)

Organising Committee, 6th International Congress on AIDS in Asia and the Pacific, Melbourne 2001 (Doreen Rosenthal)

Scientific Advisory Committee of the Ontario HIV Treatments Network, Toronto, Canada (Gary Dowsett)
Control, secrecy and sexual pleasure: female-controlled methods of STI prevention in South Western Uganda
Graham Hart, Medical Research Council, Public and Social Health Services Unit, University of Glasgow, March 10.

It happened one night: an event-specific analysis of heterosexual condom use
Richard de Visser, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society, March 24.

Turning research into practice: the national schools framework
Anne Mitchell and Debbie Ollis, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society, April 7.

Regulating capital in drug discourse: an alternative framework to harm reduction
John Fitzgerald, Department of Criminology, The University of Melbourne, April 21.

Making them gay: negotiating sexual, cultural and health literacies in the pedagogy of peer education
David McInnes, School of Communication and Media, University of Western Sydney, May 5.

The Vietnamese IDU and harm reduction study: links between community development and social research
Peter Higgs, Centre for Harm Reduction, Macfarlane Burnet Centre for Medical Research, May 19.

Suck my nation - the politics of (homo) sex
Sasho Lambevski, National Centre in HIV Social Research, The University of New South Wales, June 2.

Colonialism and the experience of risk: issues for prevention in Aboriginal health
Ian Anderson, VicHealth Koori Health Research and Community Development Unit, Centre for the Study of Health and Society, The University of Melbourne, June 16.

The social construction of herpes
Natasha Posner, Mayne Medical School, The University of Queensland, August 11.

Global sex: how does ‘The new world order’ impact on sex?
Dennis Altman, School of Sociology, Politics and Anthropology, La Trobe University, August 25.

HIV/AIDS and constructs of gay community: researching educational practice within gay community-based health promotion for gay men
Gary Dowsett, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society, September 8.

The work of UNAIDS
Rob Moodie, Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, September 22.

Same sex, different rights?
Peter Gourlay and John Bisas, Equal Opportunity Commission, October 6.

Sexual health discourses: assisting patients gain autonomy and empowerment for sexual health and safety through clinical interaction
Jan Browne, University of New England, November 3.

‘Eliminating surprises’: contradictions between public health policy and clinical practice in cervical cancer screening
Anne Kavanagh, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society, November 17.
POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

This year saw three new PhD students Deborah Dempsey, Deana Leahy and Karalyn McDonald begin at the Centre. Deana was awarded a La Trobe University PhD scholarship and Deborah the first ARCSHS PhD scholarship.

Mid-year we established an award to encourage academic publishing by our postgraduate students. Anton Mischewski and Richard de Visser have already been recipients of this award (Richard twice).

Jeanette Pope submitted her thesis in December 1999 ending the year on a good note. In November, Deborah Dempsey was awarded an Australian Postgraduate Scholarship and Karalyn was awarded NHMRC postgraduate scholarship. We awarded two ARCSHS PhD scholarships for 2000 to two new students: Rebecca Bentley and Philip Entwistle.

CENTRE PHD STUDENTS

ARBES, Vicki
Understanding sexual coercion among young people: peer group dynamics
(Advisor: D Rosenthal)

COOK, Roger
Men, masculinity and infertility
(Advisor: D Rosenthal)

DEMPSEY, Deborah
Queer family values in Australia (1980-2000)
(Advisor: G Dowsett)

DE VISSER, Richard
Situational predictors of condom use amongst heterosexual young adults
(Advisor: A Smith)

MISCHEWSKI, Anton
Desirable disciplines: gay men, desire and sexual practices
(Advisors: G Dowsett & A Smith)

POPE, Jeanette
Epidemiology of sexually transmissible diseases
(Advisor: A Smith)

OTHER STUDENTS - PHD

ENTWISTLE, Philip
Sex work, the family and society: structural factors inhibiting HIV interventions for commercial sex workers in urban Cambodia
(The University of Queensland. Advisor: J Willis)

HAFNER, Diane
Feelings in the heart: Aboriginal experience of land, emotion and kinship in Cape York Peninsula
(The University of Queensland. Advisor: J Willis)

KELLY, Angela
AIDS dementia: the lived experience
(Macquarie University. Advisors: A Yeatman & G Dowsett)

MANSEL-LEES, Virginia
Plotting the paths to a lesbian identity
(The University of Melbourne. Advisor: L Hillier)

TEMPLE-SMITH, Meredith
STDs in general practice
(Deakin University. Advisors: A Kavanagh & S Gifford)
OTHER STUDENTS - MASTERS

AMOS, Alison
Radiological review of interval cancers
(The University of Melbourne. Supervisor: A Kavanagh)

BRAMWELL, Michael
The social construction of celibacy
(Supervisors: A Mitchell & M Couch)

KOERNER, Jane
(Supervisor: G Dowsett)

SUPERVISION OF TRAINEES

O’BYRNE, Ann-Marie
Public health trainee from BreastScreen Victoria
(Supervisor: A Kavanagh)

CONTINUING EDUCATION

TEACHING

Sexuality, health & social research
Dr Lynne Hillier (Convenor)
In the second semester of 1999, the post-graduate unit, ‘Sexuality, Health and Social Research’ was held at the Centre for the first time with nine students who were mainly enrolled in post-graduate courses in Health Sciences at La Trobe University. The thirteen-week course, divided into three learning areas aimed to provide an introduction to social research into sexuality. As well as presenting current theories in sexuality research and methodology, the unit offered a unique opportunity for students to hear researchers talk about their own projects. This was clearly a highlight of the course and the students often commented that they found this opportunity informative and inspiring. The unit also gave the opportunity for those involved in Masters degrees to formulate their minor thesis proposal with supervision from researchers at ARCSHS. On the basis of her experiences in the subject, one of the students will carry out her thesis work at ARCSHS in 2000.

SHORT COURSES

Research design in qualitative social inquiry
Gary Dowsett (Convenor) and Murray Couch
The Centre hosted a successful short course in Research Design in Qualitative Social Inquiry in October. This week-long course examined the principles and practices of designing social and behavioural research, particularly using qualitative methodology. The course recognises the need for applied research by public sector and community sector agencies and is designed for interested health professionals working in the public and community sectors in Australia and overseas. Participants came from Thailand and Australia, including two of the Centre’s PhD students. One interesting outcome of the course is the development of a SPIRT grant application by the Centre and staff from the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations who participated in the course.

OCCASIONAL LECTURES


Dowsett GW. Researching your own community. La Trobe University Health Sociology Workshop, Melbourne, April 1999.

Dowsett GW. Constructs of community in gay men’s HIV/AIDS health promotion. Center for AIDS Prevention Studies, University of California (San Francisco), San Francisco, April 1999.
Dowsett GW. Gay men and corporeality: the body teaches, sexuality learns. TAPS Postdoctoral Program, Center for AIDS Prevention Studies, University of California (San Francisco), San Francisco, April 1999.


Hillier L. The national same-sex attracted youth project. Colloquia Series, Psychology Department, Swinburne University of Technology, April 1999.

Hillier L. Whatever happened to ‘duty of care?’ Health Education Association of Victoria, March 1999.

Hillier L, Dempsey D & Harrison L. Young lesbians, attraction, identity and sexuality. VAC working group on lesbian health, November 1999.


Kirkman M. What’s the plot? Analysing data in narrative research. Health Sociologists’ Network at La Trobe University, Trawool, Victoria, April 1999.


SEMINARS PRESENTED

de Visser R. It happened one night: an event specific analysis of heterosexual condom use. Seminar Series, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society, March 1999.

Dowsett GW. HIV/AIDS and constructs of gay community: researching educational practice within gay community-based health promotion for gay men. Seminar Series, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society, September 1999.

Hillier L. Drug use in the context of the lives of SSAY. Drugs Forum, Australian Research Centre in Sex, Health & Society, July 1999.


Hillier L. Being same-sex attracted and young in rural areas. Victorian Health Promotion Foundation, Working Group on SSAY in rural regions, August 1999.

COMMUNITY LIAISON AND EDUCATION

The Community Liaison Unit at the Centre consists of a core staff of Anne Mitchell and Jenny Walsh, and additional project staff at various times. In 1999 Debbie Ollis and Jan Watson were part of the Unit working on the National Schools Project.

BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS WITH RESEARCHED COMMUNITIES

In 1999 a number of new projects started at the Centre and called on the Community Liaison Unit to assist them with making links into the relevant communities. These included a project exploring the education work-force in HIV/AIDS community based organisations, and a large project comparing the lives and health concerns of homeless young people in Australia with a similar group in the USA. In addition the biennial HIV Futures study of the health and well-being of PLWHA in Australia was conducted again in 1999. The important task of canvassing community issues and concerns for inclusion in the new study and developing ideas for recruitment was part of the Unit’s work.

In a small Centre project, Anton Mischewski conducted an audit of the safe sex and safe injecting equipment available in Shire of Mount Alexander in Central Victoria. This project had an important community outcome when Anne Mitchell facilitated a public meeting which was attended by a large number of interested people, many of them prominent and influential citizens of the Shire. These included senior members of the Chamber of Commerce, members of the Shire council, the CEO of a local community health centre and school representatives. The meeting generated a number of practical strategies for addressing issues raised by the research. These ongoing community development and awareness-raising initiatives will continue to be supported by the Centre.

As part of the Researchers-in-Residence program based at the Australian Federation of AIDS Organisations (AFAO), Michael Hurley conducted an evaluation of a Compliance and Communication Workshop for the Australasian Society of HIV Medicine, an evaluation of a short course in HIV Medicine for the Community, AIDS Treatments Project, Australia and New South Wales Department of Health HIV Prescribers Unit, Continuing Medical Education Project and an evaluation of a short course in HIV Medicine for the NSW Department of Health HIV Prescribers Unit, Continuing Medical Education Project.

RESEARCH DISSEMINATION

The research about the health and well-being of same-sex attracted young people (SSAY) which won a Victorian Government Public Health Award for Excellence this year, was the basis of many of the dissemination activities in 1999. This research was presented regularly to teachers, youth workers, parents groups and health care providers, including GPs. An important spin-off from this work (and of some of the other research about young people) was the opportunity for the Unit to work with the Venereology Society of Victoria to develop a training package for GPs. The package, which is designed to help doctors better meet the sexual health needs of their young clients, is completed and due for piloting. Meanwhile a waiting room poster to support the project is being developed.

The mental health aspects of the SSAY research proved to be a particular focus in 1999 and much of the dissemination work centred on this issue. Jenny Walsh was guest speaker at a large forum run by the Youth Affairs Network of Queensland to raise the issue of youth suicide and self-harm by gay and lesbian young people. This event has generated many further requests for copies of the community report from all over Australia.

A number of other projects were completed and dissemination begun in 1999. These included further HIV futures reports, one relating to heterosexual men and the others providing State-specific data, a project on the hepatitis C education work-force and research on parents as sexuality educators of their children.
Since mid-1998 the Unit has housed a project funded by the Australian National Council on AIDS and Related Diseases to develop a blueprint for best-practice evidence based HIV/AIDS, STI and blood-borne virus prevention education in secondary schools. The project began with a national meeting of representatives from all education departments and systems where a work-plan and timeline was established. The first product developed was a national policy framework to cover best practice education in the area. Throughout 1999 the project team worked on a professional development resource which provided materials for training teachers to manage some of the more difficult but important areas such as sexual diversity, gender and power issues. A resource for parents to assist them to educate their children in conjunction with school programs was also developed by the project in partnership with national parent organisations. The project will be completed in 2000 with the development of classroom materials.

**PROVIDING ADVICE ON RESEARCH INTO PRACTICE**

The Unit was called upon in 1999 to advise other organisations on community involvement in research and research into practice. These organisations included the Perinatal Data Collection Unit in Victoria and the Australian Dairy Industry project ‘Sustaining our natural resources: dairying for tomorrow’. The model of research into policy and practice was the subject of several conference presentations and attracted a wide range of international enquiries.

Finally the Unit was again delighted to conduct wide-ranging education sessions and work collaboratively with our community partners such as the Teacher Learning Network of the Education Unions and the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation, to disseminate our research findings.

**LIVING WITH HIV PROGRAM**

The report ‘A Different Epidemic: HIV Positive Heterosexual Men in the HIV Futures Survey’ was launched in Melbourne in May 1999 by the Deputy Director of the Western Region, Department of Health and Community Services.

HIV Futures II involved extensive community consultation throughout May 1999, including visits by project staff to Sydney, Brisbane and Hobart to meet with National and State PLWHA and AIDS organisations and Health Departments. A Project Reference Group for HIV Futures II is in place for the duration of the project seeking advice on content, focus and process. This group includes representatives of NAPWA, AFAO, VAC, PLWHA(Vic), ACON, PLWHA (NSW), QPP and Positive Women.

Extensive dissemination of the specific state reports from HIV Futures I accompanied consultations around HIV Futures II. These reports have been used extensively by State HIV/AIDS organisations for planning purposes.

Considerable media work was conducted by the Living with HIV Program around the launch of the report ‘A Different Epidemic: HIV Positive Heterosexual Men in the HIV Futures Survey’. Coverage included print media (mainstream, HIV and gay/lesbian press) and radio.

Living with HIV staff made themselves available for comment on World AIDS day, providing research material and insights around the current status of PLWHA in Australia.

**SAME-SEX ATTRACTED YOUTH RESEARCH**

The same-sex attracted youth research which was launched in late 1998 continued to attract media interest in 1999. Interviews and articles appeared in all media; radio, television and print.
CONFERENCES, SEMINARS & WORKSHOPS ATTENDED

Association for Qualitative Research Conference. Sex and drugs: can we find the connections? Melbourne, June (J Lindsay).

First National Aboriginal Male Health Convention Ross River NT., October (J Willis).

Meetings with Apunipima Cape York Health Council and Tropical Public Health Unit Cairns, November (J Willis).

COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

COMMONWEALTH/NATIONAL

Advisory Committee to the National Training Agenda for HIV/AIDS Educators of Gay and Homosexually Active Men (GD)

Australian National Council on AIDS & Related Diseases (ANCARD), [Deputy Chair] (DR)

Australian National Council on HIV/AIDS & Related Diseases Education and Prevention Subcommittee [Chair] (DR) [Member] (GD)

Australian National Council on HIV/AIDS &Related Diseases Hepatitis C Subcommittee (GD)

Australian National Council on HIV/AIDS & Related Diseases Indigenous Australians’ Sexual Health Committee (JW)

Australian National Council on HIV/AIDS & Related Diseases Research Advisory Committee (GD)

Australasian Society for HIV Medicine, HIV Education Program for Doctors: Treatment Issues Working Group (JG)

Monitoring and Evaluation Committee, BreastScreen Australia (AK)

National Health & Medical Research Council, Regional Grants Interviewing Committee, Adelaide & Perth (AK)

National Health & Medical Research Council Grantnet Users Reference Group (GD)

Public Health Association of Australia, National Executive (AS)

Quality Assurance Committee, National Cervical Cancer Screening Program (AK)

STATE

Association for Qualitative Research [Secretary] (JL)

Association for Qualitative Research Conference Organising Committee [Member] (JL)

Chlamydia Strategy Working Party, Victorian Department of Human Services (AS)

HIV/AIDS Prevention Education Project, Victorian Education Department, Reference group (AM, DO)

Ministerial Advisory Committee on AIDS and Related Diseases - Education Working Group (AS)

Public Health Association of Australia, Victorian Branch Committee [President] (AS)

Research and Evaluation Committee, BreastScreen Victoria (AK)

Risk and Protective Practices Advisory Committee, Victorian Department of Human Services (AS)

Victorian Association of Family Therapists Research Committee (JL)

Victorian Infectious Diseases Consortium, Victorian Department of Human Services (AS)

Victorian Ministerial Advisory Committee on AIDS and Related Diseases (AS)

Victorian Public Health Research and Education Council [Director] (AS)

Women’s Health Victoria Council (KN)

Victorian Health Promotion Foundation Clinical and Public Health Research Committee (DR)

OTHER

AIDS Education Strategies Group (AM, JW)

Care and Support Strategies Group, AIDS Council of New South Wales (MH)

Research and Ethics Committee, Victorian AIDS Council/Gay Men’s Health Centre [Convenor] (AS)

Steering Group, Sex on Premises Research Project, with Dr David McInnes (University of Western Sydney) and the AIDS Council of NSW (MH)

Victorian AIDS Council Research and Ethics Committee (AS, AM)

Victorian AIDS Council Gay and Lesbian Development Committee (AM)

Victorian AIDS Council/Gay Men’s Health Centre, Community Education Advisory and Development Committee (GD)
LA TROBE UNIVERSITY
Centre for Development of Innovation in Health, Advisory Committee (AK)
Human Ethics Committee (AS)
Research and Graduate Studies Committee (DR)
Standing Committee for Readers and Associate Professors (DR)

FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES
Board (Board of Studies) (DR)
Development Committee (DR)
Equal Opportunity Committee (KN)
Higher Degrees Committee, La Trobe University (AK)
Human Ethics Committee (KN)
Research Committee [Chair] (DR) [Member] (GD)

ASSESSORS/REVIEWERS

RESEARCH GRANT APPLICATIONS
Australian Research Grants Committee (Australian Research Council) (DR, GD, LH)
Commonwealth AIDS Research Grants (DR)
Healthways, WA (DR)
Kathleen Cunningham Foundation (AK)
National Health and Medical Research Council (AS, AK, DR, LH, GD)
New Zealand Health Research Council (DR)
Queensland Cancer Fund (AK)
The Ontario HIV Treatments Network (Canada) (GD)
Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (AK, AS, DR, LH, GD)

JOURNALS
AIDS Care (AK, AS, DR)
Australian Journal of Psychology (DR)
Australian and New Zealand Journal of Public Health (AK, AS)
Australian Psychologist (DR)
Australian Journal of Education (DR)
Cancer Causes and Control (AK)
Child Development (DR)
Contemporary Drug Problems (MOB)
Critical Inquireies (GD)

Feminism and Psychology (LH)
Genitourinary Medicine (DR)
Health Promotion International (LH)
International Journal of Psychology (DR)
International Journal of Behavioural Development (DR)
InScight (DR)
Journal of Adolescence (AK, JG, DR, LH, MH, JW)
Journal of Applied Social Psychology (DR)
Journal of Community and Applied Social Psychology (LH, DR)
Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology (DR)
Journal of Culture, Health & Sexuality (GD, LH)
Journal of Research on Adolescence (DR)
Journal of Medical Screening (AK)
Journal of Sociology (GD)
Journal of Women and Health (LH)
Medical Journal of Australia (AK, AS)
Psychology, Health and Medicine (DR)
Psychological Reports (DR)
Psychological Bulletin (DR)
Sexualities (LH, GD)
Sex Role (LH)
Social Semiotics (MH)
Social Science & Medicine (GD)
Venereology (AS, AK, DR, LH, JW)
Women and Health (DR)

MEMBERSHIP OF EDITORIAL BOARDS
Critical Inquireies (GD)
International Journal of Psychology [Associate Editor] (DR)
InScight (DR)
Journal of Adolescence (DR)
Journal of Community & Applied Social Psychology (DR)
Journal of Culture, Health & Sexuality [Senior Reviews Editor] (GD)
Psychology, Health & Medicine (DR)
Sex Education (GD)
Social Aspects of AIDS Book Series (GD)
Venereology (AS)
THESIS EXAMINERS

Lynne Hillier
Minor Master’s Thesis, Victoria University
Masters (Research) Thesis
Masters (Research) Thesis, Swinburne
University of Technology

Michael Hurley
PhD thesis, Queensland University of Technology
PhD thesis, The University of Queensland
Honors thesis, University of Western Sydney

Jo Lindsay
Masters (Research) Thesis, La Trobe University

Anne Mitchell
MPH, La Trobe University
Masters (Research), Victoria University
We are grateful to the Victorian Health Promotion Foundation (VicHealth), the Commonwealth Department of Health & Aged Care, La Trobe University and the Faculty of Health Sciences for their continued financial support during 1999.

### EXTERNAL

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### INTERNAL

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<td><strong>La Trobe University</strong></td>
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**TOTAL INCOME**: 2,343,708

*Indicates consultancy fees contracted, but not necessarily received in full in 1999.
High use of drugs by lesbians: study

A disturbingly high rate of drug use by young lesbians has been an unexpected finding in Australia’s first national study into young people attracted to members of their own sex.

Continuing analysis of the data collected for the National Report on Same-Sex Attracted Young People by the National Centre in HIV Social Research at La Trobe University has found that young homosexual, lesbian, bisexual and transgendered people are more likely to be using illegal drugs than adolescents generally.

While this was consistent with overseas studies, the researchers were surprised to find that significantly more young women than men were injecting drugs and using marijuana.

Researcher, Ms Deborah Dempsey, said 62 per cent of the 200 to 21-year-olds who took part in the study had smoked marijuana, compared with about 8 per cent in the general youth population.

In the study, young women were oversampled to make their male counterparts on all scales, with 91 new cent of women and 19 per cent of men using marijuana at least weekly.

More alarming, 11 per cent of those women had injected drugs, compared with 1 to 2 per cent of the general youth population.

Of those women, 12 per cent of the 31 to 21-year-olds, more than 50 per cent of the young women compared with 7 per cent of the young men.

"It’s incredibly worrying," Ms Dempsey said. "We don’t want them to experience the morbidity and mortality of smoking marijuana and using other drugs, and we don’t want them to think they’re being normal."

She called for more research into the specific needs of young women who inject drugs, and for more attention to be paid to the social and psychological factors that contribute to drug use among this group.

"We need to look at the structural and personal factors that lead to drug use," Ms Dempsey said. "This is a major issue for public health and we need to address it urgently."

She said the study also highlighted the importance of early intervention and support for young women who inject drugs, and the need for more targeted education and prevention programs.

"We need to work towards reducing the harm caused by drug use and the associated health risks," Ms Dempsey said. "We need to address these issues now before they become even more serious problems in the future."
Young and gay can be a tough combination.

There's no evidence that sex education of any kind leads to earlier or increased sexual activity.

As people's experience of HIV changed, the response of community organisations and service providers was also changing. HIV Futures II would reflect the true nature of lives being lived by positive people around Australia,