

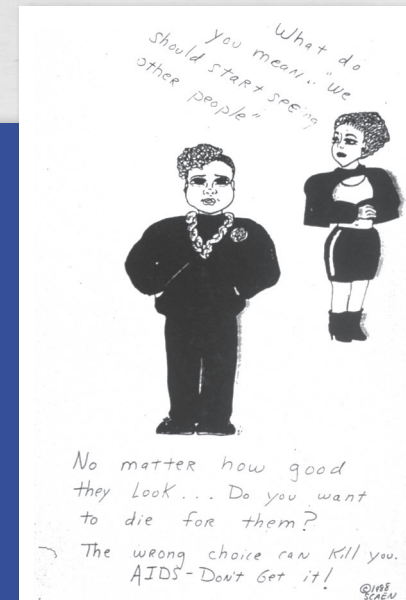
The archive of public health posters about AIDS at the National Library of Medicine is rooted in the cultural output of artists, activists, and community workers. Their work—specifically, the use of personal narrative, drawing as a visual art strategy, language, and the collective process in the creation of AIDS posters, continues to broadcast the message that, 40 years after the crisis began, AIDS is not over.

Producer The Silence = Death Collective, 1987
Courtesy National Library of Medicine



In this poster, we see people taking to the street, but not in protest. With placards in Haitian Creole that read, “Protect yourself, family & children against the HIV virus disease,” and “My fellow Haitians let us fight this AIDS disease together,” the message is of community care.

Producer League Against AIDS, U.S. Office of Minority Health, ca. 1985
Courtesy National Library of Medicine



A Community Responds

An unnamed artist belonged to the close-knit community brought together by activist DiAna DiAna in her South Carolina hair salon. In 1988, the artist produced a series of drawings featuring children, same sex couples, single women, and people who inject drugs, asking questions, giving advice, and looking to viewers to join them as they deal with the emotional fallout of the virus.

Producer South Carolina AIDS Education Network, 1988
Courtesy National Library of Medicine

Cover illustration:

In 1981, nurse Bobbi Campbell put up a poster in the window of his local pharmacy that read “GAY CANCER.” He included photos of lesions he had on his body. He advised people with similar marks to seek medical attention. Decades later, Campbell can be seen as making one of the earliest, if not the first AIDS poster. He died in 1984, unable to see the full impact of his work.

Producer HealyKohler
Courtesy National Library of Medicine

