



Community-based understanding of links between IPV and alcohol use for American Indian Women

Arielle R. Deutsch^{1,2}

¹ University of South Dakota School of Medicine ² Sanford Research, Behavioral Sciences

Purpose

Develop
Community Ties

- Build working relationships of trust and collaboration within Rosebud Sioux Reservation Community
- Create a community advisory board with diverse representation from multiple communities and AEP system parameters

Understand
Community Issues

- Learn community-based perceptions of AEP, alcohol use, and IPV, and their inter-relations
- Develop protocol for research-intervention plans that account for historical, sociopolitical, cultural, and economic perspectives

Background

AEP (Alcohol Exposed Pregnancy)

- 10% of women drink during pregnancy;
 - Rates of fetal alcohol spectrum disorders are approximately 0.01% - 10% of population
- Potential syndemic association between alcohol misuse, intimate partner violence (IPV), lack of contraception, and unintended pregnancy (FIG 1)
 - AKA, all predictors of AEP
- Interventions for AEP taking this syndemic system into account are lacking

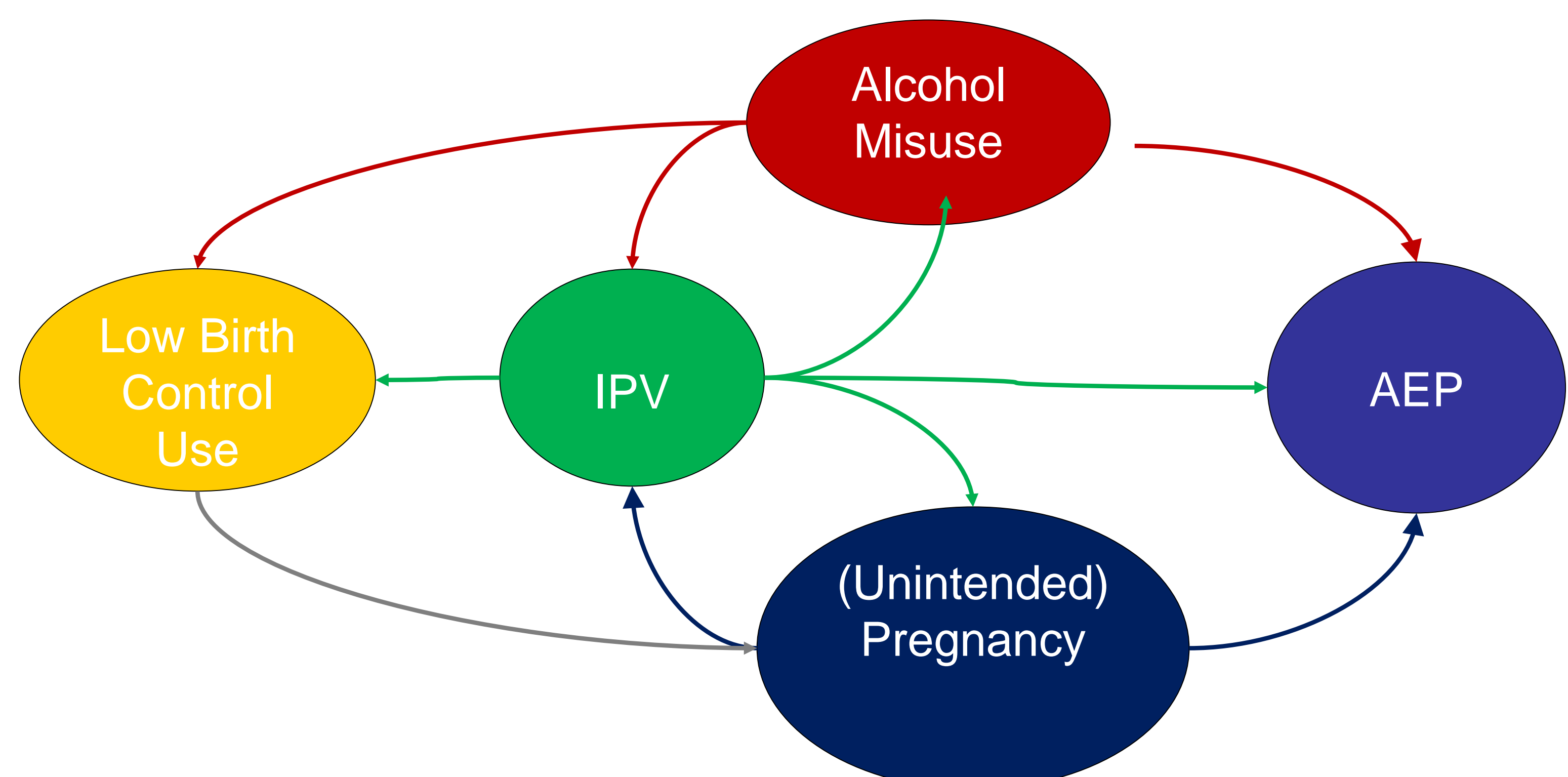
Contextual Influences for North Plains AI

- Northern Plains American Indian (AI) populations have a disproportionately higher risk for AEP, alcohol use, and/or IPV
 - Northern Plains / reservation areas are characterized by rurality, isolation, and lack of resources
 - Longstanding historical trauma, violence, and poverty provide unique underlying mechanisms
- Epidemiology of AI AEP may not be reflected in current literature
 - Current AEP in the literature: white, older educated
 - Younger (e.g., teenage, young adult) AI have disproportionately higher rates of most AEP predictors (unwanted pregnancies, repeat births, substance use, IPV/adverse childhood experiences)
- Unique and intersecting community contexts are required to better frame a syndemic system of AEP predictors; this will allow us to better a) understand epidemiology of AI AEP within specific communities and b) develop effective, tailored prevention and intervention efforts

Community and Systems Perspectives

- Complex problems require complex and comprehensive understanding
 - Examining a "system" of AEP involves understanding all of the parts that make up something greater than their sum
- Community problems require community knowledge and buy-in
 - Community-based approaches are particularly important for research partnerships with tribal communities
 - Better informed, higher buy in

Fig. 1: Syndemic System of AEP



Aims

Aim 1

Cultivate working relationships with individuals representing multiple aspects of the IPV-Alcohol-AEP system

(e.g., legal, nonprofit, social service, clinical, cultural, and citizen/layman)

Aim 2

In-depth 1 – on – 1’s to develop community-based, operational definitions, normative values for these health issues, as well as current implementation strategies / gaps in implementation for intervention, policy, and prevention

Aim 3

Develop community-focused research framework to investigate these issues from a systems perspective that values native narratives and knowledge, and will incorporate ethical sensitivity to reduce re-traumatization, privacy, and agency.

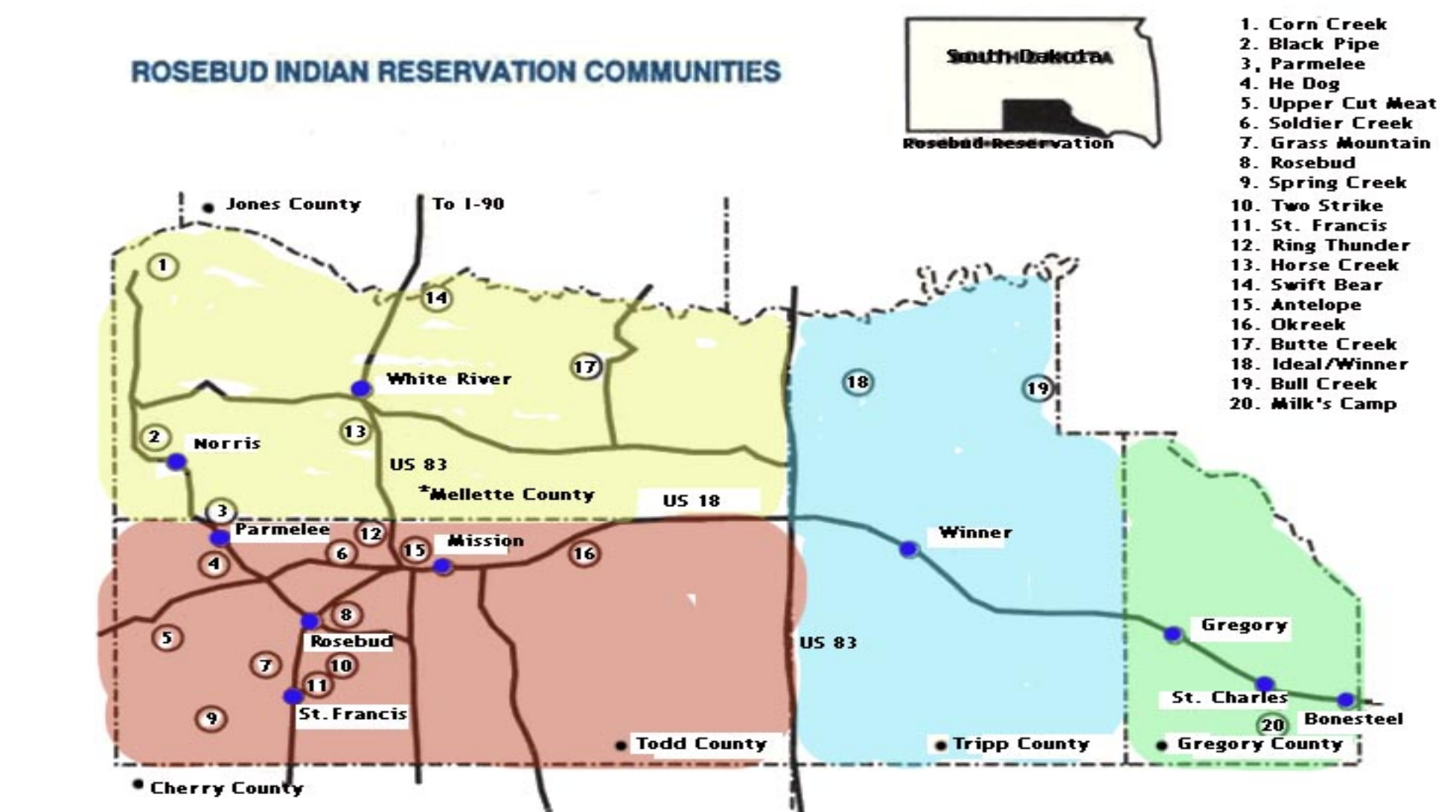
Approach

The Partners:
Rosebud Sioux Tribe (RST), located in Southern South Dakota, encompasses 20 unique and distinct communities spread out on almost 2000 square miles of plains, with a population of 9,050. RST has an unemployment rate of approximately 80-85%. Todd County, located within the reservation, is the second poorest county in the US.
RST also is a leader in the development and sustainability of a multi-organization collaborative body (Society of Care), which focuses on integrative health and wellbeing, ensuring communication and non-duplication of services.
White Buffalo Calf Woman Society Inc. is the first reservation-based woman’s shelter in the United States. Since 1980, White Buffalo Calf Inc has provided shelter, services, resources, and education for victims of IPV, advocacy for reforming IPV-related legal policy, and intervention development for both boys and girls who have experienced sexual violence.

The Plan:
Questions To Ask
Our initial plan was to use a Community Readiness Assessment to assess how ready RST was to *jointly* address IPV and substance use as a dual issue. However, after discussing things further with White Buffalo Calf staff, and understanding more about the Society of Care and the culture of collaboration within RST, we decided to develop a different interview that focuses on 3 main questions:

- 1) What are the **operational definitions** for “community”, “domestic violence”, and “substance misuse”, and what are the **individual or community perceptions** about how these two issues associate with each other?
- 2) Who shares the **primary burden of responsibility** towards continuing to address IPV and substance misuse?
- 3) What are the current **known resources** for reducing IPV and substance use within the community? Could these resources be strengthened, or could other resources be added?

People With Answers
As part of the mission to have information that is inclusive for all unique RST communities, and representative of the diversity of values, ideas, and experiences within RST, our strategy for questionnaire refinement and recruitment involves:
Elder and Community Tribal Board Representative input: We will first work with elders and representatives from the individual RST communities to refine questions, and to develop strategies for recruiting participants (e.g., amount of compensation, getting the word out, appropriate interviewers, locations for interviews).
White Buffalo Calf Inc and therapy/clinical aftercare plan: Working off of previous approaches for minimizing re-traumatization in research within RST, we will come up with a plan to provide immediate aftercare resources for those who experience psychological and emotional distress due to sensitive and possibly triggering questions.
Gaging interest and future working partnerships: To develop a community advisory board that will work together with us to utilizing this information for an appropriate, larger-scale research project that explores a broad community-based system understanding of IPV, substance use, and AEP, the interview will also allow us to understand the most appropriate people to invite. This can include interview participants themselves, or connections through recommendations on behalf of participants.



Future/Deliverables

Overall goals of this project are intended to provide a community and informational foundation for extensions of a current, ongoing community based system dynamics research project located in Rapid City, to gain understanding of AEP (and other substances) as a symptom of the discussed AEP syndemic system.

Within community-based system dynamics (in which a group of individuals come together to build the system themselves) may not be feasible areas like RST; which have higher levels of mistrust, fear of privacy violations by outsiders, and higher likelihood of triggered psychological distress while discussing these personally relevant topics.

Therefore, the current end goals will facilitate future research endeavors via:

An already-developed community advisory board that can facilitate broader buy-in of more complex-RST wide research projects and guidance for research-informed program development

Development of a group model building (systems models) protocol tailored for 1)RST communities, 2) vulnerable populations, 3) maximizing representative ness and buy-in for participation

Understanding best practices to approach both research project and subject matter based on operational definitions and community attitudes towards research partnerships with outsiders

Acknowledgements

The project described was supported by the National Institute of General Medical Sciences, 1U54GM115458. The content is solely the responsibility of the authors and does not necessarily represent the official views of the NIH.
This project also is supported by generous time and effort provided by White Buffalo Calf Women’s Society Incorporated and the Rosebud Sioux community