

November 22, 1999

TO: EVERYONE ON SPIRIT OF 1848 EMAIL BULLETIN BOARD

FROM: SPIRIT OF 1848 COORDINATING COMMITTEE (Nancy Krieger, Cecilia Zapata, Anne-Emanuelle Birn, Cathy Cubbin, Cheryl Merzel, Marion Fass, Pam Waterman)

RE: REPORTBACK FROM THE 1999 APHA CONFERENCE

Greetings! The Spirit of 1848 Caucus is happy to share our reportback from the 127th annual meeting of the American Public Health Association (Chicago, IL, November 7-11, 1999). In this reportback, we:

- (a) present decisions we made at our business meeting, and
- (b) give highlights of our sessions.

We are sending this reportback by email (via our electronic bulletin board) and posting it on our web site; over 600 people are now on our mailing/email list!

NOTE: If you know of someone who wants our report but does not have access to email or the web page, please feel free to send them a copy OR email their address to Pam Waterman (pwaterma@hsph.harvard.edu) and we'll send out a copy by regular mail. Similarly, please feel free to forward our report, by email, to interested colleagues & comrades; if any of them want to subscribe to our bulletin board, they should send their email address to Pam Waterman as well.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact any of us on the Spirit of 1848 Coordinating Committee:

--Nancy Krieger (co-chair of Spirit of 1848; politics of public health data committee); email: nkrieger@hsph.harvard.edu

--Cecilia Zapata (co-chair of Spirit of 1848; mentoring committee); email:

--Cathy Cubbin (politics of public health data committee); email: ccubbin@leland.Stanford.EDU

--Cheryl Merzel (curriculum committee); email: cm449@columbia.edu

--Marion Fass (curriculum committee); email: fassm@beloit.edu

--Anne-Emanuelle Birn (history committee); email: aebirn@newschool.edu

--Pam Waterman (e-networking committee); email: pwaterma@hsph.harvard.edu

The address for our webpage (which contains information on our mission statement, activities, etc) is: <http://www.progressivehn.org>

I. Spirit of 1848 Business meeting

Present: Nancy Krieger, Cathy Cubbin, Anne-Emanuelle Birn, Cheryl Merzel, Marion Fass, Pam Waterman, Babette Neuberger, Olivia Carter-Pokras, Simon Pillar, Celia Graterol, Emma Sanchez, Sally Kershner, Megan Betz, Katya Wanzer, Gilbert Gee, Sherman James, Adele Amodeo, Lyndon Haviland, Bonnie Duran, David Ramsey, David Rosner, Luis A. Aviles, Mah-jabeen Soobader, Rhonda Sarnoff, Lisa Kleppel, Judy Kleppel, Dan O'Connell, Susan Moscou, Vicki Alexander, Pat O'Campo, Ler-Lin Wang, and Nara Gallin [Cecilia Zapata was unable to attend APHA this year but was definitely at our meeting in spirit!]

Our business meeting was attended by 32 folk—about half were "regulars" and the rest were new to our business meeting. We recap, below, highlights of our meeting, in which we reviewed & discussed the mission, history, and structure of the Spirit of 1848 and then spent time generating plans for our work for the coming year.

A. Discussions & decisions about scope & structure of Spirit of 1848

1) We reaffirmed we are volunteer network of folk drawn to the combination of politics, passion, and public health, seeking to connect issues of social justice and public health in our lives and work and multiple communities, large and small—and that we want to do this bolstered by a

sense of history, learning from the experiences (for good and for bad) of those who have come before (see our mission statement, at end of this report). Our origins lie among folk who began working together in late 1980s as part of the Health Commission of the National Rainbow Coalition. We cohered as the Spirit of 1848 network in 1994 and began organizing APHA sessions as an affiliate group to APHA that year. In 1997 we were approved as an official Caucus of APHA, enabling us to sponsor our own sessions during the annual APHA meetings.

2) We clarified the particular "niche" our Spirit of 1848 caucus fills. Via our sub-committees, we focus on: (a) politics of public health data, (b) progressive pedagogy & curricula, (c) history (with the sub-committee serving as liaison to the Sigerist Circle, an organization of progressive historians of public health & medicine), and (d) outreach-networking-mentoring. To ensure accountability, all projects carried out in the name of the Spirit of 1848 are approved by the Spirit of 1848 Coordinating Committee, which consists of the co-chairs of the organization and the chairs/co-chairs of our sub-committees. The Coordinating Committee communicates regularly (by email) and also deals with all paperwork related to organizing & sponsoring sessions at APHA and maintaining our Caucus status.

3) Given increased demands on our email bulletin board and new opportunities for enhancing our web-page capacity, we decided to divide the outreach-networking-mentoring subcommittee into two sub-committees: (a) e-networking (to be chaired by Pam Waterman), and (b) mentoring/outreach (chaired by Cecilia Zapata).

4) We discussed a proposal, raised during our meeting, that we form another new subcommittee which would focus on issues of global/international health. We decided that: (a) all of our subcommittees need to foster a global perspective in sessions & projects, (b) such a committee would fall outside of the specific niche/tasks of Spirit of 1848, and (c) this type of committee and its interests would fit wonderfully within the Socialist Caucus (whose program chair, Susan Moscou, was at our meeting). So the folk who proposed this new subcommittee and the Socialist Caucus are now hooked up, adding yet more energy to the mix of what we create in & launch from APHA.

5) We reaffirmed our decision to keep our Spirit of 1848 sessions in the same time slot every year, so that people know what to expect (and so that we can minimize conflicts with other caucuses scheduling sessions on related topics). These time slots are:

--Politics of Public Health Data session: Monday afternoons (2:15-5:15 pm)

--Curriculum/progressive pedagogy session: Tuesday mornings (8:30-10:00 am)

--Spirit of 1848 business meeting: Tuesday afternoons (12:15-1:45 pm)

NB: we have not had history or mentoring sessions each year, so we do not yet have a fixed time for these sessions.

B. Plans for the coming year

1) Politics of Public Health Data

Attended by: Nancy Krieger, Cathy Cubbin, Vicki Alexander, Gilbert Gee

a) APHA session for next year

Our session will focus on "**Race/ethnicity and the Year 2000 Census: Implications for Public Health Data**". The rationale for this session is that new racial/ethnic categories will be used in the Year 2000 census and individuals will also have, for the first time, the option of checking multiple categories. These changes have important implications for public health, in relation to conceptualization of "race/ethnicity" and also potential mismatch between relevant "numerators" (e.g., from vital statistics or cancer registries, which do not permit people to check more than one box) and census-derived "denominators". Speakers for the session will be drawn from a symposium on this topic being organized by N. Krieger through the Harvard Center for Society and Health and which will take place on April 11, 2000; all participants at the symposium have agreed to participate in a "repeat" (and updated) session at the APHA 2000 conference. The symposium participants are:

Speakers: Katherine Wallman (chief statistician at Office of Management and Budget, in charge of the process of revising federal racial/ethnic categories), Edward Sondik (chief of the National Center for Health Statistics, who will discuss how NCHS will handle the changes), and Daniel

Friedman (Assistant Commissioner of Public Health for Massachusetts, who will discuss how his state will handle the changes)

Discussants: Hortensia Amaro (professor at Boston University; focusing on Latino/Hispanic data), David Williams (professor at Michigan State University, focusing on African American data), Tessie Guillermo (executive director of the Asian and Pacific Islander American Health Forum, focusing on Asian and Pacific Islander American data), Linda Burhanstippanov (executive director of the Native American Cancer Institute, focusing on American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian data), and Mary Waters (professor at Harvard University, focusing on immigration and racial/ethnic identity).

Based on discussion at our politics of public health data subcommittee meeting, we will explore supplementing the symposium participants with two or three additional panelists, if time permits: (1) Gilbert Gee will investigate locating a speaker representing a multiracial heritage organization, to speak to their experiences of checking the proverbial boxes; (2) Vicki Alexander offered to discuss how she and others at her local health department (Berkeley, CA) are addressing the changes; and (3) we will contact Nancy Kohn to see if someone from the Access Project (which presented at the politics of public health data session this year) can provide examples of graphics that community-based organizations would find useful to understand how the new census data affects estimates of population rates of morbidity and mortality. The history subcommittee of the Spirit of 1848 has likewise suggested we open our session with a presentation by an historian, regarding the history and politics of racial/ethnic classification in the US (including the construction of whiteness). Our goal is make a decision about additional participants by December 7; no other additional abstracts for this session will be solicited. Cathy Cubbin will take care of handling the paper work for this session. Lastly, to learn more about the politics of public health data committee, contact Cathy Cubbin (ccubbin@leland.Stanford.EDU).

b) Web page: data toolbox project

Sam Harper (who was unable to attend APHA this year) is re-invigorating our effort to set up a data toolkit on the web. The goal of this project is to assemble and describe diverse instruments relevant to measuring social determinants of health, e.g., with measures pertaining to social class and other aspects of socioeconomic position, race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation/identity, and diverse types of discrimination (interpersonal and structural), including racism, sexism, anti-gay discrimination, etc. By doing so, we hope to encourage use and development of instruments that can be used in a variety of studies, facilitating comparison of results and furthering investigation of social determinants of health. If you want to become involved in this project, or have ideas for instruments that would be good to include, PLEASE get in touch with Sam Harper (srh3@cdc.gov).

2) Curriculum

Attended by: Cheryl Merzel, Marion Fass, Sherman James, Emma Sanchez, Babette Neuberger, Olivia Carter-Pokras, Simon Pillar, Celia Graterol, Mah-jabeen Soobader, and Luis Aviles.

a) APHA session for next year

The sub-committee discussed the idea of the need for an on-going project dealing with the issue of how to reshape the public health curriculum to assure that students obtain a basic understanding of the social context and determinants of health. This includes delineating the competencies to be mastered in order to achieve this understanding; discussion of successful models for incorporating a social determinants of health and social justice perspective in public health educational programs, and how to gain institutional support for this agenda. Next year's session will focus on this topic of "rethinking" public health curricula as one mechanism for initiating this ongoing project. Likely presentations for the session would include both reflections on what such a curriculum might look like as well as examples of current courses that would contribute to such a curriculum. Most likely some of the presentations will be solicited while others may be selected from contributed abstracts. Participants would also be urged to address, directly, how they address public health history as part of their pedagogy. If you would like to be involved with this session, contact Cheryl Merzel (cm449@columbia.edu) and Marion Fass (fassm@beloit.edu).

b) Web page: progressive public health syllabus/curriculum project

The sub-committee expressed strong interest in reviving the idea of a web-based curriculum project. The goal would be to encourage folk to make their syllabi and other course-related

materials accessible via our web page, so as to share resources and spur new ideas. If you are interested in working on this project or have a syllabus to submit, likewise contact Cheryl Merzel and Marion Fass.

3) History

Attended by: Anne-Emanuelle Birn, David Rosner, David Ramsey, Susan Moscou, Dan O'Connell, Katya Wanzer, and Megan Betz.

a) This subcommittee discussed a wide range of topics involving history, public health, and social justice, including the "history of history at APHA" and how to design history sessions that are useful, provocative, and relevant to current public health policy, research, and activism. Ideas of future questions that should be addressed by the history subcommittee are: history of health care financing and organization (including origins of employment-based insurance, and the notion and use of "risk"), history of women's health activism, and the history of faith-based movements and public health.

b) The subcommittee also decided to institutionalize two new traditions:

(1) a progressive public health history poster board (along the lines of what David Ramsey generated this year), to be included with relevant Spirit of 1848 sessions.

NOTE: we are looking for **VOLUNTEERS** to create such a poster for the APHA 2000 Session on "Race/ethnicity and the year 2000 census: implications for public health data".

(2) a radical history tour for the Sunday morning of APHA.

NOTE: we also need **VOLUNTEERS** from the Boston area to help organize this tour.

c) The subcommittee proposed organizing two history-related sessions for next year:

(1) a separate session or a historical context presentation in conjunction with next year's politics of public health data session on "Race/ethnicity and the Year 2000 Census: implications for public health data"

(2) a session that would be co-organized with the history committee of the Medical Care Section, meaning that the topic choice will involve discussion between this committee and our Spirit of 1848 subcommittee. The history session sponsored by the Medical Care section takes place on the Wednesday afternoon of APHA.

If you are interested in helping with organizing these sessions, the poster board, or the radical history tour, or want more information about the history sub-committee, contact:
Anne-Emanuelle Birn (aebirn@newschool.edu).

4) E-networking

Attended by: Pam Waterman, Nancy Krieger

a) Email bulletin board: Pam will newly be in charge of running our email bulletin board. As a first step, we will look into how folk can automatically subscribe to or get unsubscribed from our listserve. We have passed the point where we can efficiently take care of each person's request manually (our listserve now has over 500 subscribers, many from the US but also increasing numbers from other countries as well). Making these changes will most likely entail changing the location of our listserve server; if so, we will do everything possible to minimize disruption to our bulletin board. If you have any questions or concerns about how our bulletin board is functioning, please contact Pam Waterman (pwaterma@hsph.harvard.edu).

b) Web page: Pam will be in touch with Michelle Murrain, who set up our present web-page, to work on upgrading our web page capacity.

5) Mentoring

Attended by: Pat O'Campo, Adele Amodeo, Ler-Lin Wang, and Nara Gallin.

The four persons in this sub-committee will contact Cecilia Zapata to work on ways to connect (a) folk who want progressive public health mentors with (b) progressive public health folk who want to mentor. One option might be to include a mentoring database on our web page; another

might be to develop new strategies to promote mentoring via our email bulletin board. The subcommittee will also decide, within the month, whether they want to organize a session for the APHA 2000 conference. To learn more about this subcommittee, contact Cecilia Zapata.

6) Additional APHA business

--We attended (representative = Nancy Krieger) the APHA Equal Health Opportunity Commission (EHOC) meeting which was on the Sunday afternoon of APHA. This committee address issues of diversity within APHA and is a place where caucus concerns can be brought to the attention of the APHA executive board and administrative staff; it also organizes 1-2 sessions per year. Our recommendation was that EHOC notify caucuses when relevant APHA resolutions are passed that call for letters to be sent to specific agencies or persons; the caucuses should develop a model letter and EHOC should assist in publicizing these letters among caucus constituencies. Spirit of 1848, for example, could post such resolutions and model letters on both our email bulletin board and our web page.

--Marion Fass agreed to serve as our representative to the first day of the APHA planning meeting (on Thurs, Nov 11) for the Year 2000 APHA conference. At our business meeting, we generated some ideas for her to propose for the APHA plenary sessions. According to Marion, the meeting was attended by about 50 people, including both representatives of the sections and most of the caucuses. In the portion of the meeting focused on brainstorming for the keynote speaker and for the plenary sessions, Marion worked with a breakout group including representatives from the Lesbian, Gay and Bisexual caucus, the Latino Caucus, the Immigrant Caucus, the Black Caucus and others. Their discussion was spirited, and they identified several major areas of interest: Health and Human Rights, Racism and Genetics, Economic Issues and International Health (looking at immigrant issues, war, etc.), and AIDS and discrimination. The group additionally proposed, to the larger assembly, that Amartya Sen be the keynote speaker (other of the breakout groups raised his name as well). Future planning will be by email, with one additional in-person meeting in January, when the new president of APHA, Carol Easley Allen, will be making decisions with the planning committee about the keynote speaker and plenary sessions. This planning committee includes 6-members-at-large, some of whom are on the Spirit of 1848 listserv; the 6 members-at-large are: Barry Levy (blevy@igc.apc.org), Richard David (rdavid@uic.edu), David Williams (wildavid@umich.edu), Susan T. West (West@neetf.org)s, Ronald R. Arias (roarias@ci.long-beach.ca.us) and Eli Capilouto (eli.capilouto@uab.edu). Lastly, the program chair from the New England Chapter of APHA, Judith A. Gorbach is interested in doing a historical tour, and Spirit of 1848 will be in touch with her regarding our plans for a "radical history tour".

II. Spirit of 1848 sessions at APHA

We did well—and we did good. Lots of attendance, good discussion, great connections. The specifics being:

A) Politics of Public Health Data

Our session was on "**MONITORING SOCIAL INEQUALITIES IN HEALTH: conceptual controversies, technical challenges, and implications for policy decisions and resource allocation**" (session 1154; Monday, Nov 8, 2:15 to 5:15 pm). About 350-400 people attended the session and engaged in thoughtful and lively discussion. The purpose of the session was to learn how we can we creatively use and extend public health data bases to monitor social inequalities in health and to consider implications of different approaches for policy, advocacy, and resource allocation. The line-up was:

* Introduction--**Cathy Cubbin, Nancy Krieger**

Part I: Monitoring inequalities in health: local US health departments and global perspectives

* Monitoring of disparities in health care within a population by a local health department—**PD Sims, M Yamata, J Slosek, L Fried.**

* VISTA/PH: software for monitoring social inequalities in health—**David Solet, Jim Krieger, JR Allen**

* Assessing patterns and trends in social inequalities in health in countries with inadequate vital statistics—**Paula Braveman, SO Rutstein**

Part II: Augmenting public health data bases to look at effects of neighborhood characteristics, residential segregation, and labor markets on the public's health--United States

* Novel uses of birth certificate data to monitor inequalities in maternal and child health—**Janet Rich-Edwards, Steve Buka, DL Kindlon, Tony Earls**

* Racial residential segregation and adult mortality in US major cities—**Chiquita Collins**

* The health inequality of labor markets in the United States--presenting a theoretical model and an empirical examination of age-adjusted death rates—**JT Whitmire, MD Schulman**

Part III: From monitoring to action: communicating results to advocacy groups & controversies over how to summarize data to guide policy

* Assisting community health leaders in collecting and presenting persuasive data on the uninsured—**Nancy Kohn, R Seifert**

* Using disability-adjusted life years in disability epidemiology: do DALY's measure "morbidity" or "disability"?—**JF Hough, DJ Lollar**

* Measure-dependent variation in health-adjusted life expectancy for conditions prevalent in low socioeconomic position populations: caveat emptor?—**MR Gold**

* Conclusion--**Nancy Krieger**

* Poster: Social inequity and health: a historical review—**David Ramsey**

NOTE: if you want to contact any of the speakers, email Cathy Cubbin (ccubbin@leland.Stanford.EDU) and she will send you their email address. You can find abstracts for all the talks in the APHA abstract book.

Primary Sponsor: Spirit of 1848 Caucus; Co-Sponsors: Sections--Community Health Planning & Policy Development; Epidemiology; Health Administration; Maternal and Child Health; Medical Care; Occupational Health & Safety; Public Health Education & Health Promotion; Public Health Nursing; Social Work; Statistics; Caucuses--American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Caucus; Asian Caucus; Black Caucus; Caucus on Homelessness; Caucus on Refugee and Immigrant Health; Health Equity and Public Hospitals Caucus; Labor Caucus; Latino Caucus; Lesbian, Gay, & Bisexual Caucus; Socialist Caucus; Women's Caucus; SPIGS: HealthLaw Forum; New Professionals

B) Curriculum

Our session was called "**From classroom to community: approaches for teaching social determinants of health**" (Session 2084; Tuesday, Nov 9, 8:30 to 10 am). About 100 people attended (at 8:30 in the morning!) to join in a session about creatively integrating classroom- and community-based learning to deepen ties between public health & social justice. The line-up was:

* Introduction--**Cheryl Merzel, Marion Fass**

* An integrated curriculum to teach, learn, and practice social justice in public health—**AM Vilaneuva, H Rubenstein, K Pham, P Blumberg, NA Bartle**

* Teaching social determinants through community assessment—**Pyser Edelsack, Len Rodberg, H Jack Geiger, MR Gold**

* Using service-learning experiences to enhance understandings of social inequalities in health in a rural university setting—**SE Christopher**

* Participatory Action Research: Research for the sake of social justice—**Jaime Delgado**

NOTE: if you want copies of any of the syllabi or related materials handed out at this session, contact Cheryl Merzel (cm449@columbia.edu) and she will send you the presenter's email address. You can find abstracts for all the presentations in the APHA abstract book.

Primary Sponsor: Spirit of 1848 Caucus; Co-Sponsors: Sections--Community Health Planning & Policy Development; Epidemiology; Health Administration; Maternal and Child Health; Medical Care; Occupational Health & Safety; Public Health Education & Health Promotion; Public Health Nursing; Social Work; Caucuses--Academic Public Health Caucus; American Indian, Alaska Native and Native Hawaiian Caucus; Asian Caucus; Black Caucus; Labor Caucus; Latino Caucus; Lesbian, Gay, & Bisexual Caucus; Public Health Student Caucus; Socialist Caucus; Women's Caucus; SPIGS--HealthLaw Forum; New Professionals

C) History

We co-sponsored a **RADICAL HISTORY TOUR** of Chicago, which took place on Sunday, November 7th. The tour was sold out and a wonderful success—around 55 people participated! Hats off to Babette Neuberger for helping get this tour off and running. According to one of the Spirit of 1848 participants, Cathy Cubbin: "The group was fortunate to have labor historian William Adelman lead us on a tour of significant historical sites in Chicago, including Haymarket Square, Jane Addams' Hull House, Haymarket Square Trial and Execution site, St. Stanislaus church and others. We then stopped for a fabulous brunch at the Riverside Deli before proceeding on to Polish Broadway, Union Park, Carter Harrison's statue, the former site of Carmen's Hall, and Teamster City. We ended our tour with a visit to the Forest Home Cemetery where we placed roses on the graves of the Haymarket Martyrs."

Given excitement generated by the tour, we are initiating conversations about making a radical history tour the first part of every APHA meeting in years to come (see report of our history sub-committee report, above). If you are interested in helping out with organizing a radical history tour in Boston for the APHA conference in 2000, please contact Anne-Emanuelle Birn (aebirn@newschool.edu).

We are also happy to report we sold 20 copies of our video (complete with titles) of last year's extravaganza—"150 Years of the Spirit of 1848: An evening of politics, passion, and public health". If you would like to order a copy of the video (\$15 plus shipping), contact Anne-Emanuelle Birn (aebirn@newschool.edu).

D) Other:

We co-sponsored several sessions, following our policy of reviewing & approving all requests for co-sponsorship through the Spirit of 1848 Coordinating Committee. These sessions were (in alphabetical order, by primary sponsor):

American Indian, Alaska Native, and Native Hawaiian Caucus: Culturally competent research and resources for Native Populations (Session 1080).

Caucus on Refugee and Immigrant Health: Rachel Fruchter memorial session: coalition-building for refugee and immigrant health—building a common agenda (Session 2216).

International Health Section: Health Impacts of International Trade Agreements: Is Free Trade Good for your Health? (Session 1037)

Medical Care Section: P Ellen Parsons Memorial Session: A U.S. National Health System: the next step in equal access (Session 2205); A Forum on National Health Reform: Beyond universal coverage: is it time to start thinking about restructuring the health system? (Session 2991)

Occupational Health & Safety Section: Women Workers: Occupational safety and health issues (Session 1057); History of Occupational Health in the US (Session 1058).

Socialist Caucus: Special panel on inequalities in health: research issues and policy implications (Session 1073); The impact of the globalization of capital on public health practice in developing countries (Session 1153); Without struggle, there is no progress (Session 2083); Agency, "empowerment", and social justice: linking the personal and the political in public health activism (Session 2166); Race and racism in medicine and epidemiology: when does race matter? (Session 2226); Structural inequalities as a public health issue: shifting the lifestyle paradigm to addressing contextual factors as the principal determinants of health (Session 3162).

We also co-sponsored a demonstration for Universal Health Care, held at the Federal Building, on the Tuesday afternoon of APHA. The Chicago sponsors of the demonstration were: Access Living, ADAPT, Labor Party, United Electrical Works, IL Nurses Assoc, Physicians for a National Health Program, Nurses for a Natl Health Program-Chicago, Campaign for Better Health Care, Jobs with Justice, Metro Seniors in Action, Chicago Coalition for the Homeless, 8th Day Center for Justice, and FAIR; the other APHA co-sponsor was the Occupational Health & Safety section.

And we had brightly colored posters up just about everywhere [NB: we were also told to stop distributing flyers, prior to the Monday general opening session, by convention hall security guards, who said they were acting at the request of APHA staff. We are going to

ascertain whether this is in fact true, as we strongly feel APHA members have the right to distribute flyers about APHA events to APHA members en route to the opening APHA session.]

FINALLY, if any of the activities and projects we are reporting to you grab you or inspire you--**JOIN IN!! We work together based on principles of solidarity, volunteering whatever time we can, to move along the work of social justice and public health. We look forward to hearing from you.**

Onwards!

Spirit of 1848 Coordinating Committee