BIOETHICS SEMINAR

A Small Dose of HIV? Science, Lay Epidemiology and HIV Vaccine Trials

Peter A Newman, PhD, Professor, Canada Research Chair in Health and Social Justice, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto

Discussant: Charmaine Williams, PhD, Associate Professor, Factor-Inwentash Faculty of Social Work, University of Toronto

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155 College St., Room 108 (main floor, to the right of the elevators)

Abstract: Recruitment of low- and middle-income country volunteers from most-at-risk populations (MARPs) in HIV vaccine and other biomedical HIV prevention trials is essential to product development; it also may help to advance new prevention technologies in settings where they are most sorely needed. Nevertheless, local cultural interpretations and lay epidemiological knowledge about HIV, vaccines and randomized controlled trials may threaten safe and ethical trial implementation. I will present data from studies conducted among MARPs in India, Thailand, Canada and the U.S. that suggest the utility of a mental models approach for exploring and communicating key HIV prevention trial concepts. I will also invoke the risk that mental models may foment "folk theories" and misunderstanding, counter to our desired outcomes. A small dose of HIV?