

# Multistage Genomewide Association Study Identifies a Locus at 1q41 Associated with Rate of HIV-1 Disease Progression to Clinical AIDS

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**Background.** A mean of 9–10 years of human immunodeficiency virus type 1 (HIV-1) infection elapse before clinical AIDS develops in untreated persons, but this rate of disease progression varies substantially among individuals. To investigate host genetic determinants of the rate of progression to clinical AIDS, we performed a multistage genomewide association study.

**Methods.** The discovery stage comprised 156 individuals from the Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study, enriched with rapid and long-term nonprogressors to increase statistical power. This was followed by replication tests of putatively associated genotypes in an independent population of 590 HIV-1-infected seroconverters.

**Results.** Significant associations with delayed AIDS progression were observed in a haplotype located at 1q41, 36 kb upstream of *PROX1* on chromosome 1 (relative hazard ratio, 0.69; Fisher's combined  $P = 6.23 \times 10^{-7}$ ). This association was replicated further in an analysis stratified by transmission mode, with the effect consistent in sexual or mucosal and parenteral transmission (relative hazard ratios, 0.72 and 0.63, respectively; combined  $P = 1.63 \times 10^{-6}$ ).

**Conclusions.** This study identified and replicated a locus upstream of *PROX1* that is associated with delayed progression to clinical AIDS. *PROX1* is a negative regulator of interferon- $\gamma$  expression in T cells and also mitigates the advancement of vascular neoplasms, such as Kaposi sarcoma, a common AIDS-defining malignancy. This study adds to the cumulative polygenic host component that effectively regulates the progression to clinical AIDS among HIV-1-infected individuals, raising prospects for potential new avenues for therapy and improvements in AIDS prognosis.

Polymorphisms in numerous human genes have been reported to confer differential susceptibility to human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infection and rates of

progression to AIDS [1, 2]. Genes encoding the major HIV-1 coreceptor chemokine (C-C motif) receptor 5

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**Table 1. Distributions of Age and HIV-1 Disease Phenotypes among the 156 Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study Participants of European Descent Included in This Study**

Characteristic	All	RPs (n = 51)	MPs (n = 57)	LTNPs (n = 48)
<b>Age, years</b>				
Mean ± SD	32.8 ± 6.1	34.6 ± 5.8	31.1 ± 6.5	33.0 ± 5.6
Range	19.1–47.6	19.1–47.6	19.5–45.9	22.5–46.8
<b>Time from seroconversion to AIDS, years</b>				
Mean ± SD	10.4 ± 6.9	3.3 ± 1.1	8.4 ± 1.3	18.2 ± 1.7
Range	0.7–21.2	0.7–4.9	6.5–11.3	13.4–21.2
<b>Viral set point, log<sub>10</sub> RNA copies/mL plasma</b>				
Mean ± SD	3.9 ± 0.8	4.9 ± 0.7	4.3 ± 0.5	3.2 ± 0.7
Range	1.6–6.4	1.6–6.4	2.6–5.1	2.1–4.9

**NOTE.** The time of progression to AIDS for rapid progressors (RPs) and moderate progressors (MPs) was calculated as the interval from the estimated date of seroconversion to the first clinical AIDS diagnosis or death from an AIDS-related disease. Disease end points for long-term nonprogressors (LTNPs) were defined as the interval from the date of seroconversion or enrollment to the date of the last follow-up visit or start of highly active antiretroviral therapy (if applicable). SD, standard deviation.

(CCR5), its ligands, and HLA class I genes are well documented and consistently replicated AIDS restriction genes. Homozygosity for the *CCR5* Δ32 allele provides near absolute protection against HIV-1 infection, whereas Δ32 heterozygosity delays progression to clinical AIDS [3]. Certain *HLA-B* alleles are variously associated with increased or decreased rates of progression [3]. For example, B\*5701 is strongly and consistently associated with slower disease progression [4, 5] and elite viral control [6].

Recent genomewide association studies (GWAS) involving HIV-infected individuals that use Illumina genotyping platforms have confirmed the strong associations between variation in HLA genes and the surrogate markers of plasma viral load and CD4<sup>+</sup> T cell count [7–9]. However, the statistical noise introduced by a large number of tests generally require *P* values  $\leq 5 \times 10^{-8}$  for genomewide significance; in GWAS, true-positive signals with *P* values above this threshold cannot be distinguished from false-positive signals by purely statistical methods. This was observed in the failure of early HIV-related GWAS to identify previously identified AIDS restriction genes, such as *CCR5* Δ32 or *RANTES* (*CCL5*). However, the effects of *CCR5* Δ32 on disease progression were confirmed in a meta-analysis [10]. Approaches using replication or meta-analysis of GWAS results can help overcome these problems [11].

Although HIV-1 load is a robust prognostic marker for clinical disease progression, studies show that viral load explains <50% of the variation in time from primary infection to the development of clinical AIDS [12–14]. Therefore, it is important to assess the direct host genetic contribution to the actual clinical end point of HIV infection: AIDS or AIDS-related death. To address the potential differences between the virologic and clinical end points, we used a 2-stage strategy to identify host common genetic polymorphisms associated with variation

among HIV-infected individuals in their rate of progression to clinical AIDS (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention [CDC] 1987 definition). First, we conducted a GWAS involving a population of HIV-1-infected men from the Multicenter AIDS Cohort Study (MACS) who were chosen to be enriched with participants representing the extreme ends of phenotypic distribution rates of HIV-1 disease progression to clinical AIDS: rapid progressors and long-term nonprogressors. A focus on extreme genotypes improves our power to detect differences between these readily discernible groups [15, 16], as seen elsewhere with AIDS phenotypes [17, 18]. Second, we selected the top-ranking single-nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) from the initial GWAS for replication tests in an independent cohort of 590 HIV-1 seroconverters. Third, we stratified the replication cohort by transmission mode (sexual or parenteral) and tested for consistent effects across these distinct populations.

## SUBJECTS AND METHODS

**Stage 1 GWAS population.** In stage 1 of the study (discover stage), we conducted a GWAS involving HIV-1-infected unrelated men who have sex with men from the MACS, a longitudinal prospective cohort conducted since 1984 in 4 US cities: Baltimore, Chicago, Los Angeles, and Pittsburgh [19]. A total of 6973 men have been enrolled. From April 1984 through March 1985, 4954 men were enrolled; 668 more men were enrolled from April 1987 through September 1991. A third enrollment of 1351 men occurred from October 2001 through August 2003. The overwhelming majority, if not all, of the participants in our study were infected with HIV-1 subtype B, and they were eligible for inclusion if they were naive to highly active antiretroviral therapy (HAART) or treated only with zidovudine monotherapy.

**Table 2. Multistage Analysis of the Association with Delayed Progression to Clinical AIDS Diagnosis and AIDS-Related Death for 4 Linked Single-Nucleotide Polymorphisms (SNPs) 36 kb Upstream of *PROX1* on Chromosome 1**

Variable	SNP (minor allele)		
	rs17762192 (C)	rs1367951 (G)	rs17762150 (T)
Stage 1 (discovery): AIDS in 1987, <i>P</i>	$7.13 \times 10^{-5}$	$6.69 \times 10^{-5}$	$3.64 \times 10^{-5}$
Stage 2 (replication): AIDS in 1987			
Overall			
<i>P</i>	$4.80 \times 10^{-4}$	$5.90 \times 10^{-4}$	$8.30 \times 10^{-4}$
Corrected <i>P</i> <sup>a</sup>	$7.20 \times 10^{-3}$	$8.85 \times 10^{-3}$	$1.25 \times 10^{-2}$
RH	0.69	0.69	0.7
Sexual transmission			
<i>P</i>	$1.7 \times 10^{-2}$		
RH	0.72	...	...
Parenteral transmission			
<i>P</i>	$7.0 \times 10^{-3}$		
RH	0.63	...	...
AIDS death			
<i>P</i>	$2.00 \times 10^{-3}$	$2.00 \times 10^{-3}$	$3.00 \times 10^{-3}$
RH	0.68	0.69	0.69
CD4 <sup>+</sup> T cell count <200 cells/mm <sup>3</sup>			
<i>P</i>	$4.50 \times 10^{-2}$	$5.40 \times 10^{-2}$	$8.20 \times 10^{-2}$
RH	0.82	0.83	0.84

**NOTE.** For the 4 linked SNPs,  $r^2 > 0.9$ . In stage 1,  $n = 156$ ; in stage 2,  $n = 590$ ; for sexual transmission,  $n = 405$ ; and for parenteral transmission,  $n = 182$ . RH, relative hazard.

<sup>a</sup> Corrected for 15 tests with use of the Bonferroni correction.

**Progression to clinical AIDS phenotype.** We attempted to select equal numbers of individuals in 3 distinct categories of AIDS-free interval: 51 rapid progressors, 57 moderate progressors, and 48 long-term nonprogressors (Table 1). Study participants were chosen to be enriched with those who had HIV-1 disease progression rates from the extreme ends of this phenotypic distribution (rapid progressors and long-term non-progressors), because inclusion of extreme participants has been shown to increase power in genetic association analyses [15–18]. Rapid progressors were seroconverters for whom the interval from the estimated date of seroconversion to the date of the first clinical AIDS diagnosis or death due to an AIDS-related disease [20] was <5 years; it is estimated that ~10% of the MACS participants are rapid progressors [21]. Moderate progressors were seroconverters for whom this interval was close to the median AIDS-free interval of 9.2 years [21]. Long-term nonprogressors included seroconverters and those already infected at entry in the cohort. These individuals had no 2 consecutive CD4<sup>+</sup> T cell counts <500 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, no AIDS diagnosis, and no HAART use for  $\geq 14.8$  years after seroconversion (or after enrollment, if they were seropositive at entry). Dates of seroconversion were estimated as the midpoint between the last seronegative visit and the first seropositive visit; only seroconverters with <1 year between these visits were included in our study. For long-term nonprogressors, the end point was defined

as the date of the last follow-up visit or the date of first HAART treatment, if applicable. Approximately 10% of the MACS participants are long-term nonprogressors [21]. These phenotype criteria yielded 194 individuals for genotyping.

**Genotyping.** For the stage 1 discovery analysis, we successfully genotyped 189 individuals with use of the Affymetrix GeneChip Human Mapping 500K Array Set (<http://www.affymetrix.com>; 5 individuals either did not pass the minimal call rate threshold [ $>95\%$ ] or were found to have potential sample errors in subsequent quality control). DNA was obtained from peripheral blood mononuclear cells (PBMCs) for 118 individuals and from lymphoblastoid cell lines for 71 individuals with limited PBMC availability. Genotypic fidelity between PBMCs and lymphoblastoid cell lines genotypes was validated using paired genotypic samples from 16 individuals [22]. SNP genotypes were called using the Affymetrix BRLMM algorithm [23]; the mean call rate for all SNPs was 98.5%. For SNP quality assurance, we repeated the genotyping of 471,000 SNPs for 151 individuals with use of the Affymetrix Genome-Wide Human SNP Array (version 6.0; J.L.T., in preparation) in a different laboratory (Laboratory of Genomic Diversity, National Cancer Institute) and achieved >99.5% genotyping concordance between the genotype calls for the 2 laboratories (unfiltered for SNP call rate; 71,121,000 genotypes were compared).

**Table 3. Fifteen Top-Ranking Associations of Loci with Rate of Progression to Clinical AIDS (25 Single-Nucleotide Polymorphisms [SNPs]) from the Discovery-Stage Genomewide Association Study (Stage 1)**

SNP	Rank	<i>P</i>	<i>q</i> <sup>a</sup>	Replication <i>P</i> <sup>b</sup>	Chromosome	Position, base pair	Type	Ancestral allele	Closest gene
<b>rs6984368</b>	1	$8.76 \times 10^{-6}$	.6834	.158	8	82055464	Intronic	G	<i>PAG1</i>
<b>rs7006101</b>	22	$4.81 \times 10^{-5}$	.7105	$6.58 \times 10^{-2}$	8	82059755	Synonymous	C	<i>PAG1</i>
rs16899646	2	$1.33 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.114	6	31524899	Intergenic	C	<i>HCP5</i>
<b>rs1691946</b>	3	$1.70 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.995	10	29200463	Intronic	G	C10orf126
<b>rs1775929</b>	7	$2.69 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.881	10	29199354	Intronic	T	C10orf126
<b>rs1691943</b>	8	$2.69 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.881	10	29200842	Intronic	G	C10orf126
<b>rs1775933</b>	11	$3.10 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.844	10	29200882	Intronic	G	C10orf126
rs11648686	4	$1.78 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.175	16	50950897	Intergenic	G	<i>TOX3</i>
<b>rs4800820</b>	5	$2.20 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.710	18	23630471	Intergenic	T	<i>CDH2</i>
<b>rs9957708</b>	9	$2.71 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.523	18	23633388	Intergenic	A	<i>CDH2</i>
rs7102407	6	$2.32 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.828	11	9512693	Intergenic	C	<i>ZNF143</i>
rs10082685	38	$7.89 \times 10^{-5}$	.7185	.460	11	9500492	Intronic	G	<i>ZNF143</i>
rs4910466	39	$8.28 \times 10^{-5}$	.7263	$4.79 \times 10^{-2}$	11	9465928	Intronic	G	<i>ZNF143</i>
<b>rs12332694</b>	10	$2.71 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.942	5	79377745	Intronic	C	<i>THBS4</i>
rs775095	12	$3.20 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.346	20	15917077	Intronic	T	<i>MACROD2</i>
<b>rs4910052</b>	13	$3.31 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	$1.50 \times 10^{-2}$	11	9411950	Synonymous	T	<i>IPO7</i>
<b>rs36048375</b>	14	$3.31 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	$1.49 \times 10^{-2}$	11	9419893	Intronic	G	<i>IPO7</i>
rs7983751	15	$3.37 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.673	13	29992021	Intronic	T	<i>HMGB1</i>
<b>rs11622505</b>	16	$3.46 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.980	14	92387319	Intergenic	A	<i>GOLGA5</i>
rs17762150	17	$3.64 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	$8.30 \times 10^{-4}$	1	212191441	Intergenic	C	<i>PROX1</i>
rs1367951	30	$6.69 \times 10^{-5}$	.7105	$5.90 \times 10^{-4}$	1	212192136	Intergenic	A	<i>PROX1</i>
rs17762192	34	$7.13 \times 10^{-5}$	.7105	$4.80 \times 10^{-4}$	1	212191750	Intergenic	G	<i>PROX1</i>
<b>rs2267420</b>	18	$3.73 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.220	22	38678466	Intronic	A	<i>GRAP2</i>
rs498280	19	$3.84 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	$7.88 \times 10^{-2}$	7	105188251	3' utr	C	<i>ATXN7L1</i>
<b>rs17050206</b>	20	$3.95 \times 10^{-5}$	.6834	.700	4	139372068	Intronic	C	<i>SLC7A11</i>

**NOTE.** Boldface type SNPs in adjacent rows represent linked SNPs ( $r^2 > 0.09$ ).

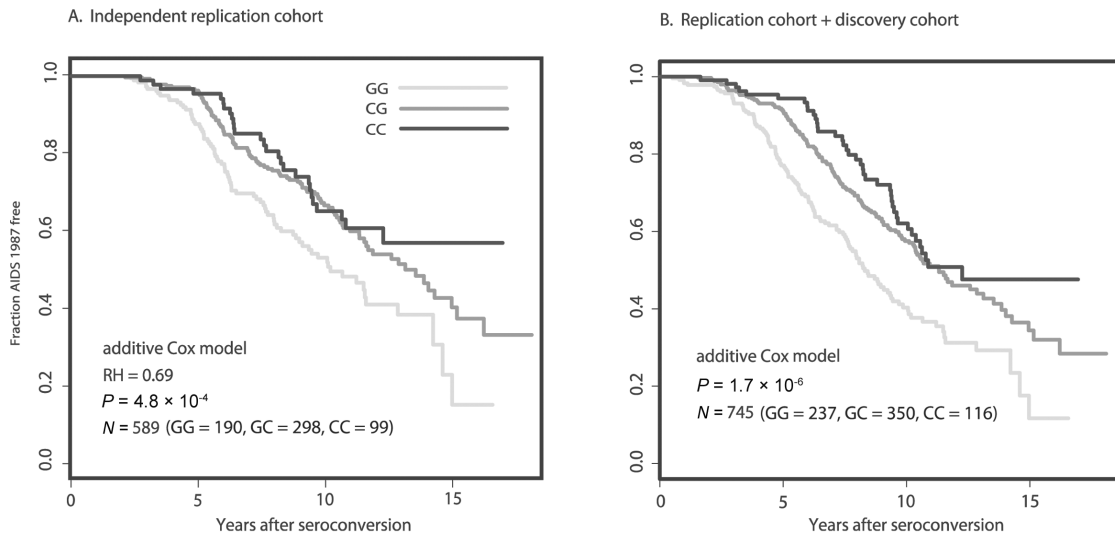
<sup>a</sup> *P* values corrected for false discovery rate (*q* values).

<sup>b</sup> *P* values for AIDS 1987 diagnoses in the replication cohort, uncorrected for multiple tests.

**Correction for potential population stratification.** The stage 1 discovery study population included individuals of 4 self-reported ethnicities: white, non-Hispanic; black, non-Hispanic; white, Hispanic; and Asian or Pacific Islander. To confirm ancestries, we combined our 189 sample genotypes with 30 HapMap reference samples [24] were also genotyped on Affymetrix 500K arrays, including 10 individuals from each of the following populations: Yoruba in Ibadan, Nigeria; Japanese in Tokyo, Japan, and Chinese in Beijing, China; and Utah residents with ancestry from northern and western Europe. Using this combined data set, and after removing regions of known high linkage disequilibrium, we estimated identity-by-state pairwise distances with the genomewide association software PLINK (version 1.07) [25]; we used these estimates for multidimensional scaling analysis. Among the 189 MACS participants analyzed, self-reported ethnicities were consistent with observed HapMap ancestry in all but 2 instances. To avoid spurious associations resulting from population stratification, we restricted subsequent genomewide association analyses to 156 individuals whose MACS samples were grouped with the HapMap European American population (51 rapid progressors,

57 moderate progressors, and 48 long-term nonprogressors) (Table 2). In this population, we also corrected for potential population stratification with use of a modified Eigenstrat method [26]; 14 significant principal component axes were identified and included as covariates in the regression models described below. Q-Q plots testing the normality of the *P* value distribution after SNP filtering and Eigenstrat correction showed no significant deviations from what would be expected with a null hypothesis ( $\lambda = 1.0056$ ;  $\lambda = 1.0$  is expected with a null hypothesis), indicating little effect of population stratification.

**Stage 1 statistical analysis.** We tested for associations between individual SNP genotypes and phenotypes for time to clinical AIDS by using 2 approaches: implemented with PLINK software [25]. First, we used logistic regression and an additive genetic model and included as covariates age at seroconversion and the 14 significant principal component axes identified by the Eigenstrat method. In this categorical approach, phenotypes were coded as follows: rapid progression (3), moderate progression (2), long-term nonprogression (1). Next, we used quantitative progression phenotypes ( $\log_{10}$  transformed) in a



**Figure 1.** Survival analysis of a locus associated with delayed progression to AIDS. Kaplan-Meier survival curves for genotypes of single-nucleotide polymorphism rs17762192, representing a haplotype located 36 kb upstream of *PROX1* on chromosome 1, showing strong associations with differing rates of progression to clinical AIDS (see Table 3 for *P* values and genomic location). This analysis incorporates seroconverters from the stage 2 replication analysis that were typed for rs17762192 ( $n = 587$ ). GG, GC, and CC genotype counts are shown for the independent replication cohort (A) and the independent replication cohort combined with the cohort used in the stage 1 discovery genome-wide association study (B). RH, relative hazard.

linear regression model (with the same genetic model and 15 covariates). Results were overlapping for both analyses; only the results for logistic regression (categorical progression phenotypes) are shown. To avoid excessive artifacts of small samples and for quality control screening of genotypes before testing, we excluded all SNPs with minor allele frequencies of  $<5\%$  ( $n = 113,205$ ), all SNPs that deviated from Hardy-Weinberg equilibrium at a significance level of  $P < .001$  ( $n = 4459$ ), and all SNPs that yielded unambiguous genotype calls in  $<95\%$  of samples ( $n = 54,739$ ). These quality control measures yielded 345,926 SNPs. We located SNPs in a gene or gene region with use of the Ensembl database [27], implemented with WGA-Viewer software (version 1.25) [28]; SNPs were mapped to 5' upstream, 5' untranslated, coding, intronic, 3' untranslated, or 3' downstream gene regions, as well as intergenic regions. The Affymetrix signal intensity plots for all top-ranking SNPs were examined to confirm genotype calls. We show *P* values corrected using the false discovery rate procedure [29].

**Stage 2 replication study population.** From the stage 1 analysis, we selected the 25 top-ranking SNPs with *P* values of  $<1 \times 10^{-5}$  and *q* values  $<.70$ , representing 15 loci with SNPs with  $r^2$  values  $>.90$ , to test for replication in an independent replication cohort of 590 seroconverters. These stage 2 participants were enrolled in 5 natural history cohorts of patients with HIV infection or AIDS: AIDS Link to the Intravenous Experience ( $n = 13$ ) [30], MACS ( $n = 291$ , excluding the 156 MACS individuals used in our stage 1 GWAS) [19], the San Francisco City Clinic Cohort Study ( $n = 76$ ) [31], and the Multicenter Hemophilia Cohort Study ( $n = 169$ ) [32]. Details

of these cohorts have been described elsewhere [33]. The date of seroconversion after study enrollment was estimated as the midpoint between the last seronegative and the first seropositive HIV-1 antibody test result; only individuals of European ancestry with  $<2$  years between the 2 tests were included. The censoring date was either the date of the last follow-up visit or 31 December 1995, the date HAART became the standard of care, to avoid potential confounding by virus-suppressive therapy. Genotyping was performed using the Affymetrix Genome-Wide Human SNP Array, version 6.0.

**Replication study statistical analysis.** In the stage 2 analysis, we analyzed the 25 top-ranking stage 1 SNPs for genotypic association with progression to clinical AIDS (CDC 1987 definition), time to AIDS-related death, and time to  $CD4^+$  T cell count  $<200$  cells/mm<sup>3</sup>. Cox model *P* values were subjected to a Bonferroni correction for 15 independent tests, representing all SNPs tested for replication and pruned for linkage disequilibrium at  $r^2 > .9$  (25 SNPs in 15 loci). Next, we stratified

The figure is available in its entirety in the online edition of the *Journal of Infectious Diseases*.

**Figure 2.** Location of the 3 single-nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) in the upstream region of the *PROX1* gene (1q32) and linkage disequilibrium matrix; the linkage disequilibrium matrix was shown by Haploview for the HapMap Utah European population. The intensity of the red color in each box is proportional to the strength of the linkage disequilibrium estimates ( $D'$ ) for the SNP pair. Linkage disequilibrium blocks depicted by black triangles were based on 95% confidence interval criteria [34].

**Table 4. Associations of HIV-1 Disease Progression from the Stage 1 Genomewide Association Study for Single-Nucleotide Polymorphisms (SNPs) in or within 50 kb of Genes that Produce Proteins Reportedly Involved in HIV-1 Infection**

Gene	Chromosome	SNP	<i>P</i>	No. of SNPs	Corrected <i>P</i> <sup>a</sup>
<i>APOBEC3G</i>	22	rs139314	$1.63 \times 10^{-1}$	10	1.63
<i>CCL2</i>	17	rs1024612	$7.10 \times 10^{-3}$	27	$1.9 \times 10^{-1}$
<i>CCL3L1</i>	17	rs9910447	$3.00 \times 10^{-1}$	3	$9.0 \times 10^{-1}$
<i>CCL5</i>	17	rs9303692	$1.10 \times 10^{-1}$	18	1.82
<i>CCR2/CCR5</i>	3	rs916093	$1.80 \times 10^{-3}$	31	$5.6 \times 10^{-2}$
<i>CUL5</i>	11	rs2089174	$1.79 \times 10^{-2}$	26	$4.7 \times 10^{-1}$
<i>CXCR1</i>	2	rs13027120	$4.20 \times 10^{-3}$	10	$4.2 \times 10^{-2}$
<i>CX<sub>3</sub>CR1</i>	3	rs2271489	$6.62 \times 10^{-2}$	26	1.72
<i>CXCL12</i>	10	rs928565	$7.50 \times 10^{-3}$	50	$3.8 \times 10^{-1}$
<i>HLA-B</i>	6	rs16899646	$1.33 \times 10^{-5}$	81	$1.1 \times 10^{-3}$
<i>IFNG</i>	12	rs4913277	$5.13 \times 10^{-1}$	35	17.96
<i>IL10</i>	1	rs7228082	$4.85 \times 10^{-2}$	24	1.16
<i>IL4</i>	5	rs3798135	$3.83 \times 10^{-2}$	23	$8.8 \times 10^{-1}$
<i>MBL</i>	10	rs10824779	$1.34 \times 10^{-1}$	38	5.09
<i>PPIA</i>	7	rs7785231	$2.18 \times 10^{-1}$	11	2.40
<i>TRIM5</i>	11	rs10769180	$6.80 \times 10^{-3}$	106	$7.2 \times 10^{-1}$
<i>TSG101</i>	11	rs11024717	$2.83 \times 10^{-1}$	12	3.40

**NOTE.** Categorical progression rate phenotypes were used for this analysis; the SNPs shown are those with the smallest uncorrected *P* values.

<sup>a</sup> Bonferroni-corrected *P* values.

the replication cohort by viral transmission mode and tested the significant associations in each resulting population. The 2 discrete populations represented sexual transmission (men who have sex with men;  $n = 405$ ) and parenteral transmission (hemophiliacs and injection drug users;  $n = 182$ ).

## RESULTS

**Association between locus upstream of *PROX1* on chromosome 1 and progression rate.** Our discovery-stage genomewide association analysis of 345,926 validated SNPs with rate of progression to clinical AIDS resulted in 25 SNPs with statistically significant associations at  $P < 1 \times 10^{-5}$  and corrected *P* values of  $< .70$  (*q* values, corrected for false discovery rate) (Table 3). These SNPs were tested for replication in an independent cohort of 590 seroconverters. In this replication population, results with an additive (codominant) genetic model revealed a single haplotype segment including 3 linked SNPs ( $r^2 > 0.9$ ) 36 kb upstream of *PROX1* on chromosome 1, with minor alleles that were associated with delayed progression to AIDS diagnosis as well as AIDS-related death (Figure 1) after Bonferroni correction (rs17762192; discovery-stage,  $P = 7.13 \times 10^{-5}$ ; replication-stage,  $P = 4.8 \times 10^{-4}$  and  $P = 7.2 \times 10^{-3}$  [corrected]; relative hazard ratio, 0.69; Fisher's combined  $P = 6.23 \times 10^{-7}$ ) (Table 2). Effects were consistent in the replication analysis stratified by HIV-1 transmission mode, in which equivalent relative hazard ratios for AIDS diagnosis were found in the sexual and parenteral transmission populations (relative hazard

ratios, 0.72 for sexual and 0.63 for parenteral transmission; Fisher's combined  $P = 1.63 \times 10^{-6}$ ) (Table 2).

The 3 associated SNPs were examined for linkage disequilibrium in relation to *PROX1*. There was a strong backbone of linkage around the associated SNPs, and for 2 SNPs, the linkage disequilibrium extended, albeit weakly, into the *PROX1* coding region (Figure 2, which appear only in the electronic version of the *Journal*). We are presently dissecting the haplotype structure of the region, which includes genotyping additional SNPs and resequencing the region, to further refine the association with progression to clinical AIDS.

**Replication of previously identified genes associated with AIDS progression.** Our stage 1 genomewide association analysis provides an opportunity to replicate previously identified candidate AIDS restriction genes in these cohorts. In the analysis of progression to clinical AIDS, we found clear associations for SNPs within 50 kb of *HLA-B* (the most significant was rs16899646;  $P = 1.33 \times 10^{-5}$ ). Likewise, we found associations for SNPs within or in linkage disequilibrium with SNPs within the following genes, reported elsewhere to influence AIDS progression: *CCR2/CCR5* (rs916093;  $P = 1.8 \times 10^{-3}$ ) and *CXCR1* (Table 4).

The associations found by Fellay et al [7] between *RNF39* and *ZNRD1* and disease progression were not replicated in our stage 1 analysis (assessing the SNPs in strong linkage disequilibrium with those identified by Fellay and colleagues). The discrepancies between these 2 progression GWAS may reflect

**Table 5. Association Analysis of Set Point HIV-1 Load in the Stage 1 Genomewide Association Study (GWAS) Population**

SNP	HIV load set point in GWAS by Fellay et al [7]				Current study	
	Rank	<i>P</i>	Chromosome	Closest gene	<i>P</i>	Corrected <i>P</i> <sup>a</sup>
<b>rs2248462</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>3.61 × 10<sup>-6</sup></b>	<b>6</b>	<b>HCP5</b>	<b>4.51 × 10<sup>-4</sup></b>	<b>1.16 × 10<sup>-2</sup></b>
rs9263715	17	7.08 × 10 <sup>-6</sup>	6	PSORS1C1	4.00 × 10 <sup>-2</sup>	1.12
<b>rs9348876</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>4.09 × 10<sup>-5</sup></b>	<b>6</b>	<b>AIF1</b>	<b>1.34 × 10<sup>-3</sup></b>	<b>3.75 × 10<sup>-2</sup></b>
rs10736862	53	4.24 × 10 <sup>-5</sup>	9	ASS	5.55 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	15.54
rs919214	74	7.02 × 10 <sup>-5</sup>	12	GNPTAB	5.10 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	14.28
rs7894582	79	7.41 × 10 <sup>-5</sup>	10	NHLRC2	7.31 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	20.47
rs10738377	83	7.78 × 10 <sup>-5</sup>	9	FREM1	7.29 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	20.41
rs12037583	88	8.26 × 10 <sup>-5</sup>	1	TNR	1.81 × 10 <sup>-2</sup>	5.07 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>
rs3749971	90	8.32 × 10 <sup>-5</sup>	6	OR12D3	3.08 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	8.62
rs2248617	97	9.23 × 10 <sup>-5</sup>	6	HCP5	1.62 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	4.54
rs6674438	106	1.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	1	GNG4	6.78 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	18.98
rs633265	109	1.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	18	MC4R	6.87 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	19.24
rs1119911	111	1.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	13	RXFP2	7.96 × 10 <sup>-2</sup>	2.23
rs2326434	120	1.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	8	DEPDC6	3.09 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	8.65
rs2355164	121	1.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	2	UPP2	4.64 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	12.99
rs1980360	128	1.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	4	SCD5	8.36 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	23.41
rs4626416	134	1.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	6	NA	5.54 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	15.51
rs2860975	141	1.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	10	CYP2C8	7.74 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	21.67
rs10104973	151	2.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	8	COL14A1	9.81 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	27.47
rs1420198	160	2.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	16	TOX3	8.24 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	23.07
rs10087151	168	2.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	8	COL14A1	8.55 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	23.94
rs1544149	171	2.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	1	SMYD3	4.81 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	13.47
rs6910183	173	2.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	6	THBS2	1.99 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	5.57
rs11772832	177	2.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	7	CNOT4	2.52 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	7.06
rs9266409	187	2.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	6	Q5SS58_HUMAN	8.35 × 10 <sup>-3</sup>	2.34 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>
rs600130	193	2.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	9	FBP2	2.29 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	6.41
rs3130544	194	2.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	6	C6orf15	7.01 × 10 <sup>-2</sup>	1.96
rs10509689	198	2.00 × 10 <sup>-4</sup>	10	ALDH18A1	4.56 × 10 <sup>-1</sup>	1.96

**NOTE.** Boldface type single nucleotide polymorphisms (SNPs) are SNPs found in the top 200 by Fellay et al [7] that were also tested in this study (direct overlap between Illumina Hap550 and Affymetrix 500K arrays). NA, not available.

<sup>a</sup> Bonferroni-corrected *P* values.

small sample sizes ( $n = 486$  in the study by Fellay et al [7] and  $n = 156$  in the present study) or the differences in disease progression phenotypes. Fellay et al used time from seroconversion to the start of antiretroviral treatment or time to the predicted or observed first CD4<sup>+</sup> T cell count <350 cells/mm<sup>3</sup>, whereas both stage 1 (discovery) and stage 2 (replication) of our study tracked time from seroconversion to a clinical AIDS diagnosis or AIDS-related death.

**Replication of previously identified genes associated with viral load.** Because recent HIV-related GWAS have focused on viral load phenotypes [7–9], we sought to replicate these associations with use of viral load measurements for the 156 individuals from stage 1. Set point viral load was calculated according to the methods of Fellay et al [7] as the mean of log<sub>10</sub>-transformed viral load (measured in viral RNA copies per milliliter) from 6 months to 3 years after the first visit with a positive HIV-1 antibody test result, including only visits before

any antiretroviral therapy. To avoid measurements obtained during the initial peak viremia or during the accelerating phase of chronic disease characterized by increasing viral load, we removed all measurements > 0.5 log<sub>10</sub> higher or lower than the mean viral load during visits from 6 months to 3 years after seroconversion, according to the methods of Fellay et al [7].

We tested for associations between SNP genotypes and viral load phenotypes with use of the aforementioned SNP filtering and linear regression methods. Fellay et al [7] examined viral RNA set point in 486 European individuals and found 2 SNPs strongly associated with set point HIV-1 load. One polymorphism was found in a nonsynonymous coding nucleotide of HLA complex P5 (*HCP5*); this SNP is in high linkage disequilibrium with *HLA-B\*5701* on chromosome 6. The other SNP was found in the 5' region of *HLA-C*. Although there was minimal overlap in SNPs tested between our genotyping platform (Affymetrix 500K) and that used by Fellay and colleagues

(Illumina 550K), certain relationships were replicated (Table 5) and reaffirmed the dominant role of the HLA in controlling viral load. For example, SNP rs2248462, intergenic to *HCP5* on chromosome 6 and associated with viral set point by Fellay and colleagues ( $P = 3.61 \times 10^{-6}$ ) [7], was also significantly associated with viral set point in our study ( $P = 4.15 \times 10^{-4}$ ; corrected,  $P = 1.16 \times 10^{-2}$ ); this SNP is in strong linkage disequilibrium ( $r^2 = 1$ ) with 2 other associated SNPs from our study: rs2516422 ( $P = 5.12 \times 10^{-4}$ ) and rs2395034 ( $P = 5.13 \times 10^{-4}$ ). The minor alleles of these 3 SNPs were associated with decreased viral set point. SNP rs9348876, 7.8 kb upstream of *AIF1* on chromosome 6, was significantly associated with viral set point both by Fellay et al [7] ( $P = 4.09 \times 10^{-5}$ ) and in our data set ( $P = 1.3 \times 10^{-3}$ ; corrected,  $P = 3.75 \times 10^{-2}$ ).

## DISCUSSION

In our stage 1 GWAS of viral set point, we observed significant associations with HIV-1 load for several SNPs in the HLA region, as reported elsewhere [7]. This portion of our study confirms the dominant role of HLA genes in controlling viral load.

In our 2-stage association study of host genetic polymorphisms and rate of progression to clinical AIDS, we found SNPs near the transcription factor *PROX1* that were confirmed in replication tests, with use of a larger and independent set of seroconverters. Human *PROX1* is involved in biologic functions closely tied to HIV infection, most notably as a negative regulator of interferon (IFN)  $\gamma$  expression in T cells [35]. IFN- $\gamma$  plays an important role in HIV disease progression through its activity as a regulatory cytokine and inflammatory effector. Furthermore, *PROX1* encodes a transcription factor in which differential expression has been shown to mediate the progression of Kaposi sarcoma [36], a common sequela of HIV-1 infection. The exact role of this locus in HIV disease progression is unclear, although the regulation of IFN- $\gamma$  in T cells by *PROX1* presents a possible mechanism of action. In our stage 1 population, the association between this locus and disease progression is not explained by an association with Kaposi sarcoma as the AIDS-defining illness. Additional studies will be necessary to determine the association between these SNPs and differential levels of expression of *PROX1* and/or IFN- $\gamma$ .

These data suggest that, beyond the major role of HLA in viral control, a cumulative polygenic host component may be involved in the regulation of rate of progression to clinical AIDS. Our results should prove to be valuable in informing larger host genetics studies of HIV-1 and progression to AIDS and in guiding future replication and follow-up studies in other cohorts and populations.

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