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Examining Internal Traumatic Gay Men's Syndrome (ITGMS) and syndemics among American Indian and indigenous gay men

Recent biomedical advances in HIV prevention strategies such as pre-exposure prophylaxis (PrEP) and achieving an undetectable viral load (UVL) support evidence-based scientific studies indicating HIV transmission rates can continue to be reduced through campaigns such as "Getting to Zero." Despite the new evidence there continue to be disparities in risk and in access to prevention strategies based on a number of social, cultural, and economic factors collectively noted here as Syndemic impact (the co-constitutive epidemiological factors in large urban areas where the social and biological intersect). Syndemic impact when coupled with Internal Traumatic Gay Men's Syndrome (the inter-generational, socially-isolating and traumatic [life changing] experiences that shape risk for HIV and overall long-term health outcomes for gay HIV positive men) can help to explain the on-going social and cultural impact of trauma on health outcomes for both negative and positive self-identified gay men. Previous studies (Diaz, 1997; Cohen, 1999; Vernon, 2001; Jolivette, 2016) have shown the socio-cultural and socio-psychological impact of identity factors such as race, religion, economic status etc. on the mental health of gay men of color. Among American Indians, First Nations, and Alaskan Native gay men we must also incorporate an analysis of (ITGMS) to explore how social and cultural interactions influence HIV prevention, treatment, and long-term care.

Biography

Andrew J Jolivette is Professor and former Chair of the Department of American Indian Studies at San Francisco State University, where he has been since 2001. He also currently serves as the Interim Executive Director of the San Francisco American Indian Community Cultural Center for the Arts. He is the author of five books: Among which Indian Blood: HIV and Colonial Trauma in San Francisco's Two-Spirit Community was a finalist in the LGBTQ Studies Category for a Lambda Literary Award in June 2017. He recently served as scholar in residence in Native Sexualities and Public Health at the University of California, Santa Cruz in fall 2013. He is the former Vice-Chair of the Data Center: Research for Justice Board of Directors as well as a former board member with the African American Art and Culture Complex, the Vice-President for Finance for Black Community Matters and as a Board Member of the Center for Restorative Solutions in California. He is the Book Series Editor of Critical Indigenous and American Indian Studies at Peter Lang Publishing in New York.

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