

NLM Traveling Exhibitions

PR Information



www.nlm.nih.gov/surviving-and-thriving

The National Library of Medicine produced *Surviving and Thriving: AIDS, Politics, and Culture*, guest curated by historian and educator Jennifer Brier, Ph.D.

The traveling exhibition and companion website tell the story about a new disease that appeared in the United State in 1981. Reactions to the disease, soon named AIDS (acquired immune deficiency syndrome), varied. Early responders cared for the sick, fought homophobia, and promoted new practices to keep people healthy. Scientists and public health officials struggled to understand the disease and how it spread. Politicians remained largely silent until the epidemic became too big to ignore. Activists demanded that people with AIDS be part of the solution. *Surviving and Thriving* illustrates an iconic history of AIDS alongside lesser-known examples of historical figures who changed the course of the pandemic.

[Surviving and Thriving: AIDS, Politics, and Culture/Sobrevivir y Prosperar: Sida, Política y Cultura](#), a Spanish- and English-language online adaptation of a 2013 exhibition, features [Resources](#), including class resources and links to selected NLM health information resources. A [digital gallery](#) features a curated selection of fully digitized items from [NLM Digital Collections](#) that showcase NLM's rich collection of posters and other ephemera on HIV/AIDS from 1981 to the present day.

Please include this courtesy line with all public announcements about the project:

The National Library of Medicine produced this exhibition and companion website.

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Host Venues for *Surviving and Thriving* receive a link to download the following PR images. For your reference, included here are thumbnail images and brief captions. Please include their corresponding **courtesy** noted below when using them.



In October 1990, ACT UP descended upon Washington and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention in Atlanta, carrying signs that demanded the formal definition of AIDS change to include women. Excluded from the diagnosis of having AIDS, women could not access potentially lifesaving care and treatment, even as they died of the disease. By 1992, activists succeeded in their efforts: women were officially recognized as people who could have AIDS.

Poster for the Department of Health and Human Services demonstration designed by ACT UP/DC Women's Committee, 1990

Courtesy National Library of Medicine



Dr. Victoria Cargill first encountered AIDS in Boston in 1981, before the term even existed. The experience changed her life, and she has spent her career caring for people with AIDS, particularly those who are most vulnerable. Dr. Cargill came to Washington, DC in 1998 and continued her HIV/AIDS work at a community health center in Southeast Washington, an area with an infection rate of more than 12 percent. Today, Dr. Cargill is associate director for Interdisciplinary Research at the Office of Research on Women's Health.

Victoria Cargill, MD (right) with a patient at a Washington, DC community health center, February 2013

Courtesy National Library of Medicine



La Decisión I, New York City Department of Health, 1990

Courtesy of the National Library of Medicine

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President Ronald Reagan took five years to publicly address the epidemic. At the end of 1985, he asked Surgeon General C. Everett Koop to write a “special report on AIDS.”

President Ronald Reagan (right) and Dr. C. Everett Koop at White House, ca. 1983

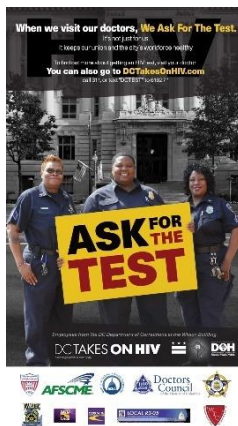
Courtesy National Library of Medicine



In 1982, Michael Callen and Richard Berkowitz, two gay men with AIDS living in New York, invented the practice of safer sex, forever changing the way people dealt with and prevented AIDS.

Michael Callen (at typewriter) and Richard Berkowitz, 1984

Courtesy Richard Dworkin



In the 21st century, testing for HIV is the first line of defense in the battle against AIDS. But when the test was released in 1985, many people refused for fear that their names would go on a registry to deny them health care. Municipal unions in Washington, DC are at the forefront of fighting this persistent myth and explaining how testing helps keep people healthy.

“Ask for the Test” poster, District of Columbia Department of Health, 2012

Courtesy HAHSTA (HIV/AIDS, Hepatitis, STD, TB Administration), District of Columbia Department of Health

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In 1990, ACT UP protesters took over parts of the National Institutes of Health campus, calling on scientists to develop more drugs for people with AIDS and the federal government to disseminate drugs equitably. Their efforts convinced policy makers to change regulations that resulted in a new regimen of drugs used to treat AIDS made available in 1996.

Protestors in front of the James A. Shannon Building, National Institutes of Health, 1990

Courtesy Donna Binder



With chapters across the country, ACT UP held thousands of demonstrations between 1987 and 1996, including one at the Department of Health and Human Services to insist that women with AIDS receive care and treatment. Their actions transformed how scientists and politicians responded to the AIDS crisis.

Protestors in front of the Department of Health and Human Services, during the national campaign to change the definition of AIDS, October 2, 1990

Courtesy Donna Binder