Further Adventures in the Origin of AIDS

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Mystery of where AIDS came from solved? Not so fast. Last fall, we read Jacques Pépin's theory in *The Origin of AIDS*. He says that HIV in humans can be traced back to about 80 chimpanzees in Africa that infected bush-meat hunters, and that the virus was then further spread through the use of nonsterile medical equipment. Now comes a new book that implicates colonization of the continent in the early 1900s as the catalyst of the global pandemic. *Tinderbox*, coauthored by journalist Craig Timberg and AIDS researcher Daniel Halperin, PhD, hypothesizes that without the mobility, urbanization, medical campaigns and prostitution introduced to central Africa by Europeans, the HIV-1 group M strain would've been a short-lived, localized outbreak in the forests of Cameroon. The theory has caused much controversy. One thing's for sure: The multiple, complex and interrelated drivers of HIV mean the beginnings of AIDS will continue to spark interest.

To read an interview with Daniel Halperin, click here.

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