

Someday This Will Be Over

AIDS Remembered

“Someday, the AIDS crisis will be over. Remember that. And when that day comes—when that day has come and gone, there’ll be people alive on this earth—gay people and straight people, men and women, black and white, who will hear the story that once there was a terrible disease in this country and all over the world, and that a brave group of people stood up and fought and, in some cases, gave their lives, so that other people might live and be free.”

Vito Russo speech, “Why We Fight,”
ACT UP demonstration in Albany, NY May 9, 1988



December 1, 2023 marks the thirty-fifth anniversary of World AIDS Day, a “global movement to unite people in the fight against HIV and AIDS” that began in 1988. The day also serves as a moment to remember and mourn the more than 35 million people worldwide that have died from Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome.

This display cannot capture the complexity of the AIDS pandemic — the social and cultural impacts, the politics, the medical breakthroughs, the human stories. It provides just a smattering of glimpses into some aspects of how our world, especially in the United States and Seattle, changed during the height of the pandemic in the 1980s and 1990s. We encourage you to learn more, to reflect, and, for those of you that are old enough, to remember.

Please note that some of the language and images used in this display may be disturbing to some. The human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) is spread through the exchange of bodily fluids through sexual contact, intravenous drug use, and blood transfusions. The public health campaign and AIDS activists often used graphic images and content to convey ways to prevent transmission of the disease.

Learn more:

- Atkins, Gary. *Gay Seattle: Stories of Exile and Belonging*. University of Washington Press, 2013.
- Crane, Johanna Tayloe. *Scrambling for Africa: AIDS, Expertise, and the Rise of American Global Health Science*. Cornell University Press, 2013.
- France, David. *How to Survive a Plague: The Inside Story of How Citizens and Science Tamed AIDS*. Alfred A. Knopf, 2016.
- Grmek, Mirko D. *History of AIDS: Emergence and Origin of a Modern Pandemic*. Princeton University Press, 1990.
- Hubbard, Jim, et al. *United in Anger: A History of ACT UP*. [ACTS UP Oral History Project], 2012.
- Mackenzie, Sonja. *Structural Intimacies: Sexual Stories in the Black AIDS Epidemic*. Rutgers University Press, 2013.
- McKenna, Kevin. *Safer Sex: Gay Politics and the Remaking of Liberalism in Seattle, 1966-1995*. Diss. University of Washington, 2017.
- Royles, Dan. *To Make the Wounded Whole: The African American Struggle against HIV/AIDS*. The University of North Carolina Press, 2020.
- Schulman, Sarah. *Let the Record Show: A Political History of ACT UP New York, 1987-1993*. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2021.
- Shilts, Randy. *And the Band Played on: Politics, People, and the AIDS Epidemic*. St. Martin's Press, 1987.
- Whiteside, Alan. *HIV and AIDS: A Very Short Introduction*. Second edition., Oxford University Press, 2016.

Feature Films & Documentaries:

- Cran, William., et al. *The Age of AIDS*. PBS, 2006.
- France, David, et al. *How to Survive a Plague*. Ro*co Films, 2012.
- Nyswaner, Ron., et al. *Philadelphia*. Columbia TriStar Home Video, 1997.

UW Special Collections Manuscript Holdings:

- Charles J. Harbaugh papers, circa 1950-1996
- Tim Burak papers, circa 1980s
- Stan Henry papers, 1966-2002

Digitized Research Collections:

- Archives of Sexuality and Gender - *Articles, reports & manuscript material illustrating LGBTQ history and culture since 1940 including the AIDS crisis.*
- LGBT Studies - *Books, articles, films & more covering LGBT history and culture including the AIDS crisis*
- LGBT Magazine Archive - *LGBTQ magazines including the Advocate (1967-2015)*
- LGBTQ+ Rights - *Law collection including Congressional hearings, scholarly & law journal articles, Supreme Court briefs & more.*

Exhibit curators: Jessica Albano, Kari Anderson, Dylan Burns, Jason Grossmann-Ferris, Theresa Mudrock & Sally Pine