No Laughing Matter

Editorial Cartoons on AIDS

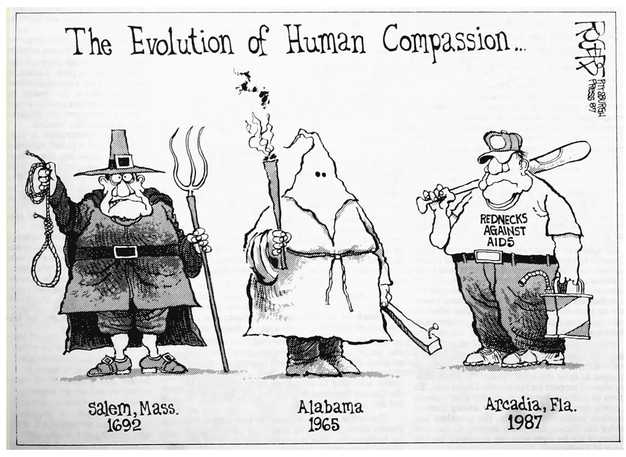
The main purpose of political cartoons is to provide political commentary on current events and issues. They are visual editorials "where journalism and popular culture intersect... a single frame loaded with vivid images and condensed meaning."

> *"We are the pit bulls of journalism. We are the rapid prosecution and immediate execution. We draw a conclusion, we draw a cartoon, and hopefully, we draw blood."*
>
> *Michael Ramirez, political cartoonist for the Las Vegas Review-Journal*



Cartoons taken from *Editorials on File*, 1987

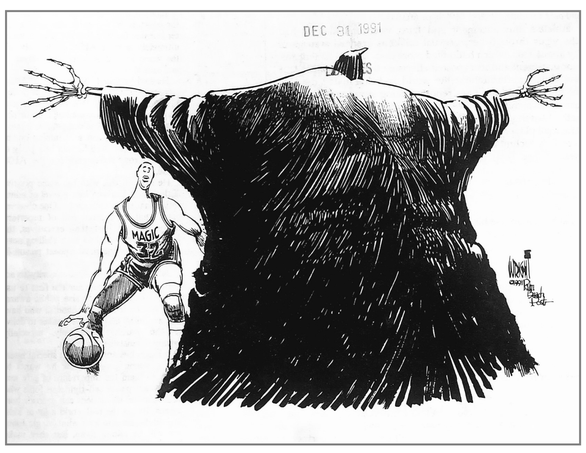




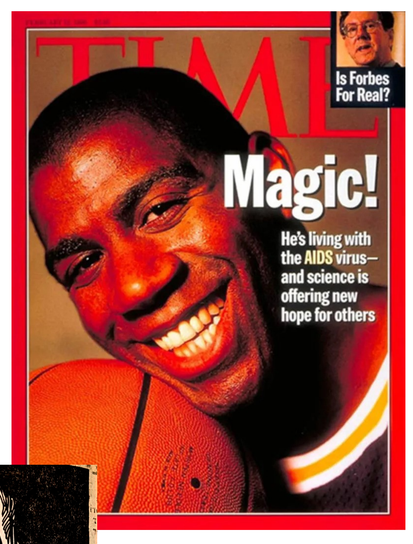
The hysteria surrounding AIDS in the mid-1980s burst into flames in Arcadia, Florida. The Ray family had successfully sued the local school district to allow their three HIV positive sons, Ricky, Robert, and Randy, to attend the local public school. The three brothers contracted the virus due to infected infusions of Factor VII, a blood-based treated for hemophilia. In August 1987, an arsonist burned down the family home and the Rays were forced to leave Arcadia. Ricky Ray died of AIDS in 1992 at the age of 15; his brother Robert in 2000 at the age of 22; youngest brother Randy died this year at the age of 43.



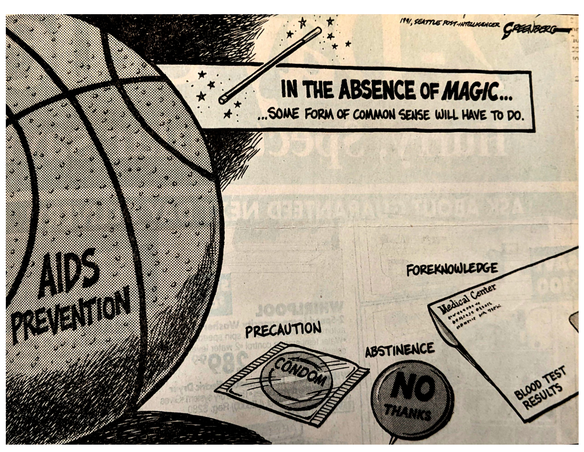
Ray brothers in 1987



The announcement that Earvin "Magic" Johnson, the basketball superstar, was HIV positive rocked the sports world and nation in November 1991. Though AIDS was first recognized ten years earlier, Johnson's HIV positive status was one of the events that broke through the media and received national coverage. The Associated Press reported, "people talked and cried and thought about little else." Dr. Anthony Fauci noted that the announcement, "really jolted people into a much more empathetic view towards people who were living with HIV."

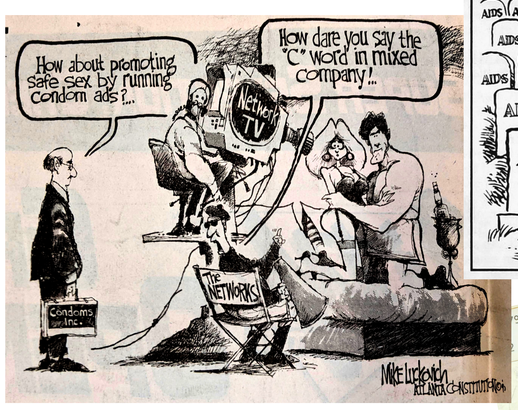


Condom advertising on the television was controversial in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Congress even held a hearing, where Congressman Henry A. Waxman accused television networks as "hypocritically priggish... portraying thousands of sexual encounters each year in programming...television is unwilling to give the life-saving information about safe sex and condoms."

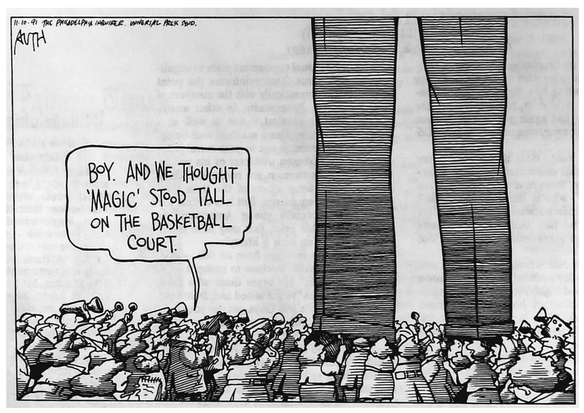


Cartoons taken from the Nance HIV/AIDS scrapbooks (UW Special Collections) and *Editorials on File*, 1991.

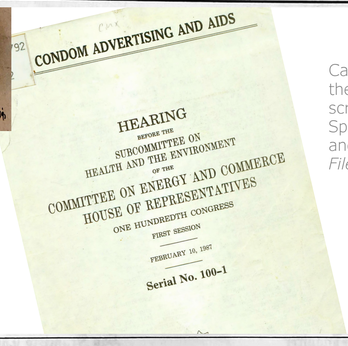






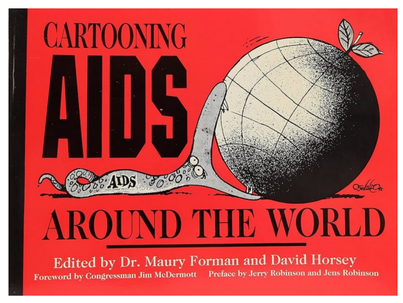


David Horsey cartoons taken from the Nance HIV/AIDS scrapbooks (UW Special Collections) and Billy Ireland Cartoon Library & Museum

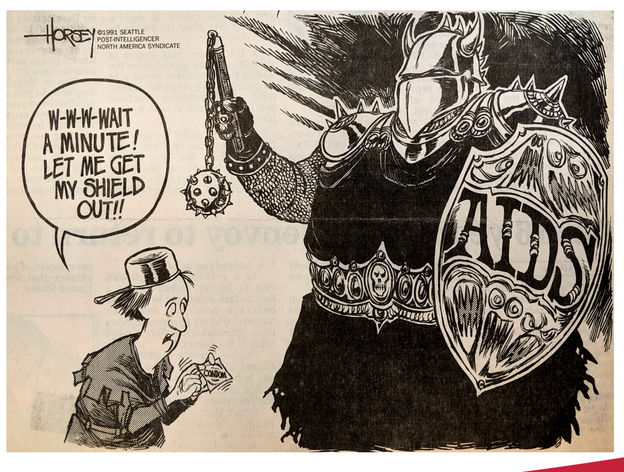


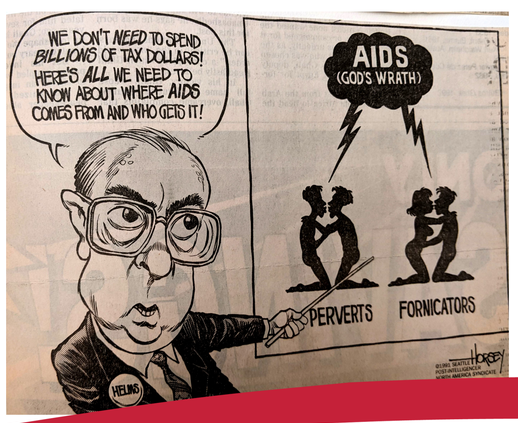
Cartoons taken from the Nance HIV/AIDS scrapbooks (UW Special Collections) and *Editorials on File*, 1987 & 1994.

David Horsey, two-time Pulitzer prize winning editorial cartoonist, started out as the editor for the UW Daily. He then went on to work for the Seattle Post-Intelligencer, Los Angles Times and Seattle Times. In 1992, he co-edited the *Cartooning AIDS Around the World* showing how cartoons "illuminated the issue and using humor and symbolism would draw people more quickly into a sympathetic view."











The title, No Laughing Matter, is taken from "Let's Talk: Teens, Sexuality & Media," a Teen Futures media literacy education project at the UW College of Education.