

AIDS and Society Research Unit

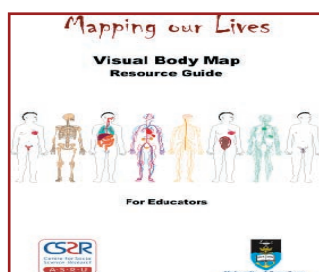


ASRU, members of the A-team have participated in workshops for the Red Cross, Voluntary Services Overseas, Absolute Return for Kids (ARK) and a host of community organisations and NGOs in South and Southern Africa. Members of the A-team also work as field-workers in ASRU and other parts of the Centre for Social Science Research.

ASRU's core funders are the Ford Foundation and the South African National Research Foundation. ■

AIDS & Society Research Unit (ASRU) supports innovative inter-disciplinary research into the social and economic impact of AIDS in South Africa. We are especially interested in the challenges and consequences of 'rolling out' antiretroviral therapy. We are running two ongoing panel studies in Khayelitsha: one in the general population; the other amongst a cohort of people on long-term antiretroviral therapy. This should lead us to a better understanding of the social and economic context of people on antiretroviral therapy, as well as the impact of treatment over time on incomes, attitudes and behaviour. These surveys, together with related qualitative and ethnographic research, also explore health-seeking behaviour and how people (especially those on antiretroviral treatment) negotiate their way between 'Western' and 'traditional' medicine.

By forging creative links between academic research and outreach activities, we aim to improve our understanding of the relationship between AIDS and society and to make a difference to those living with HIV. As part of our 'action research' agenda, ASRU offers a set of 'Mapping Our Lives' workshops for HIV-positive people and peer educators. These educational and creative workshops are run by a group of Xhosa-speaking peer counsellors known as the 'A-team'. Through



People @ASRU

Project Leaders

Nicoli Nattrass
(Director)
Colin Almeleh
(Head of the outreach project)
Celeste Coetzee
(Survey co-ordinator)
Brendan Maughan-Brown
(Stigma project)
Jo Thobeka Wreford
(Sangoma project)

Researchers

Vezi Ndlovu, René Brandt, Lauren Kahn, Sumaya Mall, Xanthe Wessels, Trude Naimak, Nadia Fuleihan, Per Strand, Rachel Bray, Annie Devenish, Lene Leonhardtsen, Jeremy Magruder, Annabelle Wienand, Beth Mills.

Data Capturers, Research Assistants and Administrators

Monique Glass, Selina Poswayo, Thomas Scott, Keith Christmas, Neryvia Pillay, Danielle Jordaan, Estelle Cheung, Nondumiso Hlwele, Kathy Forbes, Libbi Downes.

Field Workers, Outreach Workers

Ncedeka Mbune, Nomonde Kundayi, Thozama Ndevu, Victoria Ndayaluvana, Thobani Ncapai, Ntombizodwa Somlayi, Nomawethu Ngalimani, Cordelia Ndzamela, Babalwa Cekiso, Noloyiso Balintulo.

Visitors

Manjari Mahajan
(Cornell),
Ed Bruera
(Harvard),
Ali Tasiran
(University of Gothenborg),
Nathan Geffen
(Treatment Action Campaign).



RESEARCH PROJECTS 2005	
Traditional medicine in the era of AIDS	The demand for traditional medicine in Khayelitsha – amongst the general population and in a cohort of long-term HAART patients. This entails the collection and analysis of quantitative data from our ongoing panel studies (Nicoli Nattrass), as well as qualitative research on sangomas (Jo Wreford, Beth Mills, Annie Devinish) and on people who use both Western and traditional medicine (Sumaya Mall, Beth Mills).
HIV and parenting	The challenges posed by motherhood for HIV-positive women (René Brand), reproductive decision-making by HIV-positive people (Vezi Ndlovu), the impact on children (Rachel Bray and René Brandt)
HIV Stigma	Qualitative and quantitative research into the determinants of stigmatising attitudes amongst the stigmatisers, and the experience of stigma amongst the stigmatised (Brendan Maughan-Brown, Colin Almeleh)
Disclosure of HIV status	Collection and analysis of qualitative data on narratives of disclosure. Investigation of decisions to disclose to sexual partners and household members (Colin Almeleh and Lene Leonharsen)
Sexual behaviour	To what extent are HIV-positive people practising safe sex? What are the determinants of sexual behaviour amongst HIV-positive people and amongst young adults in general? (Lauren Kahn, Colin Almeleh, Lene Leonharsen)
The socio-economic impact of HAART	The impact of providing HAART on employment and labour-market participation (Celeste Coetzee, Nicoli Nattrass, Ali Tasiran) and how this compares to changes in labour market participation in the broader population over time (Nicoli Nattrass, Jeremy Magruder)
The institutional challenges of rolling out HAART	Cross country econometric analysis of access to HAART (Nicoli Nattrass). The impact of electronic technologies on the management of adherence to HAART (Xanthe Wessels and Nicoli Nattrass). The implications for welfare policy of the perverse incentives created for people on HAART by the disability grants (Nicoli Nattrass), the politics of AIDS policy (Per Strand, Nicoli Nattrass).
Creative forms of AIDS education	Evaluation of alternative creative visual forms of transmitting AIDS-related information about the body, (body mapping and the body visual – see below). This research project evaluates key aspects of ASRU's outreach activities (Annabelle Wienand).
OUTREACH	
Mapping Our Lives	A peer-driven art and educational workshop to promote treatment literacy and adherence. Entails the production of life sized 'body maps', journey maps and memory books. We provide these services (free) when requested to do so by HIV counsellors, educators and HIV-positive support groups.
The Body Visual	An anatomically correct, yet simple visual aid for teaching human biology, with accompanying manual. Designed (in close collaboration with doctors from Absolute Return for Kids, UCT's department of Human Biology, and peer educators from the Treatment Action Campaign) for use in clinics, HIV-positive support groups and schools. Project leader/ designer: Colin Almeleh
Community Adherence Programme	ASRU headed a team including doctors, nurses, immunologists and researchers that has researched and designed education and training materials for Patient Advocates / Community Adherence Workers who provide community-based psychosocial and clinical support to people on HAART.
Treatment advocacy through art	Together with David Krut Publishing, to raise AIDS awareness and support for a HAART rollout in South Africa by making and distributing promotional material (including videos) and selling high-quality prints of body maps (the proceeds of which are divided equally between the artists and the AIDS outreach programme).
Other collaborations	With Siamon Gordon (Oxford) to support the 'You, me and HIV' project in schools (funded by UNICEF and managed by ASRU).