



# AIDS and Anthropology Bulletin

 NEWSLETTER OF THE AIDS AND ANTHROPOLOGY RESEARCH GROUP

VOLUME 19, ISSUE 2

FALL/WINTER 2007

## Letter from the Chair

Dear AARG,

I want to acknowledge the behind-the-scenes efforts of our bulletin editor, Dugeidy Ortiz. Thank you for making the timely availability of another newsletter possible, Dugeidy!

This is our last newsletter before the AAA Meetings held this year in Washington D.C. Our business meeting will be held on Thursday, November 29 from 12:15 – 1:30 p.m. As yet, the location has not been announced.

Please join us for the business meeting. It's the best way for us to us to keep some cohesiveness and momentum in AARG. New members we have not yet met in person, please come, introduce yourselves, share your ideas and suggestions for what we can do to make AARG most relevant to your research and work, and please bring other colleagues who may be interested as well.

Here are some of the topics that we will cover at the business meeting:

- Updates from officers
- Election Results

- Announcement of Professional and Paper award winners
- Ideas for increasing the number of submissions, particularly among students
- Revisions of paper submission guidelines
- SMA policy statement update
- Ideas for increasing membership

Other issues—your suggestions!

Please send suggestions for other topics/issues/concerns you want to discuss if time permits to: [delia.easton@gmail.com](mailto:delia.easton@gmail.com)

Thank you and I look forward to seeing you in D.C.

Delia

### Editor:

Dugeidy Ortiz

### Layout and Design:

Dugeidy Ortiz

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## Letter from the Editor

We are fast approaching the 2007 AAA meetings in Washington D.C. Normally we include all the HIV/AIDS related panels and presentations in the Bulletin but this year we have broken tradition and are sending out a handy supplement with all the panels and presentations that you can carry with you at the meetings.

I decided on the supplement to provide much needed article space. In this issue we have an article by Robert Heimer, et.al, about tailoring HIV prevention education for primary care providers. The rest of the newsletter is dedicated to Moher Downing's fieldnotes, which were written in 2005 during her fieldwork in South Africa and Tan-

zania and are introduced by Doug Goldsmith.

I want to thank David Beine for his great job in compiling the AAA presentation list.

Let's keep the Bulletin going! Submit papers, announcements and photos to [aargsub@gmail.com](mailto:aargsub@gmail.com). I look forward to your submissions!

**AIDS AND  
ANTHROPOLOGY  
RESEARCH GROUP**

**Officers:**

Chair Delia Easton  
Sec./Treasurer Karen Kroeger  
Membership Virginia Mann  
Dir.e-comm. Ray Bucko

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Margaret Connors (1997)  
Fred Bloom (1998-99)  
Elisa J. Sobo (2000-01)  
Merrill Singer (2002-03)  
Doug Goldsmith (2004-2006)

**AARG Announcements**



AMERICAN ANTHROPOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION



**106th AAA Annual Meeting  
Nov 28 - Dec 2  
Washington, DC**

**Please join us at the American Anthropological Association's 106th Annual Meeting to be held November 28 – December 2, 2007 in Washington DC at the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel. This year's theme is: Difference, (In)Equality & Justice.**

[Difference, \(In\)equality & Justice](#)  
Faye V Harrison, 2007 Executive Program Chair



**The AIDS and Anthropology Research Group**

**Mission**

The AIDS and Anthropology Research Group (AARG), an interest group of the Society for Medical Anthropology (SMA), is a network of scholars interested in anthropological research on HIV infection and AIDS. The mission of the AARG is to support anthropological research in the fight against HIV and AIDS.

To this end, AARG

1) works to use anthropological research in the fight against HIV and AIDS, 2) advocates for AIDS research within anthropology, 3) promotes AIDS research by anthropologists within the broader AIDS research community, 4) and provides a forum for anthropologists working on AIDS to meet & communicate about their work.

## AARG Announcements

**AIDS AND ANTHROPOLOGY GROUP  
BUSINESS MEETING  
THURSDAY NOVEMBER 29 2007  
12:15-1:30 PM  
AGENDA**

- \* Updates from officers
- \* Election Results
- \* Announcement of Professional and Paper award winners
- \* Ideas for increasing the number of submissions, particularly among students
- \* Revisions of paper submission guidelines
- \* SMA policy statement update
- \* Ideas for increasing membership
- \* Other issues-your suggestions!



Hello AARG Members:

The End of October is AARG Membership Renewal Time – Please renew your membership and forward this to colleagues who might be interested in joining AARG for the first time.

To renew your membership please use this URL:

[http://BlueQ.creighton.edu/  
BlueQ/surveylogin.asp?  
k=119370094302](http://BlueQ.creighton.edu/BlueQ/surveylogin.asp?k=119370094302)

If you have any problem with this procedure please contact me at [bucko@creighton.edu](mailto:bucko@creighton.edu)

Thanks for your generosity in continuing your membership in AARG.

Ray

**We would like to thank everyone who submitted papers for the AARG Paper Prize!**

**We received a record number of entries. 5 student and 7 professional paper submissions!**

**Winning papers will be published in the next issue!**

## Training Pharmacists and Primary Care Providers in HIV Prevention among IDUs

Robert Heimer\*, Merrill Singer\*\*, Laretta E. Grau\*, and Mark L. Kinzly\*

\* Yale University

\*\* Center for Health, Intervention and Prevention and Center for Health Communication and Marketing at the University of Connecticut

Expanding syringe access is a vital element in HIV/AIDS prevention, and a number of anthropologists have been involved in research over the last several decades supporting this conclusion (Compton et al. 2004, Singer et al. 1997, Valleroy et al. 1995). As a result, some states initiated programs to train pharmacists and health providers about the health benefits of participation in efforts to expand syringe access and lower HIV and hepatitis risk (Rich et al. 2004), In Connecticut, for example, it is estimated that these efforts decreased HIV transmission by about 50 percent (Heimer 2004). In recent years, however, syringe access for IDUs has shrunk. Syringe exchange programs have fewer resources. Further, there has been reluctance among state officials in a time of tightening budgets and decreasing national attention on AIDS to push for increased state funding and cities with programs have municipal budgets that barely are able to cover cost-of-living increases in staff salaries. Moreover, pharmacists are increasingly reluctant to sell syringes over-the-counter. To counter this trend, Connecticut researchers and their colleagues outside of the state have teamed together to implement a state-funded program designed to offer training coupled to continuing medical education accreditation for pharmacists and primary care medical providers to

increase their willingness to provide safe and reliable access to sterile syringes. The planned evaluation for the project will assess the impact of the training on pharmacists, healthcare providers, and injection drug users (IDUs) who need access to sterile syringes.

Components of the new program include:

- 1) Creation of an advisory board of experts, including experienced pharmacists and educators from Connecticut and adjacent states to help develop training curricula for pharmacists and primary care providers.
- 2) Development and implementation of a training curriculum that fits within the normal professional development and continuing education programs.
- 3) Assessment of the impact of the training based on the collection of data on knowledge, attitudes, and willingness to offer services using pre- and post-training surveys.
- 4) Collection of data from participating pharmacies about provision of sterile syringes and from participating primary care providers about screening, hepatitis testing, and prescribing of sterile syringes.

- 5) Implementation of a case-control study of active injectors from six selected communities to determine the difference in injection risk behaviors between injectors in communities served or not served by participating pharmacists and primary care providers.

Training for pharmacists focuses on increasing awareness of the nature of addiction, the reasons for the spread of HIV and hepatitis among drug injectors, and the steps they can take to help reduce these syringe-borne infections without affecting the services they provide to other customers. The training emphasizes that drug abuse and addiction are medical problems and not manifestations of moral failing. Studies have shown that individuals who embrace a public health perspective on drug abuse are more open to participating in interventions to reduce the negative consequences of addiction. As a result, the first focus of the training for pharmacists is providing them with an up-to-date explanation of the nature and causes of addictive behaviors. In this explanation, we use analogies that are familiar to pharmacists, including their involvement in over-the-counter sales of nicotine patches for addiction to cigarettes and sales of drugs for high blood pressure, diabetes, and other chronic diseases that, like addiction, may be the long-term consequences of

## Training Pharmacists and Primary Care Providers in HIV Prevention among IDUs

earlier life choices and social circumstances. The second focus of the training is on the laws and regulations concerning non-prescription syringe sales. The third focus is on pharmacists' attitudes. There now exists a rich literature cataloging these attitudes (e.g., Supplement 2 of volume 42 of the *Journal of the American Pharmaceutical Association*), but it is noteworthy that one study of pharmacists in Alaska found that the single best predictor of whether or not a pharmacy will sell syringes without a prescription is if other local pharmacies are doing so (Harbke et al. 2000). We therefore use pharmacists themselves to talk about their role as agents of public health.

Training for primary care providers emphasizes the importance of drug use and abuse screening as part of routine health care, referral to substance abuse treatment programs, injection hygiene training, prescribing them syringes, providing counseling and testing for hepatitis B and C as well as HIV, and vaccinating against hepatitis B. Screening for substance abuse during primary care visits is becoming increasingly common and simple screening measures have been developed. Research suggests that primary care physicians do not always recognize that they can use a simple screening tool to identify patients with drug-related problems. A major training focus, as a result, is increasing primary care providers' awareness of the existence of easy-to-use and reliable screening tools and training them in their use. The second topic covered in the training for primary care providers is the legal basis for health-

care provider prescription of syringes to drug injectors. Finally, the training addresses IDUs' vulnerability to hepatitis B and C infection and will seek to promote increased testing for these infections. Further, as part of routine phlebotomy procedures, IDU patients can receive injection hygiene training. Members of our team have developed a brief intervention on this subject and have preliminary evidence of its effectiveness in improving injection safety.

The pharmacist and primary care provider training project represents part of the critical movement to translate ethnographic and epidemiological research into effective public health programming in the fight against HIV/AIDS.

\*\*Merrill Singer was supported by CDC Grant# P01CD000237 in the final preparation of this article.

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## MOHER DOWNING'S HIV CONSULTANT FIELDNOTES: MOHER GIVES MORE!

Fieldnotes from South Africa and Tanzania

2005

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With an introduction by: Doug Goldsmith

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The intent, explicit detail and vivid, intimate description in Moher's fieldnotes is a result of a knowledgeable and committed eye and ear, a desire to tell all to those who need to know what she is experiencing, and a subsequent painstaking clarifying self-edit. To be succinct, rather than cute, Moher gives more - more than might be expected, and more than another might otherwise have included. A cautious mentor might advise a note taker to exclude one's personal involvement, and particularly one's feelings, from what gets documented. Some even advise setting apart left and right sides of journals for differing sets of observations. As a reader can see from Moher's fieldnotes, she is not one to present a partial account. Moher spells it all out for us, front stage and back stage, event and interpretation.

Moher's trailblazing work in AIDS prevention and compassionate advocacy for all who struggle against HIV recommend her insightful methodology, and indeed her fieldnote style, for emulation. Moher enthusiastically offered to serve AARG in all the ways requested of her -- as Steering Committee member, as prize paper reviewer, and as Chair-elect. After her unfortunate stroke, which followed the consultancy events described in the fieldnotes, she stepped aside to let another serve AARG as current Chair. As the then Chair of AARG, who was urging her to once again be on another HIV session, I had initially received these notes while she was still in the field, (as one more long time friendly ear, along with her closer colleagues and family). She made it known to me that she wishes to share her fieldnotes with AARG in this issue of the AAB, in order to further contribute to the work she remains committed too.

Thanks again Moher,

Doug Goldsmith, Past Chair of AARG

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## KWAZULU NATAL– SOUTH AFRICA

### KwaZulu Natal Notes

October 19, 2005

I am here in what used to be the old African Zulu Kingdom now improbably called KwaZulu Natal or KZN as the locals affectionately call it for short. I am in the valley of 1000 or 2000 hills which actually looks like the Garden of Eden. I am really jet lagged and woke up at first light and am now sitting under many flowering jacarandas whose purple blossoms are falling all over my computer. We drank some really good South African wine last night. I was drinking with Norwegians, which is never a good thing, as they really know how to throw it back.

But let me start back a couple of days...to last Sunday night when I left my dear Luis and my old girl, Maggie, and Rosemary at the airport. Luis was suffering from a severe back problem with his spinal stenosis. He has been in so much pain that he could hardly walk or stand up for more than a few minutes. Naturally, I didn't want to leave him. This whole trip has been on again off again so many times that I don't think I really thought I was really going even though I kept packing and doing the things one does to leave town for more than two months. Some how I thought it would all come together before I left and that I would know where I was going to be after the first week here in South Africa. But hey it didn't come together, and it still hasn't come together and I

still don't know where I will be after next Wednesday, but more about that later. Right now I am on the terrace in the most beautiful country hotel complete with rondoal roofs surrounded by the most amazing birds and flowers and ponds full of giant koi of extravagant colors. Being a little jet lagged, I ran out of sleep was wide-awake at 6 AM. So here I am typing while Africa awakens around me.

I didn't get to fly business class this time. I was in steerage with the peons, and boy is it a long flight when you can't stretch out and luxuriate in those wonderful seats that turn into real beds with big fluffy pillows. Although I did take a sleeping pill and managed to sleep soundly for long stretches of time. I was however awakened when my South African Airlines flight stopped to refuel in a very strange place—the Isle de Sal off the coast of Senegal. My seatmate, Jeanette, a South African woman who has lived in North Carolina for the last 25 years, told me the story of this strange place off the Atlantic coast. Apparently, when South African Airlines started up some many years ago, none of the northern African nations would allow them to land to refuel on their soil because of Apartheid. Can't say that I blame them, so the South Africans bought their own island for that purpose. And what a strange island, it is. Apparently only airline personnel live there because there isn't much of an infrastructure there. Jeanette told me that in the old days, they made everyone get off the plane whether you wanted to or not and go

into the shack to drink really bad tea and coffee. Sleeping babies and children had to be awakened and dragged off the plane. She said her kids used to scream when she woke them up and dragged them off the plane to this surreal place in the middle of the Atlantic. I guess in the post 911 world, it is better to let sleeping babies lie, so we just took another sleeping pill and went back to sleep while we sat there for about an hour. The rest of the trip was uneventful, which is always a good thing when you are flying.

I landed in Jo'burg and had to transfer to the domestic terminal, which entailed walking up miles and miles of ramps that were supposed to be moving, but of course, weren't working. I imagine that happens often. Old porters kept trying to wrestle our carts away from us, but for some reason Jeanette wouldn't let them push our carts up the miles and miles of non-moving ramps. By the time we arrived at the domestic terminal, I was sweating like I had run a marathon. I checked in, and then staggered into the bar for a well-earned cigarette and cold water. When I got to Durban, of course, my ride to the conference site was not waiting for me as promised. Wisely I had the cell phone number of the chap so I borrowed a cell phone from a total stranger and called him. I was very relieved when he answered on the first ring and promised my ride was on the way and would wave a sign when he got there. I was eventually picked up by the conference organizer's son along with two African

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## KWAZULU NATAL– SOUTH AFRICA

*(Continued from page 7)*

graduate students studying in Norway. I promptly fell asleep in the car so I didn't get to see much of KZN, or get to bug the students for their life stories. I woke up as we came around the bend and got our first view of the Valley of the 1000 or 2000 Hills. I am sharing a room with Lorene from Kenya. Lorene is the grad student of my friend, Jone Salamanson, a professor at the University of Oslo, and the reason I am in the Garden of Eden. I am at a conference sponsored by the Theology Departments of the University of Oslo, the University of KwaZulu Natal, and the University of Diakonhjemmet (whatever that is). This joint collaboration is to develop a better understanding of the relationship between religion and AIDS...that sure sounded "conferency. The conference is called "Broken Bodies/Healing Communities and then some long second title, but everyone affectionately calls it "Broken Bodies" for short, as in "I am at just at Broken Bodies for one day", or "will you be at Broken Bodies tomorrow?" Is that a Norwegian thing? It sure seems weird. I was invited to talk about women and AIDS and create a "bridge" between academia and community-based research. I have never been at a theological conference before, and I can tell you that the deadly combination of theology and academia is really scary. I sat through papers that minutely examined John 3:23 for some signs of how to interpret his teachings to make them relevant to AIDS and bible study groups. Oh it all just went on and on. Finally

on the second day, there were some papers from local community groups doing AIDS work in different churches. I finally felt at home. My paper was right at home with theirs. I came to talk about how AIDS positive women's peer groups could be started in the small little congregations in the Zulu townships.

It turns out that the woman and her husband that I am going to visit after this part of my trip is finished, are good friends of the man who has been taking care of us here and making all the arrangements and taking care of the logistics. How can this be? I have one name of someone in Petermaritzburg to look up and bring gifts from her mother in Oakland...and this person is connected to a person I never met before, but have become good friends with in the time I have been here. It is just too freaky!

### Saturday, October 22 or something

After the conference, Jone, and her 7 colleagues and I drove about an hour to a place called Mpophomeni, a township that was founded in 1966 after the Areas Growth Act was passed---the nice term for when they moved all the blacks and Indians and coloreds to reservations/townships. I have to tell you that it was like doing Anthropology about a hundred years ago with those Norwegians. We were all put in different houses in the "rich" part of the rural township. I stayed in a 3-bedroom house with furniture that

I swear they bought on Mission Street, it was so ornate and formal. The ceiling of the entire house is actually indescribable, but I will try. It was all done in layers of pine and each piece was intricately cut out and layered into 4 or 5 different levels down the hall, around the formal living and dining room and into the kitchen. Jone told me that the husband is a drunk married to two sisters who are both pregnant. I counted 4 girls and a very sickly baby. None of the girls responded to my attempts to play and kid with them. They could barely tell me their names. Only one of the sisters seemed to be around. Apparently they make all the money by running taxi vans and the tourist house (I bet it is mostly social scientists who stay there as "tourists"). The weather was warm and I sure needed my bedroom window open (well it was the little girls' bedroom actually). But no one opens their windows in Africa no matter what the weather as I found out in Uganda. I wasn't worried about anyone getting in through the NATO wire and the bars, but I was worried that someone would wake me up and ask me to close my window as they did in Uganda all the time. The green hills around Mpophomeni reminded me of California in the late winter/early spring. It was just beautiful and familiar. My delightful academic companions/housemates, Bawa, an anthropologist from Ghana who has lived in Sweden for the last 25 years, and Hans, a Norwegian University/Academic minister, who has spent time in Namibia, had breakfast and dinner together every day. The food

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## KWAZULU NATAL– SOUTH AFRICA

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was lovely, and unlike Namibia, they don't eat big game, they eat chicken, they eat chicken at every meal. It is a good thing that I like to eat chicken at every meal also. I tried so hard to make small talk with one of the sisters, but she didn't speak any English. Very few of the people spoke English so unless we had Jone's 24-hour translator with us, even small talk was difficult especially with shy women.

Saturday afternoon it had been arranged for us to do a community report back from the Norwegians fieldwork. We helped one of Jone's "informants" organize a formal program on the computer, and all of sudden what we had thought of as informal became very informal. She printed up the agenda with a fancy title and made many copies and passed it around to everyone who showed up. Jone gave a brilliant speech about the vitality and vibrancy she found in their community. It was translated into Zulu and everyone liked it. I had asked Jone's informant to gather 6 HIV+ women who were open about their status to be part of an exercise about values and attitudes about HIV. It didn't go exactly as I had planned or how it had gone when I had done it other places (USA), but the audience got totally into putting their two cents into the values part and giving us long-winded explanations about how people with HIV should or shouldn't do this or that. Mostly the men dominated the discussion, and I had a hard job trying to stop that. Everything had

to be translated into Zulu, which made their long-winded explanations even longer. But people said they had never had a community meeting where people got to speak their minds about HIV. I also brought them greetings from WORLD, the women with HIV organization that I have been working with for the last 14 years. I think they liked that, especially as I kept using the term "positive women" instead of women with HIV/AIDS. I like changing lexicons. Jone had catered a big community Braai (barbecue) that was really good. I had planned on showing the video about HIV University called "Each One Teach One", but we had a technology problem so that after everyone had gathered inside the hall, there was nothing to watch. We did manage to copy the CD onto the community center computer so they can watch it at a later time. That may not have happened if there had not been a computer problem so we decided to look on it as a good thing. I had spent a lot of time and money copying the video to DVD for just this purpose so I was pretty upset. The next day we got some people to come to the community center to view the DVD on the computer and they were really inspired. Oh I am so sorry that we didn't get to show it to the whole community because it is this wonderful story about how positive women start their own HIV Universities in their communities. You just want to go out and start one yourself after you see it.

Let me tell you about church on Sunday. Remember, this is fieldwork that

is related to the Broken Bodies project, which is all about religion and AIDS. Jone and her wonderful comrade, Sidsel, have made many trips to Mpophomeni over the last few years and have used the churches as their gatekeepers. I don't know if they flipped a coin or what to figure out who got what religion, but Jone got the Catholics and the Mhembe (the prophet with 27 wives and 63 children—oops he just died and left them all to his eldest son---more about that later). Sidsel got the Methodist, but they had the bad taste to split up over money during her fieldwork so they fight over her. Bawa... I forgot who Bawa got, but he got somebody. So we all had to decide who would go to which church on Sunday morning. You all know what a great churchgoer I am. I asked which had the best singing, and they all said the Methodist, of course. Well, I didn't realize that we wouldn't have a translator (the Catholic priest spoke English and everything was translated into Zulu), and it would turn out to be a little difficult to follow. So Hans and I joined Sidsel and went to the "new" Methodist church, which was held in a classroom in the local high school. The minister was very young, and greeted Sidsel with much enthusiasm. Us social scientist had taken up a collection before we left for church, and divided our money up between the two churches. Sidsel was in terrible quandary... both churches had sent representatives to her tourist house to insist on her coming to their church or something like that. She was awake all night trying to figure out how to best handle this

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## KWAZULU NATAL- SOUTH AFRICA

*(Continued from page 9)*

situation so she wouldn't alienate her "informants." She decided to go to both churches! Like Solomon, she explained to the first minister upon our arrival that she would leave in the middle to go to the rival church. Never a good idea. So people arrived with their lovely children, all dressed up (as was I), and we started singing in Zulu. Then he introduced Sidsel so she could explain why she would have the bad taste to get up and leave the classroom in the middle of the singing (it turns out that mostly they do sing through the whole service except when the minister is yelling at them in Zulu). She made a lovely speech that was translated by our other informant, whom Sidsel had asked to be there. Poor Sidsel, she had tears in her eyes when she told them how hard it was for her to leave. And then she gave them our donation towards building a real church. Well the singing really started then. I was mortified. (I have no idea how much money we gave them. I never got the money thing straight. I am not very good at that as the more I travel, the more confusing it gets. All I know is that I had 10 Rands left, which I know isn't much.) They sang and swayed and praised. She left Hans and I behind in our little school desks reading the blackboard from the Friday high school science lesson on Thermodynamics and the different levels on the atmosphere—I really know them now, and we were alone...the only two white people in this classroom/church. Then the young minister started his sermon. I have no idea

what he said...but I can tell you it was pretty steamy and full of spit and fire, I am sure. I would have loved to have even known the topic! At the end of the sermon, the Women's Prayer group marched in their uniforms... white dresses with red sashes and hats...and all very fat and young. I must say that I didn't understand this part. I thought they would sing separately, but they didn't. They just joined in with everyone else. Hans said he thought they come late because they are practicing, but I don't get it as they just joined in with everyone else. Maybe they were out praying for their new minister who so bravely broke away from his senior minister...well that's what I think happened. After a great round of singing and praying which involved Hans and I squeezing out of our double school desks, the minister asked dear Hans to give a blessing. He did a wonderful blessing, which the minister translated. I cried. He said wonderful things about them and their church and their families. Then the minister concluded the service and asked Hans and I to join him at the front of the room. The most wonderful, African thing then happened. Each man, woman, child, and baby in the congregation was presented to us while everyone sang and swayed. Hans and I grasped each individual hand and acknowledged them with a warm handshake, a sway as they sang, and a big smile in return to their big smile. It was overwhelming and so reminiscent of what...? It took a long time and I never wanted it to end. I never wanted the singing to stop, the swaying, the handshakes, the smiles, the

babies, the small children, the women, the young boys and girls, etc. Afterwards, the minister would not let us leave without being accompanied by someone from the church. Hans and I insisted that we could walk the few short blocks back to our house, but he said that "No, he was brought up to believe that he was responsible for us so that we couldn't leave until we had been passed on to someone else and were no longer under our care. Just then Jone's driver/translator showed up to rescue us. (Hey, I like this driver part of Africa. I want a driver in the US when I come home.)

Well church was the easy part to describe. Now I have to tell you about going to the Hmebe on Sunday afternoon. So get ready for a really long story. Jone has done extensive fieldwork in their community/family and she wanted to "present her findings to them", what we call a community report back. Now remember, the prophet has just died leaving all those wives and kiddies and no one in the wings to take over for him. Gee, I wonder why? What guy doesn't want 27 wives and 63 children? So we drive up the lovely hills to their community, which overlooks the whole valley (it looks like the Napa Valley with shanties and sheebens instead of the wineries). The whole weekend has been "hurry up and wait" and this is certainly no different. Being good little social scientists, we are totally patient and in the hurry up and wait groove). There is to be a catered feast

*(Continued on page 11)*

## TANZANIA

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(paid for by Broken Bodies budget and organized by Jone) and dancing. Jone has given us lots of background info about the community and her time there. We feel prepared. She had to give lots of money to the community in order to meet the prophet because her time in the field was short, and she couldn't afford to waste it using the customary field methods for getting through the gatekeepers to the key informant. Money expedited the usual process of time. After all, when you have 27 wives and 63 children, money must be in short supply. Anyway, we were greeted by an elder, which bode well. That meant we were welcome and expected. The prophet would never have greeted us. Jone explained that it was apparent that there was no heir-apparent prophet because then he would have NOT greeted us and we would know that. A large tent had been put up and we were seated in the shade overlooking the Valleys of the Midlands of KZN. We sat. We sat. We sat. Oh, I forgot to tell you that all the women had to have their heads covered. I, of course, knew this, and had my big white lady hat on with my church dress. The youngest of the 63 children started stealing into the tent and hanging around. I got bored and went to sit with them. They did not speak English, but I suspected they knew English songs. I said "Ittsy Bitty Spider Went Up the..." and before you knew it, they were singing that song and we were all spiders going up the water spout on each others bodies. Then I said the most important universal

word for children..."Barney" and there we were singing "I Love You... You Love Me..." After we ran out of songs, I got out my grandmother book that I had prepared for just such an occasion, and I was showing them pictures of all of you. I said each one of your names, and they said them back to me. "Luis, Makena, David, Timi, Kia, Maggie, Rosemary, etc., etc..." You are all in my book and your names have been spoken by Zulu children with 27 mothers and 62 siblings. I created a riot as the children crowded in to see my picture book. The Norwegians photographed the event so you will get pictures of moi in her big white Sears's hat surrounded by little African children crushing the babies as they swarm to look at photos of Americans. They were very impressed with David's tattoos. It passed the time...no seriously, I was happy that I made the effort to reach out, but I was actually scared as the babies started to cry when their siblings pushed and shoved to see my photos, and they were screaming as they were almost crushed. Imagine if I had been giving out money instead of photos and songs.

Finally, the dancing started. And what dancing it was. Jone had told us how slow and precise it was. But nothing prepared me for the exactness and the universality of it. First the young girls in white danced. Then the older women danced, and then the young boys. There was a drum and two horns that looked like didgerry doos (spelling) that could only really play

one note/sound, but what they did with it was amazing. The dancing lasted a long time, but not long enough as far as I was concerned because it was so wonderful. It was so different from the Zulu dancing the day before. It actually reminded me of Irish Keely dancing. They only moved from the waist down because it was not supposed to be sexual as was the Zulu dancing. While they were dancing, the caterer was serving the food starting with the elders first. None of this feed the children first. They took several hours to feed everyone. The food was plentiful and very good... that what lots of Norwegian money can do. The caterers just went slowly around the tent handing out bountiful plates of good food to each person starting with the senior men who were sitting in front of the dancers. We were next to them and were naturally served next as the honoured guests. The kids never made a peep for the food. I commented to the Norwegians that in the USA the children would have been served first. They thought that was strange. The children weren't served for more than an hour, and yet they never moved or acted impatient. When they were finally served, but not on plates as we were, but in Styrofoam boxes, they pleasantly handed the food down the line to the younger children. No adults got up to help the kids sort out the food! Imagine that? Toddlers walked quietly up to older children and they picked through their food, but then they were handed their own box of food. So what should we think? They weren't hungry? They were very

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well socialized about food? They come sixth in the food chain after elders, visitors, senior women, younger women, older children, etc. What would happen to American children if they came sixth in the food chain instead of first?

### TANZANIA

**Sunday, October 30, 2005**

Oops.....

Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania

I am so sorry...how did I get here on the edge of the Indian Ocean in Dar es Salaam off the coast of Zanzibar from the depths of the Zulu Valley? Sounds exciting, doesn't it? Looks good on paper? I am at the Holiday Inn, no less, looking at the Indian Ocean. Thursday, I thought I was going to Lesotho! Lesotho! Where the hell is Lesotho? Well, actually, it is right next to the Zulu Valley, but is it's own country in the middle of South Africa...one if not, Africa's poorest countries, where the HIV seroprevalence rate is thought to be as high as 80%!!! Apparently I was told that WHO was fighting over who should have me, but I think they just told me that because I sent the doctor in charge a nasty e-mail threatening to go home if they didn't settle my travel orders by Friday, the 29<sup>th</sup>. So they had a charming young man call me often and act like he knew what he was doing. He asked me where I wanted to

go! Well I have a \$284, 2-year, multi-entry visa to Ethiopia because that is what "they" told me to do, but I might also go to Uganda or Tanzania, or Lesotho. I actually didn't have an opinion as long as they reimburse me for my Ethiopia visa. Crass, but true.

So after getting up at 4 AM this morning and being taken to the airport by my new friend, Thelma, daughter of a woman I know from WORLD, who lives in Petermaritzburg, here, I am in the Holiday Inn overlooking the Botanical Gardens. Tomorrow I start work at the WHO office here. I briefly read my job description when I had a second on the Internet yesterday, and it terrified me. Don't expect to hear from me for a long time. Don't expect long chats about my Embassy friends like in Namibia or the nurses at the National Training Center or my trips to Game parks. It will be like Uganda, I am sure...exhaustion, chaos, miscommunication, little personal interaction, and just getting the job done.

I just came back from dinner that cost \$20,810 Tanzanian something (I just found out it is Schillings—how cute). What does that mean? I didn't change any money at the airport yesterday because it took so long to get my Visa (\$50 US) that I was afraid the driver would leave. I had dutifully purchased the *Lonely Planet Guide to Ethiopia* and was well into it when I found out that I was going to Tanzania. The *Lonely Planet* for Tanzania costs \$40 US so I am here without a guide knowing

nothing about Tanzania and no Internet access at the moment to do a quick search.

I am near Zanzibar...now isn't that exotic...which is having free elections for the first time today. So far the violence hasn't been so bad, according to the news, but if the right party doesn't win, then they predict violence. I guess the same will be true here in Tanzania where the elections will be held in a couple of days. It was all on the BBC news this morning. My hotel room is lovely and the windows even open so I can let in all the malaria mosquitos (I am taking preventive meds). So I slept with the hot air pouring into my room and the cold air conditioning pouring over it. Now I am at the WHO office near the hotel. A uniformed WHO driver picked me up in front of the hotel in the big WHO white van and made me feel very important. I have on crisp white and beige linen as one does in the tropic, and I am just dripping wet and my linen is crumbling as I write this. I haven't moved and the sweat is just pouring off of me. Ahhh...true Africa at last. So I am here waiting for the head of the WHO AIDS team to come to meet me.

Am I too old for this? I will let you know very soon.....

**Tuesday, November 1, 2005**

**All Souls Day**

I remember my dead...legions of

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them.

When I walked into the conference room at the WHO HQ yesterday morning, the first person I saw was a very nice doctor that I worked with in San Francisco at I-TECH, my old UCSF job. So of course, I felt immediately at home. He and his wife have been working in KwaZulu Natel and just arrived here about two weeks ago. They are both now working with WHO on the same project as me. Small world continues! It also appears that some of the people that I worked with in Uganda are going to help with the training here. Oh that will be so good as I really liked them.

I got a few tips at dinner tonight from them about where to go this weekend so I can swim in the Indian Ocean, and will make arrangements to do this Saturday hopefully. I am lost without the Lonely Planet and their Web site is pathetic for Tanzania.

I met the Election Observers on the elevator tonight just back from Zanzibar. I thought they were here to observe the elections, but they said they were returning from Zanzibar and that things weren't good. I would have like to have had dinner with them. Everything would be bad after the elections, and the trouble would start. That is my idea of heaven, yes. I was still asking them questions as they were stepping off the elevator. The help here at the hotel wear those stupid African costumes and are so sub-

servient that you think everyone here is so friendly. Well they actually are at Who and the National AIDS Control Program but I still need to meet some real Tanzanians, and then I will feel more settled.

Apparently we will leave here about the 13<sup>th</sup> of November to go to a rural province to do the training. I will do better there I expect.

The birds are incredible here in the morning because I am over the Botanical Gardens. I was worried that it would be all about traffic but that is definitely not the case. But I know nothing about the city. Tanzania is big tourist place so I know that all that cool exotic stuff is out there but I haven't seen it yet. Soon.

I just found out that we are leaving tomorrow for a retreat where we will sit and read all the training documents together!!!! These are the same documents that I slept with all summer that made me so miserable. I can't believe I am going to spend the weekend reading them aloud with a group of doctors in a small dingy rural hotel! I have to leave my bar and the swimming pool. I was going to take the boat to this little island with a nature reserve and snorkelling right off of Dar. Yesterday the nice Tanzanian doctors kept telling me that we might leave this morning if it is a holiday today. I kept asking them to explain and they did, but I never understood why they wouldn't or would know if

it was to be the holiday celebrating the end of Ramadan. Finally it was explained to me that it would only be a holiday if they saw the moon last night. They didn't see the moon, so it wasn't a holiday. They saw the moon in the Nigeria though, so it was a holiday there today. If they don't see the moon tonight, it won't be a holiday, but we will go anyway.

I have a secretary who I am supposed to ask to do things. Her name is Frieda. She is very nice, and it is good that she knows more than me, which isn't saying a lot at this point. I am back at the Holiday Inn having a wine next to the pool. She is still back at the office because it took me all day to proof these million documents that I know so well. It seems that each country that is going to get this cool training called IMAI (Integrated Management of Adult and Adolescent Illness) which will teach village health workers to treat people with AIDS with antiretroviral (ARVs) needs to adapt it to their own National HIV/TB, etc., Guidelines. So what they do is change the names in the hundreds of case studies to sound like names from their country. Of course, they don't change the names in all the materials



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where a specific name is mentioned so you have to slog through 9 docs to put in the correct new name or else you have no idea what case they are talking about because the names don't match. Sometimes they make female names but the pictures are male. I could go on endlessly about all the other picky, annoying things "adaptation" means. But hey, that's how you get "ownership and buy-in" from all the participating countries in the 3x5 Initiative (3 million people on ARVs by the end of 2005). Let me tell you, they are not even close to that goal. The next goal is 5x7 (5 million by 2007 and then 7x9, which I think is different. 7 million infections prevented by the end of 2009. How do they measure that, I wonder? So it is one step above "Where there is no Doctor", and the adherence issues will be huge, but adherence be damned... just get them on ARVs. So what if everyone becomes drug-resistant, and they develop new strains of the virus, at least they will have met their goal and the world will get off the backs of the West for not doing anything.

The people are so very nice here, and you can really feel the lack of fear that so characterizes South Africa. In South Africa, even in the townships, everyone has huge fences around their houses with about 10 feet of NATO wire on the top. Even houses that didn't have roofs, had fences! Every window has bars that do not open from the inside. Rooms in the houses have inside locks so you can lock

yourself in from the Blacks or the Whites or both, I guess---depending on what? Visitors told me stories of the fear that they encountered on both sides that just blew their minds. It will take a long time to get rid of the affects of apartheid. Here, I walk into an office full of Black doctors and perform the obligatory How are you? How was your night? How is your family? How is your day?, etc., and they say "Thank You. Your Welcome. Sorry"! Can you imagine a room full of doctors from the West saying that? Everyone says those three phases no matter what you say to them. Maybe they don't understand me. The waiter just asked me when I got here from Denmark?

Hey let me tell you about the birds. They are much cooler here than in Uganda. No gross, ugly Marabou Storks...peacocks and giant Guinea hens EVERYWHERE! The noise, the racket they make is unbelievable. I know that peacocks are noisy, but I didn't realize they sounded like women being murdered. That's what I awaken to every morning. I am not sure if it is the Guinea hens that sound like cats screaming or if it is the male peacocks. They get right in my face when I am walking through the Botanical Gardens on my way to work and scream at me! It is very startling the first time it happens. It is dusk now on the patio, and the raucous is rather frightening, but fun. "Help, help, help, help, help" they are screaming.

I can see the Indian Ocean from my office at WHO and from my room. It is quite beautiful, but will I ever get there? I can't wait.

**November 4, 2005**

**Kibaha Conference Center  
somewhere outside Dar**

What a place. I am locked in a small room with four Tanzanian doctors who are only speaking KiSwahili so I am sort of stuck. They are going through the piles of documents for the ART training with a fine toothcomb that began with a one-hour discussion of trying to figure out where the national Tanzanian logo should go on the front page of all the documents. They didn't like that it was down at the bottom with WHO and the other agencies that helped create these training materials. It is going to be a long day although they do seem to laugh a lot.

We are in the middle of Africa... really...we came down many dirt roads and none of the "houses" around here have running water or electricity. This little conference center is a small oasis in the middle of this rural outpost. Should be interesting. Our rooms are very bare with not even a drinking glass. Dr. Stella Chale, the team leader for IMAI here in Tanzania, keeps teasing me that now that I am out of the Hotel California (the Holiday Inn), and in the

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real Africa, I will have fun. It is very interesting in that no one feels the least bit compelled to speak English around me after they have said their warm hellos and sorries and your welcome. The Norwegians were absolutely scrupulous in switching back to English as soon as a non-Norwegian speaker came into the circle. I am supposedly “the expert” of these stupid documents, and I can’t help them because I don’t know what they are arguing about, but I do know that they are arguing. Then there is much laughter, the tension dissipates, and they go on to the next debate. There are so many documents to be proofed and corrected that I didn’t mind that I couldn’t participate. It meant that I could work on them now rather than when? Everything has to go to the printers on Monday, and we will be here until Sunday, so I am not sure when I would work on them and that is sort of scary. It is midnight and we just quit work. The other doctors went home and Stella, and the secretary Frieda, and I are the only ones staying at this “retreat.” When we finished in the conference room, we went to find the guard to lock it up for us. We just walked around in the dark calling for him and he appeared out of the shadows with his trusty rifle. Oh I do hate that part of Africa. Remember all the guns from Namibia? The world is just so full of guns and rifles and Uzi’s, and other bad weapons.

We had a big rain today...big prob-

lem. This is my first African rain where it hasn’t been cold. You know what that means. I am covered with mosquito bites. Makes you nervous for me, I bet. I take my drugs, but I don’t feel superior to the mosquitoes for one moment. Each mosquito, I think, is this the one? They were all over the mountains of papers spread on the conference table. You couldn’t begin to kill them. I tried. When people come in tomorrow, they will see blood on all of the documents. Nice.

Let me tell you about the “Bar” as it’s not exactly like the Holiday Inn in Dar. Next to the tiny reception office at the edge of the covered dining patio is the Bar. It has bottles behind it. It has stools in the front. It looks like a bar except for this one major difference...there are “bars” that go vertically from the ceiling to the top of the bar. Now I really understand the meaning of “bar.” Naturally at midnight there wasn’t much happening there in the pitch dark.

I am so ignorant of how people eat. At lunch today at 4 PM, I followed the doctors’ example, and washed my hands at this elaborate hand washing station on the patio. I know about this type of eating in Muslim countries with your left hand, but this was the first time I really saw people do it. Dr. Stella had this huge mass of mealy meal, I guess, on her plate, and while we talked she rolled it in her left hand. I never actually saw her put it in her mouth, but the food slowly disappeared on her plate. I think she dipped

the hard mass into the rest of the food, and popped it into her mouth, but I swear I never saw her do it. How does that work? It seems I might be hard up for examples of life here, but I did find it intriguing.

Some people understand when I say I am from California---that Arnold Schwartz whatever his name is our president or something there. I just say I am embarrassed. They don’t know how to respond, and I don’t know if they think it is pathetic or wonderful. I certainly don’t tell them that I voted for him because I thought it was a joke, and I didn’t want the guy to be a pathetic loser. Good thing I don’t mind being wrong! I actually don’t believe it would be any different if a Democrat were governor...they that might make me an Anarchist.

I don’t hear any peacocks here in the country, but I certainly hear other birds that I can’t identify yet. I fear I will be locked inside that conference room and never know what they are. They all know that I love dogs so that every time the dogs start to howl, they say...“there are your friends, Moher”. The dogs sound like a pack of wild hyenas and are very very scary. Our driver told me that he has seven German Shepherds, and the only ones that can be around them are him and his housekeeper’s son who helps him when he is away like now. His nine-year old daughter can’t go near them as they are strictly for protection. He is very proud of the fact that he only

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sells them for \$350 US as compared to \$1500 elsewhere. He also told me that he lives in a small apartment. Now I am trying to imagine how you keep seven German Shepherds from eating your nine-year old daughter in a small apartment. Can you imagine travelling as much as he does, and trying to figure out how you keep your dogs away from your kid? No...I say NO.

The driver today told me that he wanted me to drive with him to the training site on November 13th and for me not to fly so he could take me to see some sites at the entrance to Mt. Kilimanjaro. Mt. Kilimanjaro!!! Someone wanted me to see something of this wonderful, poor, sad, sick, beautiful country! I asked him where he wanted to take me on this 6-hour drive and he told me...to the big snake place. I am not afraid of bugs, mosquitoes, lions, elephants, spiders, but believe me, I don't get into snakes. (Sorry, Timi, and Happy Birthday today November 5<sup>th</sup>...I wish I were with you and if you read this far, you will know that I love you and have thought about you all day that tomorrow is your birthday---please tell me you saw this part).

The beds...I have to tell you about the beds as it was the strangest site driving here. We kept passing outdoor bed stores, and all the beds looked the same. Nothing to convince you that you should stop and buy a bed at this

store rather than that store. Plus all of these beds sitting out in the rain were propped up on rocks...not just a few rocks, but many rocks. When I got to my room, there was one of these beds but it wasn't propped up on rocks, which I was grateful for. But there is this special attachment for the mosquito net, which I knew about, but I didn't know about how they make the beds or why. I know that the big T at both ends has to do with the mosquito net, but I may remain ignorant about that. Instead of the top sheet and blanket being folded horizontally across the bed, they are folded from both sides vertical to the sides of the bed. I will ask someone trying not to sound like an idiot.

As awful as reviewing these documents is, it is stirring my excitement about the training. There is nothing like being in a country when they are getting ready to get masses of people on ARTs and using a very grassroots model to do it, but actually supporting it from the top down. There is no other way. I have to say that as disorganized as the WHO people are, they are utterly dedicated to this effort and travel every week to all these different countries without any frills or time off to see the tourist sites (and probably not even whining about it as I am), and are like whirling dervishes trying to get ARTs to where there is no doctor. I don't know where the big, expense account WHO doctors are, I haven't met them.)

Well, I have to go scratch my 1000 mosquito bites instead of looking at

the 1000 or 2000 hills as there is no view here...Moher later.

### Midnight, Saturday

Well we just knocked off work... been going at it since 8:30 AM. I sat and proofed one document until 4 PM! Then because there was no room in the conference room because more doctors showed up to read documents, I took off to ... you guessed it...my room. I have been at the computer for 8 hours except for a brief tea break around 5:30, and then later to stumble up to the conference room in the dark to see what Stella and Frieda were up to. On the way, of course, I did something bad to my left leg like a pulled muscle on one of the big stairs. I bet you will be hearing about that. We will all be here all day tomorrow and then back in the office very early Monday morning so we can meet the printer's deadline. I have to tell you this work is deadly! I have to really struggle to keep my eye on the prize and my attitude very upbeat...ARTs in Tanzania. 16 hours working on one facilitator manual is enough to make you go mad...really really mad. When I was sitting on the patio proofing for 8 hours, it wasn't so bad because people kept passing the gate and little children would stare at me, but here in my lonely little cell of a room, it is deadly. I couldn't even play my music on my computer because the manual is so huge, it needed all my memory just to be open. It is a word document full of pictures, photos,

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drawings, graphs, and all the things that it shouldn't be full of in order to work on it correctly. I stink of insect repellent and smoke and sweat (no air conditioning). The fan is on high on my neck so I will probably wake up with a stiff neck and a bum leg, and I haven't even left the compound. I tried to do some yoga but the floor isn't so great for it. You would never believe the amount of starches I ate today. The greens are good here though. I will look back on this with pride. I made many jokes today in my very very very brief interactions with the doctors so they wouldn't switch to KiSwahili so fast. I have learned 4 words today...thank you, thank you (well really one word), go with God, sorry...sorry, and of course, your welcome!

I know that Luis is still miserable and that well-anticipated shot has done nothing to ease his misery. My Internet connection at the Holiday Inn just sucked. I could read an e-mail but not respond before I lost the connection and had to log off and then on again to reply. Sometimes it took me 15 tries to send him an e-mail. I would even write the message in Word and then paste it into the e-mail but that wasn't fast enough before I lost the connection. Next week will be our 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (November 9). If I have a stable e-mail connection, I am going to ask you all to donate to WORLD, my volunteer organization of choice, so that we can do work here in Africa with positive women. Luis and I

should be eating our favorite food together—Ahi tuna---and having wild sex instead of being subjected to unstable e-mail connections on that special day. No one made me take this assignment, and I really knew what it would involve, so I can't really complain. However, you will hear me complain about being away from Luis and Maggie and Makena. I also miss hearing about Emma's first semester in college, and David and Lisa's life in their new house in Oakland, and Timi's job and the Hip Hop scene, and Frank's attempts to find work, and the progress of our newest family member, Juliana, our great-granddaughter. I haven't been able to send e-mails to any of you, so I don't get any e-mails, which is very very hard for me. You may not get these notes for quite a while until I figure out a plan to send them. I don't have my e-mail address book on my Web mail, so it will take me some time to send these out and then this news will be very old. A prize to anyone who makes it this far. You will know who you are!

Hello...are you there?

Yep...there is nothing like being alone in your room all day with no other frame of reference but your computer to write the old Moher notes from somewhere.

Moher tomorrow?

### Sunday, November 6

I am at a new low caused by too little sleep and too much work and no one to really hang out with and have some fun. After finally falling asleep about 1:30, I was wide awake at 6:15 and finally got up 15 minutes later to hit my computer to try to finish the documents for this morning's meeting for the doctors to review. Now I know how people feel when they can't speak the languages....I know what they are talking about because they have the docs in front of them, but no one bothers to include me. I just keep smiling and making jokes and offering to help clarify...that's all I can do. In 10 days, everything has to be ready for us to go to the training site. We will be there for almost 3 weeks and I have the sense that the conference facility there will make this place look like the Ritz. My leg is killing me...it's swollen, throbbing, and hot. I am in a room full of doctors so what am I worried about? Don't want to be a wimp, I guess.

Well just when I thought a bad Sunday couldn't get any worse, it really did. I am sure I will laugh about tonight's events some day, but I can't imagine it will be for a long time. I am writing this out side a rural police station somewhere upcountry in Tanzania. About 8:30 tonight, Stella offered to have the WHO driver take me back to the "Hotel California". She and Frieda were going to spend one more night to finish the docs. I really couldn't do

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anything more for them.

So we drive through these unbelievable rural townships and got out eventually onto the main road. We passed a roadblock, but I didn't think anything of it. They are all over Africa and they didn't even stop us as they usually do. A few minutes later, an open truck with 8 men standing on the back, pulled out in front of us and stopped and started shooting at us on the ground in front of our big WHO white truck emblazoned with the universal WHO symbol. Scared! That wouldn't even begin to describe how the driver and I felt! He actually stopped the car! I didn't like that and told him to keep driving. He asked me to keep calm...be comfortable! I wasn't very good at the be comfortable part, but I was certainly calm! I thought maybe they really weren't shooting at the ground in front of us, and that they were firecrackers. My brain absolutely couldn't register that those were real bullets coming out of those fucking rifles that I hate so fucking much. Then the driver got out of the car! I told him that I wouldn't move out of the car no matter what. I had already figured out how I could slide over and jump into the driver's seat (with a very bum leg and knee and peel off. (Some of you may not know that I escaped an armed robbery/car hijacking once before using that technique except I jumped over the passenger seat and jumped out of the car.) I had a plan and was feeling

no better. There then ensued a long heated discussion between the 8 men with rifles and my driver. It didn't look good whatever he was trying to tell them. It went on and on, and eventually some of the men surrounded the car! Oh great. Notice me. The only white woman within a hundred miles. They tried to talk to me through my window, but when I wasn't very chatty, they went around to the driver's side where the window was open! Boy I still wasn't very chatty. I asked if they spoke English and to be please tell me what was going on. "Be calm...be comfortable." One of them told me that my driver had done a very bad thing tonight. I told him that was impossible as he had been with my boss, Dr. Stella Chale, all evening. I gave him Stella's card, which she had just given me because I had pestered her for it all day. That really seemed to do the trick once he understood that it wasn't my card...it was the BOSS'S card, and he went off with it. Being compulsive, I had written Stella's number on my important African phone number sheet, which I ripped out of my purse (which was bulging with money from 3 countries, real airplane tickets, credit cards, passport, etc.) Being the only person in Africa without a cell phone, I started rummaging through the car for the driver's phone, but it wasn't there. After about 20 minutes, one of the police came back to tell me that something bad happened when he and Stella went out this evening to send e-mail to Geneva and to drop off something at a friend of hers house. I still couldn't understand why that involved 8 men with rifles. He told me

they were police and that we would go back to the conference center to get Stella and get everything cleared up. Stella! It involved Stella! Dr. Stella walks around in t-shirt dresses that praise Jesus..."When I have no hope...Jesus turns up...today was a bad day, but then Jesus came"...you get the idea. She is absolutely wonderful and I focused heavily on the Jesus message (who would have guessed) as the driver called her at the conference center. Just then, however, 3 of the armed men got into the back seat of the car! They told me to be "calm and comfortable!" I turned to them and told them if anyone said that to me again, I would stop being calm, and to please tell me what was going on. They said something about the bad thing that my driver had done tonight"...I told, not asked, the driver to call Stella. It took the driver about 20 tries to get Stella. We actually had to stop while he swapped sim cards! I won't tell you how my stomach felt. I told the driver that I had to speak with Stella before he hung up. He had a heated and long conversation with her, and then he finally put her on speakerphone. They all had a heated conversation in KiSwahili. Then he hung up!

Oh did I mention that the truck with the other guys was following us soon joined by a caravan of trucks with armed men? All of a sudden we turned right down a rutted dirt road instead of left to the conference center. I calmly demanded to know

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where we were going. “To the police station.” Then I told Socorro that I absolutely had to speak with Stella. Again it took about 20 times for him to get her on the phone. She had to call us back. He then had another long conversation with her, but this time he had it with my hand right in his face so he wouldn’t hang up. I could understand that he was trying to tell her that I wanted to speak with her, but they kept talking, and I kept my hand in his face. When I finally got the phone, she said “I am sorry!” I told her that that wasn’t what I wanted to hear, and she needed to tell me what was going on because I was completely in the dark. She said “I am sorry.” It was starting to dawn on me that maybe they really were police, but that didn’t console me one bit. It was hard to believe that there would be a police station down this rutted track, but we actually came to a walled compound that said “Polizi.” I sat in the car while we were surrounded by even more police without uniforms. I asked Socorro if we needed to pay them \$\$\$! He said “be calm” and, you guessed it, “be comfortable.” Socorro got out and talked with them some more. By then, I had hidden my purse under the seat, and moved my huge briefcase from the back seat to under my feet. The intrepid world traveller part of me (the 75-year old, Dervla Murphy part who rides her bike around these dirt tracks hadn’t quite kicked in yet) thought I should get out of the car and “be comfortable” and talk with them and get some information. The part of me

who was under the protection of the UN thought I should stay in the car. The UN part won. Cautious, careful, chicken? As comfortable as I could be at that point with any decision, I decided not to get to know the locals and smooch the situation. It didn’t seem like a smoochy situation. It was serious. We were there a long time waiting for Stella. I had gotten past the armed hijacking and murder part, but I still hadn’t let go of the idea that this was some kind of white tourist scam that I was ill-equipped to deal with effectively, when all of sudden everybody got back into the cars and our caravan was off again. “Where are we going”, I uncalmly asked? “To another police station. This is the wrong police station. Maybe Stella will be at the next police station.” When we got to the end of the dirt rut, we were met by even more police! Socorro again had to get out of the car, and everyone had to stand around for a long time. Taxis went by and I thought one of them might be Stella, but I was not that lucky. Then everyone jumped back into the cars and trucks, and we went to the conference center. For the first time, I relaxed. I wasn’t comfortable, but I realized something had happened that was specific to Stella and I felt confident that Stella could straighten it out very quickly. I felt like crying when Stella got into the car.

We drove to another police station, but not as grand as the first one, but more pleasant actually. There were some tiny shanties around it, and I watched women carrying babies while

big white rats scurried around them. I thought they were cats at first. Everyone went inside but I continued my UN policy (despite having just seen Hotel Rwanda for the second time), and stayed in the car. After all, Stella would get it straightened out, and we would be out of here in a minute. I could watch the action through the open door. After much discussion at the counter with many polizi around, they were all ushered off to the back. That was not what I expected. Then all of a sudden, the army arrived! Big Maoris in crisp uniforms with even bigger guns. Stella!!!! This was even more serious and seemed not like something that could be resolved with a simple explanation from Stella. Stella had explained to me in the car that she had asked Socorro to drive her to a friend’s house to drop something off. She had tried to call her friend to tell her that she was coming, but she didn’t answer. When they got to the armed guard at the gate to the house and asked to see her friend, the guard somehow gave the wrong message to his employer, her friend’s husband...something about a UN man wanting to see his wife. The owner of this very grand walled compound (who turned out to be Stella’s friend also), ran out and got the guard all agitated who then started to shoot at the WHO car. Naturally, Stella and Socorro backed out of there real fast. It turns out that he is a minister with the Office of Foreign Affairs, and he then called the equivalent of the FBI, the CIA, and the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Firearms to report a stolen UN vehicle...hence the road-

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block. Stella and Socorro didn't bother to tell me about this when they came back to the conference center earlier to take me "home"...they didn't tell me they had been shot at and escaped with their lives. I didn't find that omission hard to believe. They didn't need to tell this consultant about that incident. No problem there for me about that.

The diplomat met us at the door of the police station in his Bermuda shorts and red Izod shirt and sandals. I thought that we would be out of there in no time now. Well, more and more serious people arrived in suits with big cars. This was not looking good. I finally got out of the car to smoke a cig. Then I actually got out my computer and started writing this. So I guess I had calmed down and was comfortable. Socorro was brought out and taken over to a corner and was giving a statement. That took at least an hour. So now I could channel Dervla Murphy and "be comfortable." I started talking to people by offering my pathetic KiSwahili words...just say "your welcome" or "thank you" instead of Hello or How are you. After about an hour and a half, everyone emerged like NOTHING HAD HAPPENED. The wife arrived and we all converged outside the police station, and the Bermuda shorts guy started talking to me about where I should go while I am in Tanzania like he hadn't caused any of these events. Have I explained sufficiently how he caused these events. As far as I can figure it out, here is what happened. He is

asleep. His wife is not home. His guard tells him that there is a big fancy UN vehicle at the gate for his wife. He can't imagine what UN official would want to see his wife, so he decides the UN vehicle has been stolen. He calls in all the Tanzania military forces to find this man who wants to see his wife. He gets roadblocks set up. We are spotted at the roadblock. We are confronted. There is no hunky UN guy trying to seduce his wife in the car. There is only an uncalm, uncomfortable 59+ year-old fat, white woman. I didn't contribute to the situation. I didn't complicate it. Nothing I did or didn't do made the situation (having Stella's card helped) better or worse because some guy was just being a guy. The wheels were set in motion by a an ass hole jealous husband with a lot of national political power to wield. Once a potential stolen UN vehicle was reported, many levels of bureaucracy had to be waded through to ensure that no one let this vehicle through their fingers. I only hope that this "friend" doesn't cause problems for Stella and Socorro at WHO. There will be many "reports" and it is hard to believe that there will not be repercussions. I know that this is much on their minds.

At the end, we all stood around outside the polizi station, and the Izod Maori diplomat was very busy explaining that I had to be taken to Goro Goro which is a famous game park near Mt. Kilimanjaro. As if he had nothing to do with this situation, he then involved everyone in the discussion. Gee, I wasn't very smoochy. He

had just caused me to be scared beyond any level of fear that I had every experienced in my life because he was so busy protecting his walled compound and his wife, he failed to get sufficient facts to instruct his employee, his fucking armed guard, before he had him shooting out of anxiety for his boss. Later the driver did complement me on not doing anything to escalate the situation. He wanted me to know that all the polizi felt very bad that I was not "comfortable" and to "assure me that nothing bad would ever happen to me in Tanzania...they are a peaceful, safe country." I am not quite there yet. It was very difficult to receive Stella's "sorries." How can I accept an apology from someone so overworked who was only trying to help an old friend. She didn't tell me what she had to deliver to her old friend, but I wouldn't be surprised if it were a restraining order from the Maori diplomat...if they have such things here.

So now I am at the Hotel California in my same room. There were only white people checking in at midnight. No polizi here. I am calm. I am comfortable at last. Tomorrow is a holiday. I will not work.

I have to be careful what I ask for. I want adventures, but I can certainly do without this level of adventure. Certainly many times throughout the day and then the evening, I thought, "I want to go home now. You know I have experienced a certain amount of

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work frustration “Oh, no one will speak English...I might as well go home.” Or health problems “Oh, it is not a pulled muscle in my leg. It is cellulitis, I better go home before I have an infection that won’t be helped by being in a Third World Health Facility.” Or “Oh, I thought I was being held up by armed robbers or kidnappers, but it was only a jealous husband that caused me being scared to death, I can go home now.”

Socorro and I minutely processed the facts driving back to Dar and we agreed that we wouldn’t share them with anyone until we heard about possible repercussions.

The peacocks are screaming “Help.....Help.....”



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