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**White Noise: Mass Media, Public Awareness, and the HIV/AIDS
Epidemic in St. Petersburg, Russia**

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**White Noise: Mass Media, Public Awareness, and the HIV/AIDS
Epidemic in St. Petersburg, Russia**

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Abstract

White Noise: Mass Media, Public Awareness, and the HIV/AIDS Epidemic in St. Petersburg, Russia

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As an epidemic in the increasingly image-conscious and media-driven twenty-first century, the course of HIV/AIDS has been shaped by both mass media's portrayal of the disease and public perception of it. Russia currently has the highest HIV infection rate outside of Sub-Saharan Africa. In St. Petersburg, HIV infection rates are continuing to rise—the primary mode of transmission is changing from Injection Drug Use (IDU) to heterosexual intercourse, and fastest growing age group of infected persons is 30-40. As the epidemic begins to spill over from IDUs and homosexual communities into the general population, new attitudes are arising within St. Petersburg society and mass media. This paper analyses the role of mass media in HIV/AIDS prevention campaigns around the world, before presenting the author's research on the effects of mass media presentations of HIV on the St. Petersburg population. Through a three-part research study involving in-depth interviews, qualitative surveys, and a media analysis, the author portrays the media landscape in St. Petersburg in 2013 with an eye towards resolving media agendas, government policies, and public attitudes.

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Introduction and Review of the Literature

As an epidemic in the increasingly image-conscious and media-driven twenty-first century, the course of HIV/AIDS has been shaped by both mass media's portrayal of the disease and public perception of it. While there is not a clear, causal relationship between the two, they are so closely linked that in order to form a clear picture of the way in which HIV is conceived within a society both must be examined. Though some media experts emphasize that the polysemy of any mass media so dilutes its overall message as to render any given effect unspecifiable, the presence and general character of a media discourse and some of the most common ways in which the public conceives of such a discourse can be observed. This can be done through analysis of media messages and the self-disclosed perceptions of the general public. As Jenny Kitzinger writes in *Media Impact on Public Beliefs About AIDS*, the role that the media has in affecting people's knowledge of HIV prevention, and the public's role in influencing the media to create utile pieces of news, can and should be observed, despite the difficulty of doing so (Kitzinger 1992, 168). In a deadly serious context such as the HIV epidemic, it is essential that we grasp at those obscured threads of meaning woven through the complex fabric of the general public's relationship with media and make every effort to understand both how the pattern is woven together and how it can be altered. In this paper, I will examine the messages communicated by mass media in St. Petersburg, Russia regarding HIV and compare them to the thoughts and experiences of Russian citizens.

Russia presents a unique subject for study, not only because Russian history and culture have a long and storied relationship with mass media messages and government censorship, but also because Russia has the one of the fastest-growing HIV infection rates in the world. By examining the recent HIV outbreak in St. Petersburg in conjunction with

Russia's struggles to determine the role of mass media in contemporary society, I hope to find new and unique insights into the relationship between public perception and media treatment of HIV.

Chapter 1: Mass Media and the HIV Epidemic

The media contribute significantly to the definition of the world around us and thereby also to the definition of ourselves. They present ways to understand the world, to represent the world, in images, sounds and writing. They suggest ideas of what is important and what isn't, what is good and bad, what is boring and what is fun (Gripsrud 2002, 5)

Of all the many technological developments of the last 300 years, mass media has had perhaps the most pervasive and constant influence. The creation of information and its distribution along set channels has deeply affected the way that human beings conceive of and discourse with the events and people in our world. Mass media include newspapers, television, films, radio, magazines and periodicals, advertisements, the Internet, and more. In our capitalistic, global economy, the production of news is a complicated affair, which is created by responding to a combination of current events, popular interest, and government direction. And, since mass media in one form or another reaches virtually every person on earth, the influence wielded by these organizations is tremendous, exhibiting direct and observable effects upon human behavior.

PUBLIC HEALTH, BEHAVIORAL THEORY, AND THE ROLE OF THE INFORMED INDIVIDUAL

Since 1981, when the world became aware of the threat posed by HIV, social scientists, behavioral psychologists, medical professionals, and scholars of mass media have labored to understand how best they can encourage HIV-preventive behavior in the public. Researchers have gradually abandoned theories of social conditioning in favor of

models that focus more on rational behavior and the individual's role in changing their lifestyles (Terry, Gallois, McCamish 1993, 4). Foremost among these theories are the Theory of Reasoned Action, the Health Belief Model, and Social Cognitive Theory. The Theory of Reasoned Action (TRA) is predicated on the belief that "people make behavioural decisions on the basis of a reasoned consideration of the available information" (Terry et al. 1993, 5). The Health Belief Model (HBM) is a value-expectancy theory, which states that the "the desire to avoid illness or to get well (value); and [...] the belief that a specific health action available to a person would prevent (or ameliorate) illness (expectation)" (Rosenstock, Strecher, Becker 1998, 6). Social Cognitive Theory goes one step further than the TRA or HBM, saying that "people need to be given not only reasons to alter risky habits, but also the behavioral means, resources, and social supports to do so" (Bandura 1998, 25). Despite the technical differences of these three theories in conceptualization and approach to the problem of HIV, they have one distinctive feature in common: Providing the public with accurate and accessible information is the first step in preventing the spread of HIV. Any successful HIV prevention campaign must begin by creating informed individuals through the judicious use of mass media channels.

THE PRODUCTION OF MASS MEDIA AND ITS INFLUENCE ON PUBLIC AWARENESS

[Public] confusion or ‘failure’ to respond to education campaigns can *not* be assumed to be a problem with the audience (using explanations relating to their ‘psychological resistance’, ‘locus of control’ or ‘ignorance’). Rather public reactions reflect confusion *within message content* and *conflict at the level of production* both of health education messages and the mass media. (Kitzinger 1992, 190)

Over the last three decades, government groups and NGOs have launched many public health campaigns promoting awareness of HIV/AIDS, one of the earliest and most well documented of which was a campaign that was launched by the United Kingdom’s government in 1986. This campaign initially used print advertisements to distribute facts about HIV and its modes of transmission, but later began to employ cinema, television, radio, and billboard ads as well. The UK government ran this campaign for two years, progressing through three different phases respectively targeting the public at large, injection drug users (IDUs), and young heterosexuals. From the very beginning the campaign employed fear-based tactics, distributing messages such as “AIDS: Don’t Die of Ignorance” and highlighting the dangers associated with unprotected sex and the sharing of non-sterile drug equipment (Markova and Power 1992, 113-4).

Efforts to gauge the effectiveness of the campaign have generated conflicting reports, with some scholars suggesting that the communications slightly increased public awareness, but had no effect on lowering public anxiety or changing misconceptions about the virus (Markova and Power 1992, 15). The various approaches to measuring the campaigns success offer an interesting starting point for considering the role of media in public health. Markova and Power write:

Some reports (Wellings & McVey, 1990; White et al., 1988) have suggested that raising awareness of HIV/AIDS is an essential criterion for determining success. Other studies (Campbell & Waters, 1987; Wober, 1988) assume that knowledge of HIV/AIDS is a suitable yardstick for measuring the effectiveness of campaigns. Results of such studies obviously differ, depending on the number of items included in their knowledge examination and on the degree of specificity or difficulty attached to such knowledge items. Other studies use changes in sexual behavior as a determinant of outcome (Emmons et al., 1986) and still others focus on attitude change or anxiety reduction (Nutbeam et al., 1989). As it is likely that it is more difficult to change sexual behavior than to increase awareness of HIV/AIDS, the dependent outcome measure chosen by health communication evaluators will surely influence their final conclusions about the effectiveness of a campaign. (Markova and Power 1992, 116)

James Dearing and Everett Rogers conducted another important study of mass media and public health campaigns in 1992. They examined the early stages of public education during the advent of HIV/AIDS in San Francisco through 1988, analyzing how materials were produced and the influence of media agenda on public knowledge. Their theoretical framework identified two primary types of influence on media agendas—endogenous and exogenous. “Endogenous influences on news agendas are variables that originate from within a mass media organization, such as the perceptions of a news issue by editors. Exogenous influences on news agendas are variables that originate from outside mass media organizations, such as the number of protest marches held about a topic” (Dearing and Rogers 1992,173-4). These two influences coincided in San Francisco in the 1980s, laying the foundation for American HIV/AIDS journalism.

During the early years of HIV’s spread through the United States, the *San Francisco Chronicle* published more articles on the subject than did *The New York Times*, *Los Angeles Times*, or *Washington Post*. This happened because in 1982, an editor at the *Chronicle* hired Randy Shilts, a gay reporter and subsequent author of a book on AIDS.

He became the nation's first full-time reporter on HIV and one of the most influential media figures on the subject (Dearing and Rogers 1992, 178). At the same time, San Francisco's gay population, proportionally the nation's largest at the time, experienced an extraordinary outbreak of HIV. Between the size of the gay population and recent medical news about the disease, HIV quickly rose to the forefront of the general population's consciousness (Dearing and Rogers 1992, 176-7). Through the confluence of both endogenous and exogenous influences, San Francisco and the *Chronicle* became the hub for a national discussion about HIV.

Without this particular sequence of events, a national discussion about HIV might never have become so widespread. Dearing and Rogers write poetically;

Each year in the United States a few potential issues become public; the vast majority die an unheralded death by failing to attract sufficient mass media attention. If a scientific issue is not in the mass media, then it is not news, and if it is not news, then it does not become a public issue. AIDS did not make it onto the U.S. mass media news agenda for 4 years. (1992, 180-1)

Thanks to its importance in San Francisco, HIV began to receive coverage from *The New York Times*, which in turn drew attention from the rest of the nation. This impact can be attributed the salience and credibility that people attribute to any subject covered by the *Times*. After this, coverage quickly spread across networks and media channels, with NBC, CBS, ABC, and PBS devoting significant portions of their airtime to HIV-related issues (Dearing and Rogers 1992, 183-5).

As can be seen, media campaigns themselves must also be conceived of as the products of a social system. While communications efforts are routinely viewed as independent rather than dependent variables, "as producers rather than products of social

change,” we must keep in mind that any changes in a society’s attitude towards HIV/AIDS are, to some degree, determined by social and economic structures already present in that society (Salmon and Kroger 1992, 132, 144). In few places is the role of such structures more visible than on television and in the news.

ASSUMED AUTHORITY: THE ROLES OF GENERALIST AND SPECIALIST REPORTERS IN (MIS-) CONSTRUING AN EPIDEMIC

From the public’s perspective, news outlets—be they print, radio, or television—are seen to have an innate level of credibility. Because of this often-unconscious investment of authority, news articles can wield great power over public opinion. The creation of news articles, however, is far from a transparent and an unbiased process. With social, market, and political forces pressuring them, networks and their reporters are far from impartial. In HIV/AIDS reporting, one of the most important factors influencing the accuracy of news produced is the differentiation between specialist and generalist reporters.

Counter-intuitively, medical and health correspondents do not produce the majority of the material on health featured on media outlets. Most features are written by freelancers or general correspondents, who have varying levels of knowledge about the subject. In particular, when a story featuring HIV or AIDS has wide enough appeal to be a headline, general correspondents tend to cover it. These general reporters often get things wrong because they either do not check their facts or talk to the right people (Williams and Miller 1998, 148-9).

Specialist reporters are limited in their scope and resources by the in-depth nature of their work. They tend to have close connections with a relatively small number of leading professionals and organizations, access to cutting-edge research, and a responsibility to their sources to report accurately. They are unable to write about a wide range of subjects and are limited in those about which they do write. If a specialist reporter takes a radical stance on an issue, they risk offending and alienating their sources (Williams and Miller 1998, 149). Because of both their expense and limited utility, few networks will retain specialist reporters on any subject, let alone HIV.

Into the vacuum left behind by specialist reporters' absence, step general reporters. Williams and Miller write, "Central to the culture of journalism is the obsession with 'story'. This focus on the 'story' and its 'values' runs counter to definitions, which stress 'education' or 'social responsibility'" (Williams and Miller 1998, 155). As a result, much of the information that is distributed over news networks is actually of dubious credibility. In the case of HIV, this has led to a rampant misinformation of the public, as dramatic stories are favored over educational ones.

TELEVISED SUCCESS: A PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGN IN THE UNITED KINGDOM

Network television is widely viewed as one of the most effective channels for distributing information. With its integration of visual media with verbal narratives, TV can communicate incredible amounts of information in a short period of time. Because of the richness of the medium and its ability to reach exceedingly wide swaths of the population, it has been one of the most important weapons in the fight against HIV. The

public awareness campaign run by the British government from 1986-1990 focused heavily on television news and social advertisements, with unique results. Because of the government's active promotion of HIV awareness, government-sponsored stories, normalizing portrayals of people living with the virus, news about research developments, and reports about other countries comprised over two thirds of the media's total coverage of HIV during that time (Miller and Beharrell 1992, 69).

During this time, television news networks in Britain supported the government's proclamation that an outbreak among the heterosexual population was potentially on the way and helped to support the government's campaign to change sexual behavior. The news networks allied themselves heavily with medical specialists and academics, eschewing the government's more vague and dilatory approach to educating the public and calling for more scientific information. Critiques of the government even went so far as to criticize the government for dumbing down its message in response to pressure from activists on the moral right (Miller and Beharrell 1992, 75-6).

Such a response is extremely unusual in the history of televised media and HIV, and not merely because the media began to call for more scientific sources. Throughout this time period, British TV outlets even went so far as to avoid the stigmatization of gay men, which was a hallmark of HIV awareness campaigns during the 1980s and 1990s and continues to plague media representations of PLWH (people living with HIV) today. That is not to say that there was no anti-gay coverage, but that there was little that was blatantly homophobic (Miller and Beharrell 1992, 80).

SENSITIVE SUBJECTS: CONTROVERSY SURROUNDING HIV/AIDS AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS

Sitting at the intersection of sex, illegal drug use, public health, and interpersonal relationships, HIV is an understandably controversial subject. Media coverage of HIV-related issues has met with a great deal of controversy from the moral right. Critiques such as those in the UK against the government's social advertisements in the late 1980s, claiming that the information being distributed was not scientific enough, are notable exceptions. The majority of criticism stems from objection from the moral right to portrayals of material of a sexual nature, homosexuality, and illegal injection drug use. To avoid controversy, many public health campaigns, particularly those targeting youth, will desexualize and generalize information as much as possible. This results in some confusion and ignorance remaining behind even after specific efforts to educate people. For example, the use of sanitized expressions such as "exchange of bodily fluids" rather than the more accurate "sexual secretions and blood contact" has led to the relatively common misbelief that HIV can be transmitted via saliva (Bandura 1994, 34).

The fear of offending audience segments and thereby losing business has often crippled networks in their efforts to promote HIV awareness. One of the most commonly offending characteristics of the HIV epidemic is association with homosexuality. Some scholars claim that this resistance to messages about the disease would have been lessened if the epidemic had begun by spreading through the heterosexual population first (Bandura 1994, 35). "Media interventions targeted at gay men have little chance of getting aired on mainstream media, to say nothing of attracting funds from major funding

organizations. In addition, our society's ambivalence about sexuality has hamstrung campaigners ability to talk frankly with adolescents" (Perloff 2001, 104).

Assessing the source of criticism, however, is not so simple as merely claiming that conservative moral groups object to depictions of adult subjects in the media. The roots of the controversy are much more explosive: one must bear in mind that HIV is a deeply personal issue with threatening connotations that evoke intense emotional responses (Markova and Power 1992, 121). While many public awareness campaigns in the media have attempted to promote education and influence behavior through fear mongering, they may have negatively affected the public. After all, people do not need to be scared out of their wits to change their behavior, any more than they need to be terrified to buy homeowners' insurance (Bandura 1994, 32).

Chapter 2: HIV/AIDS Epidemic in St. Petersburg, Russia

WHY RUSSIA?

The influence of mass media and public perception on the spread of HIV tends to differ from country to country, with national borders coinciding with ideological borders in terms of both people's perception and media treatment of the disease (Seale 2002, 94-7). Rather than divide a study by other demographic criteria, such as age, gender, ethnicity, etc., I have chosen to include a diverse population bounded by shared geography. Though large differences in the knowledgeability about HIV can be observed when groups are broken down by criteria such as education and sexual orientation, to gain insight into the role that mass media plays in spreading awareness of HIV, it is most useful to choose people from a specific region. The usefulness of civic and national borders for studying HIV and media appears to stem from the ability of local and national government policy to affect news outlets and public awareness campaigns.

In Russia, government subsidies specifically designed to sponsor informative TV programs promoting HIV awareness are commonly given out to major news outlets. Yet, despite both government campaigns and exposure to international news and health information via the Internet, the rate of HIV infection in Russia is increasing nearly three times faster than anywhere else in the developed world. At the global level, the HIV epidemic has more or less stabilized, but the rates of new cases of HIV infection and AIDS mortality remain unacceptably high in many countries. While the global total for new cases of HIV infection is steadily falling, the number of people living with HIV in

Eastern Europe and Central Asia has tripled since 2000, and the number of new cases continues to rise. HIV develops most rapidly in the eastern part of the European Region of the WHO, and, as of November 22, 2012, the total number of documented cases of people living with HIV in Russia was 703,781, of whom 90,396 people had died from the disease ("Количество ВИЧ-инфицированных в России" 2012).

The statistics about infection and mortality rates are frightening, but rather than being motivated to change, Russians tend to exhibit a pervasive apathy towards and ignorance of basic information about HIV. There is a curious disconnect between HIV statistics and the opinions of Russian citizens, which begs the question: What is the relationship between mass media and public opinion in the construction of HIV discourse in Russia, and what are the characteristics contributing the continuing rise of the epidemic?

HIV/AIDS AS A SOCIAL PROBLEM

Despite the alarming statistical data and expert estimates, the majority of the Russian population does not see HIV as a widespread phenomenon. The vast majority of Russians still see HIV as something distant, exclusively relevant to certain vulnerable groups, something that could never happen to normal people. Even when they do think about it on rare occasions, such as December 1st, most Russians do not consider the spread of HIV/AIDS to be a threat to society.

Research, however, has shown that due to the dearth and expense of existing medical treatments, the most effective means for slowing or preventing the spread of HIV

are social in nature. The most common method of preventing HIV is the reduction of risky sexual behaviors. This is often accomplished with educational programs that teach at-risk individuals behaviors related to safer sex, as well as the reasons behind them. Much research has been done on the social factors affected safe-sex behavior in various societies, with the obvious conclusions being that abstinence is an unrealistic expectation and that condom use is a complicated phenomenon, as it happens in the context of one's social relationships and lifestyle. Studies in high schools in the United States have shown that instituting sexual education classes and making medical clinics available to the youth have reduced both pregnancy and the spread of sexually transmitted infections (Kirby and DiClemente 1994, 128). Being open about sex and HIV, encouraging people to be aware of the risks and available methods of prevention, and making condoms widely available has been shown to be the best way to prevent transmission via intercourse with infected individuals.

The other most common form of HIV transmission is via non-medical drug injection, and while the at-risk population within this group is more difficult to reach, success has still been seen when social outreaches are made to drug users. Injection Drug Users (IDUs) represent a large and separate subculture within the population of HIV-positive people, and the social methods for educating them about the dangers of the epidemic are necessarily different from other populations. The incidence of HIV among IDUs typically ranges from 0-20 percent depending on location, but at times has been observed to be as high as 50 percent, as it was in New York City and Newark, New Jersey during the 1990s (Roehrich, Wall, and Sorenson 1994, 189). The illegal nature of

drug use and associated activities, such as prostitution, makes it much more difficult to contact and educate IDUs about the dangers of HIV and preventative measures. Just as drug treatment programs have met with success by using treatment theories that incorporate both social and medical considerations, it is necessary to view the high risk of IDUs as a social issue affecting the entire population. This is particularly true in St. Petersburg, Russia where the HIV epidemic is beginning to spread from IDUs into the general public. In 2004, 92 percent of people infected with HIV were IDUs, but in 2012 that percentage had dropped to 67.1 percent—different modes of transmission were responsible for the flush of new cases of HIV (Smolskaya et al. 2013).

The failure of the Russian citizenry to treat HIV as a social issue is in stark contrast to the ways in which they interact with other issues such as poverty, homelessness, unemployment, and, most recently, homosexuality. Unlike these other social phenomena, the public does not come into direct contact with HIV/AIDS other than through stories and images presented by the mass media. At its root, this lack of awareness does not stem exclusively from the public perceptions of Russians, but also from those media outlets that shape the opinions and beliefs of the people. The two are deeply intertwined, and the pattern of their interaction affects the behaviors of the populace, in this case, by facilitating social conditions that accelerate the transmission of HIV without engendering a corresponding rise in awareness of the epidemic. The attentions of the media and the awareness of the population must change radically. To study the unique social situation in Russia that is leading to such high HIV infection

rates, I have created a two-part study that analyzes public perception of HIV through in-depth interviews and surveys and a statistical analysis of print and televised media.

WHY SAINT-PETERSBURG?

Rather than attempt to create a study that assesses all of Russia, I have limited the scope of my research to the City of St. Petersburg. The second largest city in Russia, St. Petersburg is a capital of art and culture with so many similarities and connections to Western Europe that it has been called the Venice of the North and the Paris of the East. Over the last decade various political, social, and economic processes occurring in the Russian Federation and abroad have affirmed the role of Saint-Petersburg not only as the center of the Northwest Federal District, but as the “European” capital of Russia. Due to the increased economic development and its corresponding social changes, St. Petersburg has begun to encounter a number of challenges and threats that are unique to Russia, but common to modern Western European society and to quickly developing metropolitan regions. Among these issues is the HIV epidemic.

St. Petersburg is the most infected area in the Northwest Federal District and is one of the leading regions in the absolute number of HIV infected people in the Russian Federation. Approximately 996 out of 100,000 people are infected in St. Petersburg, which is more than double the national average of 428 people out of 100,000 (Pokrovsky et al. 2012). According to the St. Petersburg City Center for Prevention and Control of AIDS, in 2012 there were 3,306 new registered cases of HIV infection in St. Petersburg (3,751 in 2011, 4,150 in 2012, and 4,666 in 2009). Roughly 2,551 people were St.

Petersburg residents, and 755 people – residing in the city temporarily (Smolskaya et al. 2013).

Based on data collected in 2012, there was a total of 51,552 registered cases of HIV among the city's inhabitants, which represents between one and two percent of the total population ("Количество ВИЧ-инфицированных в России" 2012). In 2012 the prevalence of the HIV infection among the population of the city ages 15-49 was 1.4 percent, which when compared to other demographic statistics shows that in St. Petersburg HIV is gradually expanding across demographic groups. And, while IDU remains the largest mode of transmission, the number of cases of individuals infected by other means, such as sexual intercourse with an HIV-positive person, has been increasing rapidly. In other words, the epidemic is entering the general population (Беляков et al. 2012, 3-4).

Estimates based on the drug-related harm reduction projects, as well as epidemiological investigations suggest that the actual number of St. Petersburg inhabitants living with HIV is likely to be two to three times higher than the number of officially registered cases. This predicted deviation from the reported cases corresponds with the estimates of international experts such as UNAIDS and the World Bank, according to which the actual number of people living with HIV tends to be four to five times higher than the registered cases for any given area (Khachatryan et al. 2006). Such numbers are unusually high for any population including rural and poorly educated areas in HIV hotbeds, but they are particularly alarming when viewed in the context of a well-educated and metropolitan city such as St. Petersburg.

CONTRIBUTING FACTORS AND PRECONDITIONS AFFECTING THE SPREAD OF HIV IN ST. PETERSBURG

There are many factors affecting the intensive spread of HIV infection in St. Petersburg, one of the most important of which is the city's geography. Because of its strategic location on the banks of the Neva River, St. Petersburg has become not only a major international sea and river port, but also one of the most important general transportation hubs in Russia, housing many large railway and auto hubs. The infrastructure for travel, transportation, and distribution has made St. Petersburg an essential thoroughfare for drug traffickers and distributors, which, coupled with the sheer quantity of visitors and transients passing through the city, has also led to high level of injection drug use—the foremost transmission vector for HIV infection. The most important two factors in HIV transmission in the Russian Federation, and in St. Petersburg in particular, continue to be the illegal, non-medical users of drugs and their sexual partners (Беляков et al. 2012, 6).

Another contributor to the spread of the virus in St. Petersburg is the rapid development of the tourism industry in the recent years. In 2012 alone, almost six million people visited the city (“Комитет по развитию туризма” 2013). According to some predictions, this number is expected to rise significantly in the upcoming years. Among other things, the development of tourism is directly associated with the rapid expansion of the sex industry, which has also had an impact on the accelerating spread of the epidemic.

Now it is not merely the metropolitan area of St. Petersburg that is considered to have some of the highest rates of HIV infection, but also the Leningrad Oblast' (Region), which is closely connected to the city. Many of the inhabitants of the Oblast work in the city and visit it for leisure. And in addition to these suburban workers, St. Petersburg houses a significant number of schools, colleges, and universities that accommodate hundreds of thousands of students, many of whom come from other regions and countries. As is true in most countries, compared to the other age groups, St. Petersburg's young people (15-29) tend to demonstrate behavior that contributes to the spread of the HIV more frequently, making it crucial to take measures to adequately inform the young people about the risks of HIV and other sexually transmitted infections. Recent research, however, shows that the HIV infection rate in St. Petersburg has actually been shifting towards the population of older age (30-39) (Беляков et al. 2012, 7-8). This is an atypical development in the spread of HIV in major cities, and since the epidemic is concentrated mostly the working-age population, could have serious economic and demographic consequences.

Suburban workers and students are not the only people coming to work in St. Petersburg. As an industrial center with a quickly developing infrastructure and a large number of job vacancies, the city has been experiencing a large influx of working immigrants. Indeed, St. Petersburg has one of the highest rates of migration growth in the Russian Federation. In 2011 St. Petersburg had 18.3 percent of the total net migration of the Russian Federation, with a net documented migration of 58,632 people. Though, like much of Europe, St. Petersburg is experiencing natural population decline, this migratory

inflow has not only fully compensated for this, but has exceeded it by 12.3 times. In 2012 alone, there were 74,100 new migrants officially recorded in the city (“Миграция населения” 2013). In addition to these documented workers, there is a corresponding number of immigrants residing illegally. Without official registration these illegal immigrants do not have access to health care, are not educated about HIV prevention, and often contribute to illegal drug and sex trafficking—all of which are major circumstances contributing to the growth of the HIV epidemic within the city.

Annual increases have been observed in the number of hospitalized patients with severe forms of HIV infection and resulting deaths in both general and specialized hospitals of the city. Often, the first diagnosis of HIV infection happens during this admission. In hospitals specializing in the treatment of patients with HIV, the highest mortality rates are observed in TB Hospital No. 2, St. Petersburg Botkin Clinical Infectious Diseases Hospital, and the hospital of the AIDS Center. Tuberculosis and chronic viral hepatitis in the stage of cirrhosis, found mostly in drug users, have tended to be the leading causes of death in patients. The fatalities have been come in a wide variety, ranging from those newly diagnosed with HIV, those who did not receive antiretroviral therapy, those who did not take it regularly, those who refused treatment and were admitted to hospital in serious condition (Беляков et al. 2012, 32-33).

DEVELOPING CHARACTERISTICS OF THE HIV EPIDEMIC IN ST. PETERSBURG

Over the last decade, the HIV epidemic in St. Petersburg has acquired several qualitatively new features, which, in addition to the extraordinary size and rate of transmission of the epidemic, has further set the city apart from other regions. Even

though the primary mode of the HIV transmission continues to be illegal, non-medical drug injection, transmission patterns have been shifting. Between 2006 and 2011, sexual intercourse became the primary mode of transmission for newly diagnosed cases of HIV in St. Petersburg (newly diagnosed cases are defined as individuals infected within the last three years). The second important feature is the age of those infected. There has been a significant increase in the rates of HIV infection among members of the population ages 30-39, making them the fastest growing section of HIV infected individuals. This is in contrast to 2007, where the spread of HIV infection was seen primarily among people ages 18-29 (Беляков et al. 2012, 8).

In addition to the changes in mode of transmission and affected age groups, since 2002, researchers have observed a significant increase in the number of women infected by HIV. The number of women infected has also led to increased incidents of neonatal infection. In 2011 St. Petersburg saw the largest number of children born to HIV-positive mothers yet observed. Additionally, the number of patients with late stages of HIV in need antiretroviral therapy (ART) has been increasing dramatically. Lastly, there has been a rise in the incidence of HIV-related tuberculosis cases and a corresponding rise in mortalities. Tuberculosis and pneumonia are the two leading causes of death among those infected with HIV in St. Petersburg. Studies have shown that most of the deceased patients have been men between the ages of 20-40 years, who tend to lead an anti-social lifestyle, and identify as drug users, homeless persons, and former prisoners. That being said, it is noteworthy that there is a rising trend of deaths in women and people over the age of 40 years (Беляков et al. 2012, 33).

Chapter 3: Quantitative and Qualitative Research

STUDY DESIGN

To research the role of mass media and HIV awareness in St. Petersburg I have conducted a three-part study, which consists of a series of seven in-depth interviews with people who are well acquainted with mass media and HIV in St. Petersburg, either professionally or personally; an analysis of the artifacts produced by major media outlets, including both print and online articles, television shows, and radio shows; and an anonymous survey of residents of St. Petersburg, examining their awareness of HIV and their beliefs about the media, the epidemic, and public awareness of the disease. This tripartite study is designed to generate objective data about media coverage of HIV and AIDS, and then to compare these data with the beliefs and experiences of media professionals and people living with HIV and to the opinions of the general public. By so doing, I hope to craft as comprehensive of a portrait as possible, accurately showing the current state of public awareness in St. Petersburg.

After the three research components, I will also discuss an important subculture in the HIV scene—AIDS dissidents. This is a highly vocal, minority group that claims HIV and AIDS are fabrications of pharmaceutical conglomerates and that anti-retroviral drugs are poisonous. They represent a growing problem in Russian society because, though the beliefs of the AIDS dissidents runs contrary to medical science and most of the information disseminated to the public via mass media, their confident and outraged voice has been able to sway the beliefs of many who lack adequate education about the

nature and threat of HIV. Many of my sources, including the interviews that I conducted, were in Russian, and any mistakes in translation are my own.

There were a number of factors limiting the scope of this study. The most important limiting factor for the survey was the inability to generate a comprehensive representation of the St. Petersburg population. As it was distributed online through my social networks, the majority of survey respondents had similar demographic backgrounds. The majority of them were ages 22-30 with higher education and access to the Internet. While these people do represent a narrow group, they are also representative of the most well-informed and most at-risk population.

The interviews in this segment were conducted with people who have worked extensively with the topic of HIV/AIDS. They have received formal education on the subject, and many of them have pursued research into HIV in their own time. Most of them are also connected in some way w the St. Petersburg AIDS Center.

For the media analysis, I analyzed a limited number of media channels and was also limited to materials produced in the last two years (2012-13). Most of the analysis is based on my personal observation and perceptions of the tones of the articles. Regarding Internet sources: the references to HIV/AIDS were so extensive online that I was only able to review sources from one year – 2013.

IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

In order to provide a qualitative depth to the mass media analysis and to receive well-informed opinions from professionals in the media and people whose lives have been directly affected by HIV, I arranged a series of seven in-depth interviews. Among the people I interviewed were radio talk show hosts, TV personalities, newspaper editors, and medical administrators. They were selected because of their experience working with HIV-related topics in a public forum. In many cases these individuals have had a great deal of contact with PLWH, giving them a personal perspective that informs their professional work. Due to the public nature of their work, the identities of the interviewees will remain anonymous.

Interview 1: The Wise Host

My first interview was with one of the TV show hosts of the “Petersburg Diary” on the St. Petersburg TV Channel. The program is available in 1.7 million households in the city. She was well-spoken and well-educated, with a welcoming, open, and respectful demeanor. As a media personality, she was among the first to become aware of the problem of HIV. This was in the early 1990s, when the issue was still new and raw in Russia. Since then, she has seen significant development in the way that society and the media treat HIV.

To begin, she made a few points about the role of the media in creating news. It is popular to add exaggerations and scandals to news stories—these attract attention from the general public. Such tactics, however, actually drive or scare people away from the

problem itself. Society at large begins to believe that the issues presented in the news with such shocking facades could never touch them. In short, because of the way that they create stories to quickly engage viewers, TV shows preclude the public's rational engagement with legitimate social issues.

This general phenomenon in the mass media has had predictable effects on the communication of information regarding HIV. As media coverage dwells on the most grotesque stories, people talk less and less about the issue at hand. They ignore the terrifying statistics about infection and mortality rates, and refuse to even consider the idea that the infection has begun to spill into the general population. In fact, nowadays, the issue is brought up very rarely, and mostly only when something significant has happened, such as when a baby accidentally received a transfusion of HIV-positive blood, or when scientists have made advances in antiretroviral drugs. According to her, the more negative the situation, the better news it makes. The one exception to this appears to be the International AIDS Day on December 1st, which consistently generates news in such a way that raises genuine awareness about HIV and educates the populace. Her views on the decreased attention to HIV-related issues in the media, save on December 1st, align very closely with the media analysis that I conducted.

My interviewee then briefly discussed the two ways that she has seen information about HIV communicated via mass media, the first of which is through obligatory programs sponsored by the government. As part of a national outreach campaign, the Health Committee creates educational programs and subsidizes news outlets to broadcast them. The second avenue down which information about HIV flows is completely

voluntary and undertaken by the free choice of individuals or networks. In her experience, this is very rare, but there are a few people out there who do it.

The confluence of these factors has led to a trend of decreasing knowledge about HIV in the general public. Not only do the media not devote coverage to it, but also there are also no school programs educating the youth about the reality and danger of the epidemic. The social issues that are covered in the media tend to focus more on issues surrounding migrant workers than public health. She went so far as to say the following in response to my question: “Do St. Petersburg inhabitants see AIDS/HIV as a serious threat to the society?”

No. Even worse...there is a paradox: every two years we do a standard poll on the topic of HIV. It's hard to come up with something original... like: do you the difference between AIDS and HIV? Do you know how HIV is transmitted? It seems like the level of awareness and knowledge about HIV/AIDS is dropping. Even worse, sometimes I think that they are some kind of bogus calls. People call in and ask: “What if a mosquito bit me...?” “What if ...I don't know, I cut myself? Or God forbid, kissed someone...” No, these are not bogus calls. They are real. And to be honest, they scare me. I will repeat myself. The current sample here is not competent, but I do think that peoples' knowledge level is dropping. Right now, we are more concerned with migrant worker issues that with our own health.

She had a number of ideas for how to fix the lack of awareness about HIV. Her first series of ideas were related to educating the public. She pointed to a lack of knowledge among teenagers and adolescents, stating that the institution of a good sex education program would result in more responsible sexual behavior, thereby minimizing the resulting danger of HIV. Campaigns such as the “White Tent” (“Белая палатка”) could be used to encourage young people to get tested. Additionally, she thought that journalists ought to be educated about HIV so that they could provide informative stories,

rather than the scandalous ones they are currently producing. According to her, the stories produced by journalists tend to focus on HIV and illegal drug use, the AIDS vaccine, or HIV therapy, and they ought to approach the subject matter from a more educational angle.

From an image-related perspective, she believed that showing more personal stories about individuals with HIV would demonstrate that the disease can affect everyone—it is not limited exclusively to criminals. She also encouraged the use of celebrity spokespeople in media campaigns and advertisements to give an assumed authority and respected voice, and to prevent the possibility of ridicule by the public, claiming that a campaign featuring Anton Kamolov that ran about two years ago was very effective in raising awareness and telling the public that HIV can affect everyone.

Interview 2: The Advocacy Officer

My second interviewee is an advocacy officer and public relations specialist for the International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (ITPCru). His organization works as a multimedia platform for educating the public about prevention and treatment options. The ITPCru was recently registered as an online informational publication, giving the group status as freelance, independent journalists, covering issues related not only to HIV/AIDS, but also to hepatitis, malaria, and tuberculosis in Eastern Europe and Russian-speaking regions of Central Asia.

He has also been living with HIV since 1998, when he was infected while in prison for illegal drug use. He sought treatment early on, takes his antiretroviral

medication regularly, and informed me that for someone like him who has taken the proper measures, the risk of infecting someone else, even through direct blood contact, is less than 0.2 percent. From the very first moments of our interview, he decried the lack of coverage and reliable information in the media, saying, “The AIDS problem is not of great interest to the journalists with the exceptions of two days of the year: World AIDS Day and World Remembrance Day of AIDS Victims. Two days, when journalists need information on HIV, and they go running around the AIDS centers, shooting their videos, asking about the struggles of HIV-positive people... and that's only twice a year. That's it. The rest of the time they are more interested in politics, money matters, clubs, and hangouts.”

Our conversation first focused on the role of media in encouraging prophylactics and other prevention efforts. He claimed that the mass media have no role whatsoever in encouraging behaviors that can prevent HIV, claiming that most of what is written on the subject is written incorrectly. In his opinion there are only a few writers and publications that have accurate information about this topic, among which are Anna Kuzina from *Moskovskij Komsomolec* (*Московский Комсомолец*) and the *Bolshoi Gorod* (*Большой Город*). Most other publications are mere horror stories, spreading misinformation and fear among the populace.

This trend of fear-driven stories began when HIV was new to Russia. Ten years ago, “it was new, it was scary, and it needed attention.” Attention was drawn to drug users, prostitutes, and homosexuals, and the problem of HIV was associated strictly with those groups. Then and now, the articles published to be written by journalists who are

“not prepared, [do] not have proper knowledge, and simply [do] not care. All they care about is presenting the material in a beautiful way, using beautiful phrases, and quotations from well-known medical specialists that sound good.” According to my interviewee, this lack of education on part of the media has led to public fear of HIV.

Some of the media sources that are the most poorly informed and fear-mongering are NTV, TB 100, and Kultura. There are, however, some news portals that provide competent coverage of the subject matter. Among these are *Mednovosti*, *MK*, *Kommersant*, and the journalist Vera Razborova from *Vademecum*. Unfortunately, these sources are the minority, and their voice is not widely heard. People still wonder where the HIV epidemic has come from, and are unable to piece together the story of how the infection has spread from the information they have available.

He acknowledged that, despite the public’s belief that HIV is not a threat to them, the epidemic is “progressing and cannot be stopped today.... You can work with social adjustment of prisoners, you can try to help the homeless, work with unemployment, but that will not help to stop the HIV epidemic. As long as nothing is done, nothing will change. All that is being done is limited by the budget.” This train of thought led to an interesting discussion about the role of government censorship in mass media’s treatment of HIV. He ascribed a great deal of responsibility for the failure to educate the public to the totalitarian nature of Russian government. As a journalist, he sympathizes with the pressures placed upon writers to create and release the material that the government orders them to produce. If a Russian journalist publishes something that the government does not like, that journalist will never publish again. The government is going to such

extremes, he believes, at least partially because of the cost of financing treatments. Fewer than ten percent of those who are diagnosed with HIV receive treatment, and there have been hundreds of thousands of deaths associated with the epidemic. And, if the population were accurately tested, a great number of previously undiagnosed cases would be discovered—treatment for all of those people would require effort and expenditure that the government is unwilling to make. So, by claiming that the epidemic is limited to fringe elements and ordering that its true scope be ignored, the government is absolving itself of any possibility of blame for not wanting to spend money on HIV.

My interviewee also saw a corresponding self-censorship of the press. Local publishers will never write stories about bad situations, health-related or otherwise, in their region because, “it will attract attention and possibly somebody’s head will fly off.” Were the mass media to independently publish accurate information about HIV, that would mean they perceived the full scale of the epidemic—something the government is deliberately refusing to acknowledge. This also manifests in the lack of governmental programs to educate people about drugs, safe sex, and prophylactics. My interviewee expressed his surprise that the government never sponsors the organizations reaching out to drug addicts and other high-risk groups.

While no journalists call for changes in the government’s treatment of HIV, there are some communities that cover the topic professionally. These young specialists avoid horror stories, writing instead about how HIV can be treated, showing that it is not necessarily fatal and that people with HIV can live normal lives. Many of these writers use social media as a platform because of the ease with which it reaches people,

particularly the youth. He believes that by using social networks and digital advertising, concise, professional descriptions of the virus and its treatment can be widely distributed.

He has interacted with many NGOs that have been working with HIV education and are willing and able to help the Russian media. If they were allowed into the news-making process they would provide information, educate journalists on what to write and how to present information properly. He believes that the government ought to be involved in the training of journalists for writing about HIV, and that specialists should be trained in the Department of Journalism at St. Petersburg State University.

Finally, we discussed AIDS dissidents and his thoughts on how best to deal with them. He claimed that rather than fight the dissidents, they ought to be ignored, saying “we should just forget about them: don’t touch them, don’t attract attention to them.” As an active member of the All-Russian Network of PLWH, he has thought about finding legal means for drawing up lawsuits against them for “spreading false information, causing harm to health, and forwarding the progression of epidemics in Russia.” He believes that if they could be sued and their websites (which contain video materials, lectures, and more claiming that AIDS is not real) taken down, they would fall apart. He also noted that it is possible that the government has secretly created AIDS dissidents to cut down on the costs of treatment.

Interview 3: The Young Scholar

My third interview was with a radio talk show host, who works for Radio Zenit. She has worked for three years with the program “Recipe of Life,” which is subsidized by

a government grant. The program runs every Friday during primetime—around 7:00 - 8:00 in the evening—and is twenty minutes long. During the program, different individuals affiliated with HIV in some way are interviewed. Among those that they have interviewed are people living with HIV, representatives of NGOs, doctors, medical physiologists, and celebrities. She mentioned the following:

Since the topic is the same every week, we try to be creative and find new ways to talk about it. If the guest speaker is a psychologist from the anonymous testing facility, then we try to dedicate the program to the different aspects of HIV testing. We try to tell a person who is planning to get tested for HIV everything about the process in the most accessible way: what fears exist, what is going to happen, something about the personnel and facility. Also, in every program, we include personal stories, maybe something taken from the Internet, discuss the topic of stereotypes, myths about HIV. Additionally, we have thematic programs – we take an individual story and tell about HIV/AIDS from that perspective.

Notable guests have even included the American basketball player living with HIV, Magic Johnson. She says that her first encounters with openly HIV-positive people were during the research and production of this show, and that they dramatically changed the way she views the issue. As a result, she is very passionate about HIV awareness and prevention and has taken the time to become an expert on the subject matter as it relates to mass media and HIV.

These grants are funded by the Press Committee, which purchases airtime through Zenit Radio's sales and marketing department. In other countries, such grants are often accompanied by training from the government. My interviewee obtained an almanac intended for Belorussian journalists, and said that she learned a great deal from it about how to respond clearly and accurately to important questions about HIV. Unfortunately, such training does not currently accompany the government-sponsored radio programs in

Russia. In her silence on the issue, she seemed to tacitly acknowledge that the Russian government is not likely to take similar steps, but she instead suggested that NGOs might be persuaded to create workshops for the mass media, which might in turn cause the media to voluntarily cover topics relating to HIV more often.

Like my second interviewee, she believes that mass media do not provide nearly enough coverage of HIV. She lamented the dearth of publications that address the epidemic, and the fact that materials seem to appear only on World AIDS Day and World Remembrance Day of AIDS Victims. She notes a tendency among the media to “focus on anti-scientific programs, perhaps to show an alternative point of view, which is valuable in any other area, but not in this one.” Even movies and TV shows focus not on humanizing discussion of HIV-positive individuals and the social problem that HIV presents, but rather “[t]hey highlight fear, suffering, the lack of a cure, things such as neighbors nailing shut the apartment door of an HIV-positive woman... everything but adequate information, not the fact that it can affect anyone, that if you have unprotected sex, you need to go and get tested.”

She believes that the reason for this low level of media attention and the lack of social awareness is primarily audience reaction. News about HIV does not sell, and TV channels and newspapers know this. She recalled a time when she was participating in an outdoor HIV testing campaign:

I participated in the outdoor HIV testing campaign once. It was my duty to catch people on the street and persuade them to get tested. I can see peoples’ reaction. They get this squeamish grimace on their face...like, “Please go away. Anything but this.”

Rather than being interested in education or awareness efforts, the public seeks out so-called “black news”—stories about suffering and crime or catchy scientific sensations.

To her, this lack of awareness seems to manifest in widespread misinformation among the public. People view HIV as a threat, but not to themselves.

[T]he majority of people I know can be divided into two camps (with exception of those, who adequately perceive this problem – they are the minority): those who say that HIV could be contracted anywhere – in the bathroom, shower, etc., even though it’s a common knowledge that none of the listed is an actual mode of transmission. They also know this, but are scared anyways. The others are not afraid of anything. They believe that HIV will never touch them, because HIV exists only among drug users or in a brothel or in Sub-Saharan Africa.

This lack of education is further exaggerated by the work of AIDS dissidents. My interviewee believes that they pose a very serious threat to society. The role of dissidents in encouraging people to stop treatment leads not only to their own death, but also to the infection of others. When pregnant women stop treatment after encountering AIDS dissidents’ literature, they can give birth to HIV-positive babies. She notes that on the Internet, doctors have lost to dissidents. One of the first search results for “AIDS” on Yandex.ru is “There is no AIDS.” Social networks devoted to HIV/AIDS are similarly plagued by comments about the supposed fictionality of the disease. She discusses AIDS dissidents frequently on her show, saying that they exist and that people should be wary of them, but many still trust the dissidents more than they do doctors.

She believes that by more frequently publishing material about HIV, the mass media could do much to change this frighteningly low level of awareness. Doing so could also have significant effects on tolerance of PLWH. Right now, there is a dark stigma upon anyone with HIV, as it is related to prostitution, drug use, and homosexuality. But if

stories with sound scientific foundations were published, showing that individuals who have sought out medical treatment are harmless, cannot transmit the virus, can have healthy children, and are normal in all respects, the resulting positive representation could create a tolerant attitude among the public.

The interviewee said that breaking the negative stereotypes about HIV ought to be one of the most important goals of the media. The most important stereotype of these being the dangerous idea that “it will not touch me.” Everyone ought to know how HIV is transmitted and how it is not. They also ought to know the life expectancy of those with HIV. With proper treatment, a PLWH can live a normal, full life. She believes that this information needs to be communicated in tandem with current statistics about the threat of the disease. Now that the fastest growing mode of transmission is sexual intercourse rather than drug injection, the public ought to be given accurate information about the composition, transmission, and demographics of the epidemic.

One of the most tragic groups of victims of HIV are married women whose husbands have cheated on them. Prophylactics in the marriage bed are not particularly popular, and women can be infected without knowing where the virus came from.

From her experience, mass media is an effective channel for communicating information to the public. Her listeners regularly send comments in via the SMS portal. Nonetheless, she still feels like the feedback is not adequate. She has heard people say, “PLWH should be burned or they should be dumped on a deserted island; or they write something based on the beliefs of AIDS dissidents. But, this is a peculiarity of those members of the Internet audience that write reviews. I think people who write comments

to every publication belong to a small specific group of people who have issues. I think that if a publication does reach a person, he will not necessarily respond to it or provide feedback.” Finally, she noted that while the older generations are more difficult to reach via mass media, they do trust the word of the media more readily.

Interview 4: The Editor-Turned-Ally

My fourth interview subject is one of the Chief Editors of the *St. Petersburg Courier*, a weekly publication focusing on economic issues, politics, social problems, and health in St. Petersburg. It is a 24-page publication with a circulation of approximately 60,000. He began to cover the topic of HIV/AIDS during 2013, because the newspaper staff decided the topic was increasingly relevant in the city. He told me that prior to being chosen as the lead correspondent for HIV news, he knew nothing about HIV or AIDS—he even considered the two to be the same thing. As he educated himself on the subject, he discovered that there is plenty of information about HIV available to the public—online, in books, or in medical brochures—but few people seek it out or peruse it when it is available.

With his new responsibilities, he has come into contact with a number of HIV-positive individuals, which he had never before knowingly done. Most recently his interactions have been with an organization called EVA, a support group for women with HIV. Through them he learned how people live with HIV, how they open up with others about their status, and how they help other HIV-positive people.

Interactions such as these have also affected both his personal feelings about HIV-positive people and his professional opinion on the ways in which mass media can be used to raise awareness. He has observed that there are plenty of newspapers and online print sources, such as blogs, that do communicate information about HIV. Unfortunately, he does not believe that the public at large actively reads newspapers, so even though information is being printed, it is not reaching most people. Currently, people are spending less and less on newspapers, because they are seeking out free online versions, stealing copies, or looking for free print copies.

The strategy for how to communicate with the public is only half of the question, though. The other half is what to communicate. Like several of my other interviewees, he believes that mass media needs to work on presenting PLWH as normal people—there is no need to distance oneself from them as though they were lepers. Mass media needs to share information about how uninfected people can live with PLWH and how they can help each other. Print media in particular needs to put out positive information about PLWH, since there is so much negativity in online sources, and newspapers are still seen as a more credible source.

Despite the fact that he has seen more information available about HIV, he still does not believe that there is enough coverage from mass media. He believes that this lack of coverage stems from journalists' unfamiliarity with the subject. Even though there are free conferences held for media professionals held every year on World AIDS Day and World Remembrance Day of AIDS Victims, few people attend. There are so few journalists willing to invest the time to learn about HIV, and that is why there is not

sufficient coverage. Additionally, in contemporary mass media, HIV is mostly encountered when mentioned in scandals. Mentions of HIV are featured when there is criminal or scandalous activity that occurs in the health care system.

My interviewee did not view any one media channel as more effective than others for communicating with the public, but rather he believed all channels should be used in concert, saying:

Some people listen to the radio, others watch TV, and others read newspapers and magazines. It is not enough to just to show a program on TV. Russian families have about 45 free channels. One or two of those channels will be selected show program on HIV prevention, but what if people do not watch those channels? Only a small group of people turns on those two channels. We need various media channels – multiple programs on different TV channels, Internet, radio, free newspapers, paid newspapers – it all should be in combination.

On the subject of AIDS dissidents, he is familiar with them and considers them to be a bad threat to society. With how crucial it is to spread accurate information about how HIV is communicated and treated, what milestones are being overcome, and success stories about HIV therapy, he believes that AIDS dissidents strike a terrible blow to public health. Again, he reiterated how important it is to have accurate information in print media, because so much misinformation about HIV is spread online. During his organization's latest publication on HIV, they interviewed medical professionals about the task of persuading people to start antiretroviral therapy, and almost every person interviewed said that it is extremely difficult to convince anyone, even people who have not been exposed to AIDS dissidents' propaganda, to begin the treatment. When youth, who are the demographic most at risk from HIV and the most likely to get news from online sources, encounter AIDS dissidents, there can be particularly tragic results.

From his perspective it is difficult to tell if the mass media is having any kind of positive effect on awareness or tolerance. There are so few publications on HIV and they appear so sporadically, that there is no way to show statistically that they have made a difference. To make a difference, he believes that there needs to be more quality information about HIV published in all media channels. The information needs to come from a qualified specialist, and be up-to-date. It is extremely difficult to find legitimate sources currently, but quite easy to find “55 sites republishing the same list of 10 Myths about HIV.” If there were a way for authorities to engage and promote medical specialists on essential websites, such efforts would go a long ways towards informing the public about HIV. As for the moment, it is difficult to find appropriate information, and the people who search for it have often already been touched by the disease.

Interview 5: The Public Health Revolutionary

My fifth interviewee was the Chief Coordinator for ITPCru. The organization is extremely private, and I did not have the opportunity to become well acquainted with him, but thanks to an introduction from one of my other interviewees, I was fortunate enough to be invited to ITPCru’s headquarters and conduct this interview. ITPCru views itself as a revolutionary organization, priming society for a radical change in behavior towards public health.

I began the interview by asking him about the role of mass media coverage in HIV prevention, and, like many of my other interviewees, he told me that in his opinion there are only two days a year on which this subject is discussed: World AIDS Day and

World Remembrance of AIDS Victims Day. Other events outweigh media interest in HIV/AIDS. If it is mentioned, HIV will most often be connected with criminal activity. He has rarely heard any positive coverage of HIV in the media; mostly just “a lot of worn-out clichés, very little information.”

The TV channel Dozhd (Дождь), once ran an “HIV Day” program, which would serve as a good model for future programs. He believes that an open discussion must take place in the media, where the pros and cons of various theories and points of views can be freely debated. Such discussions also need to alert the public that the virus has not gone away, but that the epidemic is growing at the fastest pace yet. In particular, treatment and therapy for PLWH needs to have a prominent place in media discussion. Antiretroviral therapy is not mentioned at all in mass media, and that is a tragedy because it keeps vital information away from people who might need it desperately.

He sees three primary reasons for the lack of media coverage. The first is that after all of the coverage in the 1990s, he believes people grew tired of hearing about HIV. The second is that the public have too many other crises to deal with in contemporary society, and mass media do not want to present yet another to the public. The third reason is government censorship and a tendency to attempt to appease government expectations by presenting St. Petersburg society as perfectly fine and getting better.

Much of the information that is presented on HIV is “presented either incorrectly or in the wrong form, such as ‘AIDS is the plague of the 20th century. Oh my god, what are we going to do?!’” The tendency of mass media to present HIV as a spectacle has

distorted the public's perception of reality. And so, even accurate information often takes on a surreal character, and loses its credibility.

He has, however, also observed a growing trend in contemporary public reaction to mass media of cynicism and outrage against false information. As the epidemic is spilling into the general population, people are becoming increasingly well-educated on it, and are then able to call media channels out on incorrect information when they see it. Even as official mass media channels are continuing to misrepresent the situation, social media channels are starting to convey more realistic information about HIV.

In St. Petersburg specifically, he does not believe that the public views HIV as a serious threat yet. Even though the epidemic has spread to an all-time high, and more and more people are encountering HIV personally, the public still has not begun to take serious measures to combat the virus. In many cases people who are newly diagnosed with HIV are simply finding out that they have been living with it for an extended period of time. Though new tests are being used to discern just how long people have had HIV, many people are still contracting the disease every day. It is impossible to say that the epidemic has slowed down or paused. And even though the pace of infection among IDUs, who represent the "critical mass of HIV-positive people," has slowed down, the spread of the disease through sexual intercourse is accelerating the spread of the virus.

When asked about which media channels he believes are most effective for spreading awareness about HIV, my interviewee said that he can only speak with confidence to the media channels that he uses—radio. He joked that as traffic jams get worse and worse in the city, people have begun to spend more time listening to the radio,

and it is reaching a much larger audience than even TV. Older generations tend to trust the television, but the youth no longer do. There are no predominant magazines in the city. Nobody reads the newspapers. Thus, he believes that radio is the most effective channel at the moment.

Regarding how well-informed about HIV they are, on a scale of one to ten, my interviewee said that he thinks St. Petersburg ranks a three or four, saying, “There are some echoes of information. People know it exists, know that there is treatment, and that we don’t die from it now as quickly as we have in the past. But nobody is interested in the details.” He believes that increasing the quantity of news articles about HIV, even if those articles are black PR or bad stories, is the most important aspect in raising awareness. Visible coverage of the subject must come first.

Some of the themes that he would like to see covered are HIV treatment options, the currently shifting modes of transmission, harm reduction programs for drug users, and sex workers. There seems to be a sort of taboo around these subjects, and he believes that this is causing many problems. He had several ideas for how to navigate sensitive topics on mass media in a respectful and viewer friendly manner, saying:

I think we need to change the form—switch to a Twitter-like system: short, bright, attractive messages and visuals. More humor would be great. Humor removes taboo. The more you laugh, the easier you respond to the subject. The easier you respond to the subject, the easier it is to understand it. If you think this is very, very scary, then you probably will not want to hear about it; when you laugh, it's not so scary anymore... I

would like to see more television, but we can hardly expect that. TV is turning into “yellow” trash, controlling itself.

Interview 6: The Chess Master

Interviewee number six is another host of the TV program “Petersburg Diary.” He is intellectual, analytical, and very well spoken. Throughout our discussion both his emotional poise and strategic thinking stood out to me. Because of his influence, the “Petersburg Diary” periodically brings up AIDS in St. Petersburg. They devote half an hour every month to the discussion of HIV-related issues. In this special program the hosts try to deliver accurate information about the epidemic to their viewers.

Personally, he considers himself to be extremely well informed about the epidemic. He reads the latest medical articles, studies, and research on HIV. He knows many locations where people can get tested and much about how treatment works. He also gets tested for HIV regularly. Outside of the show, however, he has no personal experience interacting with HIV-positive people.

Our discussion revolved around the ways that mass media can and have been used to address the problem of HIV. Many of his responses were couched in a language and pattern that resembled the presentation of a problem followed by a solution. The overarching theme was that of using mass media to draw people’s attention to HIV, which, as he said, is extremely difficult in most cases because people tend to avoid media relating to such acute problems. Mass media must let people know that HIV needs to be taken seriously and that it is easy and normal to get tested.

To improve public awareness about HIV, he believes that the best solution is to simply talk about it—to have every network allocate half an hour each month to the discussion of HIV. The information does not need to be forced upon people, but individuals need to have intelligent discussions about HIV taking place around them. There need to be conversations about the methods of protection and medical treatments, and news that research may soon offer a cure for the virus.

From his observations, his network is the only one to regularly present information on HIV. He conducted an analysis of media mentions of HIV over the past thirty years and found that this lack of attention is a recent phenomenon. The 1990s in particular saw an abundance of social advertising on both federal and local channels. Since then, he believes that government funding of HIV-related programs has been cut drastically, as more concern is being drawn to hepatitis than AIDS. Social advertisements featuring hepatitis seem to have supplanted HIV on the television.

The character of these programs cross time also differs. Mass media during the 1990s used to refer to HIV as a terminal disease. Now, thanks to ARV therapy, people can live normal lives with the disease, and the discussion has shifted away from the talk about an epidemic that kills everyone. This is a good trend in media, and my interviewee stressed that it is important to not create panic through the mass media, but that even if someone does get infected, they can still live a long and normal life, even having healthy children.

We do need to talk about this subject, but without being pushy.... We need to tell people that this disease does not kill. Often, when a person goes to the doctor's office to get blood test results, thoughts rush through his head that if the results

are positive, his life will be over: “I’ll just go and jump from the building and terminate my life.” That’s what we need to talk about.

Though the television was used to reach older audiences with great success, the narrowness of the medium has severely limited its influence upon the youth. Young people simply do not watch a broad array of shows. HIV programs featured on STS, which is popular with Moscow’s youth, or TNT might reach them, but most channels aim at a different audience.

Speaking for his generation, people who were in school in the 1980s, he believes that they are well educated about HIV. The information reached them: how HIV is transmitted, how to protect oneself, and what to do if you think you may have been infected. This educational work was done at schools in the early 1990s, but nothing like these programs exists nowadays.

Interestingly, my interviewee said that he believes that St. Petersburg is remarkably tolerant of PLWH. He claims that the city is tolerant of most social issues that cause problems elsewhere in the country, for example problems with immigrants. He does not believe that HIV causes negative reactions from people living in St. Petersburg.

Interview 7: The Bleeding Heart

My seventh interviewee is one of the hosts of the TV shows “Good Morning” (“Хорошее утро”) and “Besedka” (“Беседка”). His experience working with PLWH has been limited to studio guests, as none of his friends or acquaintances is infected. Among the interviews with HIV-positive people, one notable example stood out to him. The details that he gave to me were somewhat vague, but he told me that he was struck by

how “very trusting” their conversation was, and at the end he kissed the girl’s hand “and did not feel disgusted about it.”

His views on the role of mass media in HIV prevention had a unique perspective among my interviewees. Like the others, he believes that mass media is doing very little to address the issue of HIV. Despite the special programs and grants that try to address this problem, society is “mostly [...] turning away from it; and not only from this problem, but from the problem of disabled and handicapped people, unfortunately. We are doing it on the so-so basis, mostly to put a check mark.” The lack of attention in the media is the manifestation of social apathy towards those in need.

This can be observed even more keenly in the lives of young people—youth organizations are not being involved in the fight against HIV, and no education about sexual health is happening in schools. Though medicine has made many breakthroughs regarding HIV, “[g]rowing up now, the young people are treating this problem the same way those who grew up in the 90s treated it. At that time it was a very scary thing, nobody knew anything about it, and people considered PLWH outcasts.” Even rudimentary education about HIV is lacking in society, and few people know how the virus is transmitted. As an example, he told stories of how the parents of kindergarteners will take their children out of school if they discover that a classmate is infected. And despite anti-discrimination laws, employers are still rejecting applicants or firing employees if they are discovered to have HIV.

He believes that St. Petersburg residents believe HIV presents a big problem to society, “because of the number of drug users and people with non-traditional sexual

orientation.” People are thinking about it and aware of it, but they are afraid of the disease. And until HIV directly touches their lives in some regard, they remain indifferent to it.

When asked for his thoughts on how to use mass media to raise public awareness, he began by expressing the insufficiency of all current avenues of media.

Outdoor advertising does not work; neither do audio or visual ads, such as the social ads that tell you not to do drugs. I think if there was a solution, then it would have been widely implemented already. I don't think that money is an issue. It's a problem, a real problem [...]. Something is being done, but it does not have a real effect and does not make a real difference. It is being done just for the record. It is all the same for the disabled, orphans, people with cancer, AIDS... all the same.

To begin combating the public's indifference towards HIV, he believes that a message of tolerance and protection must be presented by mass media. The public must be made aware of the fact that, when they receive proper treatment, PLWH are not dangerous. He said that until he began researching HIV, even he was scared of HIV-positive people, but that experience with them and education about the disease have changed his attitude completely.

MEDIA ANALYSIS

The goal of this section is to explore some of the complexities of mass media outlets in St. Petersburg in relations to HIV and AIDS, specifically looking at local radio and television stations, newspapers, and Internet news portals. I first examined the range of coverage of HIV and AIDS on St. Petersburg local media, then ran an analysis of the articles and shows containing the keywords “HIV” and “AIDS.” This analysis examined the dates on which HIV-related articles were published, information type, subject matter, and the tone of the article in relation to HIV.

I examined St. Petersburg network coverage of HIV/AIDS from 2011 to 2013. My analysis covered eight different media sources, processing over 300 articles. I chose my sources because of their local coverage. Thus, while some larger outlets do operate in St. Petersburg, these were disqualified from my analysis because of their national or international audience. My rating is constructed on the basis of the media system by Medialogia agency, which includes about 8,500 of the most influential Russian media sources: TV, radio, newspapers, magazines, news agencies, online media and blogs, based on the Citation Index (see Table 1). The Citation Index (CI) is an indicator that takes into account the number of links to the source of information in other media and influence of the source that published the link ("Методика составления рейтингов").

Specifically, I selected the following local sources: radio – Echo of Moscow in St. Petersburg (Эхо Москвы), Radio Baltika (Радио Балтика); Internet news portals – Fontanka.ru, Rosbalt.ru; TV channels – 100TV (100ТВ), Saint-Petersburg (Санкт-

Петербург); newspapers – *Petersburg Diary* (*Петербургский дневник*), *Delovoy Petersburg* (*Деловой Петербург*). After picking out the most cited sources, I scanned the articles for the following key words: HIV and AIDS.

№	Media Channel	Category	CI
1	Росбалт	News Agency	1 988,15
2	Fontanka.ru	Internet	1 580,25
3	БалтИнфо	News Agency	444,83
4	Эхо Москвы (Санкт-Петербург)	Radio	161,95
5	100 ТВ	TV	123,37
6	Петербургский дневник	Newspaper	68,13
7	Деловой Петербург	Newspaper	67,53
8	Вечерний Петербург	Newspaper	58,77
9	Телеканал "Санкт-Петербург"	TV	50,21
10	Радио Балтика	Radio	38,45
11	Dr.ru	Internet	37,31
12	Город 812	Magazine	34,01
13	Mr7.ru	Internet	29,06
14	Saint-petersburg.ru	Internet	23,78
15	Zaks.ru	Internet	21,17
16	Комсомольская правда (Санкт-Петербург)	Newspaper	18,66
17	Невское время	Newspaper	16,21
18	Санкт-Петербургские ведомости	Newspaper	16,04
19	Abnews.ru	Internet	15,32
20	Интерфакс (Северо-Запад)	News Agency	10,71
21	Echomsk.spb.ru	Internet	8,19
22	Gazeta.spb.ru	Internet	3,52
23	Коммерсант (Санкт-Петербург)	Newspaper	3,45
24	Аргументы и факты (Санкт-Петербург)	Newspaper	3,06
25	Эксперт (Северо-Запад)	Magazine	2,57

Table 1: St. Petersburg: 2012 Citation Index ("Санкт-Петербург: рейтинг СМИ за 2012")

After analyzing multiple publications that came out within the last two years in regards to HIV/AIDS, I came to a conclusion that the topic of HIV/AIDS is discussed

rather ambivalently across all media outlets. Internet and radio sources had a larger proportion of articles with a negative tone, while television and newspaper sources tended to have more positive and neutral mentions than negative. The publications that talk about preventative programs and government actions vary from providing positive feedback to being sharply negative.

	Keyword			Importance		Tone		
	AIDS	HIV	Both	Primary	Secondary	Positive	Negative	Neutral
Radio	22	56	12	50	40	14	13	67
TV	3	37	8	28	20	11	5	32
Newspaper	4	22	33	32	27	23	6	30
Internet	11	54	49	69	35	20	24	60
Totals:	40	169	102	179	122	68	48	189

Table 2: Importance and Tone in the Media

Newspapers mention HIV in a positive light four times more often than in a negative light. TV mentions HIV positively twice as often as negatively. Positive mentions on the radio and on the Internet occur about as often as the negative ones, with negative tones occurring slightly more frequently in the online articles than positive tones (see Table 2). There are more news reports of criminal activities related to HIV/AIDS

than any other information types in the selected media sources. Thus, the audience can perceive the topic of HIV/AIDS in a scandalous light.

In the information provided to the people of St. Petersburg by various media outlets there are still mistakes and misrepresentations about the virus and people living with it. The discovery of a vaccine or cure for HIV/AIDS is a common theme in media presentations, and even though doctors and experts at the St. Petersburg City AIDS Center claim such a vaccine does not currently exist, articles and news pieces about it keep making headlines. The government daily newspaper *Rossiyskaya Gazeta* (*Российская газета*) recently published an article about scientists in the Urals who have “accidentally” found a cure for AIDS (Дубичева 2011). This story was picked up and published by other popular publications.

The topic of HIV and AIDS is of interest for most media outlets on the eve of two significant dates: December 1st – World AIDS Day, and May 21st – World Remembrance Day of AIDS Victims; after which, the popularity of the topic is reduced. The media professionals that I interviewed also confirmed this information in regard to print media. The analysis also showed that television tends to speak of HIV 12 times more frequently than it does of AIDS, compared to five times more frequently than in newspapers and on the Internet, and two times more frequently on radio. Radio tended to mention the word “AIDS” much more frequently than any other media.

There were instances where the media professionals communicated directly with HIV-infected people, but this did not occur often. Indeed, very few media outlets have a regular column talking about the lives and issues of PLWH. This, however, can also be

explained by the fact that some people did not want to disclose their HIV status to the reporters. The absence of regular engagement with PLWH can be explained by several factors: the view that the issue is more medical, rather than social; the opinion that that the HIV infection mainly affects marginalized populations; and the reluctance to put PLWH into the spotlight.

Among media, I observed the widespread use of terms such as “risk groups.” The use of such clinical terminology contributes to the fact that the population still perceives HIV/AIDS as something distant from them--something related only to people who use drugs, homosexuals, and those who engage in prostitution. It can also be seen used in a discriminatory context. Media often conflated the terms HIV and AIDS, using the latter term in headlines to draw more attention, even when the article referred to HIV. I found 21 out of 140 Internet articles misuse the term “AIDS.” They write about people becoming “infected with AIDS” or getting “checked for AIDS,” when they clearly mean HIV. One such example that I encountered is the headline, “Прививка против СПИДа помогает в первые дни после заражения” or “Vaccination against AIDS helps only in the first days of becoming infected” (“Обзор сегодняшних петербургских газет” 2011).

The radio has several features that set it apart from print and televised media. Firstly, the tone of radio shows and articles relating to HIV/AIDS is primarily neutral, rather than negative or positive. When negative tones do come up, they tend to be in articles where the keywords are of secondary importance. For example, this happens when mention of an HIV infection is used as supplementary information about a criminal.

On the radio, I was surprised to notice that there were significantly fewer articles published on World AIDS Day than I had expected.

As a keyword, “HIV” tends to be mentioned when it was associated with a news story giving a more factual report, such as the occasion when a little girl accidentally received a transfusion of HIV-positive blood at the children’s city hospital or the discussion about migrant workers in St. Petersburg. This is in contrast to the use of the word “AIDS.” AIDS tended to be mentioned in connection to statistics, holidays, and celebrities. The statistics mentioned were regional, national, or international statistics about the epidemic, rarely local. Interestingly, all of the statistics mentioned painted a bleak portrait of the epidemic, referring to growing infection rates and mortalities, but not mentioning transmission modes or other utile information for preventing HIV. The word “AIDS” was also commonly mentioned in association with celebrities, regardless off whether the celebrity in question actually had HIV or AIDS. Presumably this is because the dynamic and shocking connotations of the word “AIDS” enable it to mesh more readily with celebrity gossip. Charity events also received a great deal of coverage in the media.

St. Petersburg Grant Program

The government of St. Petersburg has recently created a new program to combat the epidemic caused by the human immunodeficiency virus, titled: “The Prevention of the Illness Caused by the Human Immunodeficiency Virus, in St. Petersburg for 2013-2015” (“Профилактика заболевания, вызываемого вирусом иммунодефицита

человека, в Санкт-Петербурге на 2013-2015 годы”). The main objective of the program is educating the residents of St. Petersburg about HIV prevention and treatment, as well as providing care for PLWH. The total funding of the three-year duration of the program in St. Petersburg is reported to be 1,795,476,500 rubles (Постановление о Программе “Профилактика заболевания, вызываемого вирусом иммунодефицита человека” 2013).

The branch of the St. Petersburg local government that deals with public policy in areas of printing, publishing, distribution of books and periodicals, media, and social advertising is the Committee for Print and Media (Комитет по печати и взаимодействию со средствами массовой информации). In 2013, they ran a contest among the local news organizations offering grants to print publications, radio and TV stations for best program ideas about HIV/AIDS. The total budgeted for this agenda was 2,830,000 rubles. This is a significant amount, especially considering that the overall budget of the Committee for Press and Media for the next three years is 9,147,200 rubles.

The two eventual winners were Radio Zenit and the TV channel Saint-Petersburg, and as of April 22, 2013, the advisory council of the committee has endorsed the proposals submitted by these media channels. The TV channel Saint-Petersburg, founded by the City Agency for Television and Radio (CATR), received 1,098,240 rubles for the creation of a series of 11 programs, each 26 minutes long. Each monthly program will be designed to inform residents about the risks of drug use, promote a healthy lifestyle, discuss the available measures of HIV prevention, and highlight the progress of the city’s program for the prevention of this disease. As part of this project the media networks will

engage with authorities, doctors, scientists, popular musicians, writers, and athletes in the creation of content. Radio Zenit has proposed to create 30 weekly thematic programs on HIV, 20 minutes each, weighing in on subjects similar to those featured on the channel Saint-Petersburg. Radio Zenit received 720,000 rubles for the creation of the series. It is noteworthy to mention that the TV channel and the radio station were the only participants in the competition, and as a result, the Advisory Council of the Press Committee unanimously endorsed both candidates (“Телеканал Санкт-Петербург и радио Зенит создадут программы о ВИЧ-инфекции” 2013).

An example of one of these segments is an episode of the TV program “The Diary of St. Petersburg” (“Петербургский дневник”) on the TV channel Saint-Petersburg, which aired on August 8, 2013 and was titled “HIV is Not a Death Sentence” (“ВИЧ не приговор”). The studio guests for this episode were Natalia Sizova, the head of the department of infectious diseases at the St. Petersburg AIDS Center polyclinic, and Kirill Fadeev, a medical doctor specializing in infectious diseases. Conversation in the studio touched such topics as the development of a vaccine against HIV infection, treatment for HIV-positive migrants, coverage of HIV/AIDS in the media space, as well as patients who are turning away from the treatment with antiretroviral drugs. The guests also talked about the opening of new regional offices for dispensary treatment of HIV-positive people in connection with a big load on AIDS Center (the City AIDS Center receives more than 30,000 patients monthly).

As direct evidence that HIV is not a sentence, a short interview was taken with Anastasia Afanasyeva, an HIV-positive woman, who confidently lives her life and is not

afraid to talk about her diagnosis, arguing that HIV infection is the most common chronic disease that can be controlled. Anastasia works at the Nonprofit Partnership “E.V.A.” as psychological support to women and families affected by HIV infection and other socially significant diseases.

During my research at the AIDS Center over the summer of 2013, I was invited to observe the taping of this episode. The building in which the television station was housed was a bit time-stricken, but had strict access; only the authorized personnel were allowed to enter. The guests and I were invited to the dressing room, where we met up with the TV crew. After the filming, I got to meet and talk with the host of the show, a lovely and well-spoken young woman. She was very knowledgeable on the subject of HIV/AIDS and was willing to share her opinions and experiences. Overall, the visit to the Saint-Petersburg station headquarters was pleasant and edifying. I got to be at the heart of one of the major St. Petersburg mass media channels and witness the making of a popular show with a focus on HIV/AIDS.

SURVEY ANALYSIS

My target population was St. Petersburg residents, ages 18-30. I received 119 complete responses to the survey, with 81 female respondents and 38 male. The majority of the survey participants were ages 22-30. This is due primarily to the fact that I asked distributed the survey among my peers, who are incidentally the age group at greatest risk of HIV. The second age category, 31-40, is the fastest growing age group, and is currently the second highest risk. There were 91 respondents in the 22-30-age group and 15 in the 31-40. The majority of my survey respondents were well-educated. Eighty percent have college diplomas, two have completed doctoral studies, and 13 percent have at least some college education.

Of my respondents, 50 percent first heard about HIV/AIDS from a mass media source such as TV, radio, newspapers, or magazines, and 24 percent first heard it from parents or friends. Mass media continues to play a large role in their obtaining information about the epidemic, as 51 percent claim that in the last year they have learned more about the disease over the Internet, 40 percent have learned something from TV programs or advertisements, and only 20 percent claim that they have not encountered anything related to HIV/AIDS in the last year via mass media.

Though the information appears to be out there, mass media outlets do not appear to be publishing it with sufficient frequency, as 55 percent of my participants said that they only rarely encounter information about HIV/AIDS in the mass media, 38 percent said that they see it from time to time, and three percent claimed that they never see such

articles or shows. Sixty-one percent said the mass media devotes very little attention to the issue. Fifty-six percent claim that they have heard something about HIV/AIDS within the last year, but 20 percent claimed that it had been several years since they had seen media coverage relating to the epidemic.

Self-assessments about their level of knowledge closely correlated with their assessment of media coverage. Sixty-six percent of respondents claim that they are content with their knowledge, 23 percent said that they know very little and would like to know more (these are the people who the mass media should target) two percent said they do not know anything about it and do not want to know, and nine percent said they know almost everything. When asked about how informed their friends were, the answers were very similar. Regarding their parents and families, however, they responded saying that their parents tended to be significantly less well-informed about HIV/AIDS than their peers.

The respondents also exhibited a mistrust of mass media, with 64 percent saying that they believed the information disseminated over major channels was not reliably accurate, based on their current knowledge. The most reliable media channels, according to them, were newspapers in general, Fontanka.ru, Echo of Moscow, and some independent channels. Others only use Internet resources, because they do not trust any other mass media outlets. Some said that they trust social ads on the street and in the metro. Only two said that they trust only official sources or any articles and programs in which they specify the source and the field and experience of the person who wrote them.

Virtually all respondents view the issue of HIV as important to the city. But they disagree in their assessment of the situation within St. Petersburg. While 62 percent acknowledge that the situation right now is unfavorable, another 22 percent say that they do not know and do not care. Such people present a genuine danger to the society. Forty-nine percent agree that HIV/AIDS is a serious threat to society, while 34 percent somewhat agree, and 11 percent believe that it is not a threat at all. Furthermore, while 52 percent think that information about HIV is important, 36 percent say that education and awareness of HIV is not all that important.

There were extremely mixed responses from respondents when asked about whether or not treating HIV/AIDS should be a priority in St. Petersburg. Twenty-three percent absolutely agree, 35 percent somewhat agree; 14 percent are neutral, 24 percent somewhat disagree, and five percent absolutely disagree. This corresponds with the information received in my interviews that the St. Petersburg citizenry views other social issues as more pressing than the HIV epidemic. While half of my respondents said that they thought information on HIV/AIDS is important, over a third said that it is not that important to raise awareness and educate people.

Interestingly, virtually all of my respondents believe that the media has not significantly affected their attitudes towards the situation in the city. They also claim that they have not changed their prophylactic behavior in any way based on information they have received about HIV/AIDS. They are well aware of how HIV is transmitted, and only five percent demonstrated ignorance (perhaps jokingly) by claiming that they believed

HIV could be passed through kissing. Seventy-nine percent of my respondents were aware of the fact that HIV cannot be cured.

The most worrisome findings from the survey dealt with respondents' beliefs about the possibility of their getting infected. Most either believe that they cannot get infected or have never thought about it. Forty-one percent have not been tested, 36 percent have never even thought about getting tested, and a meager 23 percent have been tested for HIV. Less than half of respondents knew where to get tested, 20 percent said they had no idea, and 33 percent said they were not exactly sure.

Nonetheless, as regards peoples' attitudes towards HIV, there was optimistic news. Seventy-nine percent of respondents agreed that HIV-positive women can have healthy children. Since the epidemic has spilled into the general population, and more women are being affected by it, this piece of knowledge is very important. It should go hand in hand with the information about HIV therapy and treatment. It is important to spread knowledge about prevention, but it is also important to let people know what to do if they do get the virus and also to disseminate the message of tolerance. Eighty-one percent of respondents stated that they are sympathetic towards PLWH, and only three percent said that they have a negative opinion of them.

Regarding AIDS dissidents: 37 percent said that they are a threat, 28 percent said that they were not, while 36 percent said they did not know who they were. That may be due to the fact that they were not officially familiar with this term.

AIDS DISSIDENTS

When talking about the information on HIV/AIDS in various mass media channels, as well as social media channels, it is important to mention the prevailing alternative view on the topic. It is a view that disregards the danger of HIV, denies the connection between HIV and AIDS, portrays AIDS as a severe form of a disease that is associated with the mere weakening of the immune system, attributes the invention of AIDS to pharmaceutical companies as a source of profit, and considers medication against HIV to be poison (Kalichman 2009, 10). This view is known as AIDS denialism and its supporters are called the AIDS dissidents (in Russian – СПИД диссиденты). They represent a real and present threat to global progress against HIV.

Their main discussion points are as follows:

1. HIV does not cause AIDS (some argue that HIV does not exist)
2. The diagnosis of HIV infection is made based on test antibodies, which may be present in the blood of the patient if he suffered a number of diseases, and are in no way related to retroviruses (influenza, etc.)
3. ARV therapy destroys the cells of the immune system, which causes the development of immunodeficiency syndrome (AIDS).

One of the most infamous examples of AIDS dissidents can be seen in an episode of the television talk show, “Gordon Quixote” (“Гордон-Кихот”), where the topic of discussion was HIV infection and treatment. It is important to note that the host – Alexander Gordon – is a notorious supporter of so-called alternative points of view. The

goal of his show is to fight against “windmills,” or the irritating mirages and images in the media, books, and the surrounding reality (“Информация о передаче: Гордон-Кихот”). At the heart of the program is the struggle between Gordon and his guests. The room is divided into two camps, and members of each camp challenge members of the other. This show is broadcasted on one of nation’s central TV channels - the First Channel (Первый канал), which has the largest audience coverage in the Russian Federation—approximately 98.8 percent of the population (“Зоны вещания канала”).

In April of 2010, Gordon discussed the alternative theory espoused by AIDS dissidents, which denies that HIV is the primary cause of AIDS. The program discussed the possibility that HIV does not exist and that those who insist to the contrary are either ignorant or trying to make money. Many viewers, lacking information about HIV, resonated with this view, and since the airing of the TV episode, AIDS dissidents have used it as a rallying point in their battle against scientific reports.

The head of the Russian Federal Center for Prevention and Treatment of AIDS, Vadim Pokrovsky, says that these dissidents do irreparable harm to the society - they discourage HIV-positive individuals from seeking treatment, pull them away from constant follow-ups, and instill doubt in the minds of those who determine the drug supply policy (“Вадим Покровский: СПИД-диссиденты наносят непоправимый вред” 2010).

Ultimately, denialism promotes distrust in the diagnosis and treatment of HIV/AIDS. Why get tested when the results are invalid? Why receive treatment when the virus is harmless? ... Merely raising these questions refutes AIDS science, fosters a sense of personal denial, and interferes with treatment options and policy decisions. Denialism can cultivate maladaptive and even malignant

denial in people who have tested HIV-positive. Denialism has influenced people who make policy, teach students, and lecture to the public at large (Kalichman 2009, 23).

While conducting research at the St. Petersburg AIDS Center, I personally encountered this view numerous times. To distribute information, AIDS dissidents rely heavily upon social media. VKontakte is the most popular Russian social network, and with 40 million active daily users (“Суточная аудитория ВКонтакте” 2012), it is the second largest in the world after Facebook and has over 227 members globally (“Каталог пользователей ВКонтакте”). The second largest group on VKontakte relating to the topic of HIV/AIDS is called: “HIV/AIDS – the greatest myths of the XX century” (“ВИЧ/СПИД – величайшая мистификация XX века”). It currently has 15,221 members and keeps growing. This group has a notorious discussion sections about the dangers of the ARV therapy, which vary wildly in report of the causes of AIDS and the symptoms caused by ARV drugs, but which universally declaims them as fraudulent and poisonous.

Because many of the people in the ranks of the AIDS dissidents are simple townfolk who heard something somewhere and willingly exaggerate any rumors, social media is an ideal mode of transmission for such dangerous ideas. The same essential principles that enable mass media to be an effective weapon in the fight against HIV have been used by the AIDS dissidents to turn people away from the truth. Here is a quote from one of the members of the VKontakte group:

The thing is that most people who are faced with this problem (HIV) do not understand viruses, molecules, cells, and so on, so at the moment, the public opinion is based mainly on the information presented by the mass media...”

“Дело в том, что большинство людей столкнувшихся с проблемой совершенно не разбирается в вирусах, молекулах, клетках и т.д., поэтому на данный момент, общественное мнение строится в основном на информации преподносимой СМИ...” (Ленон 2011)

Disturbingly, the discussion of so-called AIDS dissident theory has gained momentum and visibility among mass media recently. Leading Russian TV channels commonly invite the proponents of this theory to talk shows for the purpose of debating with leading experts in infectious diseases. As the HIV epidemic is breaking out into the general population, the dangers of deliberately spreading misinformation are increasing exponentially, and it is imperative that discussions of HIV in the media treat AIDS dissidents with the same skepticism and criticism as they do any other conspiracy theory.

Conclusion

HIV/AIDS is one of the largest social problems in St. Petersburg, and this is only underscored by the city's failure to acknowledge the epidemic. As a huge, wealthy, influential city with a cutting edge medical scene, compared to other cities it has unprecedented problems with HIV. While the distribution and availability of medical testing and treatment are not adequate, the lack of media coverage of the epidemic has led to more immediate issues. The media and the public have entered into a vicious cycle, encouraged by the government. Mass media publishes what the public wants to hear, and the public wants to hear about how HIV/AIDS is related to a criminal fringe and cannot affect it. People still do not think that they personally are at risk from HIV, and they continue in their ignorance.

The epidemic, meanwhile, has already spilt over into the general population, infecting people of diverse age groups and from varying walks of life. The lack of education and prophylactic programs have only exacerbated this problem, as the refusal of media coverage has prevented the population from learning about the measures they could take to keep themselves safe. Additionally, the negative stereotypes generated by biased reporting have fomented discrimination against individuals with HIV, the very act of learning about HIV, and medical science dealing with the epidemic. In many cases, as the epidemic has accelerated and spread, media coverage of HIV and public awareness of HIV and HIV treatment have experienced a corresponding decline.

HIV represents a complex problem, and any education awareness programs must cover a wide array of related issues; including the incurability of the disease, the existence of effective, but complicated antiretroviral treatment, the availability of antiretroviral “vaccines,” the lack of access to treatment, the initial spread of the disease among vulnerable groups, and the extant stigmatization of HIV-positive people. Discussion of treatment in the media ought to be a top priority, especially since more women are becoming infected, and with proper treatment, HIV-positive women can have healthy children. Any positive stories in the media will make active contributions to the fight against HIV and against discrimination. Positive representation in the media of PLWH can greatly improve the lives of normal people and also reduce the risk of individuals who have not been infected.

For now, there is reason to be hopeful. Government grants for radio programs, TV shows, print publications, and public events are being given. It is important to do more than merely increase the quantity of programs and articles produced, but to also provide training for journalists. There need to be educational programs for journalists and press conferences that are also attended by officials, doctors, and PLWH—the people directly working with HIV. As I have shown through my interviews and media analysis, personal interactions and the stories that come from them make a tremendous difference in the public acceptance of PLWH.

One of the most promising examples of a change in the media’s coverage of HIV can be seen in the Telethon program, “Time to Live!” (“Время жить!”). It is one of the first socially oriented long-term projects on the Russian television devoted to the topic of

HIV/AIDS. It covers the truths about HIV transmission and prevention, and discusses issues such as children living with HIV, discrimination against HIV-positive people, social responsibility, awareness of personal risk of HIV infection among the population, and promotion of HIV testing. It is hosted by Vladimir Pozner, who is a very prominent figure in the fight against HIV/AIDS in Russia. He is a model of the media coverage that St. Petersburg needs—an independent television journalist, the founder of “Russian Media Partnership Against AIDS”, and member of the Transatlantic Partners Against AIDS (“Телемарафон ‘Время жить!’”).

Media discussions about HIV are essential to slowing the spread of the epidemic. As the St. Petersburg government and mass media move ahead with their public education activities in the future, they need to focus on humanizing PLWH. They must communicate accurate information about HIV transmission, testing centers, living with the disease, and living with those who have HIV, and they must do so without inciting fear amongst the general population or raising homophobia. To have the greatest impact, the people and organizations of St. Petersburg need to come together as a whole, acknowledging that the HIV epidemic affects people indiscriminately, but that a concerted, rational response by a community can effectively stop the spread of HIV. If, in the coming year, St. Petersburg’s media spread messages of education and tolerance, there is a distinct possibility that this unprecedented outbreak of HIV can be contained in a very short period of time.

Appendix A: Media Analysis

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Echo of Moscow	AIDS	10.01.2012	British musician Elton John has signed a contract to publish his book about AIDS. The title of the book is "Love is the cure: on Life, Loss, and the End of AIDS"	In his book, it will include memories of friends who had AIDS, including the lead singer of the Queen - Freddie Mercury.	Primary	Neutral	International Event	Celebrity News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	AIDS	11.08.2013	Dmitry Kiselev: "Why should I be ashamed?"	Interview with the deputy director of the All-Russia State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company, who publically made a highly inappropriate homophobic remark. Discussion of AIDS and preventative methods though LGBT community.	Primary	Neutral	Discussion	Interview
Radio	Echo of Moscow	AIDS	28.08.2013	Russian Children's Clinical Hospital equated homosexuals with prostitutes and drug addicts.	As stated on their website, all of the above categories are at risk of HIV and AIDS, which precludes the possibility of blood donation.	Secondary	Negative	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	AIDS	06.01.2012	100,000 people are currently being treated from AIDS in Russia.	The numbers continue to rise because of the increasing number of drug addicts in Russia.	Primary	Neutral	Statistics	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Echo of Moscow	AIDS	17.10.2013	The Nobel Peace Prize laureates will award Sharon Stone for her contribution in the fight against AIDS.		Secondary	Positive	Event	Celebrity News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	AIDS	05.06.2013	The court fined the coordinator of a grassroots campaign for the distribution of condoms at the Eternal Flame.	12 people were handing out condoms and explaining the modes of transmission of the HIV infection.	Primary	Neutral	Event/ Criminal	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	AIDS	11.08.2013	Deputy Director of All-Russia State Television and Radio Broadcasting Company Kiselev confirmed what he said on TV about gays	Dmitry Kiselev confirmed what he said on TV about the need to "burn" or "bury" the internal organs of gay people after their death, so they would not become organ donors	Secondary	Negative	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	AIDS	10.10.2012	Lady Gaga received the John Lennon peace award	Yoko Ono marked Lady Gaga's contribution to the human rights and philanthropic activities	Secondary	Positive	International Event	Celebrity News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	AIDS	24.05.2013	Russian millionaire Klyukin won a trip into space with Leonardo DiCaprio	All the money earned by the AmFAR bill be donated on the fight against AIDS	Secondary	Positive	International Event	Celebrity News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	AIDS	28.03.2012	Is it necessary to introduce a mandatory AIDS test for couples before getting married? - poll	68% of the listeners think so	Primary	Neutral	Poll	Poll

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Echo of Moscow	AIDS	28.05.2013	St. Petersburg was named the sexiest city in the world	Among the reasons for this - a large number of bars, sexual liberation, and the presence of the museum of erotica.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	AIDS	24.09.2013	Sergei Buntman: "No nation can exist isolated"	Discussion about the situation in Africa, multiculturalism and treatment of minorities by the Western media.	Secondary	Neutral	Discussion	Interview
Radio	Echo of Moscow	AIDS	17.09.2012	Association "Doctors Without Borders" continues to work in Syria, but the issue of safety remains open	Every year the organization sends more than 3 thousands of volunteers to more than 80 countries, including to zones of armed conflict. In addition, the "Doctors without Borders" lead preventive and educational work against drugs and AIDS.	Secondary	Neutral	International Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	29.03.2013	7000 Americans may have been exposed to HIV in a dental clinic		Primary	Neutral	International Event/ Criminal	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	16.04.2013	The future of the child who mistakenly received HIV-infected blood during transfusion is not in danger		Primary	Negative	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	25.07.2013	The investigation of the St. Petersburg doctor, who transfused HIV-infected blood into a child is closed. The doctor was fired.		Primary	Negative	Event/ Criminal	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	26.08.2013	The State Duma is preparing to ban blood donation by gays.		Primary	Negative	Event/Gov	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	18.04.2013	The first analysis showed no HIV in the child who received infected blood though blood transfusion		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	14.02.2012	Development of a vaccine against HIV in St. Petersburg is temporary suspended		Primary	Neutral	Event/Vaccine	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	13.11.2012	The Health Ministry has been purchasing overpriced goods and services in the campaign against HIV.		Primary	Negative	Event/Criminal	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	29.01.2013	Four children with disabilities were not released to the U.S. for adoption, but the decision may be reconsidered.		Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	26.04.2012	The child could not have been infected with HIV at the hospital	A 4-y.o. boy was undergoing treatment there and was diagnosed with HIV, while his parents reveal no infection	Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	18.04.2013	The first test results did not show any infection of the child, who received a transfusion of HIV-positive blood		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	04.03.2013	Doctors in the U.S. we able to cure HIV a child of HIV. In the state of Mississippi a year-old girl showed no signs of the HIV after highly active antiretroviral therapy			Positive	International Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	14.06.2013	The show "Будем Здоровы" ("Lets be Healthy"). Health concerns in Russia.	At the end of the interview, the host mentioned the HIV prevention program in	Secondary	Neutral	Discussion	Interview

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					the CIS countries.				
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	26.04.2013	Doctors have not found the HIV virus in the little girl who received a transfusion of HIV+ blood		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	28.11.2012	The deputies of the Legislative Assembly did not support an appeal to Poltavchenko about condom vending machines	The Legislative Assembly did not support the idea of installing condom dispensers in hostels and on campuses to combat HIV.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	17.04.2013	Nearly 4,000 people died in Russian prisons in 2012	More than half of Russian prisoners are suffering from various diseases, including HIV, tuberculosis, drug addiction, and various mental health problems, and do not receive adequate medical care.	Primary	Neutral	Statistics	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	28.03.2012	The introduction of mandatory HIV testing for those who are getting married is a rude intrusion of the state into private lives - the head of the Public Council for Patients' Rights.	The Republic of Ingushetia is following the example of Chechnya, wanting to introduce the practice of mandatory testing for HIV infection before marriage. President of the Public Council for the Protection of Patients' Rights doesn't like that idea.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	28.03.2012	The practice of mandatory testing for HIV infection for those about to get married, now initiated in Ingushetia, should be introduced throughout Russia. - Chairman of the Committee on Social Policy of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation			Neutral	Event/Gov	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	28.02.2012	Activists group "Patient control" protested today in front of the Health Committee building	Activists reminded the officials in St. Petersburg about the severe shortage of medicine for tuberculosis and HIV patients	Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	31.07.2013	Russia's PLWH will be allowed to adopt children	Such proposal was sent to the Ministry of Health of the Government of Russia. Currently, a government decree number 542, which was adopted in 1996, prohibits the adoption of children by people who have HIV.	Secondary	Positive	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	01.08.2013	The St. Petersburg orphans who were not adopted by Americans will be taken into other families	New foster parents were found for four orphans who could not be adopted by Americans.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	21.02.2012	The head of the movement of Tajik migrant workers does not believe that the ideas of Onishchenko on foreign migrants workers will be implemented.	The chief state sanitary doctor Gennady Onishchenko proposes to oblige workers who come work in Russia to be screened for HIV and TB	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	24.05.2012	In Russia drug addicts will not be treated with methadone.	The Federal Drug Control Service of the Russian Federation considers methadone as a drug and will not allow its use in Russia for the treatment of drug addicts who inject heroin. International NGOs are concerned that heroin injectors contributes to the spread of HIV and other socially dangerous diseases.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	13.01.2013	Discussion about the new adoption laws		Secondary	Neutral	Discussion	Interview
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	16.07.2012	The director of the summer youth camp will be responsible for health violations.	The camp did have thermometers for monitoring the conditions of stored fruits and vegetables, and the thermometers in the refrigerator were broken.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	26.12.2012	Foreign workers coming to Russia will be required to have health insurance.	Having health insurance may be a prerequisite for entering Russia to health the spread of infectious diseases.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV	26.03.2013	How to return blood donors? Threats of the "underground" market of donated blood.	At the beginning of this year, a law came into effect that prohibits paying blood donors, which cause a 20% decrease in blood donation.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV/AIDS	19.07.2013	The new tightening measures on adoption (custody)	Discusses and criticize the unjust law that prohibits adoption if the parent or any other family member is HIV+.	Secondary	Neutral	Discussion	Interview

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV/AIDS	17.04.2012	Your informed source: the chief doctor of clinical children's infectious hospital in Ust-Izhora	The epidemic went into the general population and more and more women become infected. If you identify the HIV+ status in a child and prescribe treatment in time, he/she may live as long as anyone else. HIV+ women can have healthy children. There is a program to inform HIV+ women that they can have a healthy child.	Primary	Neutral	Discussion/Statistics	Interview
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV/AIDS	20.09.2013	The UN has predicted that after 2030, HIV will continue to exist, but the cases will be isolated	Because of the emergence of new drugs and treatment methods by 2030 the disease will not be able to overcome the epidemiological threshold	Primary	Neutral	Statistics	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV/AIDS	15.04.2013	The final results of the child who received HIV infected blood through blood transfusion, will be ready in a month		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV/AIDS	02.08.2013	Gays and prostitutes will be massively screened for HIV		Primary	Negative	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV/AIDS	27.11.2012	At a dance competition in Estonia, the students were given a task to	Dance event to raise awareness about HIV/AIDS and other STIs	Primary	Neutral	International Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
				dance as "gay mosquitos" and "gangster bees."					
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV/AIDS	19.10.2012	The Government of St. Petersburg has denied their involvement in the creation of public brochures, in which the immigrant workers are depicted as a roller, trowel and broom		Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV/AIDS	15.04.2013	A one-year old child received blood from an HIV-positive donor in a St. Petersburg hospital	Before the transfusion, blood was sent in for an additional analysis to the AIDS Center. However, doctors did not have time to wait and the child had to have an urgent transfusion. When they learned that the donor is HIV-positive, they immediately assigned preventive treatment.	Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV/AIDS	19.09.2012	The State Department says that USAID did not conduct work that directly affected policy in Russia.	USAID - the largest foreign sponsor of Russian non-profit organizations - stops work in Russia.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Echo of Moscow	HIV/AIDS	03.05.2012	St. Petersburg is opening the first Center genomic bioinformatics.	The main goal is to detect genes of resistance or susceptibility to HIV/AIDS, hepatitis, and cancer.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	04.11.2013	A criminal case on "hooliganism" was started over the shooting at the "Rainbow Tea Party"	One person lost sight after the perpetrators broke into the building and fired at the members of the LGBT group	Secondary	Neutral	Event/ Criminal	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	30.09.2013	Pavel Astakhov will inspect the educational institutions in St. Petersburg	The ombudsman will visit the children's neuropsychiatric facility No. 23, the orphanage No.16 for children with HIV infection, as well as several other institutions.	Secondary	Positive	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	26.09.2013	Do students need free condoms?	World Contraception Day in St. Petersburg went unnoticed. September 26 was devoted to personal stories about this subject. It was planned to install vending machines with free condoms in student dorms, however, so far this has not happened. Most people support this idea.	Secondary	Positive	Event/ Statistics/ World Contracep- tion Day	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	26.09.2013	Free contraception should be limited only to students, - says our expert.	In the last 10 years, the number of abortions has decreased. Condoms should be given to students, but not to minors.	Secondary	Positive	Opinion/ Statistics	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	26.09.2013	St. Petersburg students support the distribution of condoms	Earlier this year, the governor said that the Smolny is developing a project for HIV prevention and treatment over the next three years. As a part of this program, they plan to install vending machines that would dispense 50,000 condoms a year.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	18.09.2013	Mushrooms with antiviral effect were found in Siberia	According to the scientists, these mushrooms help fight the flu, smallpox, and even HIV.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/ Discovery	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	25.07.2013	The investigation on the case of a child infected with HIV in a clinic has been completed.	Trying to save a 1.5-year-old girl, doctors mistakenly given her a transfusion of HIV-positive blood	Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	24.06.2013	The head physician at the Children's Hospital No. 5 was fired after accidentally transfusing HIV-infected blood to a child	Due to the low levels of hemoglobin, a child received a transfusion of HIV positive blood. This immediately became known and the child started receiving antiviral drugs. Upon leaving the hospital, the child tested negative for HIV.	Primary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV/AIDS	13.06.2013	In the international press on June 13th: Pills for life	Studies in Thailand showed that HIV therapy may be effective. As reported by The Wall Street Journal, receiving AIDS drugs helps avoid infecting those who are at in the zone of risk.	Primary	Negative	International News	Media Review
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	10.06.2013	Disabled orphans that did not make it to the U.S. can only rely on foreign adoptive parents	33 children remain in the orphanages waiting for a family.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	23.09.2013	Pavel Astakhov, considers the situation with the orphans who were not allowed to travel to the United States, a game in which he does not want to participate	Because of the new law, 33 orphans who have long found adoptive parents in the United States are now in limbo. Among them, 6 are with disabilities: one is HIV positive and 4 are with Down syndrome	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	29.04.2013	The prosecutor's office checked the blood transfusion stations in St. Petersburg	Because of the HIV-positive blood transfusion scare, all stations were checked in St. Petersburg.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	25.04.2013	Girl who received HIV-positive blood is not infected		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	22.04.2013	In St. Petersburg, measures have been taken to prevent	This case has been examined in detail and control was increased	Primary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
				transfusion of contaminated blood	over the release of blood.				
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	18.04.2013	The child, who received HIV-positive blood may not have been infected	First results showed that the child is not infected. There tests will be done.	Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	15.04.2013	The cause of the blood transfusion from an HIV-positive donor was a human factor	The doctor has not checked the blood in all databases and allowed it to be used in the operation.	Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	15.04.2013	In St. Petersburg, a child received blood from an HIV-positive donor		Primary	Negative	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	29.03.2013	Seven million Americans may have been exposed to HIV and hepatitis in a private dental clinic	The clinic did not observe the basic rules of hygiene: the needles were used more than once, the medical equipment has not been washed for a long time, and some drugs were used without permission. The dentist was suspected when one of his patients was diagnosed with hepatitis C and HIV.	Primary	Negative	International Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	05.03.2013	In the local press on March 5th: St. Petersburg does not have enough money for the vaccine against AIDS	St. Petersburg specialists are happy with the success of their American colleagues. According to the "Evening Petersburg", our specialists could catch up and outperform the Americans, but are unable to do so due to the lack of funding.	Primary	Neutral	Event/ Vaccine	Media Review
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	29.01.2013	St. Petersburg is one of the leaders in the country in the number of the HIV-infected people	The number of HIV-infected people in St. Petersburg is twice as high as the national average. The city is in the top ten in Russia and ranks first in the North-West region.	Primary	Neutral	Statistics	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	14.06.2012	More than half of the HIV-positive people in St. Petersburg hide their diagnosis from their partners		Primary	Neutral	Statistics	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	15.05.2012	There will be four more categories of benefit recipients in Russia	HIV-positive individuals and their families will now be available for social benefits	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	28.03.2012	Before marriage, newlyweds, may soon required to be tested for HIV		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	19.12.2011	Child-patients from the HIV hospital in Ust-Izhora received New Year's gifts		Primary	Positive	Charity Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	19.12.2011	Thank you for participating in the charity "Give a child a holiday!"		Primary	Positive	Charity Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	18.12.2011	The charity "Give a child a holiday" is coming to an end		Primary	Positive	Charity Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	12.12.2011	Migrant workers will receive assistance over the phone	In the near future, St. Petersburg will open a telephone hotline for migrant workers, where they can get professional assistance regarding HIV in their native language.	Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	12.12.2011	The number of HIV-positive migrants in St. Petersburg is increasing	In 2011, 90 illegal HIV-positive migrant workers have been deported from St. Petersburg. Special projects are being developed to educate those coming to work to the city from other countries.	Primary	Negative	Event/ Statistics	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV/AIDS	05.12.2011	Can HIV-positive children attend mainstream kindergartens?	Mothers in the city are worried that their children attend kindergarten with those who are HIV-positive	Primary	Neutral	Discussion	Interview
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	14.10.2011	Tajiks are banned from entering Russia because of illness		Primary	Negative	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV/AIDS	05.06.2011	30th anniversary of "the plague of the 20th century"	On June 5, 1981, American scientists discovered the AIDS	Primary	Neutral	Event/ Statistics/ AIDS 30th Anniversary	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Radio Baltica	HIV	29.05.2011	The "White Tent" prevention campaign kicks off in Kupchino	St. Petersburg residents can get free medical advice and an HIV express test in a white tent near the Kupchino metro station. This campaign is aimed at preventing the spread of HIV and promoting healthy lifestyle.	Primary	Positive	Event	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	AIDS	23.10.2013	Sharon Stone received the Peace Award Summit for AIDS work		Secondary	Positive	Event	Celebrity News
Radio	Radio Baltica	AIDS	24.05.2013	Russian businessman will fly into space with Leonardo DiCaprio	Bidding was done by the Foundation for AIDS research	Secondary	Neutral	Event	Celebrity News
Radio	Radio Baltica	AIDS	18.04.2013	Madonna became an illegal migrant worker	The Foreign Ministry accused Madonna of not having the right to give concerts in the two capitals. Diplomats said the star had to make an official permit to work in Russia.	Secondary	Negative	Event	Celebrity News
Radio	Radio Baltica	AIDS	14.12.2012	The Ministry of Health has promised St. Petersburg one billion rubles for the fight against AIDS	St. Petersburg will purchase one billion rubles worth of drugs for HIV and hepatitis. The Russian Ministry of Health promised to allocate the money to the city.	Primary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Radio	Radio Baltica	AIDS	14.12.2012		One out of one hundred St. Petersburg inhabitants is infected with HIV, but the city administration is not even thinking about giving out free condoms.	Primary	Neutral	Event/ Statistics	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	AIDS	01.05.2012	St. Petersburg is organizing a charity campaign "While Flower"	All day on June 1 on the streets of St. Petersburg, volunteers will be handing out white paper flower made by students in exchange for donations that will go towards fight against HIV, cancer, etc.	Secondary	Positive	Event/ Charity	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	AIDS	26.07.2011	Vaccination against AIDS will become a reality.	At the end of last year, the city began testing the vaccine, which was developed by scientists in St. Petersburg. It turns out that the main problem is not to create a drug, but to learn how to use it. This vaccination against AIDS helps only if used in the first days after becoming infected.	Primary	Positive	Event/ Vaccine	News
Radio	Radio Baltica	AIDS	01.07.2011	St. Petersburg is developing a new program to combat illegal drug use	The situation with the spread of AIDS and drug addiction in St. Petersburg will be discussed today at a meeting of representatives of the city administration,	Primary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					physicians, and NGOs.				
Radio	Radio Baltica	AIDS	30.03.2012	The weekly "Der Spiegel" calls the law banning the propaganda of homosexuality, adopted in St. Petersburg and other Russian cities, controversial and fomenting hatred in the society.		Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
TV	TV100	HIV	06.11.2013	Frunzensky district court held its first hearing on the case of the doctor, Oleg Piskunov, who performed a blood transfusion with HIV+ blood	After the surgery, he gave a blood transfusion to a child, without testing the blood. Later it was found that the blood was HIV+. The doctor is not admitting his guilt, but is aware of the consequences.	Primary	Neutral	Event	News
TV	TV100	HIV/AIDS	11.10.2013	Can HIV be defeated in prisons and colonies	A quarter of all prisoners in St. Petersburg is infected with the human immunodeficiency virus. It is the highest figure in Russia. Even though the funding increased and things are being done, experts are still faced with many challenges.	Primary	Neutral	Event	News
TV	TV100	HIV	25.07.2013	The case of the doctor who gave a transfusion of HIV+ blood to an infant will be sent to court		Primary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
TV	TV100	HIV	25.07.2013	HIV affects cats in St. Petersburg	FIV is common among homeless cats. It is similar to HIV; cats can live long lives being infected.	Primary	Positive	Event	News
TV	TV100	HIV	25.07.2013	St. Petersburg investigative committee has completed the investigation of the HIV+ blood transfusion		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
TV	TV100	HIV	24.06.2013	Chief Doctor of the hospital, where a small child received a transfusion of HIV+ blood, resigned.		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
TV	TV100	HIV	30.05.2013	St. Petersburg children's Ombudsman considers that there may be exceptions in the "Law of Dima Yakovlev"	33 children did not make it to U.S. on time to be adopted by the new foster families because of the new law. St. Petersburg activists are trying to find a way to help them find families.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
TV	TV100	HIV	14.03.2013	Stephen Fry spent more than two hours in Vitaly Milonov's office	The British actor met up with local authorities to discuss human rights, specifically gay rights and freedoms.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
TV	TV100	HIV	22.02.2013	What diseases do visitors from Central Asia bring to St. Petersburg?	Migrant workers from Central Asia bring diseases such as Typhus, syphilis and HIV into St. Petersburg. They do not have an opportunity to be tested and treated and they spread their illnesses	Secondary	Negative	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					while on their jobs.				
TV	TV100	HIV	17.02.2013	Cannot adopt, refuse	St. Petersburg community of PLWH is asking V. Putin to restore the adoption rights of those living with HIV. Many other illnesses have been removed from the list of adoption restrictions, but, however, did not affect HIV.	Primary	Positive	Event	News
TV	TV100	HIV	29.01.2013	The city government is currently holding a meeting at the Smolny	The following three topics are on the agenda of the meeting: the execution of the municipal budget in the past year, the development of the horticultural movement, and the perspectives on the fight against HIV-infection.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
TV	TV100	HIV	18.10.2012	Migrant workers portrayed as shovels and brushes in a new handbook	The booklet, which is available on the official website of the "Tolerance" project, depicts foreign workers as working tools -	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					shovels, hammers, rollers, and brushes. First part of the booklet deals with legal issues, second talks about HIV, and the third talk				
TV	TV100	HIV	02.10.2012	Russia houses over 10 million illegal immigrants	Out of 120 thousand foreign workers in St. Petersburg who have a registration and have gotten a medical exam, nearly a thousand are carriers of dangerous diseases, including HIV.	Secondary	Negative	Event	News
TV	TV100	HIV	01.10.2012	A group of criminals that forge documents was caught in St. Petersburg.	The group created false documents for illegal migrant workers. Illegal immigrants cause serious health concerns in the city because they bring and spread various diseases.	Secondary	Negative	Event/ Criminal	News
TV	TV100	HIV	21.09.2012	Migrant workers will soon have additional costs for vaccinations	Each visitor will have to get vaccinated against measles, diphtheria, tetanus, and typhoid	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
TV	TV100	HIV	16.07.2012	The youth camp "Yunost" went through an inspection.	It was previously reported that children were living in unsanitary conditions, some had severe weight loss, and among other things, HIV-positive	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					children were not receiving proper care. This time there were violations, but not as severe.				
TV	TV100	HIV	14.07.2012	The youth health camp "Yunost" in Roshino is awaiting an inspection	Previous inspection revealed violations in sanitation and care provision.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
TV	TV100	HIV	22.05.2012	Why Petersburg became the leader in the number of HIV-positive residents?	This episode discusses statistics and facts about HIV and AIDS. The two guests are both doctors and specialists in the field. It also has interviews with PLWH to show their struggles and depict them as normal people.	Primary	Positive	Discussion	TV Talk Show
TV	TV100	AIDS	04.09.2013	Migrants have no business in the markets	A State Duma deputy proposed to prohibit migrants from working from Central Asia in food sales, due to a belief that they carry various diseases. Illegal migration is a big problem in Russia.	Secondary	Negative	Event	News
TV	TV100	AIDS	27.08.2013	"Blue" blood. Pros and Cons.	Homosexuals will be legally banned from donating blood. However, this law may be changed, since there	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					is severe shortage of donated blood.				
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	08.08.2013	HIV is not a death sentence	Experts give valuable information about HIV/AIDS. The program includes an interview with an HIV-positive woman, who tries to break stereotypes.		Positive	Discussion	TV Talk Show
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV/AIDS	06.11.2013	Gleb Grozovsky's lawyer appealed the court's decision to arrest him	The Investigative Committee suspects the former professional soccer player and a priest of committing a sexual assault against two schoolgirls. This news piece what Gleb Grozovskiy, a father of four, says himself and those who know him well say to his accusation.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/ Criminal	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV/AIDS	10.10.2013	More than 25% of the prisoners in St. Petersburg are infected with HIV	Along with the representatives of the penal system, the head of the city AIDS Center and community members were invite to attend the expanded meeting on HIV/AIDS in the city. If the overall number of infected in	Primary	Neutral	Event/ Statistics	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					St. Petersburg is just over 1%, the population of prisoners infected with immunodeficiency virus is 25%.				
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	13.09.2013	An HIV-positive Tikhvin resident suspected of seducing a 15-year-old girl	11 criminal cases were filed against a 19-year-old man concerning who had sexual relations with a 15-year-old girl. According to a source, the suspect was aware of his HIV status.	Primary	Negative	Event/ Criminal	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	25.07.2013	Frank, the FIV-positive cat is looking for new owners	HIV or rather FIV in felines, has been confirmed in the 13-year-old cat named Frank. He is now undergoing rehabilitation at the veterinary clinic.	Primary	Positive	Event	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	25.07.2013	The doctor who gave an HIV-positive blood transfusion faces negligence charges.	The criminal case against Oleg Piskunov, the transfusiologist of the 5th City Hospital, who gave an HIV-positive blood transfusion to a child, will be sent to the public prosecution office.	Primary	Neutral	Event/ Criminal	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	25.07.2013	The doctor who gave an HIV-positive blood transfusion to a girl will face charges	Criminal investigation that was initiated after a doctor gave an HIV-positive blood transfusion to a 1,5-year-old girl in March is finished.	Primary	Neutral	Event/ Criminal	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	24.05.2013	The chief doctor of the Children's City Hospital #5 was removed from office		Primary	Neutral	Event/ Criminal	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV/AIDS	28.05.2013	The City AIDS Center: Only 2% of the newborns inherited the immunodeficiency virus in St. Petersburg	HIV-positive women are now increasingly giving birth to healthy children. This year, more than 800 children were born in St. Petersburg. Only 13 of them have inherited HIV-positive status.	Primary	Positive	Event/ Statistics	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV/AIDS	20.05.2013	HIV express testing will be set up by major metro stations in St. Petersburg	This event is part of a campaign for the World Remembrance Day of AIDS Victims. Out of 60,000 residents in the city, there are almost 2.5 thousand registered HIV patients. The purpose of the event is to identify new cases of HIV and help current patients.	Primary	Positive	Event/ Educational	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV/AIDS	20.05.2013	Synopsis: About 3 thousand new cases of HIV are revealed annually in St. Petersburg	St. Petersburg is one of the first cities in Russia, where the HIV epidemic began. Now the Northern Capital has the highest number of HIV patients in the North-West Federal District.	Primary	Neutral	Event/ Statistics	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	30.04.2013	Prosecution: Two hospitals used non-sterile blood transfusion system	Prosecutors summed up the inspections of the blood transfusion stations. They revealed violations of sanitary norms. Two hospitals used expired blood transfusion systems.	Primary	Neutral	Event/ Criminal	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	25.04.2013	The child who in late March received an HIV-positive blood transfusion did not get infected		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	19.04.2013	The public prosecutor's office will inspect all blood transfusion station in St. Petersburg	The reason for the large-scale inspection was an incident, where a child received a transfusion of HIV-positive blood in the 5th Children's Hospital.	Primary	Neutral	Event	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	19.04.2013	The transfusion of HIV-positive blood occurred due to carelessness of the doctors		Primary	Neutral	Event/ Criminal	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	18.04.2013	The first test showed no signs of HIV	The first blood tests showed to signs of HIV in the girl who receive	Primary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					an HIV-positive blood transfusion.				
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	16.04.2013	The Minister of Health called the HIV-positive blood transfusion a "criminal activity"	The girl who received HIV-positive blood transfusion is in serious condition. The child needs another surgery.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Criminal	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	15.04.2013	The HIV-positive blood that was donated for the transfusion belonged to a relative of the family	The doctors did not see the e-mail that stated that the blood that was to be transfused was HIV-positive. They read the e-mail after they had started the transfusion.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Criminal	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	15.04.2013	A 1,5-year-old child in St. Petersburg received an HIV-positive blood transfusion		Primary	Neutral	Event/Criminal	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	29.01.2013	A part of the targeted investment programs were ineffective	Smolny returned to the problem of failure to implement the 2012 budget. Over the year, city officials were unable to spend 50 billion rubles.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV/AIDS	29.01.2013	53 billion ruble budget could not be spent because of contractors	In 2012 St. Petersburg set a unique record - officials could not spend more than 50 billion rubles. Among other things discussed at the government meeting were the health issues in the city, specifically, the	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					HIV prevention program in the next two years.				
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	12.12.2012	1% of St. Petersburg residents are carriers of the immunodeficiency virus	Based on the spread of HIV, St. Petersburg is ranked #1 in the North-West region and #5 among large cities in Russia.	Primary	Neutral	Event/ Statistics	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	09.12.2012	New "living books" in St. Petersburg: a punk, an HIV-positive man, a migrant worker	St. Petersburg residents will be able to use the "Human Library". In it real people serve as books, and anyone can read a "book" by signing up for conversation. Any individual can become a "Living Book" by sharing their personal experiences. The main objective of the project is to improve mutual understanding between people.	Primary	Positive	Event/ Educational	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	28.11.2012	The Legislative Assembly refused to install condom machines	The lawmakers have approved the city budget 2013 and refused to install vending machines with free condoms. The idea	Primary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					was proposed to aid HIV prevention among young people.				
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	25.09.2012	Poltavchenko visited the St. Nicholas hospital	The St. Nicholas Children's Hospital opened today after reconstruction. Governor Georgy Poltavchenko inspected the newly-opened building. Now, the hospital can house 144 young patients, including children with HIV infection.	Secondary	Positive	Event	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	04.06.2012	There are more than 11 thousand drug addicts and 3 thousand drug dealers in St. Petersburg	St. Petersburg is one of the most drug-dependent cities in Russia. According to official statistics there are more than 11 thousand drug addicts in the Northern capital. 74% of them are HIV-positive. The statistics apply only to people who got registered. Annually drugs kill about 70,000 Russians.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/ Statistics	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV	03.06.2012	Children drew the "Miracles of St. Petersburg" in the St. Isaac's Cathedral	The campaign "Children Draw in a Cathedral" takes place in St. Petersburg for the fifth time. Anyone can participate in the projects, not just school students and art students, but kids from the orphanages, children with disabilities, and people with HIV.	Secondary	Positive	Event/Charity	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	HIV/AIDS	15.05.2012	Journalists discussed how to help in the fight against AIDS	Mass media pay attention to the topic of HIV/AIDS only once a year - on December 1 during the International AIDS Day. The rest of the time, information about the immunodeficiency virus is not found in the press. Journalists from all over Russia gathered in St. Petersburg to discuss how to help fight against the terrible disease.	Primary	Positive	Event	News
TV	Saint-Petersburg	AIDS	20.04.2012	By 2015 the pneumonia vaccine will make mandatory	6 thousands children in St. Petersburg have pneumonia, and doctors believe this figure to be prohibitively high. They believe that vaccination	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Vaccine	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					should solve this problem. It is planned that by 2015 this vaccine will be mandatory.				
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	AIDS	29.11.2013	Scientists have found the most dangerous strain of HIV in Africa	Scientists found a new strain of HIV in West Africa. It's fast-acting and the most dangerous variety. It leads to AIDS much faster than the existing form of the virus.	Primary	Neutral	International Event/ Discovery	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	AIDS	27.11.2013	Life-long battle	Drug addiction is a life-long battle. It is a two-way process to be come addicted and then try to stop using drugs. Russia is currently going through a drug crisis similar to U.S. in the 60s.	Secondary	Neutral	Lecture	Print Article
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	AIDS	25.11.2013	The children are waiting for you	A website was created that shows children who don't have parents and need a home in the city. Some kids have serious conditions and in the past, such children were adopted by foreign families.	Secondary	Positive	Event/ Charity	Print Article

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	AIDS	22.11.2013	Labor of foreigners is an expense for the city	More and more migrant workers are coming to St. Petersburg. The number of births has significantly increased due to this inflow. This puts financial strain on the city.	Secondary	Negative	Commentary	Print Article
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	25.10.2013	Scientists are checking the vaccine for all strains of HIV	An obstacle in the development of an effective vaccine is the genetic diversity of HIV. Future vaccine against all kinds of human HIV will be mosaic. It will include several proteins of different strains of HIV.	Primary	Neutral	Event/ Vaccine	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	18.10.2013	Sharon Stone was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize	Sharon Stone was awarded the prize for her contribution in the fight against AIDS.	Secondary	Positive	Event	Celebrity News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	16.10.2013	Novosibirsk scientists found a dangerous form of HIV	Novosibirsk scientists have found a more viable and dangerous than all previously known in Russia variants of human immunodeficiency virus.	Primary	Neutral	Event/ Discovery	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	23.10.2013	UN: humanity will win the fight against AIDS in 2030		Primary	Positive	Statistics	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	31.07.2013	Doctor goes on trial	The case of the doctor who gave an HIV-positive blood transfusion to a little girl is closed. The head doctor resigned.	Primary	Neutral	Event	Print Article
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	30.07.2013	The case of a child who received an HIV-positive transfusion in a clinic has been closed.		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	25.07.2013	The investigation on the case of a child infected with HIV in a clinic has been completed.		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	03.07.2013	St. Petersburg will welcome the Family Day by singing, dancing, and creating a comfortable environment for parents and children	Day of Family, Love, and Faithfulness in St. Petersburg will be celebrating with the new financial initiatives. Along with celebratory activities, the holiday will be welcomed with financial compensation to families with children and couples who are celebrating significant anniversaries.	Secondary	Positive	Event/Charity	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	24.06.2013	The head physician of the St. Petersburg hospital, where a child received HIV-positive blood was fired		Primary	Neutral	Event/Criminal	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	10.06.2013	The public prosecutor's office detected violations in the medical clinics in St. Petersburg	In some clinics, the patients did not receive information on the doctors' qualifications, some did not follow the sanitary measures, one clinic did not disinfect syringes, and a gynecological facility did not comply with the measures of HIV prevention.	Secondary	Negative	Event/ Criminal	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	06.06.2013	You will be told about the virus in detail	Dr. M. Essex will give a detailed lecture about HIV and AIDS at the St. Petersburg State University.	Primary	Neutral	Commentary	Print Article
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	06.06.2013	A support program for women living with HIV was launched in St. Petersburg	The purpose of the program is to improve the quality of life of women living with HIV and provide them with all the necessary and relevant information about the virus, its treatment, access to medical services and legal opportunities, and to facilitate communication with medical professionals.	Primary	Positive	Event/ Educational	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	26.04.2013	Doctor's oversight	The doctor did not check the information on the blood before	Primary	Neutral	Event/ Criminal	Print Article

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					allowing to use it in the transfusion.				
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	25.04.2013	The child, who received an HIV-positive blood transfusion was not infected		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	19.04.2013	Petersburg Prosecutor's Office: the baby received an HIV-positive blood transfusion because of inattentive staff and outdated computers		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	18.04.2013	The authorities in St. Petersburg discussed the problems of blood donation	The meeting began with a discussion of the resonant case HIV-positive blood transfusion. Further, the discussion touched upon the inspection of blood and donor compensation.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	16.04.2013	Ministry of Health: The case of the HIV-positive blood transfusion is a crime		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	15.04.2013	Smolny stated the causes of the HIV-positive blood transfusion to a child	The official representative of the Health Committee of St. Petersburg believes that the human factor was the cause of blood transfusion in one of the hospitals in the city.	Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	15.04.2013	A 1,5-year-old child in St. Petersburg received an HIV-positive blood transfusion		Primary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	26.03.2013	The Petrogradsky district of St. Petersburg summed up its drug policy	The district is actively working on drug prevention program: there is currently a working station for HIV prevention that also provides assistance to drug addicts.	Secondary	Positive	Event	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	04.03.2013	In the U.S. a child was fully cured of HIV through "aggressive therapy"	After the girl underwent a course of aggressive therapy, analyzes confirmed a complete cure. In the pasts, in most cases after the cessation of the treatment, patients died within 2-3 weeks.	Primary	Positive	International Event/ Discovery	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	30.01.2013	AIDS began to recede	The city government has created an HIV/AIDS prevention program for 2013-2015. They plan to allocate almost 1.8 billion rubles to the program.	Primary	Positive	Event/ Statistics	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	28.01.2013	HIV, budget. and horticulturists - are a few things on the government agenda.	Officials plan to discuss the results of execution of the municipal budget for 2012, activities for agricultural and horticultural seasonal maintenance, as well as the HIV prevention program for 2013-2015.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	18.01.2013	Svetlana Agapitova asks the media to find parents for St. Petersburg orphans	The Ombudsman for Children in St. Petersburg, Svetlana Agapitova, turned the attention of media to the problem of 33 orphans, whose adoption by American families was interrupted by the so-called law of "Dima Yakovlev". Among the children are those with serious medical conditions.		Neutral	Event	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	29.12.2012	The drug mafia - is just the tip of the iceberg	An interview with the director of the regional NGO "Look into the Future" about the problem of drug abuse and the HIV epidemic in St. Petersburg. Their approaches to combat the situation in the city.	Primary	Positive	Discussion	Interview
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	21.12.2012	The residents of the Kolpino district were offered the opportunity to give a gift of a holiday to a child.	The charity event will collect toys and food for children at the Ust-Izhora hospital.	Secondary	Positive	Charity Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	30.11.2012	Volunteers against AIDS	The volunteers are collecting notes with kind words and wishes to give to the patients of the city AIDS center. The volunteers also got to visit the AIDS center and test for HIV. Also, they presented projects contributing to the fight against HIV/AIDS.	Primary	Positive	Event/World AIDS Day	Print Article
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	31.10.2012	At the beginning of the year 2.5 thousand HIV-infected were identified in St. Petersburg		Primary	Neutral	Statistics	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	19.10.2012	The "Directory for migrants workers" was erroneously attributed to Smolny	The mass media on Thursday was full of reports about the controversial brochures issued ostensibly by the Government of St. Petersburg, in which the migrant workers are depicted as a roller, broom, spatula, and brush.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	30.04.2012	HIV - is not a death sentence	HIV-positive mothers have hope to have healthy children. There is now a new rehabilitation facility that provides care and help for HIV-positive women and children.	Primary	Positive	Discussion/Statistics	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	14.10.2013	In 8 months St. Petersburg drug enforcement officers seized 158 kg of cocaine		Secondary	Negative	Event/Criminal	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	24.05.2013	Russian businessman paid more than \$1 million to take a space flight with Leonardo DiCaprio	The money will be donated to AIDS research.	Secondary	Positive	Event	Celebrity News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	30.11.2012	The police officers became donors for a day	Over 100 police officers volunteered to give blood, since there are shortages on blood donations. Beforehand, they were all screened for dangerous infections and viruses.	Secondary	Positive	Event	News
Newspaper	Petersburg Diary	HIV	28.11.2012	Volunteers in St. Petersburg will host a campaign to fight AIDS	The campaign will include a concert program in which volunteers will present their speeches titled "Being a volunteer!", as well as posters and their own social projects aimed at AIDS prevention and promotion of healthy lifestyles among young people.	Primary	Positive	Event/World AIDS Day	News
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	02.12.2013	St. Petersburg doctors started the second phase of testing of the HIV vaccine	The researches finally got the funding to proceed with the second phase of testing of the long-awaited HIV	Primary	Neutral	Discussion/Vaccine	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					vaccine.				
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	06.11.2013	"The priest case" will be investigated by the authorities and the Russian Orthodox Church	Scandal surrounding Gleb Grozovsky became "number one" news in Russian. He was charged with sexual assault against a 9-year old and	Secondary	Neutral	Event/ Criminal	News
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	16.10.2013	The entire spectrum of life - from despair to hope	The Baltic Media Center launched a photo exhibition titled "The Space of the indifferent", organized by the "Diakonia" charity and supported by the administration of St. Petersburg in the framework of the "Tolerance" project.	Secondary	Positive	Event/ Charity	Print Article
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	04.07.2013	City is preparing to celebrate the Family Day	Day of Family, Love, and Faithfulness in St. Petersburg will be celebrated with new financial initiatives. Along with celebratory activities, the holiday will be welcomed with financial compensation to large families and couples who are celebrating significant anniversaries.	Secondary	Positive	Event/ Charity	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	24.06.2013	Peterhof is organizing special days for donating blood	Each participant will be able to pass a free preliminary medical examination, as well as to get tested for HIV and hepatitis B and C.	Secondary	Positive	Event/Charity	News
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	09.06.2013	<i>Vecherniy Peterburg</i> is once again ahead.	Recently the Central House of Journalism in Moscow hosted a Conference titled "Problems of HIV/AIDS in the Mirror of Media", which summed up the All-Russia competition for journalists. The award for the best publication on the topic of the fight against AIDS received the editor of the "Health" column in the <i>Vecherniy Peterburg</i> , Tatyana Tyumeneva, with her article: "HIV has laid siege on Petersburg. There is still no vaccine."	Primary	Neutral	Event/Vaccine	News
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	24.05.2013	The Finish border will test for HIV	At the multilateral road checkpoint at the border between Russia and Finland in Brusnichnoe, visitors will be able to express HIV test.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Test	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	15.05.2013	Goldfish will help fight tumors?	St. Petersburg researchers made a discovery in the field of oncology and are participating in the trials for the new vaccine against cancer. They believe that the growths on the heads of the domesticated gold fish can be used to fight cancer tumors.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Vaccine	News
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	30.04.2013	The public prosecutor's office inspected the blood transfusion stations and revealed violations	In general, the requirements are met, but there are a handful of violators. 8 new administrative cases are opened.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	26.04.2013	The girls who received an HIV-positive blood transfusion was not infected.		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	25.04.2013	The Governor, Georgy Poltavchenko, presented a report to the Legislative Assembly of St. Petersburg	The governor talked about the growth of indicators, economy, infrastructure, housing, education, and financial aid to families.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	17.04.2013	St. Petersburg NGO published a handbook for the homeless	The handbook will include information on where to eat, sleep, get medical assistance, and how to help a victim before the arrival an ambulance. Also, it will	Secondary	Positive	Event/Charity	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					provide a list of rights that the homeless have, but are not commonly known among the public.				
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	15.04.2013	The doctors have infected a child with AIDS		Primary	Negative	Event/Criminal	News
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	22.03.2013	I am a cop. Do you want to talk about it?	St. Petersburg residents will be able to use the "Human Library". In it real people serve as books, and anyone can read a "book" by signing up for conversation. There will be a punk, a Muslim, an HIV-positive man. The main objective of the project is to improve mutual understanding between people and get rid of anthropobia.	Secondary	Positive	Event/Educational	News
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	04.03.2013	Defeating HIV is now just around the corner?	St. Petersburg medical researchers are happy with the success of their overseas counterparts in curing a little girl from HIV, but the lack of funds prevent them from repeating such successful discovery in Russia.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Vaccine	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	20.12.2012	I do a lot, but would like to do even more	A well-known athlete and a TV host - Maria Kiseleva - talked about her new show, personal life, and how she helps children in need.	Secondary	Positive	Discussion/Charity	Interview
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	16.10.2012	My dear leeches	Hirudotherapist, Ekaterina Kersilova, talks about the healing properties of leeches	Secondary	Neutral	Discussion/Health	Interview
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	28.06.2012	HIV has laid siege on Petersburg. There is still no vaccine.	Discussion with the Doctor of Biological Sciences - Andrej Kozlov - about the HIV situation in St. Petersburg and why the development of the vaccine has stopped after a successful phase 1.			Discussion/Vaccine	Interview
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	15.03.2012	Evil thoughts can kill	An interview with a clergyman about the connection of physical health and actions.	Secondary	Negative	Discussion	Interview
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	14.03.2012	Ophthalmologists believe: crossed eyes are eyes, screaming for help	The article lists ways to prevent crossed eyes and talks about the connection of genes and maladies such as AIDS.	Secondary	Neutral	Discussion/Health	Interview
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	07.02.2012	HIV-positive migrant workers went to work in the public food services for 3 thousand	The doctor who gave out medical certificates in absentia was detained.	Primary	Negative	Event/Criminal	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
				rubles					
Newspaper	Vecherniy Peterburg	HIV/AIDS	27.09.2012	Vitaly Milonov is late: an embryo is already recognized as a human	Minolov proposed that the embryos acquire civil rights "from the first heartbeat" which would automatically equate abortion to murder. However, similar law was already passed.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	01.12.2013	World AIDS Day is celebrated on Sunday	The article talks about the history of the World AIDS Day and gives statistics about the HIV epidemic in Russia.	Primary	Positive	World AIDS Day	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV/AIDS	06.11.2013	Priest Gleb Grozovskii arrested in St. Petersburg	Gleb Grozovskii was charged with sexually assaulting two under-aged girls.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Criminal	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	03.11.2013	Masked gunmen fired at a LGBT party on Fontanka	Two masked men broke into the building on Fontanka. They shot a man in the face with an air gun and fled. According to official sources, the building houses an NGO that supports PLWH.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Criminal	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	25.10.2013	The universal HIV vaccine will be mosaic	The vaccine will be composed of several proteins from different	Primary	Neutral	Event/Vaccine	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					strains of the HIV virus.				
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	22.10.2013	The patient is more alive than dead	Russia's chief sanitary doctor, Gennady Onishchenko, was released from his position on October 22 due to the expiration of his term.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	18.10.2013	St. Petersburg citizens will help the Duma in the fight against illegal immigrants.	Members of the Constitutional Legislation Committee have approved the initiative of the odious Andrew Anokhin, which states that all immigrant workers must have a medical policy and 30 thousand rubles before entering the country.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV/AIDS	17.10.2013	Sharon Stone was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize		Secondary	Positive	Event	Celebrity News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV/AIDS	04.09.2013	Law enforcers believe that the model, Julia Loshagina, could have been killed by her husband	One of the causes of this crime, according to media reports, may have been that Julia gave her husband HIV.	Secondary	Negative	Event/Criminal	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	14.08.2013	"Humanitarian Action" for those who found themselves at the	The campaign is aimed at helping PLWH, drug addicts, and people at risk.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Charity	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
				bottom					
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV/AIDS	23.07.2013	Russian scientists are testing vaccines against HIV, tuberculosis and cancer	Three domestic, new generation vaccines against tuberculosis, HIV, and cancer are in the preclinical studies. All three vaccines are already showing high effectiveness even at the early stage.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Vaccine	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	04.07.2013	The State Duma: 2013 ban on ban	This articles looks at the government's various notorious laws, including adoption laws, smoking bans, and possession of foreign accounts.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	Overview
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV/AIDS	03.07.2013	In the U.S., two patients were cured from HIV after a bone marrow transplant	Both women lived with HIV for 30 years and needed a transplant because of lymphoma.	Primary	Positive	Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV/AIDS	27.06.2013	MIA: 600 million rubles worth of fake medicine has been sold to cancer and AIDS patients in central Russia	According to the polics, criminal groups that were involved in the spread of counterfeit HIV and cancer drugs have been exposed. For three years these criminals counterfeited expensive drugs and sold them through fake pharmacy chains.	Primary	Negative	Event/Criminal	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV/AIDS	05.06.2013	The court fined the promoter of the campaign for condom distribution at the Eternal Flame in Tolyatti	An HIV awareness campaign was held by the Eternal Flame at the Freedom Square in Tolyatti. 12 participants put up pictures of famous people who died from AIDS and handed out leaflets and condoms, explaining the modes of HIV transmission. They were stopped and fined.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Criminal	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	24.05.2013	Tourists on the Finnish-Russian border will be checked for HIV		Primary	Positive	Event/Test	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	22.05.2013	The attachment syndrome by the "law of Dima Yakovlev"	In St. Petersburg, 33 children who were not picked up in time by their American adoptive parents finally lost hope to find families due to the new adoption law.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV/AIDS	22.05.2013	Volunteers in Tolyatti deny that they spread out condoms by the Eternal Flame		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	20.05.2013	The man accused of murder of an 8-year-old girl in Tatarstan 8-year-old said that he was tortured	According to Tashbayeva, he was tortured with electrical current and violence and was threatened to be thrown into a cell with HIV-positive people if he did not confess to the crime.	Secondary	Negative	Event/Criminal	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	05.05.2013	Petersburg City Court: The European Convention does not prohibit Russia to expel ill foreigners	A man from Moldova was denied the right to permanently stay in Russia, when though he is married to a Russian woman, after he found out his HIV-positive status.	Primary	Negative	Event/Gov	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	02.05.2013	Supreme Court: Registration in hospitals does not violate the rights of patients	Clinics informing to the Federal Migration Service (FMS) on the enrolled patients does not violate the rights of patient confidentiality. The Supreme Court of Russia reached such decision.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	25.04.2013	The girls who received an HIV-positive blood transfusion was not infected.		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	19.04.2013	The public prosecutor's office is inspecting all blood transfusion station in St. Petersburg	The St. Petersburg Prosecutor's Office is conducting inspections of all blood transfusion stations of the city. The cause was a recent incident, where a child received an HIV-positive blood transfusion.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV/AIDS	19.04.2013	A million for HIV in the blood of a donor	The recent story about the transfusion of HIV-positive blood was not the first one in St. Petersburg. The Vreden Institute paid 1 million rubles to a patient who got infected with HIV and hepatitis after receiving blood. The court did not find the doctors responsible.	Primary	Negative	Event/Criminal	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	18.04.2013	Blood donation: eliminate the human factor	The city is planning to allocate 25 million rubles, so prevent any incidents during blood donation and transfusion from happening.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	18.04.2013	The first test results did not show any infection of the child, who received a transfusion of HIV+ blood		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	17.04.2013	"Nochlezhka" released the tenth volume Handbook for the Homeless	The handbook will include information on where to eat, sleep, get medical assistance, and how to help a victim before the arrival an ambulance. Also, it will provide a list of rights that the homeless have, but are not commonly known among the public.	Secondary	Positive	Event/Charity	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	16.04.2013	The Minister of Health, Veronika Skvortsova, called the transfusion of HIV-positive blood "disgraceful and outrageous."		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	15.04.2013	Director of the "Blood Donor Fund": the incident at the Children's Hospital No. 5 happened due to negligence		p	Neutral	Event	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	15.04.2013	The Russian Investigative Committee initiated a criminal investigation into the case of the HIV-positive blood transfusion.		Primary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	15.04.2013	In the Children's Hospital No. 5 child, the doctors gave an HIV-positive blood transfusion to a 1,5-year-old girl		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	29.03.2013	A dentist could have infected thousands of Americans with HIV	Around 7 thousand Americans could have been infected with HIV and other infectious diseases in a dental clinic in Oklahoma. Violations of the elementary rules of sanitation were found.	Primary	Negative	International Event	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	26.03.2013	A Deputy of the Legislative Assembly proposed not to issue a license to migrant workers with HIV or drug addiction		Primary	Negative	Event/Gov	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV/AIDS	15.03.2013	Nearly a third of South African schoolgirls have HIV, which was contacted from "elderly patrons"	According to official statistics, about 5 million people in South Africa are living with HIV - that is about 10% of the population.	Primary	Negative	International Event/Statistics	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV/AIDS	04.03.2013	A two-year-old girl was cured of HIV in the U.S.	The girl managed to recover thanks to the aggressive treatment	Primary	Positive	International Event/Discovery	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					with drugs immediately after her birth.				
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV/AIDS	29.01.2013	Vice-governor Divinsky asked whether people with AIDS can be cured	The articles talks about the budget allocated to HIV treatment in the city. The governor of St. Petersburg called for a more selective approach to spending the money on HIV prevention and awareness.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	29.01.2013	There are almost 27 thousand registered HIV cases in St. Petersburg	The Head of the Health Committee noted that the annually only 12-15% of the city population tests for HIV.	Primary	Neutral	Statistics/Gov	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	HIV	10.01.2013	Tajik barbers were recommended not to shave customers	The Minister of Health of Tajikistan claimed that this is one of the methods of HIV prevention. The article also talks about the regulations regarding beards in Tajikistan.	Secondary	Neutral	International Event	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	AIDS	29.11.2013	The debt load the British was equated to the AIDS epidemic	The dangers from high debt load in Britain was recently compared with the threat from AIDS.	Secondary	Negative	International Event	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	AIDS	13.11.2013	Porn stars will soon have to wear construction glasses	The authorities in California want to protect porn stars on the	Secondary	Neutral	International Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					job as much as possible.				
Internet	Fontanka.ru	AIDS	27.10.2013	A criminal in Brussels has bitten a police officer to infect him with AIDS	The offender told the police officer that he was sick with this fatal disease and that now they will die together.	Primary	Negative	International Event/Criminal	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	AIDS	15.06.2013	Deficiency of drugs threatens half of AIDS patients in Russia	60,000 people who have AIDS are at risk to be left without medical assistance. This is due to the new reforms on drug procurement.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	AIDS	07.06.2013	When should we teach the children about the "products # 2"	This article talks about when is the right time and how to talk to kids about sex education.	Secondary	Neutral	Discussion	Overview
Internet	Fontanka.ru	AIDS	24.05.2013	Vasily Klyukin will fly into space with Leonardo DiCaprio.		Secondary	Positive	International Event	News
Internet	Fontanka.ru	AIDS	14.03.2013	A Jesuit from Argentina is now sitting on the papal throne	The new pope, who took the name Francis, is known for his humility, conservatism in theology, and has shown great attention to issues of social justice.	Secondary	Positive	International Event	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	01.12.2013	World celebrates AIDS Day	The article talks about the history of the World AIDS Day and gives statistics about the HIV epidemic in the world.	Primary	Positive	Event/World AIDS Day	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	30.11.2013	Light conquers AIDS	Light can modify HIV genome in the human body and any HIV strain. This means that in such way it is possible to create a vaccine directly in the patient's body.	Primary	Positive	Discussion/Vaccine	Interview
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	29.11.2013	UN is concerned about the increase of AIDS victims among the youth	According to UNICEF, the number of deaths from AIDS in poor countries has increased significantly, both among children and mothers.	Primary	Neutral	International Event/Statistics	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	28.11.2013	A new strain of HIV was discovered	Swedish virologists discovered a variant of HIV, which is associated with a much more rapid progression to AIDS compared with the known virus strains.	Primary	Neutral	International Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	28.11.2013	Vitamins and selenium are able to stop the development of AIDS	Specialists at the Florida University discovered that multivitamins and selenium can stop the development of AIDS.	Primary	Neutral	International Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	27.11.2013	Migrants are bringing HIV and bacillus to Moscow	Advances in modern medicine have proved that the fight against HIV infection is possible, but there are several factors that	Primary	Negative	Event/Statistics	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					complicate this fight. Experts claim that the main factor is the migration process.				
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	26.11.2013	About 40% of HIV-infected people in Moscow are migrants		Primary	Neutral	Statistics	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	26.11.2013	WHO: The Greeks are infecting themselves with HIV to receive benefits from the European Union	Some residents deliberately infect themselves with HIV to get 700 euros from the EU authorities. According to a report by the WHO, the number of people infected with HIV in Greece has "increased significantly."	Primary	Negative	International Event	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	22.11.2013	UN: One of the main reasons for the spread of AIDS - sexual violence	UNAIDS Executive Director Michel Sidibe said that every hour 50 women become infected with HIV.	Primary	Neutral	International Event	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	20.11.2013	UN celebrates the World Children's Day	UN Children's Fund is conducting extensive work in all aspects of child's' health - from the prenatal period until adolescence. The Fund takes measures to ensure pregnant women to have access to proper medical supervision before and during labor,	Primary	Positive	International Event/Charity	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					to strengthen opportunities for families to cope with childhood illnesses, to advise communities on health issues.				
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	11.11.2013	Gun shot in the eye as regards from Milonov	Chyzhevsky, who was shot by unknown assailants in St. Petersburg, intends to prosecute not only the perpetrators, but also lawmakers who regularly initiate the so-called Russian "hate laws."	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	08.11.2013	Scientists have discovered why HIV is not afraid of the human immune system	HIV uses an "invisibility hat" made from the cells of the host's body, so that the virus manages to escape from immune's defense.	Primary	Neutral	International Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	04.11.2013	Police is investigating the shooting during the "rainbow tea party" in St. Petersburg		Primary	Neutral	Event/Criminal	News
Internet	Rosbalt	AIDS	27.10.2013	A recidivist in Brussels bit a police officer during an arrest to infect him with AIDS	After the incident, the offender told the officer that they are now going to "die together."	Primary	Negative	International Event/Criminal	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	22.10.2013	Breast milk protects babies from HIV	American scientists discovered a unique protein in the breast milk of nursing women due to which the HIV virus cannot enter the baby's body.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	21.10.2013	Lech Walesa welcomes the Nobel Peace Prize laureates and the actress Sharon Stone	This year the prize was awarded to Sharon Stone for organizing a campaign to raise funds to fight HIV.	Secondary	Positive	International Event	Celebrity News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	16.10.2013	Kazakhstan dissociated themselves with the new variant of HIV-1	The new variant of the HIV-1, discovered by the Novosibirsk scientists, was not registered in Kazakhstan.	Primary	Neutral	International Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	16.10.2013	A new variant of HIV is spreading rapidly in Siberia and the Far East	According to the head of the department of retroviruses "Vector," the new form of HIV-1 may be the most viable variant of the virus in Russia. It is possible that it will spread much faster than the leading subtype A.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	09.10.2013	Resident of Yugra, got 2.5 years in prison after infecting two women with HIV	Last year, the man repeatedly had had sex with women without telling them about his HIV status.	Primary	Negative	Event/Criminal	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	08.10.2013	The scientists are working on a vaccine against HIV based on the feline virus		Primary	Neutral	Event/Vaccine	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	30.09.2013	Health of the migrant workers will cost Russia	Increasing and uncontrolled presence of migrants in Russia increases the nationwide number of hepatitis, HIV, and tuberculosis cases. According to the Federal Migration Services today there are 11.2 million migrants in Russia and only about 1.5 million of them are officially employed.	Secondary	Negative	Event	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	27.09.2013	African pensioners treat arthritis with condoms		Primary	Neutral	International Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	25.09.2013	Scientists are looking for the cure for AIDS in the Siberian mushrooms	Researchers claim that Chaga has antiviral effects and is able to treat AIDS.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	20.09.2013	UN promised to defeat AIDS by 2030	The disease will not be able to overcome the epidemic threshold as a result of the emergence of new drugs and treatment methods. Lures is sure that HIV will continue to exist, but the cases of infection will be rare	Primary	Positive	International Event/Discovery	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
					and isolated.				
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	18.09.2013	The hearing of the doctor who gave an HIV-positive blood transfusion is rescheduled for November 6		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	13.09.2013	The Tikhvin resident that infected a 15-year-old girl with HIV has repeatedly come into contact with her.	According to investigators, the young man knew about his HIV status and the age of the girl, but this did not keep him from having sexual intercourse with the 15-year-old.	Primary	Negative	Event/Criminal	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	12.09.2013	Scientists have found a cure for monkey AIDS	American scientists were able to create an effective vaccine against simian immunodeficiency. The new development could help create a vaccine against the HIV.	Primary	Positive	Event/Vaccine	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	11.09.2013	Insurance for the helpless	The authorities are concerned about the health of the migrant workers, as well as the health of the rest of the population do to the influx of workers from Central Asia.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	28.08.2013	Medical institutions in Russia began to prohibit gays from donating blood, equating them to prostitutes and drug addicts	The new law, which soon will prohibit homosexuals from donating blood, caused an outrage among social groups in the country.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	26.08.2013	Media: Russian gays will be prohibited to become blood donors, and soon after they will be "treated"		Secondary	Negative	Event	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	21.08.2013	The Ministry of Justice proposes to eliminate the restrictions on the rights of HIV-positive convicts	The changes will help equate the rights of the HIV-positive convicts to other groups of prisoners and will position the Criminal Enforcement Code in line with the recommendations of the Council of Europe.	Primary	Positive	Event/Gov	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	02.08.2013	Media: Rospotrebnadzor plans to organize a large-scale HIV screening of gays and prostitutes		Primary	Neutral	Event/Statistics	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	02.08.2013	A compound was found in soy that can help fight against HIV	Soybeans contain a compound called genistein, which stops the spread of HIV in the human body.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	01.08.2013	Among the Russian army draftees, 1.5% are drug addicts	This year among the draftees who came to the recruiting sites only 1.5% out of 750,000 were drug addicts.	Secondary	Negative	Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	25.07.2013	The public prosecutor's office will handle the case of the doctor who gave an HIV-positive blood transfusion to a little girl	The authorities have completed the investigation of the criminal case against Oleg Piskunov, who was accused of committing crimes under "services that do not meet safety requirements and negligence."	Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	24.07.2013	In Kazan, a woman and her roommate raped her young son and infected him with AIDS		Primary	Negative	Event/Criminal	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	15.07.2013	Italian scientists used the HIV virus for the treatment of genetic diseases	Researchers from Italy said that they have successfully used the HIV virus for the treatment of metachromatic leukodystrophy and Wiskott-Aldrich syndrome.	Primary	Neutral	International Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	08.07.2013	Uzbekistan will spend \$ 2 million on AIDS treatment	Uzbekistan is writing a proposal to the Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria to continue the project to fight against HIV. The government has allocated \$2 million for these purposes and UN - \$27 million.	Primary	Neutral	International Event	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	04.07.2013	A bone marrow transplant may be cure for HIV	Two men with HIV were able to stop the treatment after a bone marrow transplant.	Primary	Positive	International Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	29.06.2013	Two St. Petersburg children who were not adopted by Americans found new parents	Out of 33 children left without parental care, two more may be placed into a family soon.	Secondary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	24.06.2013	The scandal during the transfusion of HIV-positive blood was one of the reasons for the dismissal of the head doctor of the children's hospital		Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	15.05.2013	U.S. officials recommend doctors to give AIDS treatment to drug addicts	U.S. officials from the Public Health reported that doctors should consider giving HIV drugs to drug addicts because of the high risk.	Primary	Negative	International Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	06.06.2013	In Donetsk a man is walking around naked swearing and promising to cure AIDS	The man was holding a cross and yelled cursed at church hierarchs. In addition, he promised to cure of HIV those who followed him.	Secondary	Negative	International Event/Criminal	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	30.05.2013	In one of the Chinese provinces HIV-positive teachers were allowed to teach in schools	The Chinese province of Guangdong is the first in the country to allow HIV and AIDS patients to teach in schools.	Primary	Neutral	International Event	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	27.05.2013	HIV vaccine has been successfully	Doctors have successfully tested a	Primary	Neutral	International Event/Vacci	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
				tested on animals	vaccine against HIV on animals.			ne	
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	23.05.2013	AIDS patient in Leningrad Oblast cohabited with a schoolgirl	Investigators in the Leningrad oblast opened a criminal case against a man who infected a 15-year schoolgirl with HIV.	Primary	Negative	Event/Criminal	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	29.04.2013	In St. Petersburg, violations were found during an inspection of blood transfusion stations		Secondary	Neutral	Event/Criminal	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	29.04.2013	The Danish started testing new HIV therapy on people	Danish scientists believe that HIV can be cured. They are conducting clinical trials in order to test the new therapy, which involves the isolation of HIV from human DNA and the destruction of it by the immune system.	Primary	Positive	International Event/Vaccine	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	25.04.2013	The blood test results of the girls who received HIV-positive blood are negative		Primary	Neutral	Event	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	24.04.2013	Ukraine wants to ban advertisements for condoms	The new law states that advertising, which includes information about contraception and sexual products should be placed strictly in specialized medical institutions and pharmacies.	Secondary	Neutral	International Event/Gov	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	23.04.2013	During an anti AIDS campaign in Ghana, medical facilities distributed free condoms with holes	Residents of Ghana became victims of "careless charity" - many condoms that were distributed at local hospitals had defects.	Primary	Negative	International Event/Criminal	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	23.04.2013	The Russian Ministry of Health is ready to permit HIV-positive and those with hepatitis to adopt children		Primary	Positive	Event/Gov	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	22.04.2013	After the incident with HIV in St. Petersburg algorithm of blood testing will be changed	Now before any procedures two specialists will check the blood.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Gov	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV/AIDS	20.04.2013	U.S. scientists: Circumcision reduces the risk of contracting AIDS	Circumcision radically alters the composition of the bacterial flora the penis, killing the anaerobic bacteria. This explains the decrease in the risk of contracting infections.	Secondary	Neutral	International Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	19.04.2013	All blood transfusion stations in St. Petersburg will be inspected	The public prosecutor's office will inspect all blood transfusion stations Petersburg.	Secondary	Neutral	Event	News
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	15.04.2013	In St. Petersburg, a child received a blood transfusion from an HIV-positive donor	A little girl received an HIV-positive blood transfusion in the Children's Clinical Hospital No. 5.	Primary	Neutral	Event/Criminal	News

News Source	Organization Name	Keyword	Date	Article Title	Article Summary	Importance	Tone	Information Type	Category
Internet	Rosbalt	HIV	05.04.2013	Scientists have found antibodies in humans capable of killing HIV	A group of scientists from Duke University were able to identify antibodies in the human body that can kill about 55% of known HIV strains.	Primary	Positive	International Event/Discovery	News
Internet	Rosbalt	AIDS	10.09.2013	Golden Apple headphones will help fight AIDS in Africa	Apple will sell a large number of their exclusive products, and all of the proceeds will go to fight AIDS in Africa.	Secondary	Positive	International Event/Charity	News
Internet	Rosbalt	AIDS	05.09.2013	Famous boxer died of AIDS	Tommy Morrison, a former boxing champion in the heavyweight division, died of AIDS at age 44.	Primary	Neutral	International Event	Celebrity News
Internet	Rosbalt	AIDS	21.04.2013	New deadly diseases await humanity	British scientists predicted that the spread of new serious infectious diseases will begin in poor tropical countries, where the rapidly growing population is in constant contact with the wildlife.	Secondary	Negative	International Event	News

Appendix B: Survey Results

Your gender:

#	Answer	Response	%
1	M	38	32%
2	F	81	68%
	Total	119	100%

What is your age?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	15-17	2	2%
2	18-21	5	4%
3	22-30	91	76%
4	31-40	15	13%
5	41-60	6	5%
6	61 and older	1	1%
	Total	120	100%

What is the highest degree or level of school you have completed? (Please mark the highest degree received):

#	Answer	Response	%
1	I did not attend school	0	0%
2	Primary education (4 grades)	0	0%
3	Incomplete secondary education (9 grades)	1	1%
4	General secondary (11 grades)	2	2%
5	Vocational technical training	1	1%
6	Post-secondary education	5	4%
7	Undergraduate Degree	15	13%
8	Graduate Degree	94	78%
9	Doctorate Degree	2	2%
10	Other (please specify):	0	0%
	Total	120	100%

The first time I heard about HIV/AIDS was:

#	Answer	Response	%
1	From parents, friends, acquaintances	28	24%
2	From mass media channels: TV, radio, newspapers, magazines	58	50%
3	I read specialized literature on HIV/AIDS: medical booklets, brochures, posters	20	17%
4	From medical workers	5	4%
5	Other (please specify):	5	4%
	Total	116	100%

Other (please specify):
в школе – in school
Плакат в поликлинике – poster in the clinic
Песня Земфиры "А у тебя СПИД", далее от родителей и знакомых – from a song by Zemfira "AIDS", also from parents and acquaintances
в школе – in school
из интернета – from the Internet

From which sources have you obtained information about HIV/AIDS in the last 12 months? (more than one answer possible)

#	Answer	Response	%
1	From specialized literature and brochures	13	11%
2	From newspapers and magazines	15	13%
3	From school	3	3%
4	From a higher educational institution	5	4%
5	From TV programs and ads	46	40%
6	From the Internet	59	51%
7	From medical workers	14	12%
8	From friends and acquaintances	14	12%
9	From classes and lectures held at my work	3	3%
10	From my sexual partner	2	2%
11	From parents and other relatives	4	3%
12	From special campaigns	2	2%
13	I have never encountered such information	23	20%
14	From other sources (please specify):	4	3%

From other sources:
На стендах в медицинских учреждениях Санкт-Петербурга - on the stands in medical facilities in St. Petersburg
Радио - radio
соц.реклама на билбордах - social ads on billboards

How informed do you consider yourself to be regarding HIV/AIDS?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	I do not know anything and do not want to know	2	2%
2	I know very little and would like to know more	27	23%
3	I am content with my knowledge	77	66%
4	I know almost everything	10	9%
	Total	116	100%

How often do you come across information about HIV/AIDS in the media?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Never	3	3%
2	Rarely	63	55%
3	From time to time	43	38%
4	Often	5	4%
5	Always	0	0%
	Total	114	100%

In your opinion, what is the situation in St. Petersburg regarding HIV?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Favorable	19	17%
2	Unfavorable	71	62%
3	I don't know or care	25	22%
	Total	115	100%

Please evaluate whether the mass media in St. Petersburg is devoting enough attention to the issue?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Absolutely no attention	11	10%
2	Very little attention	68	61%
3	Enough attention	29	26%
4	A great deal of attention	2	2%
5	Too much attention	1	1%
	Total	111	100%

When is the last time you have heard something about HIV/AIDS in the mass media?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	This week	8	7%
2	This month	18	16%
3	This year	62	56%
4	Several years ago	22	20%
	Total	110	100%

How accurate do you believe the information disseminated by the mass media regarding HIV/AIDS to be?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Absolutely not accurate	12	11%
2	Not very accurate	71	64%
3	Fairly accurate	27	24%
4	Absolutely accurate	1	1%
	Total	111	100%

Which media channels in St. Petersburg do you believe to be most reliable?

Text Response
Телевидение, газеты – TV, newspapers
Телевидение, некоторые печатные издания – TV, some print publications
Газеты – newspapers
Интернет – Internet
Коммерсант, Большой город, Тайм Аут – Kommersant, Bolshoy Gorod, Time Out
Интернет – Internet
Фонтанка.ру – Fontanka.ru
фонтанка.ру – Fontanka.ru
фантанка.ру – Fontanka.ru
реклама на улицах – advertising on the street
Никакие – none
Фонтанка – Fontanka.ru
интернет, про другие не знаю - не пользуюсь – Internet, don't use any other ones
Затрудняюсь ответить. Надежность СМИ в принципе под большим вопросом – I find it difficult to answer. Reliability of media is questionable
новая газета – Novaya Gazeta
Независимые сми вещающие в т.ч. через интернет – independent media, broadcasting via the Internet
Эхо Москвы, Фонтанка.ру – Echo of Moscow, Fontanka.ru
Не уделяю времени на СМИ – I don't devote time to mass media
Независимые – independent
5 канал, газета Метро – Channel 5, newspaper <i>Metro</i>
Социальная реклама в метро – social advertising in the metro
журнал "огонек" – magazine "Ogoniok"
TV
Интернет – Internet
статьи с комментарием врачей, документальные фильмы – articles with commentary from doctors, documentaries
затрудняюсь ответить – difficult to say
Санкт-Петербург – Saint-Peterburg
Фонтанка, блоги (если их можно считать СМИ) – Fontanka.ru, blogs
Фонтанка.ру – Fontanka.ru
газета Деловой Петербург, fontanka.ru, karpovka.net – newspaper <i>Delovoy Peterburg</i> , fontanka.ru, karpovka.net
честно, никаких – honestly, none
Не доверяют ни одному СМИ в полной мере – I don't trust any media channel fully
Интернет – Internet
Газеты, тв канал – newspapers, TV
интернет-порталы федерального значения лента.ру, газета.ру, Балтийская

медиа Группа – federal Internet portals, lenta.ru, gazeta.ru, Baltic Media Group
специализированные издания – specialized publications
Затрудняюсь – difficult to say
РБК – RBC
fontanka.ru – Fontanka.ru
документальных и художественных фильмы – documentaries and feature films
Деловой Петербург – Delovoy Peterburg
Никакие – none
Независимый онлайн СМИ – independent online media
Никакие – none
ОРТ – ORT
fontanka.ru, ria.ru
Радио – radio
Телевидение – TV
АиФ – Argumenty I Fakty
Независимые интернет-издания – independent online publications
Интернет ресурсы – Internet resources
bfm.ru
любые статьи и передачи, в которых указано авторство и соответствующая сфера деятельности и опыт человека, их написавшего – any articles and programs that indicate the author, his field of work and personal experience
пятый канал, фонтанкаРу, деловой Петербург, в принципе любую периодическую печать не считая желтой прессы – Channel 5, fontanka.ru, Delovoy Peterburg, any periodicals except yellow press
Телевидение – TV
интернет издания, радио "эхо"москвы – Internet publications, radio "Echo of Moscow"
5ый канал, канал СТО, ИА Интерфакс, РБК, ДП – Channel 5, 100TV, Interfax, RBC, DP
Интернет – Internet
Фонтанка – fontanke.ru
официальные источники – official sources

How much does the information you receive about HIV/AIDS from the mass media influence:

#	Question	Absolutely does not influence	Not much influence	Somewhat influences	Strongly influences	Total Responses
1	Your behavior	24	30	53	3	110
2	Your attitudes toward the situation in the city?	22	39	41	8	110

Do you consider this issue to be relevant in St. Petersburg?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	99	90%
2	No	11	10%
	Total	110	100%

Do you agree with the following statement? – HIV/AIDS is a threat and a serious problem to the society.

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Strongly disagree	2	2%
2	Disagree	10	9%
3	Neutral	11	10%
4	Agree	34	31%
5	Strongly agree	54	49%
	Total	111	100%

Do you agree with the following statement? – This problem is a priority to the people in St. Petersburg.

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Strongly disagree	5	5%
2	Disagree	27	24%
3	Neutral	15	14%
4	Agree	39	35%
5	Strongly agree	25	23%
	Total	111	100%

How important do you consider information about HIV/AIDS to be?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Absolutely unimportant	2	2%
2	Not very important	40	36%
3	Important	57	52%
4	Extremely important	11	10%
	Total	110	100%

How informed do you consider yourself to be regarding HIV/AIDS?

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	Total Responses	Mean
1	Absolutely uninformed: Fully informed	3	20	43	35	10	111	3.26

How informed do you consider your parents to be regarding HIV/AIDS?

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	Total Responses	Mean
1	Absolutely uninformed: Fully informed	4	44	32	23	7	110	2.86

How informed do you consider your friends and peers to be regarding HIV/AIDS?

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	Total Responses	Mean
1	Absolutely uninformed: Fully informed	1	30	51	25	4	111	3.01

How is HIV transmitted? (more than one answer possible)

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Through a handshake	0	0%
2	By air	1	1%
3	Transfusion of contaminated blood	102	93%
4	From mother to child	86	78%
5	With repeated use of contaminated needles, syringes, and other medical instruments	102	93%
6	Sexual transmission	108	98%
7	When kissing	6	5%
8	When sharing a bath	0	0%
9	I don't know	1	1%
10	Other (please specify):	1	1%

Other (please specify):

Через кровь и прочие внутренние жидкости, для этого есть куча способов –
Through blood and other internal fluids, there many ways

Can HIV infection be cured?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	11	10%
2	No	87	79%
3	I don't know	12	11%
	Total	110	100%

Do you accept the possibility of getting infected yourself?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	25	23%
2	No	45	41%
3	Never thought about it	40	36%
	Total	110	100%

Can a visibly healthy person be HIV-positive?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	99	90%
2	No	3	3%
3	I don't know	8	7%
	Total	110	100%

Do you know where to get tested for HIV in St. Petersburg?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	52	47%
2	No	22	20%
3	I think so, but not sure	36	33%
	Total	110	100%

Where can you get tested for HIV? (multiple answers possible)

#	Answer	Response	%
1	In any clinic	72	65%
2	In the infirmary of the school	7	6%
3	In the city AIDS center	87	79%
4	There are no such places in St. Petersburg	0	0%
5	I don't know	11	10%
6	Other: (please specify):	10	9%

Other (please specify):
В платных лабораториях и специальных анонимных пунктах – at private laboratories and specialized anonymous stations
Квд – dermatovenerologic dispensary
видела рекламу: проверь.. - не запомнила где – saw an ad: “get checked...” - do not remember where
В КВД – in the dermatovenerologic dispensary
Боткина – St. Petersburg Botkin Clinical Infectious Diseases Hospital
частные лаборатории – private laboratory
там, где способны сделать соответствующий анализ крови – a facility that does appropriate blood tests
районные гинекологические и андрологические центры – district gynecology and andrology centers
районный КВД – local dermatovenerologic dispensary
женская консультация – OB/GYN

Do you agree with the following statement? – HIV-positive woman can give birth to a healthy child.

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Agree	86	79%
2	Disagree	10	9%
3	I don't know	13	12%
	Total	109	100%

What is your attitude towards HIV-positive people?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Sympathetic	89	81%
2	Negative	3	3%
3	I don't know	18	16%
	Total	110	100%

Are AIDS and HIV two different things?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	70	64%
2	No	30	27%
3	I don't know	10	9%
	Total	110	100%

Do you believe that AIDS dissidents represent a threat to the society?

#	Answer	Response	%
1	Yes	40	37%
2	No	30	28%
3	I don't know who they are	39	36%
	Total	109	100%

Appendix C: Translated Transcriptions of the In-Depth Interviews

INTERVIEW 1

Maria Rassokhina: Do you have any experience working with the subject of HIV/AIDS?

Interviewee 1: Yes. First time I heard about this problem when I was about 17 years old (in the 90s). It was related to the drug problem. There wasn't a division between AIDS and HIV then. I heard it via the mass media; also in my university.

Maria Rassokhina: As a professional, how do you talk about it?

Interviewee 1: I will make a distinction. 1. Our channel. We work with a grant and create programs about HIV prevention and help raise awareness. It comes out regularly, systematically. Sometimes it repeats the topic. We want to get the info to people. It does not have a scandalous note, so there is no resonance. It is simply to raise awareness. People who are involved in this problem are the people to who watch and listen to the program about it. The other question is to involve the people who think this problem will not touch them. 2. There are scandalous programs about AIDS/HIV. They grab the views attention, but it is arguable that they educate people. Here, I think, in the 90s, when this was new and scandalous, having to do with drug addicts and prostitutes and marginal, anti social groups in our society – then it grabbed attention. It seems so distant from the people that it would never affect them. “Like I am so pure and white and fluffy.” Now it's different. Maybe it's a characteristic of the society: We turn away from the dirt and filth in the society and close our eye. Now that the numbers are scary and disease HIV/AIDS lost a social and age characteristics. They are blurred and we cannot say that only... 20 year olds have it or people leading marginal life style have it. No, it's not like that, it can affect anyone. Now, as paradoxical as it seems, people are talking less and less about this issue, then when it just appeared in the 90s. But that is my subjective opinion. Those are the two aspects of the information process. 1. In the frame of being obligatory in the program that local city government is doing – mandatory programs. The Health Committee decides what is going to be told/broadcasted – “We have fulfilled our duty.” And the other aspect of it being a completely voluntary subject. However, I have a colleague that regularly discusses this subject matter. He believes it to be eternally relevant.

Maria Rassokhina: Do you think that the media ignores the subject matter?

Interviewee 1: I will repeat. This is a characteristic of the mass media. Hadn't the little 1 year old baby did not get infected with HIV contaminated blood (as it recently happened in St. Petersburg), we would not have remembered about this issue. As I was preparing for the most recent program, I went on a St. Petersburg TV station website and looked

when was the last time the subject (HIV/AIDS) was mentioned. December 1st – the traditional date. And the last time before that the topic was mentioned was in 2009 or 2010, I don't want to mistaken, I searched specifically by date, not by relevance. It was the time that St. Petersburg scientists announced that they will we working on/creating a vaccine against HIV and are looking for volunteers for testing for this experiment. That's it: four topics on the entire page.

Maria Rassokhina: How is HIV/AIDS portrayed in the mass media: newspapers, magazines, radio?

Interviewee 1: You know, I may be reading wrong publications, but even in the quite competent sources, such as “Russian Reporter,” I now mostly read Internet sources such as Live Journal. Right, I don't see any information on that topic. There are plenty of exaggerations and scandals and that is it and it limited by that. I have read about drug addiction, but it is cause by sensational news/related to some current event. Once again, if it not newsworthy, than the mass media will prefer not to bring it up. In best-case scenario, if there is a grand opening of a new center. If there is an expansion of new facilities here in St. Petersburg, then there is a reason to remind people. That is a positive occasion. But here is no occasion, better yet, no negative occasion, then no one will remember it.

Maria Rassokhina: In your opinion, do the city residents perceive HIV/AIDS as a threat and a serious problem to the society?

Interviewee 1: No. Paradox: every two years we do a standard poll on the topic of, it's hard to come up with something original... For example: Do you the difference between AIDS and HIV? Do you know how HIV is transmitted? It seems like the level of awareness and knowledge about HIV/AIDS is dropping. Even worse, sometimes I think that they are some kind of bogus calls. People call in and ask: “What if a mosquito bit me...?” “What if ...I don't know, I cut myself? Or God forbid, kissed someone...” No, these are not bogus calls. They are real. And to be honest, they scare me. I will repeat myself. The current sample here is not competent, but I do think that peoples' knowledge level is dropping. Right now, we are more concerned about issues with migrant workers than our own health.

Maria Rassokhina: Do you think mass media play a role in the formation of tolerant attitudes towards HIV-positive people?

Interviewee 1: Yes, I think so. The people who ended up in this situation themselves play a big role. The more open they are about the issue, the more they demonstrate that they are normal people, like everyone else and live a normal life, the more tolerant the society will be toward them. It is important to remember that such problem exists. And second point is the important role of us, journalists, various mass media channels, if we

are going to show/report such stories and make them informative and not scandalous, then the results will be seen.

Maria Rassokhina: Do you know about the AIDS dissidents?

Interviewee 1: I have heard of people that deny the connection between HIV and AIDS, but I was not aware that they were called this way. What possibly exacerbated this problem is the television show on the central channel “Gordon Quixote” (“Гордон Кихот”), when a group of non-professional, non-professors, non-specialists stated that all of this (AIDS) does not exist, that is it simply a problem with the immune system or a conspiracy of the pharmaceutical companies and that HIV has always existed was found out just now. This all has seriously undermined the whole story and, even worse, reflected on the behavior of the HIV infected people, who started to refuse/reject treatment.

Maria Rassokhina: What other areas of information, specific topics related to HIV/AIDS have you noticed in the media? I know you have already mentioned tolerance towards PLWH and personal stories.

Interviewee 1: I find it difficult to answer this question. I will repeat myself once again, I have seen very few publications altogether. Maybe it is because currently I don't read much newspapers or watch television. Another aspect that is still inextricably tied/linked to the 90s... I am thinking about a program by my colleague on HIV and drugs. Also this topic. Another topic is HIV therapy, the invention of a vaccine against AIDS. Unfortunately, this story is, outdated.

Maria Rassokhina: Have you ever had experience working with someone who is HIV-positive?

Interviewee 1: I have not. I sat in on a program, but was not the host of it. So I cannot say that we interacted.

Maria Rassokhina: How would you improve or change the transmission of information about HIV/AIDS through mass media in St. Petersburg? Any suggestions on making the information flow better?

Interviewee 1: Well, first, and I already emphasized this, is through personal, individual stories. Personal stories always better influence a person, especially if he can himself or herself or a neighbor or friend in the given scenario/situation. Secondly, there is a wonderful campaign (it is not directly related to the mass media, but is relevant for the overall subject) called the “White Tent”. This campaign encourages young people to get tested. Some would probably not go to an AIDS center without a reason to get tested, but in this case you go with your friends; stop by and get tested, on some level even as a joke.

But this will also increase awareness, that such thing is available and it is safe, and it is anonymous. But how to publicize this?... I question the effectiveness of various commercials and advertising campaigns. There was a very effective, in my opinion, advertising campaign, featuring well-known media personalities such as Anton Kamolov, who addressed to each and everyone that this problem affects everyone. This happened about two years ago. There were posters around the city and around the country. There were also attempts of sex education in schools; but unfortunately, our “wonderful” government strongly rejected that idea. Nevertheless, this is also one of the methods, maybe not through the mass media, but through adolescent programs, that, unfortunately, we don’t currently have or lack, to talk to your peers, not to turn away from this problem. If we were responsible and knowledgeable in the sexual matters, than all the resulting problems would be minimal. Respectively, to sum it up, it is stories, programs through specific characters, absence of scandals, dirty stories, or at least their minimization. I am repeating myself, that with such stories, we want to distance ourselves by saying this dirt is not mine to deal with. And third is some sort of programs for teenagers. Fourth is the use of famous media personas in quality, interesting campaign ads that would impact/influence and that would not be solely a formality and would not cause ridicule. I know this is all very difficult to realize... but it is doable.

Maria Rassokhina: Thank you for your time.

INTERVIEW 2

Maria Rassokhina: Could you please share your experiences with and observations of the topic of HIV/AIDS and the media?

Interviewee 2: The AIDS problem is not of great interest to the journalists with the exceptions of two days of the year: World AIDS Day and World Remembrance Day of AIDS Victims. Two days, when journalists need information on HIV and they go running around the AIDS centers, shooting their videos, asking about the struggles of HIV-positive people... and that's only twice a year. That's it. The rest of the time they are more interested in politics, money matters, clubs, and hangouts.

Maria Rassokhina: I know you have recently become a journalist? Is that correct?

Interviewee 2: Yes, in the beginning of June, we registered our website as an online informational publication. And now we all are considered freelance, independent journalists, covering the subject of HIV/AIDS and the access to treatment, as well as hepatitis, malaria, and tuberculosis in Eastern Europe and Central Asia – the Russian-speaking countries of the former Soviet Union.

This site has previously existed, but as a part of our organization site. We are considered as a part of the International Treatment Preparedness Coalition (ITPC). We have now registered the site as a mass media channel, which gave up the opportunity to quicker receive responses to our inquiries. This also allows us to attend different conferences, as journalists, and write about it more professionally in a more professional circle.

Maria Rassokhina: What role do you think the media has in prevention of HIV infection in St. Petersburg?

Interviewee 2: At this time, I believe that the mass media play no role in the prevention at all. Most of what is written about the subject is written incorrectly. There are just a few journalists that have been working with the subject for a while. They have been reading, studying, and educating themselves about the treatment and access to it. But there are, maybe, 2 or 3 newspapers that write accurately on this topic. Anna Kuzina from *Moskovskij Komsomolets* (Московский комсомолец) and the publication called *Bolshoy Gorod* (Большой город) also write about HIV; they've published several stories about PLWH and about activists. The rest are mostly horror stories, for example about how the epidemic effects the people, about how much money is required on the treatment of AIDS, and so on.

Maria Rassokhina: How can you explain the low level of attention devoted to this issue over the last ten years?

Interviewee 2: In the beginning, when it all started, there was a lot was written about the subject. It was new, it was scary, and it needed attention. The way the issue was depicted 10 years ago, is the same way it is depicted today – it is scary, that it is the disease of the drug users and prostitutes, and that it does not affect us, but look where we are headed; gays and AIDS. They use fear and frightening titles to attract attention to the articles. The article has a flashy title, but the content does not make any sense; simply because they need to spend certain amount of money on a certain amount of articles. A media person who comes to conduct interviews and tries to write publish information about HIV/AIDS is not prepared, does not have proper knowledge, and simply does not care. All they care about is to present the material in a beautiful way, using beautiful phrases and quotations of well-know medical specialists that sound good. Sometimes their publications are terrible; that is how they scare the public.

Maria Rassokhina: Could you please share some more of your experiences working with journalists and professionals from popular mass media channels?

Interviewee 2: If we are talking about television, then it is worth mentioning “NTV” (“НТВ”). They show horror stories. “TV100” (“ТВ100”) channel also tries to show how terrible our medical services are; that patients are not treated well and everyone dies. Also, the “Kultura” (“Культура”) channel recently showed very dissident materials. Talking about print media... We work with the following portals: “Mednovosti,” (“Медновости”), “МК,” “Kommersant” (“Коммерсант”). There is a new journalist there who writes very competently on the subject. I have recently met a girl, who is still a student, studying journalism in Karelia. Vera Razborova from the “Vademekum” magazine publishes many things about HIV: treatment, pharma news, new laws... It's a great pleasure to work with them. Kuzina from *MK* is simply our savior. Medportal - medical news, publishes our articles throughout the year, not just on the special dates. As for television... Channel 1 once covered a story about people living with HIV, to show that they exist. Mostly TV stories are horror stories about the epidemic of the drug users, prostitutes, and gays. The problem has spilled out into the general public a long time ago. Although many people are socially adapt, they still cannot figure out where the infection came from, how it appeared. On World Remembrance Day of AIDS Victims they show famous personalities who died from AIDS; on World AIDS Day they talk about big scientific conferences that were held in Russia.

Maria Rassokhina: In your opinion, do the city residents perceive HIV/AIDS as a threat and a serious problem to the society?

Interviewee 2: More no, than yes. Based on my own experience, people think that it will never affect them, since they are not a prostitute or gay, and their relatives don't have

AIDS. You will not find out until you get tested and diagnosed, and in order to get tested you have to know that there are tests available. Some know about the tests, but do not find it necessary to do it. Many find out about their diagnosis when they are hospitalized and tested.

Maria Rassokhina: Do you think this problem is a priority to the people in our city?

Interviewee 2: I have been in this sphere for a very long time. For me, the subject of HIV/AIDS is always relevant and always a priority. I am sure there are also other important diseases and social problems. There are currently two epidemics in Russia - HIV and Hepatitis. They are progressing and cannot be stopped today. The epidemic of HIV is growing, unlike in the rest of the world. You can work with social adjustment of prisoners; you can try to help the homeless, work with the unemployment, but that will not help to stop the HIV epidemics. As long as nothing is done, nothing will change. All that is being done is limited by the budget. If you take oncology, for example, you dig out a lot of problems that are silenced, not talked about; but they show that something is being done.

Maria Rassokhina: Why is so little attention devoted to this issue; why is there so little coverage?

Interviewee 2: We are a totalitarian state. If I publish that there's something wrong in the country, I will never have the opportunity to publish again. There is strict censorship in print publications and on the TV. They give the materials that they have to give, because they are either paid or because it was ordered from above. No local publisher will ever show how bad things are in their region, because it will attract attention and possibly somebody's heads will fly off. So that's why they either barely touch the subject or don't publish anything at all. If they write that the epidemic affects all layers of the society and that everyone needs to get tested, that would mean they acknowledge the epidemic and perceive the actual scale of it. Why do it? They will have to spend more money. Now we have roughly 1 million 250 thousand infected in the country; half of them need treatment. Only about 120 thousand of them are actually getting the treatment, because there is no more money; and 500 thousand dies. But if you start testing the population and find out the real situation in the country, it'll turn out that the epidemic is even greater and there is limited amount of money allocated to it. The state doesn't want to know. That is why they are not registering the Hepatitis cases, because that will mean that more needs to be spent on it. And why spend money, when there are more important things. Hepatitis treatment is very expensive, starting at about 50 thousand rubles, and a common person cannot afford it. There are no real working government programs, except for a few that cover less than 50 percent of the treatment. The situation with HIV is more interesting. HIV treatment is entirely funded by the state. Because of the cost of the medications, it's not realistic to treat a million people. That is why we organize protests against the pricing policies of pharmaceutical companies. We scream and yell and

perform, so they would lower the prices. We could buy more medicine for the same budget.

Maria Rassokhina: How informed do you consider our society to be about HIV/AIDS?

Interviewee 2: On a scale... This year, out of 100 percent about 20-25 percent. The situation has improved this year, the problem got more attention from the NGOs and the government, more testing was available in St. Petersburg and its oblast'; wider circles were informed. For example, out of my family of eight people, I am the only one who knows enough about HIV and testing; the rest of the family knows a little, but they will never go get tested because it's scary. It's the same as it was in the 90s – it is the plague. If you take an average Russian family – they only have heard some horror stories. Many think that it is better if they never get tested. I don't even see the information about where to get tested in our city. I have seen some social ads about drugs, but never about HIV testing.

Maria Rassokhina: Do you think that mass media play a role in the formation of tolerant attitudes towards HIV-positive people?

Interviewee 2: If we put all the filth and horror stories about AIDS aside, there are communities of journalists that cover the topic professionally. Radio Zenit is one of them. Some young specialists write about it as about disease that can be treated, that is not necessarily fatal, people can create healthy families... those journalists make a big difference. They make a substantial contribution. Who else will do it? Not the specialists, not the doctors in the polyclinics, not the Channel 1... Most young people now are online. If we can involve the social networks to start doing social advertising, using some concise professional description of the virus and its treatment... That is what we are currently doing. For example, I live with this, I work, I have a family, I live a normal life; those who react to it as to some sort of plague, have dropped out of my life; those who are open to learning about or who already what about it stay. There's an organization that deals with harm reduction. We have a department that works with prophylactics, harm reduction, spread of awareness. There are some NGOs that give away sets with clean spoons, syringes, and water bottles to drug addicts. They also provide information that there are other diseases out there, not just HIV. They caution people not to abuse drugs and have safe sex, use condoms, etc. I was always surprised that they are never government organizations. You'd think that in such a country, you could do certain things with the government support. Now that many NGOs are prohibited, there are less of these programs – about testing, distribution of information...

Maria Rassokhina: Do you believe that AIDS dissidents present a threat to our society? How should we fight them?

Interviewee 2: We should not fight them. We should just forget about them: don't touch

them; don't attract any attention to them... Though, they have managed to put their people into the All-Russian Network of PLWH to corrupt them from the inside. I had an idea to find legal support and try to take them down legally for spreading false information, causing harm to health, and forwarding the progression of epidemics in Russia. Try to sue them and close their websites. They have video material, lectures. If we take them to court a couple of times, they will fall apart. Nothing else works. When we write about them, we let people know that they exist. On the other hand, it is possible that the government initiates all these groups to cut down the expenses on the treatment; save money. There is better medicine available now; you can take just one pill a day, but it does not exist in Russia yet. The city started to purchase some of it, but it was not initiated from Moscow. Big cities such as St. Petersburg, Kaliningrad, and Yekaterinburg have better medical services, specialists, testing, treatment, and information. Take Samara or Altai Krai, there's nothing there. In Novosibirsk there is a service, where you pay 300,000 rubles and the help you "get rid" of the virus through steam.

Maria Rassokhina: How would you improve or change the transmission of information about HIV/AIDS through mass media in St. Petersburg? Would you have any recommendations?

Interviewee 2: There are many NGOs that have been working with this problem professionally for many years and they have the ability to help. If you involve these people to provide information, they will create many programs, will educate the journalists on how to write, what to write, how to present this information properly, where to present it. I also think that these problems should be dealt with on the government level, not just among the journalists. We have training for journalists, but even after training, some continued to write the strangest things. Not all of them. We need to work with the Department of Journalism at the St. Petersburg State University; teach them early on, so there will be specialists who will write about it.

Maria Rassokhina: Can we expect positive changes in the near future?

Interviewee 2: Something must happen. Or the epidemic will engulf us completely... and then something will start being done. I can't really take St. Petersburg into account. We are so happy to be living in St. Petersburg, because many things are being done here on a good level. But if you look at the distant regions, you'll see a much worse picture. And if we don't do anything: involve young professional, train them – nothing will change.

Maria Rassokhina: What areas of information, specific topics related to HIV/AIDS should be talked about in the media to raise awareness of the population?

Interviewee 2: Modes of transmission, a bit about the virus, and about the treatment. Specifically, that if you are undergoing treatment, the possibility of passing the

virus is close to none; maybe like 0,2 percent even through direct blood contact. At the moment I am taking medication consistently and it has reduced the viral load in my blood to an undetectable level. I cannot transmit the virus; there is not enough of it. My immune system has recovered. The virus is not affecting it anymore. That is it. There is no problem; you just have to start in time, be consistent, and adhere to certain rules.

Maria Rassokhina: Thank you for your time.

INTERVIEW 3

Maria Rassokhina: Do you have experience working with the subject of HIV/AIDS?

Interviewee 3: My experience is the 3-year-old program – “Recipe of Life” (“Рецепт Жизни”) that comes out on Radio Zenit (радио Зенит). It is based on a grant. We gladly accepted the grant and this is the third year we are working with it. The duration of the show is 20 minutes; it comes out every week on Fridays at prime time around 7-8 in the evening. The purpose of it is that we invite a new expert to every week. It can be an individual from the community of people living HIV, representatives of various NGOs, doctors, medical physiologists, simply well-known people, who have a firm opinion on the topic. And respectively, they share their knowledge and opinions; we discuss relevant questions such as testing, public attitudes towards this issue, awareness, motivation to think about your health and safety, and so on. What else can I add? Since the topic is the same every week, we try to be creative and find new ways to talk about it. If the guest speaker is a psychologist from the anonymous testing facility, then we try to dedicate the program to the different aspects of HIV testing. We try to tell a person who is planning to get tested for HIV everything about the process in the most accessible way: what fears exist, what is going to happen, something about the personnel and facility. Also, in every program, we include personal stories, maybe something taken from the Internet, discuss the topic of stereotypes, myths about HIV. Additionally, we have thematic programs – we take an individual story and tell about HIV/AIDS from that perspective. For example, we recently had a show about Magic Johnson, a famous basketball player living with HIV. We took some of his quotes and intertwined them with important information about HIV/AIDS. On the whole, the structure of the program looks something like that.

Maria Rassokhina: Have you ever had experience of personal communication with someone who is HIV-positive?

Interviewee 3: Yes. Furthermore, in the process of interviewing people for our program, I acquired about 7-8 acquaintances, who are currently living with HIV. Those were the first people I encountered who had an open status. This radically changed my view on this problem. I still keep in touch with some of them through social networks and enjoy our interactions.

Maria Rassokhina: What role do you think the media has in prevention of HIV infection in St. Petersburg?

Interviewee 3: They have an enormous potential, but unfortunately, they absolutely do not fulfill this function. There are very few publications available. Some materials appear on memorial dates such as World AIDS Day AIDS and World Remembrance Day of AIDS Victims. Also, in my opinion, as a person who has experience interacting with

many specialists and professionals every week, I notice what journalists focus their attention on. They focus on anti-scientific programs, perhaps trying to show an alternative point of view, which is valuable in any other area, but not in this one. When people like Gordon say that AIDS not exist, I want to shut him up. Moreover, even the shows and movies that don't denounce the existence of AIDS and talk about people living with HIV and the problem it presents to the society, so not stress the important facts that need to be stressed. They highlight fear, suffering, the lack of cure, things such as neighbors nailing shut the apartment door of an HIV-positive woman... everything, but no the adequate information, not the fact that it can affect anyone, that if you have unprotected sex, you need to go and get tested; and simply give raw data/statistics on the rates of the infection.

Maria Rassokhina: How can you explain the low level of attention devoted to this issue?

Interviewee 3: I think the reason for this is the reaction from the audience. The mass media researches the interests of its audience and they clearly know what people are and what they are not interested in. Unfortunately, the TV channels and newspapers both rely on sales of their publications. I participated in the outdoor HIV testing campaign once. It was my duty to catch people on the street and persuade them to get tested. I can see peoples' reaction. They get this squeamish grimace on their face... Like, "Please go away. Anything but this." People close themselves off from the problem and don't want to know about it. As a result, the mass media do not aim to play a role of the educators on the subject. They only give what is interesting to the audience, and the audience is interested either in the "black news" – stories about suffering and crime, or catchy scientific sensations – if the drug that completely cures the virus was discovered, that would have been a good subject. But boring messages, such as "get tested" or "think about this problem," are not popular among the mass media.

Maria Rassokhina: How did you start reporting on this topic?

Interviewee 3: I was offered to be the host of this show. Initially, the program was supposed to have a general focus on health; the main theme was supposed to be not only HIV/AIDS, but alcoholism and drug addiction. Eventually, I got involved in and fascinated by the subject. We host a large number of experts, who talk about the problem in a language that is easy to understand. So on the second and third year, I started voluntarily doing the show. I am personally interested in this subject.

Maria Rassokhina: What, in your opinion, is the most effective branch of mass media in St. Petersburg?

Interviewee 3: It is always the television, because television is, most importantly, an image. Radio has a big potential because of the audience with cars. People listen to the

radio while driving and they tend to remember the information they hear. I think the electronic resources have more potential to deliver the information to the audience. There are also the online resources, but that depends on... However, radio and television possess more manipulative characteristics. They have a great potential in this respect.

Maria Rassokhina: In our city, does the television perform the task of preventing the spread of HIV infection?

Interviewee 3: No, I do not think so. Last year I analyzed programs that came out on the television about HIV/AIDS. I discovered that not many programs addressed this topic on various television channels. This allows to conclude that no, our television does not offer enough information on the subject.

Maria Rassokhina: In your opinion, do the city residents perceive HIV/AIDS as a threat and a serious problem to the society? And is this problem a priority to the people in our city?

Interviewee 3: As a threat – yes; but not for themselves. You would think that since there is plenty of buzz about HIV, people have some basic knowledge about it. But when you actually talk to people, you discover that they know very little about it. They may remember about one method of transmission, but not the other. My experience shows that the majority of the people I know can be divided into two camps (with exception of those, who adequately perceive this problem – they are the minority): those who say that HIV could be contracted anywhere – in the bathroom, shower, etc., even though it's a common knowledge that none of the listed is an actual mode of transmission. They also know this, but are scared anyways. The others are not afraid of anything. They believe that HIV will never touch them, because HIV exists only among drug users or in a brothel or in Sub-Saharan Africa. They think that they lead a healthy lifestyle, do not sleep around, and can determine by the appearance that their sex partner is healthy. They know that this danger exists, but believe that it will never affect them or their loved ones. This has been my experience. Maybe something is changing, but I do not feel that.

Maria Rassokhina: Do you believe that AIDS dissidents present a threat to our society?

Interviewee 3: They present a serious threat. First of all, they encourage people to stop their treatment, which leads to death. It is one thing that they doom themselves - it is their choice; but if a pregnant woman stops her HIV therapy and gives birth to an HIV-positive baby just because she encountered a fancy book with their mad ideas. I think that this is a very active threat and, unfortunately, as one of my colleagues noted, on the Internet doctors lost to AIDS dissidents. If you search “AIDS” in Yandex.ru, one of the first links will be “There is no AIDS.” If you ever visit a group on a social network dedicated to HIV/AIDS, there will surely be comments written by them. There will also be comments by them under a legitimate publication that features concrete facts and depicts stories

from real victims – saying that AIDS does not exist. I don't know who benefits from this, but I believe they present a huge threat and need to be stopped. Not sure how though. I often talk about them on my show, saying that this point of view exists and beware of it. Yet there are still people out there who believe AIDS dissidents more than they believe doctors.

Maria Rassokhina: Do you think that mass media play a role in the formation of tolerant attitudes towards HIV-positive people?

Interviewee 3: I think so. Especially when they publish specific stories about PLWH, showing that they live normal lives. Additionally, if there is also factual information about how harmless they are, that is they are taking medication that they cannot transmit the virus, they can have healthy children... These encouraging facts together with positive representations help form a better attitude towards this problem.

Maria Rassokhina: What areas of information, specific topics related to HIV/AIDS, do you consider the most important in the media? What should the mass media talk about?

Interviewee 3: The mass media should discredit stereotypes about HIV, all of them. The most dangerous stereotype is that “it will not touch me.” We need to explain why and how it may affect them. The mass media should mention the modes of transmission of the virus. People should know how it is transmitted and how it is not. It should touch upon the subject of life expectancy of the PLWH. There is a stereotype that if a person has HIV he will soon die. Yes, everyone will eventually die, but that person may outlive everyone by 20 years. It should point out that there is an encouraging prospective for a long and happy life, if proper treatment is observed. So, number one is fighting stereotypes. Next is the topic of HIV-testing. I think this subject needs to be covered in more detail. The topic of living with HIV; that PLWH can live a normal life also needs to be discussed. Also talk about the tendencies of the epidemic: its composition, how it is changing, the modes of transmission, that more women are getting infected, the age is increasing, that more people are getting infected through sexual intercourse rather than injection drugs, etc. The general message should be that the problem is not somewhere out there, but it is close and can affect this particular reader. These specific points should be further developed. I would also advise, even though it is a taboo subject, to talk more about contraception and safe sex. Oh, and another topic that can be addressed to the older audience is the communication between them and kids or teenagers on this topic. Parents and teachers are the great authoritative sources that can give a child valuable information. So it is important to ring up the topic of conversation with children on the subject of HIV/AIDS in the mass media.

Maria Rassokhina: Does the information actually get to the people through the mass media?

Interviewee 3: I think so. People are posting comments to the SMS portal. We don't offer an option to comment on the radio website, so they send messages to the SMS portal and based on the content I can say that the information does reach them. Basically, there is almost always some sort of feedback. In the case of Internet publications, there is feedback from the audience; however, it is not always adequate. People either say that PLWH should be burned or they should be dumped on a deserted island; or they write something based on the beliefs of AIDS dissidents. But this a peculiarity of the Internet audience that writes reviews. I think people who write comments to every publication belong to a small specific group of people who has issues. I think that if a publication does reach a person, he will not necessarily respond to it or provide feedback; rather, he will process the information and come to make some conclusions. I have friends who, after listening to me talk about the subject of HIV/AIDS, come to me with questions about where to get tested. So I have hope that if someone hears at least a fragment of my program, he will also start thinking about this. I encourage people to get tested, especially couples, by saying that if they really care about their partner, they will get tested together. The subject of our program is heavy and it is pretty long – 20 minutes – and I doubt that people weekly listen to my program from start to finish. But since it consists of blocks and I gradually move from one question to another based on the interviews, so I am hopeful that, maybe not this week, but the next, someone will tune in on a discussion of an important problem, such as the address of the city AIDS center. And hopefully, after listening will consider going and getting tested.

Maria Rassokhina: Do you think proper information and people's awareness will be able to slow down the growth of the epidemic?

Interviewee 3: Yes. I am confident about that.

Maria Rassokhina: Is the situation in the city getting better?

Interviewee 3: I think the situation is getting better. At least because there is more information available. But this change is happening very slowly. At least now there is no panic and horror associated with the problem. Many know that HIV is scary, but it is not a death sentence. And I think the levels of public awareness are changing for the better. I am persuaded that out of 3-4 thousand young people that become HIV-positive every year, most of them could have avoided the virus if they knew a bit more about it, if they thought about it. Or maybe some of them know, but do not want to reflect it on their own life. I am not taking drug users into account when talking about awareness, because they are a much different, difficult case. But those who got infected through sexual intercourse by ignorance... yes. It is sad and unclear how to deal with such category as family women, who were cheated on by their husbands, not thinking about health safety, and brought the virus into the family. And the women, who were always loyal to their husbands, who are proper housewives – it is unclear how they can protect themselves. A condom in a matrimonial bed is not a popular measure. Maybe it is important to educate

more men... Overall, I do believe that the percentage of the infection would have dropped if everyone knew and talked about it.

Maria Rassokhina: How can we improve the transmission of information about HIV/AIDS through mass media in St. Petersburg?

Interviewee 3: I think... First of all, the grant system is a pretty good thing.

Maria Rassokhina: Could you please tell me more about these grants?

Interviewee 3: This means that the Press Committee receives certain funds that it uses to purchase a segment of airtime on the radio or television. In this case it happens through the sales and marketing department. And in exchange for this, the radio stations, TV channels, or newspapers have to dedicate a certain amount of their informational space to the coverage of a certain social problem. And I think that this would be a good initial stimulus. Abroad, it is common to have a training system for the journalists, who cover the topic of HIV. In particular, I got a hold of an almanac for Belorussian journalists and it was great. Each question is presented with a clear answer: what is antiretroviral therapy; how HIV is transmitted... The answers are given in a concise, understandable, not a super scientific form. I think that if, lets say the NGOs, organized more interesting workshops for the mass media, in which they discussed interesting ways of covering the topic of HIV/AIDS and portraying its importance, then the various mass media channels would start covering the topic voluntarily and more often. So, it is important to stimulate the mass media and stimulate the audience. I do not have the answer to the question about how to stimulate the audience. There are some difficulties with the audience. They are still afraid of the abbreviation “AIDS” and they prefer to read about the intimate lives of celebrities and violent crimes around the city. Heavy topics such as HIV and related topic such as tuberculosis, viral hepatitis, etc., are too hard one the people, especially those who labor all day on their jobs and come home to fall on their bed with a can of beer... HIV I the last topic they want to hear about. That is why, if we can jointly find a way to cover this topic in an interesting and fascinating manner, for example by using celebrities. By the way, famous people – is an excellent resource. A few years ago, there was a rock concert “Starts Against AIDS” on December 1st, dedicated to HIV/AIDS awareness. Great newsworthy occasion – interviewing rock stars about HIV/AIDS and at the same time having a great show that attracts many people to the cause. It is a great occasion for any publication. It’s important to present the subject in the most interesting and informative way, so that the listener’s ears would not curl up into a tube from boredom. Unfortunately, it is significantly harder to work with the older audience, but they do trust the mass media more.

Maria Rassokhina: Thank you for your time.

INTERVIEW 4

Maria Rassokhina: Do you have any experience working with the subject of HIV/AIDS? If so, could you please share your experience working with this topic.

Interviewee 4: As it happens, I started writing on this topic this year. There was no one to work on this issue. We decided that it was a very relevant topic, especially for St. Petersburg. Although, it is a positive trend now, as far as I delved into this topic. There have been harder times in St. Petersburg, when there were so many HIV infected people. Now, thank goodness, it has started to decline. It is pretty common that before starting to write on a new topic, before going to interview people on something, you have to some research yourself to understand the topic. What is HIV? What is AIDS? To be honest, last year, I considered the two to be the same thing. Now, I understand. I have done my research on the topic. I don't need to be explained what is HIV and what is AIDS. When I arrive at the AIDS Center to talk to professors and doctors, I don't have to be explained the basics. I believe it is important for journalists to know their material/facts. There is plenty of information out there: online, in the book, and medical brochures... One need to read, learn, educate themselves and with this knowledge already acquired, then go to speak to the professionals in the field.

Maria Rassokhina: Have you ever had experience of personal communication with someone who is HIV-positive? Please share some details about this communication.

Interviewee 4: Up to this year – no. Maybe they just have never opened up about their status. Recently, I have met up and talked with HIV-positive individuals in the organization named E.V.A. as we prepared another publication. They told me how they live with HIV, how they opened up about the status, how they help other HIV-positive people. I have never had a similar experience until this year.

Maria Rassokhina: Now lets talk about about mass media. What role do you think the media has in prevention of HIV infection in St. Petersburg?

Interviewee 4: I think a large role. I can't say that the public actively reads newspapers. Nevertheless, now there are plenty newspapers and their online counterparts/versions; there are blogs, people see this and are interested. So we need to use every opportunity to tell what is HIV and who is at risk – this is one half of the question. The other is that HIV-positive people are not people with some sort of leprosy. They should not be put away behind bars or be distanced from. They are normal people. You just need to know the rules how to live with/next to them and how to help them. That is, do not make them seem like some kind of zombies. The role of the mass media here plays a very important role. Our newspaper, *Petrovskiy Kuryer*, is free and it has a large circulation. Currently, people try to spend less and less money on newspapers. They are either going to find an

online version, if it exists, or they will take it from a stand in the metro or a store. Or they will not take it, but rather be given a copy. They will read it at home or on a subway and will start thinking/reflecting on the issue. We focus on putting information about HIV/AIDS in the newspaper, because there is so much negativity online. They will look at this and read about this... Newspaper is still seen as a more trustworthy source of information, especially by the older generation. That is, the parents of those for whom we mostly write. The information available on the Internet needs to be carefully filtered. And there will not always be a person around who will tell you what to read and what not to read, what is truth and what is not. The information that is in the newspaper is considered checked and verified. Moreover, in our publications we offer newsmakers, who are very famous individuals – they are scientists, PhDs, individuals who have been working for many years with HIV-positive people (deputy director of the City AIDS Center as an example) – people, whose opinion needs to be listened to.

Maria Rassokhina: Is there enough media attention devoted to this issue?

Interviewee 4: No. Not enough.

Maria Rassokhina: How can you explain the low level of attention devoted to this issue?

Interviewee 4: It's hard to explain. In order to write about this, one needs to be educated on the subject. Young journalists don't always try to understand/become familiar about the topic. They can attend a conference that is traditionally set up on December 1st - World AIDS Day or World Remembrance day of AIDS Victims, miscomprehend something and not publish anything than to sort things out and try to understand. So, first, some journalists are far removed from this subject; and the specialists/masters who know much and are interested about this topic and want people to get tested and go through therapy, so that others will not become infected – there are not many such people among the journalists now. It is necessary to understand and study the topic.

Maria Rassokhina: In your opinion, do the city residents perceive HIV/AIDS as a threat and a serious problem to the society? Is this problem a priority to the people in our city?

Interviewee 4: No. In my opinion, the problem is not perceived as a threat. If in the past, it has been perceived, now it is considered... not that HIV is defeated, but there are more important problems out there.

Maria Rassokhina: How does the media portray HIV/AIDS in St. Petersburg?

Interviewee 4: I mostly encountered it in the forms of scandals. This topic is brought up if something happened. For example, if the head doctor was found to have HIV or contaminated blood was transfused or dirty needles were used... and a person became infected. There will be a scandal. In such scenario it is not the topic of HIV that comes up, but rather how to punish the guilty one or here is what's going on in our Medical Care. They take some notorious/scandalous event and write about it. This is the new norm – to quickly release the information, without going into much detail about it.

Maria Rassokhina: What, in your opinion, is the most effective branch of mass media in St. Petersburg? And does it perform the task of preventing the spread of HIV infection?

Interviewee 4: It should be in combination. Some people listen to the radio, others watch TV, and others read newspapers and magazines. It is not enough to just show a program on TV. Russian families have about 45 free channels. One or two of those channels will be selected to show a program on HIV prevention, but what if people do not watch those channels? Only a small group of people turns on those two channels. We need various media channels – multiple programs on different TV channels, Internet, radio, free newspapers, paid newspapers – it all should be in combination.

Maria Rassokhina: Have you heard of AIDS dissidents?

Interviewee 4: Yes.

Maria Rassokhina: Do you believe that they represent a threat to our society?

Interviewee 4: Yes, I do. This is bad. I don't know how to overcome this notion. Once again, it is important to tell people how everything really is: how HIV is treated, what milestones are being overcome, talking about success stories and lives of people who are undergoing HIV therapy. Provide positive examples. Right now, you can't tell someone not to express his or her opinion or put someone into jail for it. There is plenty of deceiving information on the Internet, such as the AIDS denialism. And because young people spend a large amount of time online, they encounter this information. During the preparation of our latest publication on HIV/AIDS, almost every medical professional told me how difficult it is to persuade some people to start the HIV therapy. Some people say why take medicine, if I am going to die anyways; others don't want to take it, because they have read online that AIDS doesn't exist and treatment is not necessary. Some young people (the youth) buy into this. That is bad.

Maria Rassokhina: Do you think that mass media play a role in the formation of tolerant attitudes towards HIV-positive people?

Interviewee 4: We try. It is hard to tell. I have not seen many other publications. They appear twice a year – in the winter and in the spring (refereeing to World AIDS Day and World Remembrance Day of AIDS Victims). They appear and then it's silence again. Occasional publications do not make any sort of positive impact. We try to make an impact. In the last publication, we published stories about the lives of several women, who are HIV-positive. We published their photos. They are active in the community and do not present any sort of threat to the society. The society needs to know how to act, especially right now. Everyone knows that drugs are bad, but there are other also other things... In any case, people are still going continue to have sex. It's important to know how to protect yourself, especially if you fall in love with an HIV-positive person.

Maria Rassokhina: Why do you think the amount of information about safe sex decline in the last few years? It seems that there is no sex education anymore.

Interviewee 4: It is hard to tell. It was always thought that only the drug addicts and homosexuals get infected, and the rest of us can never get HIV. There has always been an emphasis on the marginal or the risk groups when talking about HIV. Even now, if the journalist does not thoroughly research the topic, he will grasp only the information about these risk groups, which everyone already knows about. The journalist will most likely disregard the fact that the infection is spilling out into the general population. It's not only the AIDS dissidents that do the damage. Also, young people have a tendency not to trust and oppose the positions of officials, along with medical officials: "There is no AIDS and now they tell me that HIV is transmitted through sexual intercourse.." I think the number of informational sources is growing, however they are not persistent enough and the information is not takes in/accepted. People are thinking that this problem will not affect them.

Maria Rassokhina: How would you improve or change the transmission of information about HIV/AIDS through mass media in St. Petersburg?

Interviewee 4: We need more quality information about HIV/AIDS. We need this information to be coming from a real specialist and to be relevant and up-to-date. Not a scenario, where 55 sites republish 10 myths about HIV. It is hard to find useful and up-to-date resources. It is common that the search engine will pull up a handful of legitimate links and rest are created by pseudo professionals. This creates shortage of information. There should be more tangible information with provided by authoritative individuals. It would also be helpful to engage specialists to promote the essential websites, from which people can get fundamental information about HIV/AIDS and move them up in in the search list. In many cases, people will not search for the information without a reason. Those who do, have been in some way or form touched by this problem. Right now, it is still hard to find appropriate information.

Maria Rassokhina: Thank you for your time.

INTERVIEW 5

Maria Rassokhina: What role do you think the media has in prevention of HIV infection in St. Petersburg?

Interviewee 5: Unfortunately now there are only two days in the year when this subject is discussed: traditionally on December 1 - World AIDS Day AIDS and on the World Remembrance Day of AIDS Victims. The latter one is talked about less often. And on the 1st of December, when there is no other hot news around that time. If there's something else interesting going on, it will overweight the HIV/AIDS subject. Plus it is sometimes mentioned in connection with a crime, for example, somebody killed so many people and was infected with AIDS. To be honest, I have rarely heard any positive coverage of the HIV/AIDS problem. Once, there was an "HIV day" on the TV Chanel "Dozhd" ("Дождь"), at least they had an interesting discussion. All in all, mass media gives a lot of worn out clichés, very little information. I know a couple of people who write on this subject, but, unfortunately, they are not in St. Petersburg.

Maria Rassokhina: What do you think the coverage should be like?

Interviewee 5: I believe there must be an open discussion in the mass media, where different points of view are discussed. They should not be afraid to discuss an idea of isolating everyone who is infected, I think. And mass media can be used as a forum, where pluses and minuses of different theories and points of view can be discussed. And also as an alarm, that the virus is still around, it did not go away and the speed of epidemic is growing. People need to be informed.

Maria Rassokhina: Is there enough media attention devoted to this issue?

Interviewee 5: Unfortunately, not enough. Something that needs to get the coverage is the treatment. The possibilities the treatment provides... thanks to the treatment we can slow down HIV. This subject is not discussed in the mass media at all. It's so so sad.

Maria Rassokhina: How can you explain the low levels of attention devoted to this issue over the last ten years?

Interviewee 5: I think, partially because people got tired from hearing about this too much in the 90s. Partially because there are so many other crises; so no one needs another crisis. Also the mass media is moving either towards pleasing the government expectations, that everything is fine and getting better here, or towards open "yellowness." And everything is leaving and going into the Internet.

Maria Rassokhina: Does the existing information actually reach people?

Interviewee 5: Some of it, yes... But it's a vicious circle of a kind. First, the info is presented either incorrectly or in the wrong form, such as “AIDS is the plaque of the 20th century. Oh my god, what are we going to do!?” Then people realize, it is all not true and they don't want to hear about it anymore. And because they don't want to hear about this problem, the mass media is trying to present the subject in even stranger form, which in turn distorts the reality even more. So, to tell you the truth, some things are not getting through to the people, and some things are getting through despite everything. For example, the problem of AIDS denialism. I am observing a discussion under a video about HIV: it used to be that people would comment that there's no such thing as HIV, with many others chiming in in agreement. Now I see more people saying, yes, HIV exists, their brother died from it... It's very cyclical. In the present moment, there's a reaction to the mass media presenting incorrect information. So if the official mass media channels are misrepresenting the information, the unofficial channels - social media channels - are becoming more realistic towards this subject.

Maria Rassokhina: I have a about AIDS dissidents. How should we fight them? Do you think they represent a threat to our society?

Interviewee 5: They are a threat in a sense that they involve/engage those people who need to start the treatment. Dissidents now are not saying there's no AIDS, they are arguing about the benefits of the treatment. The problem is that they call people not to start the treatment. People are not only dying from this themselves, but due to the levels of the viral load, they are also infecting other people. There's nothing we can do about them, but we can try to protect the rest from them. Psychologically, it's hard to take so many pills every day, so when you hear alternative ideas about not having to take the pills, you might stop taking the pills at some point. Over time, many people start taking the pills again, but sometimes it's too late. You can't change/dissuade the dissidents, but you can present them as people from the Middle Ages, not bright. If you want to be like this, be like them...

Maria Rassokhina: In your opinion, do the city residents perceive HIV/AIDS as a threat and a serious problem to the society? And is this problem a priority to the people in our city?

Interviewee 5: It's hard to say... about the people of St. Petersburg. Because the epidemic has reached a new high level, more and more people encountered HIV personally, either in their close and more distant circles. But overall, no, I don't think so. No, people are not using condoms, and no, because we have very limited harm reduction programs. Some inject drugs with whatever they can find.

Maria Rassokhina: Are these simply people who had HIV for a while and are just now finding out their status?

Interviewee 5: No. There's new testing going on now, where you can find how long you have been living with HIV. So if a person knows he or she is HIV-positive, they can get tested to see how long they have been living with it. On the other hand, some people just randomly decide to get tested and will find HIV, but on high CD cells. Which means... no, we cannot say that the epidemic has slowed down or paused. The critical mass of the HIV-positive people are those who were doing drugs and got infected; the pace of growth has slowed down. But now it's mostly through sexual intercourse, it's becoming more prevailing now. And there's still a wave of drug users.

Maria Rassokhina: What, in your opinion, is the most effective branch of mass media in St. Petersburg? Not including Internet.

Interviewee 5: Well... Radio. I don't know. I am afraid that I will talk about the media channels that I use. It's mostly car radio. The traffic jams are getting worse and people spend more and more time listening to the car radio. Older people still trust the television, but the younger generation not so much. There are no dominating fashionable magazines... No, honestly I don't know many people who read newspapers. May be somebody reads them. I think right now it's radio.

Maria Rassokhina: Do you think that mass media play a role in the formation of tolerant attitudes towards HIV-positive people?

Interviewee 5: Yes, naturally. It works both ways. On the one hand, too much tolerance can also be dangerous. People will stop being afraid... On the other hand, people who are undergoing treatment can't transmit the disease to others and live a good life not much different from others – the mass media do not convey these ideas. And I think it is important to know that it is not scary to have HIV, it's scary not to be tested and not to start the treatment on time.

Maria Rassokhina: On a scale from 0 to 10, how informed do you consider our society to be about HIV/AIDS?

Interviewee 5: Closer to 3 or 4. Something like that. There are some echoes of information. People know it exists, know that there is treatment, and that we don't die from it now as quickly as we have in the past. But nobody is interested in the details. I think the younger generation knows more.

Maria Rassokhina: Do you think the situation with the coverage of HIV/AIDS on the media will improve in the future? I hear that there is more coverage now.

Interviewee 5: I wonder what they base it on? What facts do they use? I am simply interested to know.

Maria Rassokhina: More airtime, more grants, more newspaper publications.

Interviewee 5: I think there are people who are truly interested in this subject: they try to learn more every year; and there are more people who get interested in the subject every year. More journalists write about social problems; the quality of their work is getting better. Many now understand the difference between HIV and AIDS. But we cannot say that there is more airtime devoted to this problem... no I would not say so.

Maria Rassokhina: What do you think is more important quality or quantity of the information?

Interviewee 5: Quantity, of course. Black PR is also PR... If you have a super quality coverage that comes out once a year, it will not making any difference. There are subjects that are never touched upon. There's no discussion about, for example, the connection between the gay community and HIV.

Maria Rassokhina: What areas of information, specific topics related to HIV/AIDS, do you consider the most important in the media?

Interviewee 5: Once again, treatment as a way of prophylactics - this subject is never brought up. Nobody knows about it. This is very very sad. And then nobody is talking about various tendencies... that now sexual intercourse is prevailing as a mode of transmission. It has been prevailing for some time now. But why is this happening? How to stop this? There is absolutely no discussion about drugs. Drugs are bad... and that's it. There are no harm reduction programs. The attitude is really bad towards drug users and you can't jump from this position to start providing any services for them. Sex workers are not discussed. Sex services are growing, the prices are going down - it's getting more and more affordable - people are not using protection. Nothing is being said about it, and, consequently, the problem of HIV is not being discussed. The taboo of certain subjects is a great problem. And because there is no discussion, no exchange of opinions, there are no attempts to find a way out. No one is working with motivating people to do something.

Maria Rassokhina: How would you improve or change the transmission of information about HIV/AIDS through mass media in St. Petersburg? Would you have some recommendations?

Interviewee 5: I think we need to change the form - switch to a twitter system: short, bright, attractive messages and visual. More humor would be great. Humor removes taboo. The more you laugh, the easier you respond to the subject. The easier you respond to the subject, the easier it is to understand it. If you think this is very scary, then you probably will not want to hear about it; when you laugh, it's not so scary anymore. ...

More television, but we can hardly expect that. TV is turning into “yellow” trash, controlling itself.

Maria Rassokhina: Thank you for you time.

INTERVIEW 6

Maria Rassokhina: Do you have any experience working with the subject of HIV/AIDS?

Interviewee 6: Our program - "Petersburg Diary" ("Петербургский дневник") periodically brings up the subject AIDS in St. Petersburg. Our program is socially oriented, so we devote about half an hour every month to the discussion of this problem.

Maria Rassokhina: Could you please share your experience working with this topic?

Interviewee 6: As a matter of fact, I have different visitors, different people who come to the studio and we talk about this issue. We have an AIDS center in the city, which deals with this issue. And we try to deliver the information to our audience, which in the past there was more of, but now there is much less. There is almost no social advertising, so it is almost impossible for a regular consumer to get any information; except through the Internet. Specifically, we film and create small episodes; we talk to the people who are experts in this matter; we tell the audience about the new tests that are available, about express tests. Express tests are very reliable – almost 90percent reliable, if I am not mistaken; but they are not the panacea in this matter.

Maria Rassokhina: Have you ever had experience of personal communication with someone who is HIV-positive?

Interviewee 6: No.

Maria Rassokhina: What role do you think the media has in prevention of HIV infection in St. Petersburg?

Interviewee 6: The mass media attract people's attention to the problem and this is very important, because in most cases, people try to avoid such acute problems like these, the problems of this disease. Not many people stop to think about it. A person could be a carrier and not realize it. We must let people know that this problem needs to be taken seriously; and if you are leading an active intimate life, you need to be tested. By doing so, you will protect yourself and your loved ones.

Maria Rassokhina: Is there enough media attention devoted to this issue?

Interviewee 6: No, no, not really. The only television channel that brings up this problem is our channel. Not much information about HIV/AIDS can be found in the rest of the media space, for example articles regarding this disease.

Maria Rassokhina: Could you possibly explain the low levels of attention devoted to this issue over the last ten years?

Interviewee 6: I'm not sure why. In the past, there was more social advertising, plenty of it. We did an analysis and found that in the 90s there was more information and social advertising available on federal and local channels than there is now. It is probably related with lack of financing; there should be funds assigned to such matter. There are currently more concerns related to hepatitis not AIDS. We often see social ads dealing with hepatitis on the TV.

Maria Rassokhina: How does the media portray HIV/AIDS in St. Petersburg today?

Interviewee 6: They used to say that this is a terminal disease. Now people live with it for many years. We are not talking about an epidemic that kills everyone anymore, but now it is rather a slowly progressing disease that is treated with 2 or 3 pills daily. It is very important not to create panic through the mass media; but rather to explain to people that this is a disease and we don't need to be afraid of it; and if you do get infected – people live with it and live a long normal life and have healthy children.

Maria Rassokhina: What, in your opinion, is the most effective branch of mass media in St. Petersburg?

Interviewee 6: You see, television is a narrowly focused medium. If we are talking about a new generation, we can't influence them using television; the only exceptions are the specialized channels that the young people watch. If there's social advertising on the STS (“CTC”) channel, which is popular with the Moscow's youth or the TNT (“THT”) channel, then we can reach them. It does not make sense to do it through the channels that aim at different audiences.

Maria Rassokhina: In your opinion, do the city residents perceive HIV/AIDS as a threat and a serious problem to the society?

Interviewee 6: No, I don't think so. The city is quite tolerant of many things, even the problems with immigrants. Such issues do cause social unrest at times, but not in great quantities. I don't think that AIDS causes a negative reactions or anything else.

Maria Rassokhina: Do you think this problem a priority to the people in our city?

Interviewee 6: We do need to talk about this subject, but without being pushy. We simply need to talk about it. We need to tell people that this disease does not kill. Often, when a person goes to the doctor's office to get blood test results, thoughts rush through his head that if the results are positive, his life will be over: “I'll just go and jump from the building and terminate my life.” That's what we need to talk about.

Maria Rassokhina: How informed do you consider yourself to be on the subject?

Interviewee 6: Since I have to work with this issue from time to time, I prepare myself by reading articles. I study. I learn the research on the subject. I know where one can get tested. I know some information of the subject. Also, I get tested for HIV regularly.

Maria Rassokhina: What about the rest of the population? Do they need more information?

Interviewee 6: Information is needed of course, for the general public. We need to raise the level of awareness. And something else: the HIV test is not free if its not done at the AIDS center. It costs around 500 rubles, and not everybody can afford it. So if the government is going to pay any attention to this issue, they should make the testing free. Express tests at least, so this allows people to decide if they want or need to continue further testing.

Maria Rassokhina: What areas of information, specific topics related to HIV/AIDS, do you consider the most important in the media?

Interviewee 6: I think that the subject was always talked about. People of my generation, those who were in school in the 80's, we know. The information reached us: the ways AIDS are transmitted, how to protect yourself, and what to do. I don't know the awareness levels of today's youth, how well they are informed. As for me and my generation, I can say that this subject was talked about. People would come to our schools and talk about it. Such educational work was done at the beginning of the 90s. Even free contraceptives were given away. Nothing like that exists now. And I don't know if it is necessary. Maybe in high school to 14, 15, 16-year olds.

Maria Rassokhina: Would you say that there is a problem in St. Petersburg? 3-4 thousand new cases are registered every year.

Interviewee 6: I don't think those are new cases. I think those are people who were not register before and contracted the disease earlier. We cannot talk about accurate numbers here, because the numbers that are in "the shadows" are higher than the official number. 3-4 thousand people per year... those are not high numbers, when talking about a megalopolis of 5 million people. Those are teardrops.

Maria Rassokhina: What do you know about AIDS dissidents?

Interviewee 6: There is such a point of view online, on the Internet, that AIDS is a profanation of the 20th century, that... They are simply saying that this is not a pandemic, that it is not an epidemic, it is a disease that is in the stages where it can be sustained by

medical treatment.

Maria Rassokhina: How would you improve or change the transmission of information about HIV/AIDS through the mass media in St. Petersburg? Do you have any recommendations?

Interviewee 6: How can we improve it? Simply by talking about it. We should allocate a certain amount of time, say half an hour every month and talk about it. We don't need to force this information on to people; we need to let them know that this problem exists and that its manageable now; even if there's no cure, there are new studies and developments on it. We should talk about the methods of protection and medical treatments, and there is research on the way that will soon offer a cure for this disease. We could probably compare this to hepatitis and other diseases that stay with the person for life. We need to talk to the young people, who are easily influenced by the promiscuous TV show and movies. The issue should be raised.

Maria Rassokhina: Thank you for you time.

INTERVIEW 7

Maria Rassokhina: Have you ever had experience of personal communication with someone who is HIV-positive?

Interviewee 7: Yes. We had guests in the studio who were HIV-positive.

Maria Rassokhina: Could you please share some details about this interaction?

Interviewee 7: It was a very trusting conversation; at the end of it I kissed the girl's hand – who was HIV-positive – and did not feel disgusted about it. I worked with HIV-positive people, but nobody among my friends and acquaintances is infected.

Maria Rassokhina: What role do you think the media has in prevention of HIV infection?

Interviewee 7: I think it's minimal. There are special programs and grants that try to cover this problem. But mostly we are turning away from it; not only from this problem, but from the problem of disabled people and people with limited abilities, unfortunately. So we are doing it on the so-so basis, mostly to put a check mark. There is not enough attention; and the youth organizations are not being involved; and nobody is going into schools. Growing up now, the young people are treating this problem the same way those who grew up in the 90s are treating it. It was a very scary thing, nobody knew anything about it, and considered PLWH outcasts.

Maria Rassokhina: How informed do you consider our society to be about HIV/AIDS?

Interviewee 7: I think very few can answer the question about how you can get AIDS. And if the parents of kindergarteners find out that one of the kids is infected, they will sound the alarm and take their kids away from there. Most people will not want their child be in contact with an HIV-positive individual. Despite the fact that we somehow have a working law on the protection of individual rights, some say that those who are HIV-positive, while applying to jobs are not hired based on some unexplained reasons; somehow their medical information leaked out. There is no individual approach to this.

Maria Rassokhina: In your opinion, do the city residents perceive HIV/AIDS as a threat and a serious problem to the society? And is this problem a priority to the people in our city?

Interviewee 7: I think they do consider it a big problem, because of the number of drug users, the number of people with non-traditional sexual orientation. At least today we know more about this than we did 15-20 years ago. All this tells us that there's more HIV

around and we should be alarmed by it. Some programs are probably working in this respect. But the problem still remains. People may be thinking about it, but are afraid. Unless their lives are somehow affected by it, they remain indifferent.

Maria Rassokhina: What do you know about AIDS dissidents? And do you think that they present a threat to our society?

Interviewee 7: No, I don't know of such. But I assume that if they are AID dissidents, that they do present a threat.

Maria Rassokhina: What, in your opinion, is the most effective branch of mass media in St. Petersburg that covers the topic of HIV infection?

Interviewee 7: As far as I know, our channel - "Petersburg" – brings it up once or maybe twice a month. I do not know how other channels cover this topic. Donations get more coverage and attention, rather than AIDS. At least I think so.

Maria Rassokhina: How would you improve or change the transmission of information about HIV/AIDS through mass media in St. Petersburg? Do you have any recommendations?

Interviewee 7: It is a serious problem... of course people are working with it, but it's still not enough. Outdoor advertising is not working; neither do audio or visual ads, such as the social ads that tell you not to do drugs. I think if there was a recipe, then it would have been widely implemented already. It's a problem, a real problem; just like with the disabled and people with limited abilities – some cannot make it up the stairs into the store or the metro stations. Something is being done, but it is not having a real effect and not making a real difference. It's being done just for the record. It is all the same: the disabled, orphans, people with cancer, AIDS... all the same.

Maria Rassokhina: What areas of information, specific topics related to HIV/AIDS should media cover?

Interviewee 7: I would say primarily tolerance and protection. First and foremost – tolerance. So there would be awareness, so there would be a clear position, so that it would be clear that PLWH are not dangerous. They could be dangerous only if there is blood-to-blood contact or through sex; there is no other way. It is hard to persuade unenlightened and naïve people otherwise; if they know a person has HIV, they will not come closer than 10 meters to him. Many people think this way. When I didn't know much about it, I was also scared. But then I became familiar with it through my job and people who I have met and interviewed, people who work in the AIDS centers.

Maria Rassokhina: Thank you for your time.

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