20th Anniversary Conference

The Conference agenda promises an exciting, stimulating, invigorating 4-days you won’t want to miss. The theme: Knowledge is Power: Energizing Information for Application brings speakers from around the world: Dr. R.P. Kumar from All India Institute, New Delhi; ELISAD Chair, Marianne van der Heijden, The Netherlands; and Jill Austin, Canadian Center on Substance Abuse. In addition, Ed Kraft, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, will be presenting “The Library Database as Political Statement”; Leigh Hallingby, Soros Foundation, “Lindesmith Center Catalog on the WWW”; Eric Helmuth, Join Together, “Internet Update: Promising New Tools for Reducing Substance Abuse” and much much more.

Loss To SALIS Home

In May, Wendy Wang, SALIS Home Administrative Assistant, graduated from UC Berkeley, and left SALIS Home. After one full year with SALIS, Wendy produced four issues and changed the look of SALIS News by adding new graphics and page formats. In addition, she took the lead for the creation of the new SALIS Website, and was assisted by three other students in their Website construction class. If you haven’t yet looked at http://SALIS.org, you should do so now. As the main Home contact person, she also did all of the regular duties of the home office with efficiency, and still had time to mentor another staff person. It is a big loss for SALIS Home to lose someone so highly talented, organized and committed. Wendy has a big future ahead, and I am sure we will all be saying someday, “we knew her when.”

Mark Your Calendar

The 21st Annual SALIS Conference is coming soon.
Place: Bloomington, Indiana
Time: Wednesday - Sunday, April 21 - 25, 1999
Hosted by: Chair Barbara Seitz
Please watch SALIS website at SALIS.org for more information.
As information professionals, we are often expected to update our users on what is new in the area of substance abuse, including the latest news, publications, and research. Fortunately, the Web has evolved into a great resource for finding the latest news.

The Web’s very nature makes it an excellent medium for current awareness. Users can access information as quickly as webmasters can post it. Because of this technology, many sites do provide some kind of current information feature. Most offer a “what’s new” section, while others maintain “current information services” for users.

The usefulness of a site for current awareness purposes is not always apparent at first glance. Websites rarely provide descriptive information on themselves, such as the selection criteria for the news items or how frequently the stories are updated. Providing current information on a regular basis is a time-consuming task. I have found that not all sites regularly update their “what’s new” or “in the news” features. The dates of the news items or press releases are often the only indicators of how well maintained the site is. Sometimes, monitoring a site over time is the only way to determine its content and reliability. This is one reason I think it is important for us to share our experiences with websites.

For this column, I will describe three sites that offer current information services: Join Together Online, PREVline, and Tobacco BBS. The overview will examine the sites’ content, currency, sources, and the organization of the information, and will note special features.

**Join Together Online**

Join Together Online’s (JTO) Wire service (http://www.jointogether.org/sa) is the most comprehensive and reliable site I have found for current awareness purposes. Rarely does a day go by that this site is not updated. JTO Wire has Daily News Summaries, Press Releases, and Features.

The main content of JTO Wire is the Daily News Summaries section. JTO Wire acts like a clipping service, compiling news stories related to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug issues on a daily basis. JTO Wire covers both national and local news including policy, research, prevention, and treatment, with emphasis on policy issues.

JTO Wire provides a brief summary for each news story, although it does not include full-text news stories or links to the full-text news stories. Most of the stories are from major national and local newspapers. While the summaries do not link to a full-text version, they often have links to related organizations and stories. JTO voluntarily does not copyright the summaries, so users can distribute them to interested parties. In fact, JTO has just added two new features, “Email this” and “Print this,” to make it easier to circulate the stories. Users can quickly send a news summary to a client or colleague via email.

The news summaries are culled from a clipping service, and the Advocacy Institute provides the tobacco stories to JTO. The research stories are pulled from press releases and news stories. In addition, Brown University sends a monthly update of research summaries of new studies for JTO to post. While the summaries all include at least the newspaper source, it would be helpful if the original source were always given, especially for research-related stories.

The site is well organized, so navigating the summaries is easy. The default display is a list of all of the current day’s news summaries. The titles link to the full summary. Users can select to view the summaries related to alcohol, tobacco, illicit drugs, or general news. Users can also elect to see a list of summaries from the past few days up to the past 3 months. JTO Wire also compiles the research stories, so users can access research-related items quickly.

Because news summaries are provided, not just links, JTO saves the summaries for future use. While there is not a separate JTO Wire archives, users can search for news summaries through the main JTO search engine (http://find.jointogether.org/search). They can use this search engine to find all the past news summaries and all the other resources on JTO. Currently more than 16,000 news stories from the past 4 years can be searched. The search engine allows for simple boolean searching, but this is soon to be replaced by a more comprehensive search interface.

JTO also provides a useful service through its Features — original pieces written by JTO staff. Features are intended to give more in-depth coverage on a story, often not reported in the news. There is usually a new Feature each month.

The News on the Net links are updated daily, and the links are only retained for the past week or so. Because many of the links to sources on the Web become outdated, the links are not archived for future browsing or searching.

The NCADI Reporter section of the “In the News” maintains original stories written by NCADI staff. Some of the stories expand on news items, while others report on conferences and campaigns. Often a story has links for more information, sometimes to the full text of a related study or to information on the PREVline site. The Press Releases section maintains press releases on substance use, most of which are from government sources announcing new publications and studies. Links to the Press Releases and Reporter stories are kept on this page for the past year. In addition, both of these sections have archives, which can be browsed by month but not searched. Continues on Page 5
According to Wilcox, this book "takes a unique view" (p.xii) of Alcoholics Anonymous, because it is "the only accurate extensive, ethnographic description of the culture" (p. xiii) of AA. The perspective adopted is not merely unique, but is also based, according to the author, on his unusual position of being able to study the workings of Alcoholics Anonymous, both as a researcher/observer and as a recovering alcoholic. He argues that the book is different from all others precisely because it is an anthropological study of the recovery process from the perspective of a recovering alcoholic. Consequently, his approach is based on a combination of "the views of experienced insiders with behavioral analysis based in competent social science" (p. xiii).

Wilcox’s history as a self-proclaimed alcoholic is described and he recounts how he attended Alcoholics Anonymous initially as part of a court order for a DUI charge. Once having completed this requirement, he stopped attending because he considered himself different from other attendees, and unwilling to accept total abstinence. However, after a further two years, having now "accepted the fact" (p.23) that he was an alcoholic, he returns reluctantly to deal with his ever growing problems with alcohol. Three months after returning to AA, and after three months of not drinking, he decided to conduct an anthropological study of the recovery process within AA.

The book is divided into seven chapters. Chapter one discusses very briefly alcohol use and alcoholism in the United States. Chapter two, titled "Culture and Consumption," combines two largely unconnected themes: anthropological studies of alcohol consumption and drinking and a discussion of his own personal credentials and experiences within Alcoholics Anonymous. At no point within this discussion is there a detailed examination of anthropological accounts of either Alcoholics Anonymous itself or programs based on the 12 step model. In the next four chapters, Wilcox examines in detail the general features of Alcoholics Anonymous and AA meetings, including "Qualifications, Referrals and Affiliation;" "The Meeting;" "Healing in Alcoholics Anonymous;" and "Alcoholic Thinking." Finally in the concluding chapter, called Language, Culture and Belief, the author returns to anthropological theory and examines the work of Bunzel, Madsen, Mandelbaum, Field, Leland and Bateson in an attempt to develop a "better anthropological theory of alcoholism" (p.114). From the work of these various anthropologists, it is Bateson's theory of alcoholism, which the author chooses as most relevant to his own participant observational work, and the most productive in explaining why certain individuals become alcohol dependent while others do not.

The appearance of a book on the ethnography of treatment is a welcome arrival. Anthropology and ethnographic studies, within the field of alcohol studies, have tended to focus their attention on drinking behaviors rather than on the culture of treatment. The absence of ethnographic studies of treatment is also apparent in research on Alcoholics Anonymous. As Makela (1996) noted, only by conducting ethnographic and organizational studies of AA can we hope to create a "basis for a systematic analysis of the dimensions of variability within Alcoholics Anonymous" (p.255). Therefore given the absence of such studies both in treatment in general and more specifically in Alcoholics Anonymous, it is doubly disappointing that this book should fail to fill this lacuna. In spite of the author's claim that this is a unique account of Alcoholics Anonymous because of his intimate knowledge of the workings of AA meetings, this book is far from unique. Furthermore, contrary to his claim that this is the first accurate extensive ethnography of Alcoholics Anonymous, this book cannot be defined as an ethnography but instead should be seen as a partisan discussion of Alcoholics Anonymous. A description of AA which includes some scattered references to the anthropology of alcohol studies does not constitute an ethnography. Ironically, although the author would wish the reader to believe that his intimacy with Alcoholics Anonymous - he attended over 600 meetings is the book's greatest strength, it is the very nature of his intimacy with Alcoholics Anonymous, coupled with his belief in his own alcoholism, that are the primary weaknesses of this book. Albeit that he discusses the requirements of doing participant observation, and the importance of being a participant in order to obtain an insider's view, he fails nevertheless to balance the intensity of participating and becoming involved with the equally important necessity of distancing himself from the research. When he attempts to "distance himself" (p.27) from Alcoholics Anonymous in order to become objective he has a relapse. Realizing that he could not do this study from a detached perspective, he decides that the only way to accomplish the work was as "a sober, living participant in this reality" (ibid.).

The truly great anthropological ethnographies have been able to balance a strong sense of being involved within the ethnographic setting with an equally strong sense of being detached. To be involved is important in order to understand and empathize, but once having achieved this level of involvement, it is also important to be able to step back, suspend one's belief, become self-reflexive and apply an analytical objective, or to use the author's term "detached", but no matter how involved the anthropologist is, one part of him or her must remain outside the culture being examined, and must remain intellectually skeptical, and must remain analytical. To achieve this balance is even more difficult when one examines ones own culture, and many anthropologists have discussed the problems of "making anthropologically strange or alien "what is part of the anthropologist's own make-up and culture."
NLM'S ROLE IN PRESERVING SCIENTIFIC RECORD

Elizabeth Fee, Chief, History of Medicine Division
National Library of Medicine
Sheila O'Neill, Curator, Modern Manuscripts Collections
National Library of Medicine

Sheila O'Neill writes:

In his July 8 posting to the list, Steven Brush expressed concern that there was no place at NIH to preserve the papers of world-famous scientists who retire from NIH, and no system for informing and encouraging them to save their papers. Dr. Brush states that the archival holdings at NLM focus [mainly] on 19th-century physicians and the results of a few interview projects and implies that the Library has little interest in preserving the archival record of 20th-century biomedical research. He concludes that the NIH administration apparently is not interested in funding an archive that would preserve the papers of contemporary scientists. As the curator for the Modern Manuscripts Collection, and as chief of the History of Medicine Division, we would like to offer a more positive view of NLM's role in preserving the scientific record of 20th-century biomedical sciences, including the role NIH has played in that history.

The NLM's commitment to collecting the archival records of contemporary science and papers of scientists is clear. As stated in the Collection Development Manual of the National Library of Medicine (1993), the areas of collecting include biochemistry, biotechnology, and molecular biology; surgery; pediatrics and child development; medical informatics; the history of medicine; military medicine; and the Public Health Service (including the National Institutes of Health and the National Library of Medicine.)

The Modern Manuscripts and Oral History Collection at NLM currently comprises over 2,000 collections (more than 3,500 lin. ft.) which date from 1600 to the present, with the largest collections being from the post-World War II era. Many of these collections were donated by individual NIH scientists. In the last few years alone, the manuscript holdings (which also include oral history interviews, photographs, audio tapes, and audiovisual materials) have tripled in size, and well over half of these materials document the history of post-war medical research and practice. These collections have come to the Library largely through donations, but also through purchases made by the library.

In recent years, as the volume of manuscript holdings has increased, so too has support for processing, cataloging, and the development of electronic access through an online catalog, electronic finding aids, and digital manuscripts collections. Most recently, in 1997, the library embarked upon a highly successful acquisitions program to collect the papers of NIH Nobel Laureates for inclusion in a digital manuscripts project. The positive response of these eminent scientists has led to other donations, as well as increased support from the library for the processing and digitizing of collections.

Indeed, if past and present activities are indicators of the future, the NLM will undoubtedly become one of the world's most important research centers for the history of the biomedical sciences.

Sheila O'Neill <ONEILLS@mail.nlm.nih.gov>

Association of Mental Health Librarians
33rd Annual Meeting

Dates: October 2,3,4

Location: The Georgian Hotel
Santa Monica, California

Highlights: - mental health video previews
- information-seeking behaviors of professional psychologists
- Policy Information Exchange
- foundations and grantwriting
- forensic resources in mental health.

A trip to the new Getty is also included.

Costs: $80.00 - AMHL members
$100.00 - nonmembers
$40.00 - students.

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The organization of the “In The News” page is somewhat cumbersome, as all the current links for the NCADI Reporter, News on the Net, and Press Releases are listed on one page. Do not inadvertently print this page. While you can find the most recent NCADI Reporter article lined up to the left of the News on the Net links, you have to scroll down to the Press Release section to find the previous NCADI Reporter articles.

In addition to the “In the News” section, PREVLine offers some other useful features for current awareness. The Research Briefs section (http://www.health.org/res-brf/index.htm) provides synopses of new research articles. The scope of the Research Briefs is broad and usually timely. The Briefs highlight new research that is not always announced in the news. While the Research Briefs are not released on a regular schedule, PREVLine’s goal is to produce four briefs a week. The Research Briefs are a welcome service because few other sources abstract new research articles without a long time lag. Older Research Briefs are archived and can be browsed by month. Another promising current awareness resource on PREVLine is the Prevention Alerts section (http://www.health.org/pubs/qdocs/prevalert/index.htm), which highlights interesting news in the area of prevention. The Prevention Alerts provide updates on upcoming conferences and initiatives and summarizes new publications on prevention.

**Tobacco BBS**

Tobacco BBS (http://www.tobacco.org) is a no-frills site that focuses on tobacco issues. This site is impressive in its breadth. While its format can be cumbersome, I am always impressed by its wealth of information. This site has both the hottest and the most obscure news item on tobacco issues.

Among other resources, the Tobacco BBS compiles news stories related to tobacco issues (http://www.tobacco.org/#aanews). Like PREVLine, links are provided to full-text news stories on the Web and most of the stories have summaries. The news items are updated daily at 10 am.

The coverage of the news is broad in scope: policy issues, tobacco court cases, smoking in films, state news — literally anything in the news on tobacco. The Tobacco BBS pulls from a variety of news sources, from national sources such as New York Times, Reuters and AP, to local papers, such as the Hartford (CT) Courant and the Amarillo Globe.

All the current links and summaries, as well as other information, are listed on the home page, so this is another page you should not accidentally print. This format makes the current news information awkward to browse because you have to scroll through a massive amount of information. The stories are listed chronologically by subject category. Categories include federal, health, local, international, business and editorial. “Special collections” are compiled for ongoing news issues, such as tobacco legislation news, teen smoking, and lawsuits. The special collections is a nice feature for following a story over time.

News links and summaries are archived by month and by special collection. Archived stories must be browsed because there is no search engine. Although many links to news sources on the Web become quickly out-dated, you can always track down a story by an alternate route using the date and source.

This site offers other interesting current awareness features, including:

- VCR Alerts—highlights upcoming television specials or news shows on tobacco
- Quotes of the Day—features selected quotes from news stories, updated daily
- Tobacco Daily—compiles news stories often missed by the mainstream press.

These three sites offer different perspectives on current awareness in the substance abuse field. Despite the overlap in news coverage and press releases among the sites, I cannot say that one site provides all the news sources I need. Depending on the type of information I am looking for, I use the applicable site.

- To follow a tobacco-related story over time, such as an ongoing lawsuit or pending legislation, I check Tobacco BBS.
- For quick access to the full text of a key news story, I turn to PREVLine’s News on the Net.
- To monitor the news regularly for interesting stories around the country, I use Join Together Online’s Daily News Summaries.
- To look for new research items that might be relevant, I check PREVLine’s Research Briefs.
- To search for old news stories, I use Join Together Online’s search engine.

These are not the only websites that offer relevant current awareness information on the Web. I check other sites less frequently as well. My users’ information needs focus primarily on the prevention side of substance use, so there might be better sites for treatment and policy issues. If you have a good site you rely on to stay in touch, recommend it for a future Websight column. We would be happy to include it.

Contact Samantha Helfert at helfert@pire.org to submit recommendations for websites useful to substance abuse information professionals.

**Website update:**

The previous Websights column featured SAMHDA, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Data Archive, (www.icpsr.umich.edu/SAMHDA) at the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR). This archive maintains a number of data sets for the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

(Websights Continues on Page 6)
Since the last SALIS News, SAMHDA has added a couple more data sets. The 1996 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse (NHSDA) is now available from the archive and is available for on-line data analysis. In addition, the files for the 8th and 10th grade surveys of the Monitoring the Future study (1994-1997) are now available to be downloaded. In the past only the 12th grade data has been available to the public.

Data users should also note that the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data, NACJD, (www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD) also housed at ICPSR has been revamped. A new user-friendly interface and an online data analysis system have been added to the site.

Book Review

In this case the debt or reliance on Alcoholics Anonymous as a belief system is even greater, for what is clear in reading this book, is that the author is deeply committed to Alcoholics Anonymous's teaching for his survival. Consequently, the book is primarily a tribute to Alcoholics Anonymous for having "saved" him. From this perspective, the book as a homage to Alcoholics Anonymous is understandable and even laudable, and therefore should be described in this way and not given the name of an ethnography.

The lack of an analytical framework informed by anthropological theory, is most apparent within the chapter on the meeting. The author provides a descriptive account of the differences between closed, open, speaker and discussion meetings. To distinguish between these various forms of Alcoholics Anonymous' main ritualized therapeutic sessions is central to an understanding of AA. Unfortunately, all we are given is a description of these meetings and their format, and no where is there any attempt to analyze the discourse of the meetings. Even though one section of the chapter is called "ritual and ceremony", a central interest within both social and cultural anthropology, Wilcox provides us with no detailed ethnographic discussion, no real flavor of the dynamics of a "typical" meeting, and no discussion of anthropological theories of ritual and ceremony. The very fact that the meeting is so central to the day-to-day operation of Alcoholics Anonymous would lead the reader to expect a discussion of such issues as, for example: how do newcomers learn the informal rules of the group, or how is rule breaking contained and rule conformity maintained within the meeting. To assess the inadequacy of Wilcox's discussion, the reader should consult the chapter, on the "Alcoholics Anonymous Meeting as a Speech Event," in Makela (1996), or even Antze's article on "Symbolic Action in Alcoholics Anonymous" (1987). As it stands the material on the meeting within this book could just have easily been found in any publicity material on Alcoholics Anonymous, in fact his one and only reference in this section is not to an anthropology text but instead a book titled "Getting Better: Inside Alcoholics Anonymous," Robertson (1988).

The nearest the author comes to examining theories within the anthropology of alcohol studies is in his final chapter, in which he attempts to utilize Bateson's theory to explaining the extent of alcoholism within the United States. If the author had placed this chapter early on in the book and then attempted to examine his qualitative data by using the available anthropological and sociological theories of belief systems, networks, organizations, and even social movements, he would have produced a very different book. Unfortunately as it stands, the book can only be described as mutton masquerading as lamb.

References:


PERIODICAL NEWS

"Nicotine & Tobacco Research" (Official Journal of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco) is a new journal forthcoming from CARFAX with Editor in Chief, Gary W. Swan, Center for Health Sciences, SRI International, USA. Topical issues, according to marketing flyer, "Biological Markers, Patient Treatment Matching, Neuropharmacology, Genetic Overlap, Price Impact on Demand". For full details including "Notes for Contributors" see: www.carfax.co.uk/ntr-ad.htm or the home page of the Society for Research on Nicotine and Tobacco: www.srnt.org
News from Australia

Eva Congreve, Librarian
National Drug and Alcohol Research Center, Australia

Important Australian website:
The Commonwealth Department of Health and Family Services has updated its website and it is looking good. Drug and alcohol literature will be found on its 'Public Health Division' site with the following URL: http://www.health.gov.au/pubhlth/publicat/index.htm. It lists among other categories some National Campaign against Drug Abuse (NCADA)/National Drug Strategy (NDS) monographs and some newer statistical reports on drug use/abuse in Australia. Some reports can be downloaded, others may be ordered direct from the website in hardcopy form. Among the NDS monographs which can be downloaded, I would like to mention two reports SALIS members might be interested in:


Both reports have been well received by other researchers and deserve a place in any drug and alcohol library. Under the section 'National Drug Strategy Resources' you will find the latest two reports from the government:


Both reports can be downloaded. The data for these reports comes from National Drug Strategy Household surveys conducted between 1985-95. I wish you happy surfing!

Storage of Australian social science data
The 'Social Science Data Archives (SSDA)', located within the 'Research School of Social Sciences' at the Australian National University in Canberra, provides access to raw statistical data and codebooks on drug use/abuse in Australia. The SSDA, a government-funded organization, collects computer-readable data files from all parts of Australia. Data from many important national surveys and opinion polls are being stored here. Its URL is: http://ssda.anu.edu.au

Goodbye AHRTAG, Hello Healthlink Worldwide

From Monday 20 July 1998, there will be a new name in the world of health information - Healthlink Worldwide.

But it's a name with 21 years of experience behind it. Healthlink Worldwide is the new name for AHRTAG (Appropriate Health Resources and Technologies Action Group) which has been putting health information to work since 1977.

The new name reflects the organisation's focus on health and describes its way of working worldwide - linking information and health workers, linking partners, linking policy and practice.

Healthlink Worldwide continues AHRTAG's aim of improving the health of poor and vulnerable communities by strengthening the provision, use and impact of information.

Healthlink Worldwide works with more than 30 partner organisations in developing countries including governments, non-governmental organisations and academic institutes to run programmes to support particular health needs. These include continuing education and training for health workers in Africa and the Middle East, AIDS and Sexual Health, Child Health and Disability.

Healthlink Worldwide's practical training and education materials in printed and electronic forms reach nearly two million health and development workers worldwide. Healthlink Worldwide provides technical support to partner organisations and others in setting up and developing resource centres and information services. This work draws upon the UK's largest collection of health learning materials from developing countries, based at Healthlink Worldwide's resource centre.

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NEW BOOKS


The following are either new or forth coming. All full SALIS members receive free copy automatically.

### NIDA Publications


### NIAAA Publications


Government Documents


From the Editor

I’ve been rather silent for the past few issues. Sometimes we have so much to choose from that I dislike taking up space with my words. Other times (as in this issue), finding people who will deliver copy is like “pulling teeth.” So, in this issue, I just want to once again remind people that this medium is still viable for many, and is always a place for you to “get on your soapbox” (wonder where that comes from?). In other words, any of you with new ideas to share, contributions, comments, critiques, etc. please e-mail or call. What you may have knowledge about, other people may need. And I still believe in the paper-printed word. I know that many of you feel that you don’t have time. But think about how many hours a day you spend on e-mail. And when was the last time you tried to find an e-mail that was really important to your work? How much time did you spend on that? I used to regularly do a column on reference sources. It always kept me on my toes regarding new and useful information materials which helped me in my day to day work. Isn’t there someone out there who would be challenged to add another task to their already busy schedule? Think of the reward! You learn something, you teach others and save them a lot of time, and you get your name in SALIS News! Or how about someone doing NEW BOOKS FROM EUROPE/ AUSTRALIA. Or GOV DOCS/FUGITIVE Literature from those and other places? Anyone willing to do a Book Review? Or Book/Gov- Doc Annotations? Help us out, and assist in the making of News. AM


Quotes for Thought:

“Drug use--- especially heavy drug use --- destroys human character. It destroys dignity and autonomy, it burns away the sense of responsibility, it subverts productivity, it makes a mockery of virtue.”
-William Bennett, December 11, 1989

“Virtue itself turns vice, being misapplied; And vice sometimes’s by action dignified.”
-Romeo and Juliet, II, iii
1998 SALIS Membership List Addendum

If your name does not appear on this list or the list in Vol. 18 No. 1 and you know you have sent in your SALIS dues by July 20, 1998, please contact Rose Luo at SALIS Home (510) 642-5208; FAX: (510) 642-7175; or E-mail: salis@arg.org.

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