

Dean Elizabeth T.H. Fontham, Immediate Past President of American Cancer Society, Shares Her Story



Dean Elizabeth T.H. Fontham

Having completed her term as President of the American Cancer Society (ACS), Elizabeth T.H. Fontham, MPH, DrPH, intends to continue her volunteer efforts on its behalf.

“When cancer goes the way of small pox and polio, I’ll retire as a volunteer,” states Dr. Fontham, Dean of the LSUHSC School of Public Health. “The job’s not done.”

Yet a great deal *has* been done over the past year by ACS under Dr. Fontham’s presidency.

The ACS, as the Official Sponsor of Birthdays, has focused on the positive message of “the everyday joy in each life saved,” states Dr. Fontham. “I think we’ve reached new audiences through use of new communication channels. We’ve jumped headlong into the web, e-community, blogging and tweeting and putting smiles on people’s faces. It’s given this 96-year old organization a fresh face.”

(Continued on page 2.)

Selected 2008-2009 Faculty Publications

Bedimo-Rung AL, Thomson JL, Mowen AJ, Gustat J, Tompkins BJ, Strikmiller PK, Sothorn MS (2008). The condition of neighborhood parks following hurricane Katrina: development of a post-hurricane assessment instrument. *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, 5:45-57.

Wang JH, Zhang WP, Liu HX, Wang D, Li YF, Wang WQ, Wang L, He FR, Wang Z, Yan QG, **Chen W**, Huang GS, (2008). Detection of human parvovirus B19 in papillary thyroid carcinoma. *Br J Cancer*, 98(3):611-8.

Celik I, Gallicchio L, Boyd K, Lam T, Matanoski, Tao X, Shiels M, Hammond E, **Chen L**, Robinson K, Caulfield L, Herman J, Guallar E, Alberg A (2008). Arsenic in drinking water and lung cancer: a systematic review. *Environmental Research*, 108 (1): 45-55.

(Continued on page 2.)

Table of Contents

Dean Fontham, ACS Immediate Past President.....PP 1, 2, 4, 8

Professor Scribner, Study Section Chair.....PP 1, 3, 6

Selected 2008-2009 Faculty PublicationsPP 1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 8

Schweitzer Fellows.....P 5

National Presentations.....P 7

Intramural Flag FootballP 8

Professor Richard Scribner Appointed National Institutes of Health Study Section Chair



Professor Richard Scribner

Richard Scribner, M.D., MPH, recently was named Chairman of the National Institutes of Health (NIH) Community Influences on Health Behavior Study Section. In this role he will chair an NIH committee that reviews research grants for scientific and technical merit, which ultimately affect the decisions on funding and length of support.

(Continued on page 3.)

Alice LeBlanc, MPH: Editor

Isabel Billiot, MEd: Graphic Designer

Carl Klutz: Photographer

Dean Fontham *(Continued from page 1.)*

Selected 2008-2009 Faculty Publications

(Continued from page 1.)

Chen L, Gallicchio L, Caulfield L, Tao G, Boyd K, Herman J, Alberg A (2009). Alcohol intake and the risk of nasopharyngeal cancer: a systematic review and meta-analysis. *Cancer and Nutrition*, 61(1):1-15.

Lam TK, Gallicchio L, Boyd K, Shiels M, Hammond E, Tao X, **Chen L**, Robinson KA, Caulfield L, Herman J, Guallar E, Alberg A, (2009). Cruciferous vegetable consumption and lung cancer risk: a systematic review. *Cancer Epidemiology, Biomarkers & Prevention*, 18(1):184-95.

Saraiya M, Goodman MT, Datta DS, **Chen VW**, Wingo PA (2008). Commentary-cancer registries and monitoring the impact of prophylactic HPV vaccines: the potential role. *Cancer*, 113 (10 Suppl.): 3047-3057.

Byers TE, Wolf HJ, Bauer KR, Bolick-Aldrich S, **Chen VW**, Finch JL, Fulton JP, Schymura MJ, Shen T, Van Heest S, Yin X for the Patterns of Care Study Group (2008). The impact of socioeconomic status on survival after cancer in the united states: findings from the national program of cancer registries patterns of care study. *Cancer*, 113(3):582-591.

Harris, R.A., T.D. Eatmon, Jr., and C.W. Seifert (2008). Reconciling technological viability with social feasibility: the case of natural pozzolans for sustainable development. *World Review of Science, Technology and Sustainable Development*, 5(1): 49-65.

(Continued on page 3.)

Dr. Fontham is quick to credit the work of ACS as a combination of dedicated staff and volunteer efforts. There are more than 11 million cancer survivors living in the U.S. today – some free of cancer and some still fighting their disease. These survivors are the most effective volunteers and advocates for helping people stay well, get well, find cures and fight back – demonstrating “passion in action.”

Dr. Fontham applauds the early support by ACS of health care reform efforts that are now a focus of this year’s Congress. She notes that ACS has based “its position on the needs of cancer patients, not politics.”

She also cites the FDA regulation of tobacco as a major accomplishment on behalf of cancer control. This change is especially dear to Dr. Fontham, who was an author of the paper on the first U.S. case-control study of increased lung cancer rates among non-smokers exposed to passive smoking.

Subsequently, she led the largest U.S. multi-center study on lung cancer among non-smoking women. Her research has provided critical data supporting the association of second hand smoke and lung cancer risk.

***“As soon as I discovered epidemiology,
I was hooked — for life.”***

As the third woman and only non-physician President of ACS, Dr. Fontham was asked if she has a message for young women pursuing careers in academics and research.

“Truthfully, I think young women of today don’t need my advice on how to get where they want to go. It’s a different time and place.

“Women of my age faced some real and some perceived barriers. The perceived ones just required a change of thinking, but there were some real ones,” she acknowledges. “Fortunately, although there may have been a glass ceiling, I didn’t experience any shards of glass falling on my head.”

What went before Dr. Fontham’s decision to become a researcher? “I had polio as a child the year before the vaccine came out. I was seven years old, hospitalized away from family,” she remembers. “That was an impressionable time for me, and I become interested in medicine. From a very young age I wanted to be a doctor.”

(Continued on page 4.)

Professor Scribner *(Continued from page 1.)*

Scribner, D'Angelo Professor of Alcohol Research in the LSUHSC School of Public Health, has been Principal Investigator or Co-principal Investigator on 18 grants over the past 15 years. What appears at first glance to be an eclectic mix of research topics – nutrition, alcoholism, underage drinking, violent crime, obesity, STD's, teen pregnancy, disparities – are all linked by the theme that neighborhood environments influence the health behaviors leading to chronic disease in our society.

After earning his medical degree, Scribner went back to the University of California at Los Angeles to earn an MPH at its School of Public Health. The career choice of public health “seemed pretty obvious at the time.”

“Chronic diseases are the number one killer in our society – you don't just go in and take a pill to be cured of a chronic disease,” explains Scribner.

Under the watchful gaze of a Darwin cardboard cutout (replete with monkey on his back) and a bust of Hygeia, the goddess of Public Health, Scribner elaborates on ecological epidemiology.

“Health has an architecture. Wellness has an architecture. They are different for each society. The urban environment – increasingly, the neighborhood environment – is affecting people's health,” states Dr. Scribner, who adds a favorite quote from 19th century demographer Quetelet: “In some ways society prepares the disease and the patient is the instrument that carries it out’.”

***“Chronic disease and stress
have an environmental component...”***

“Chronic disease and stress have an environmental component – they are nested in the neighborhood's environment and culture. It is a concept that arose out the 60's ecology movements – now an architecture for healthy living.”

Its most recent form may have originated in the 60's, but Scribner and like researchers have taken it full force into the new millennium. Scribner's recent NIH appointment indicates a major national focus on ecological epidemiology. His examination of the population's health, using GIS, spatial analysis, and group level statistics, exemplifies how recent strides in technology are providing new tools for his research.

Forty-five seminars and invited presentations throughout the nation; 29 paper presentations to US and International scientific venues; eight major scientific journal reviewer posts; 39 peer review publication articles; and several book chapters attest to the growth of interest that Scribner's research has generated.

(Continued on page 6.)

Selected 2008-2009 Faculty Publications

(Continued from page 2.)

Lee CH, Lee JM, Wu DC, Goan YG, Chou SH, Wu IC, Kao EL, Chan TF, Huang MC, Chen PS, Lee CY, Huang CT, Huang HL, **Hu CY**, Hung YH, Wu MT (2008). Carcinogenetic impact of ADH1B and ALDH2 genes on squamous cell carcinoma risk of the esophagus with regard to the consumption of alcohol, tobacco and betel quid. *International Journal of Cancer*, 22(6): 1347-56.

LaMotte LR (2008). On accuracy of p-values in binary response models. *Tatra Mountains Mathematical Publications*, 39: 193-204.

LaMotte LR (2008). Sufficiency in finite parameter and sample spaces. *The American Statistician*, Volume 62, Number 3, 211-215.

LaMotte LR (2008). A direct derivation of the REML likelihood function. *Statistical Papers*, Volume 48(2), 321-327.

Lee, K, Daniels, M (2008). Marginalized models for longitudinal ordinal data with application to quality of life studies. *Statistics in Medicine*, 27, 4359-4380.

Lee, K, Daniels, M (2008). A class of markov models for longitudinal ordinal data. *Biometrics*, 63, 1060-1067.

Joo Y, Kim D, **Lee K**, Yun S-T, Kim H-K, **Mercante D** (2008). Estimation of anthropogenic pollution using a bayesian contamination model: an application to fractured bedrock groundwater from han river watershed. *Environmetrics*, 20(3): 221-234.

(Continued on page 4.)

Dean Fontham (Continued from page 2.)

Selected 2008-2009 Faculty Publications

(Continued from page 3.)

Mandal DM, Sartor O, Halton SL, **Mercante DE**, Bailey-Wilson JE, Rayford W (2008). Recruitment strategies and comparison of prostate cancer-specific clinical data on african-american and caucasian males with and without family history. *Prostate Cancer Prostatic Diseases*, 11(3):274-9.

Peters ES, Luckett B, Applebaum KM, Marsit CJ, McClean MS, Kelsey KT (2008). Dairy products, leanness and head and neck squamous cell carcinoma. *Head and Neck*, 30(9): 1193-205.

Ryerson AB, **Peters ES**, Coughlin SS, **Chen VW**, Gillison ML, Reichman ME, **Wu XC** (2008) Burden of potentially hpv-associated cancer of the oropharynx and oral cavity in the united states, 1998-2003. *Cancer*, 113 (Suppl. 10)/2901-2909.

Kuo J, Schmitz KH, Evenson KR, McKenzie TL, Jobe JB, **Rung AL**, Gittelsohn J, Pate RR (2009). Physical and social context of physical activities among adolescent girls. *Journal of Physical Activity and Health*, 6:144-152.

Scribner RA; Johnson S; Cohen DA; Robinson W; Farley T; Gruenewald, P (2008). Geospatial methods for identification of hiv/aids core groups. *Substance Use and Misuse*, 43(2): 203-21.

Schonlau M, **Scribner R**, Farley TA, **Theall KP**, Bluthenthal R, Scott M, Cohen DA. (2008). Alcohol outlet density and alcohol consumption in los angeles county and southern louisiana. *Geospatial Health*, 3(1):91-101.

(Continued on page 6.)

Immediately after graduating LSU as pre-med major, however, she married and moved with her husband, Mike, who was entering the University of Virginia Law School. Deferring medical school at that point, she worked instead at the University of Virginia School of Medicine Cancer Research Laboratory.

“It was animal-based research of endocrine tumors,” she recalls. “By animal-based, specifically, it was rats. I loved the research, finding answers to questions – but not working with rats.”

“Having a peer mentor is a wonderful thing...”

After her husband graduated law school, Dr. Fontham and he moved to New Orleans. Five years later, after the birth of her son and daughter, Dr. Fontham entered graduate school at Tulane University School of Public Health & Tropical Medicine. “Graduate school seemed like a better choice for a career in medical research than medical school – especially with two small children. I could complete it at my own pace. Off we went each morning, my son to kindergarten, my daughter to nursery school, and me to graduate school – all with brown lunch bags that I packed for us.”

Dr. Fontham recalls her initial MPH studies, “As soon as I discovered epidemiology, I was hooked – for life.”

After completing her Dr.P.H. coursework, before finishing her dissertation, she was hired in 1979 by Dr. Pelayo Correa, as project manager of three case-control studies of lung, pancreas and stomach cancer in the Department of Pathology at LSU School of Medicine. She credits Dr. Correa, LSU Boyd Professor (now emeritus), with tremendous influence on her development as a researcher.

“He was a pathologist by training, but an epidemiologist by experience,” recalls Dr. Fontham. “He is a very wise man, whose view of the big picture complemented my step-by-step methodological research. He had a vision of where we were headed long before we got there.”

Dr. Correa also mentored Vivien W.M. Chen, Ph.D., who joined their research in 1982.

“Vivien and I became peer mentors. Having a peer mentor is a wonderful thing – you learn as much from peer mentors as you do from your more experienced colleagues.”

(Continued on page 8.)

Schweitzer Fellows

SEVEN LSUHSC School of Public Health Students have garnered prestigious fellowships with the New Orleans Albert Schweitzer Fellowship Program since its establishment in 2007.



Amy Thierry and Lauren Cole

Amy Thierry and Lauren Cole (MPH Class of 2010) created a project to improve the oral health of elementary school children in the Greater New Orleans area. As Schweitzer Fellows, they are implementing this oral health education program at Ames Elementary and Butler Elementary after-school care programs through the Jefferson Youth Foundation. The curriculum increases overall knowledge and awareness of oral health, and introduces proper oral health techniques, such as brushing, flossing, and healthy eating habits.



Emily Rogers and Shannon Speeg

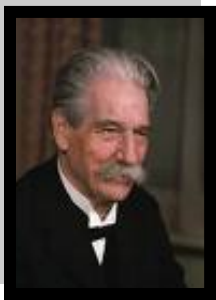
The three LSUHSC SPH students who participated in the 2008-2009 Inaugural Class of New Orleans Schweitzer Fellowships are: **Valerie Fontenot, Jonathan Howe, and Tyra Toston**, all 2009 MPH graduates.



Valerie Fontenot, Jonathan Howe and Tyra Toston

Emily Rogers and Shannon Speeg (MPH Class of 2010) seek to increase the fitness activity of participating senior citizens by providing exercise classes and informational sessions. These Schweitzer Fellows are conducting the program over a five month period at two New Orleans Council on Aging senior centers. By the end of the program, the students will evaluate improvement in the understanding of disease conditions and healthy living, a reduction in or decreased severity in chronic diseases among participants, and improvement in the social and mental status of senior citizen participants.

Albert Schweitzer



Albert Schweitzer

The Albert Schweitzer Fellowship was founded in 1940 in the United States to support Dr. Schweitzer's medical work, which he practiced in Africa before, during and after World Wars I & II. Because of his philosophy of ***Reverence for Life*** and lifelong service to humanity, he was awarded the Nobel Prize. Today the Fellowship continues to provide direct service projects to underserved communities.

For decades, the Albert Schweitzer Fellowship has supported emerging health professionals who are dedicated and skilled in addressing the health and needs of deprived communities. Its mission is to develop "leaders in service" whose example can influence and inspire others.

<http://www.schweitzerfellowship.org/features/who/>

<http://images.encarta.msn.com/xrefmedia/sharemed/targets/images/pho/t232/T232052A.jpg>

Professor Scribner *(Continued from page 3.)*

“Once you adopt this point of view, there are all sorts of things to study,” says Scribner. “It’s like visiting your grandmother’s attic. You pick up one thing after another that is interesting and all of it needs to be researched.”

Asked how many researchers have joined the fold of ecological epidemiology, Scribner comments:

“I don’t have the specific number, but interest is growing. Initially research in the field was funded by private grants. Robert Wood Johnson took a lead with active living research followed by other foundation support of violence prevention, a big interest in obesity and alcohol outlet density — I’m considered the old guy in that field,” Scribner smiles.

Within the last 10 years NIH has become very interested in the field, providing substantial funding to ecological epidemiology. It’s “Grandma’s Attic” all over.

*“If you want to get paid to think,
go into public health.”*

“Walking around the attic,” Scribner stumbled on the “mother load.” His newest area of study is stress in the neighborhood and biomarkers in genes being expressed when persons are exposed to that stressful environment.

“We have a gene nested in an individual who is nested in the environment — it’s the whole kit and caboodle of the ecological epidemiology argument.”

Scribner returns to his reasons for pursuing public health research over a clinical career, “You have to have a passion — sometimes it is a life experience or just walking in another guy’s shoes. Then you have to figure things out: how to do what you want to do to make the world a better place. If you want to get paid to think, go into public health.

“We don’t always see the results quickly, but we have the tools in public health to make lasting effects that move culture/society along. We can change policies and health outcomes for many people. It’s real rewarding from that whole soul sense; you feel good about what you are doing.

“Who could want anything better?”

Selected 2008-2009 Faculty Publications

(Continued from page 4.)

Bluthenthal, RN, Cohen D, Farley T, **Scribner RA** (2008). Alcohol availability and neighborhood characteristics in Los Angeles, California and southern Louisiana. *J Urban Health*, 85(2):191-205.

Scribner R, Mason K, **Theall K**, **Simonsen N**, Schneider SK, Towim LG, DeJong W. (2008). The contextual role of alcohol outlet density in college drinking. *J Stud Alcohol Drugs*, 69(1):112-20.

Theall K, **Scribner R**, Cohen D, Blumenthal R, Matthias Schonlau, Farley T (2009). Social capital and the neighborhood alcohol environment. *Health and Place*, 15:323-332.

Kishore V, **Theall K**, Robinson W, Pichon J, Scribner R, Roberson E, Johnson S (2008). Resource loss, coping, alcohol use, and post-traumatic stress symptoms among survivors of hurricane Katrina: a cross-sectional study. *American Journal of Disaster Medicine*, 3(6):345-57.

Theall KP, Clark RA, Amedee A, Dumestre J, **Kissinger P**. (2008). Alcohol consumption and HIV-1 vaginal RNA shedding among women. *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs*, 69:454-458.

Clark RA, **Theall KP**, Kissinger P. (2008). Microscopy and culture for trichomonas vaginalis: are both required? *International Journal of STDs and AIDS*, 18(3): 220.

Horswell R, Butler MK, Kaiser M, **Thomas, SM**, McNabb S, Besse J, et al (2008). Disease management programs for the underserved. *Disease Management*, 11(3), 141-144.

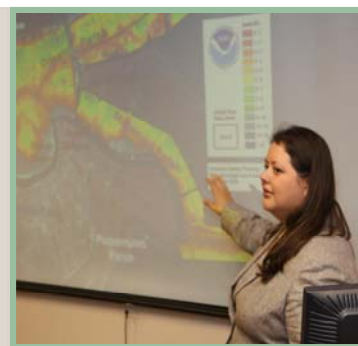
(Continued on page 8.)

NATIONAL PRESENTATIONS



LAUREN SPIZALE (MPH Class of 2010) presents her research on "Characteristics of Persons with HIV \geq 60 Years in an Urban Clinic in New Orleans" at the 2009 International Association of Physicians in AIDS in Care Conference in New Orleans during the fall, 2009.

JESSICA BEHRHORST (MPH 2009) presented her research on "Exploring the Accessibility and Affordability of Health Care Services among Hispanic and Latino Immigrants in New Orleans" at the SOPHE 2009 Conference in New Orleans in summer, 2009.



JAMES H. DIAZ, M.D., Dr.P.H., MPH & TM, Professor and Program Director of the Environmental and Occupational Health Program, presented research

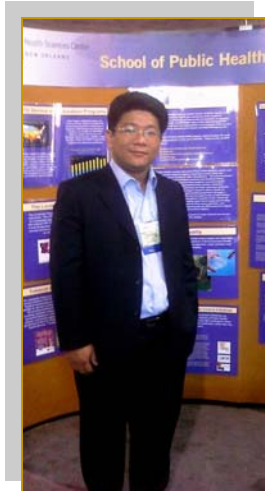


this fall on "The Transmission of Diseases in Airports & on Aircraft" to the Transportation Research Board (TRB) of the National Academy of Sciences in Washington, DC. He was also appointed to its Advisory Board, tasked with reviewing grant RFPs submitted to the Academies and its research units, such as the TRB, and to advising the members of the National Academies.

DR. CHIH-YANG HU, Assistant Professor of Environmental and Occupational Health, presented research papers at



three conferences in fall, 2009: "Emergency Post Hurricane Debris Landfills in New Orleans: More Superfund Sites?" at the 2009 National Environmental Public Health Conference in Atlanta; "Rainwater Harvesting or Not? A Cost/Benefit Analysis Using Water-Energy Correlation and GIS-Based Precipitation Simulation in Taipei, Taiwan" at the 2009 Annual Water Environment Federation Technical Exhibit and Conference (sponsored by the CDC, the National Center for Environmental Health, the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry and National Environmental Health Association) in Orlando; and "Wetland Restoration: Using Municipal Wastewater as a Resource" at the 2009 American Public Health Association 137th Annual Meeting in Philadelphia.



TUNG-SUNG TSENG, Dr.P.H., CHES, Assistant Professor, Behavioral and Community Health Sciences Program, presented a research poster at the American Public Health Association (APHA) 137th Annual Meeting: on "Racial Disparities in Smoking Cessation among Cancer Survivors," Tung-Sung Tseng, DrPH, Hui-Yi Lin, PhD, Ted Chen, PhD, Leonard Jack, PhD and Sarah Moody-Thomas, PhD.

Dean Fontham (Continued from page 4.)

It was in this setting that Drs. Fontham, Correa and Chen released their groundbreaking and controversial research on lung cancer patients from New Orleans, Atlanta, Houston, Los Angeles and San Francisco that put the topic of second-hand smoke on the map.

After working almost 20 years in the School of Medicine's Pathology Department, Dr. Fontham was called into the Dean's office in 1998 and asked to head the Department of Public Health and Preventive Medicine.

"I was surprised, intrigued and a little flattered, but concerned about leaving Dr. Correa and my colleagues and about how the administrative position would impact my research," she relates.

Since then, the department, and subsequent school, experienced great growth of faculty and staff, and public health programs and degree offerings.

"We have had challenges in the midst of Katrina, and everyone in the School of Public Health has demonstrated resilience and flexibility to meet those challenges. I, and everyone else in the school, look forward to receiving specialty accreditation for the School – and we would already have it have been were it not for Katrina and new CEPH criteria. But, speaking in the vernacular, we kept on trucking. We had to, and we did.

"We are in a beautiful space now, and our research and service programs (of nearly \$20 million) are growing. We haven't rested. We've evaluated our previous strategic plan and have developed our plan for 2009-2014; we're reviewing our curriculum to ensure that it meets the competencies needed by our students."

After establishing one Ph.D. in Biostatistics, developing another in Epidemiology, and with a third on the drawing board for Community Health Sciences, "we are getting ready to move on CEPH accreditation," smiles Dr. Fontham.

"It is a really nice place to be, even if it was a long time coming."

For more information about Dr. Fontham's extensive cancer research, see her CV at: http://publichealth.lsuhs.edu/pdf/Faculty_CV/CV-Fontham.pdf.



SPH Intramural Flag Football

If you drove by UNO fields on a Sunday afternoon this fall semester, you would have seen an attractive group of people in Caribbean-blue shirts. They are the School of Public Health's first Intramural Flag Football team.

Our LSUHSC students and staff played exceptionally well – finishing every game early due to the "mercy rule" (winning by a substantial amount). Anxiously awaiting next semester's sport, team members are contemplating hockey, water polo, figure skating, cheerleading, or beach volleyball. Intramural sports are open to all LSUHSC students, faculty, and staff who wish to participate.

Shown (l to r) are: Bottom Row: Keith Peres, Paul Lindsey, Reese Alkire, Andrew Palmer, Daniel Broy; Middle Row: Barbara Harlan, Megan Relle, Lindsey Jones, Paula Mischler; Top Row: Carl Kluttz and Braden Kluttz.

Selected 2008-2009 Faculty Publications

(Continued from page 6.)

Tseng TS, Holt CL, Shipp M, Eloubeidi M, Britt K, Norena M, Fouad MN (2009). Predictors of colorectal cancer knowledge and screening among church-attending african americans and whites in the deep south. *Journal of Community Health*, 34:90-97.

Kohler C, Schoenberger YM, **Tseng TS**, Rose L. (2008). Correlates of transitions in stage of change for quitting among adolescent smokers. *Addictive Behaviors*, 33(12): 1615-1618.

Tseng TS, Lin H (2008). Gender and age disparity in health related behaviors and behavioral patterns based on a national study of taiwan. *International Journal of Behavioral Medicine*, 15(1): 1-7.

Aaron, S, McMahon, J, Milano, D, Torres, L, **Tortu, S**, Mildvan, D, Simm, M. (2008). Intranasal transmission of hepatitis C virus: virological and clinical evidence. *Clinical Infectious Diseases*, 47(7): 931-934. (Also printed in NIDA News Scan – NIDA Addiction Research News, 23 March 2009).