Changing the Course of AIDS
Deutsch, Charles, Dickinson, David

Published by Cornell University Press

Deutsch, Charles and David Dickinson.
Changing the Course of AIDS: Peer Education in South Africa and Its Lessons for the Global Crisis.


For additional information about this book
https://muse.jhu.edu/book/42861

For content related to this chapter
https://muse.jhu.edu/related_content?type=book&id=1676956
This book was a pleasure to write. I learned a great deal. For that I am grateful to many people.

Above all, I would like to thank the many HIV/AIDS peer educators who appear in this book (under pseudonyms) or contributed to the research in so many different ways. It would be hard to find a kinder, more interesting, or more dedicated group of people to research and write about. That, however, is not why I wrote a book about peer educators. I wrote it because I believe that peer education is a critical component of any effective response to HIV/AIDS and, indeed, to changing behavior beyond the challenge of AIDS. As such, the peer educators in this book are not simply research subjects but colleagues with whom I have worked and from whom I have learned. One peer educator whom I will name, since we have worked and published together, is Duncan Kabelo Kgata who has taught me more than any other individual peer educator. Duncan, *ke a leboga*!

In addition to peer educators, many others involved in peer education programs—medical doctors, managers, trade union officials, nurses, and
social workers—participated in the research; some appear (also under pseudonyms) in this book, and I am grateful to them all. The research would not have been possible without the HIV/AIDS managers at the companies I refer to as Autocircle, Autostar, Bestbuyco, Deco, Finco, and Mineco granting me research access—something that was not always easy for them given corporate fears over the reputational aspect of HIV/AIDS. I am also grateful to Brad Mears at the South African Business Coalition on HIV/AIDS (SABCOHA) for consistently and publicly supporting my research on peer education.

The research was funded from grants made by the University of the Witwatersrand (Wits) AIDS Research Institute and the Wits Faculty of Commerce, Law and Management’s Research Committee. Professors Mukul Gupta and Mthuli Ncube at Wits Business School supported and approved the financing of working papers based on my research. Krish Sigamoney has consistently provided administrative support, while Gila Carter ably transcribed the many interviews.

The opportunity to take sabbatical leave during 2006–2007 greatly assisted in the production of this book. Grants from the Oppenheimer Memorial Trust and Wits’ Anderson Capelli Fund allowed me to spend three months as a visiting scholar at the Institute of Industrial Relations, University of California, Berkeley. The opportunity to read and to reflect on my research was critical to the development of the arguments advanced. During my sabbatical I also spent two months living in a Free State township. There I conducted no research; my objective was to improve my Sesotho, but the experience of living in an African township helped me better understand the challenges faced by peer educators.

My exposure to the life of Africans started, long before I stayed in the Free State, in the township of Katlehong, southeast of Johannesburg. I am thankful to Daniel Morena Thulo and my many friends in Monise and other parts of Katlehong for accepting me as a part of their lives. The significance of African traditional healing plays a prominent part in this book. My understanding of this owes a great deal to Thapelo ‘Touch’ Hlahatse (Traditional Doctor Mosia) for which I am grateful.

My ideas on peer education have been both affirmed and challenged by Dr. Charles Deutsch of the Harvard School of Public Health/Centre for the Support of Peer Education (South Africa) who, in contrast to the “experts” pilloried in this book, is most certainly someone who understands the importance of peer-to-peer communication.
Pete Strauss and Karen Birdsall read and commented on earlier drafts of Chapter 1 and assisted in shaping my arguments into a comprehensible form. Suzanne Gordon, coeditor of Cornell University Press’s Culture and Politics of Health Care Work series, took on what was still very much a work in progress. I could not have hoped for a better editor. The book is immeasurably more readable, and stronger, as a result of her input.

Finally, I dedicate this book to all peer educators and their fight for life. I hope that it contributes to their work and helps make AIDS everybody’s everyday concern.