

Daily Mail

TV doctor's dramatic bid to end 'hysteria' 4231

Why my kiss can ease fear of AIDS

By PATRICK O'NEILL

TELEVISION presenter Dr Miriam Stoppard kissed an AIDS victim yesterday in an attempt to calm public fears about the killer disease.

Her dramatic gesture came during the filming of Yorkshire TV's *Where There's Life* series. She kissed 24-year-old Amy Sloan who had been flown from Indiana where she contracted AIDS in 1982 after receiving a transfusion of blood from a homosexual man.

Dr Stoppard said last night: 'It was my suggestion. It made the situation quite clear. It was the only way I could think of showing that ordinary social contact with AIDS sufferers is perfectly OK.'

The kiss followed a day when fears over AIDS forced Yorkshire TV to film the programme away from its Leeds studios.

Some staff, including sixteen workers, were worried that there was a danger of catching AIDS by being in the same building as a victim.

A member of the company's health and safety committee said: 'Our

fears haven't been entirely allayed because the medical profession does not speak with one voice on the way the disease can be transmitted. One theory is that it could be transmitted by saliva.'

Dr Stoppard said: 'It's exactly this kind of fear and misunderstanding we hope this programme will overcome. I'm not surprised by the crew's reaction, but they should realise that just by being in the company of an AIDS victim they are in no danger.'

Eventually, 25 volunteer technicians and 100 members of a studio audience were taken a mile down the

road to the West Leeds Working Men's Club, Armley, which accepted assurances of safety.

Mrs Sloan flew to Britain on Sunday with her 27-year-old husband Stephen, who does not have AIDS, and they will return to America today.

She said last night: 'I decided to do it for public education. I told nobody except my immediate family.' Duncan Dallas, executive producer of the programme which will be broadcast throughout the ITV network on September 23, said: 'We know she

would be hurt because she regards it as her last duty on earth.'

● One of Britain's top experts on AIDS, Professor Michael Adler, yesterday dismissed claims that the disease could be spread by coughing or sneezing. Speaking on Jimmy Young's Radio Two programme, he said that if that were the case doctors would be among the first victims.

He added: 'When you see me dying and everyone at the Middlesex Hospital dying who are looking after AIDS patients then you can come back to me and say that I am wrong.'

over disease

EXPRESS

Flee in terror? 22

ALL reports on the dreaded disease Aids appear to have overlooked a grave possibility. If the disease can be transmitted by contaminated

hyperdermic needles, then surely it can be spread by the bites of bedbugs, mosquitoes, lice and the common flea like the Plague?

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Name and Address supplied.

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STANDARD

AIDS interview 5
 THE recording of a TV interview with two AIDS victims went ahead today using volunteers after some Yorkshire TV staff refused to work in the same studio.

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