
Primary Source Documents on the AIDS Epidemic

Document A

The People With AIDS Advisory Committee, [The Denver Principles](#), adopted 1983

We condemn attempts to label us as “victims,” a term which implies defeat, and we are only occasionally “patients,” a term which implies passivity, helplessness, and dependence upon the care of others. We are “People With AIDS.”

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ALL PEOPLE

1. Support us in our struggle against those who would fire us from our jobs, evict us from our homes, refuse to touch us or separate us from our loved ones, our community or our peers, since available evidence does not support the view that AIDS can be spread by casual, social contact.
2. Not scapegoat people with AIDS, blame us for the epidemic or generalize about our lifestyles.

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR PEOPLE WITH AIDS

1. Form caucuses to choose their own representatives, to deal with the media, to choose their own agenda and to plan their own strategies.
2. Be involved at every level of decision-making and specifically serve on the boards of directors of provider organizations.
3. Be included in all AIDS forums with equal credibility as other participants, to share their own experiences and knowledge.
4. Substitute low-risk sexual behaviors for those which could endanger themselves or their partners; we feel people with AIDS have an ethical responsibility to inform their potential sexual partners of their health status.

RIGHTS OF PEOPLE WITH AIDS

1. To as full and satisfying sexual and emotional lives as anyone else.
2. To quality medical treatment and quality social service provision without discrimination of any form including sexual orientation, gender, diagnosis, economic status or race.
3. To full explanations of all medical procedures and risks, to choose or refuse their treatment modalities, to refuse to participate in research without jeopardizing their treatment and to make informed decisions about their lives.
4. To privacy, to confidentiality of medical records, to human respect and to choose who their significant others are.
5. To die—and to LIVE—in dignity

Document B

J. Keeler, the Center for Attitudinal Healing, Poster, 1987



Source: Center for Attitudinal Healing via Wellcome Collection under CC BY-NC 4.0.

Document C

ACT UP Protest at Food and Drug Administration, October 11, 1988



Protesters prepare to hang an effigy of President Ronald Reagan at a protest organized by AIDS activist group AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power (ACT UP) at the headquarters of the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) on October 11, 1988, in Rockville, Maryland. The action, called SEIZE CONTROL OF THE FDA, by the group, shut down the FDA for the day. Source: Catherine McGann/Getty Images.

Document D

ACT UP Demonstration on the Lawn of Building 1 of the National Institutes of Health, May 21, 1990



A mass “die-in” on the lawn of Building 1 closed the demonstration as ranks of uniformed officers, some on horseback, protected National Institutes of Health (NIH) headquarters during the Storm the NIH demonstration on May 21, 1990.

Source: NIH via Flickr.

Document E

ACT UP Manchester, Newspaper Clippings, 1991

COMMUNITY LEADERS

ACT UP MANCHESTER will not tolerate ignorant or bigoted views concerning HIV and AIDS from local MPs, counsellors or other community leaders.

Act-Up plagues Tory MP

Manchester Act-Up, grassroots Conservative MP Denis Dover with a spokesman demands what they made a protest visit to his constituency surgery, Thursday, 14th May 1991.

Denis Dover is also a member of the Conservative Family Campaign which recently argued that people with HIV and AIDS should be denied the right to confidentiality, employment, support and proper medication.

When challenged, Mr Dover responded in the gay community for any misunderstanding. He recently appeared on TV that AIDS was a "gay plague" and neglected to point out that world-wide, AIDS has mainly affected heterosexuals.

Act-Up said the only way forward to the AIDS crisis is compassion and financial commitment. "This matter for Charity Town Hall is 'the issue', and this is exactly what we want" said a spokesman.

DEN DOVER, M.P.

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

CHRIS BUTLER, M.P.

HOUSE OF COMMONS
LONDON SW1A 0AA

Police throw out Aids demo group

On Sat 10 February 1991 15 members of Act-Up Manchester disrupted the parliamentary surgery of Chris Butler, Tory MP for Warrington South. This action was in answer to the announcement of the new infectious diseases bill which said: "Where local public of deliberately infecting another person with the HIV virus will be liable for up to five years imprisonment". The aim was to draw such an attention as to place the bill for only people concerned of the above offence. Act-Up Manchester felt the bill was a threat of sexual discrimination, homophobia, and conspiracy to target of concentration camps.

The group had been told the surgery was a huge symbolic issue and goalpost. After 20 minutes of shouting and screaming Mr Butler refused to speak to any members of the group who were eventually speaking to the police. No action was made.

ACT UP MANCHESTER demand:

- Community leaders understand the facts concerning HIV and AIDS infection.
- Community leaders understand the problems and fears that people with HIV and AIDS have.
- Community leaders work to help bring an end to the AIDS crisis and ease the problems for people with HIV or AIDS.

Source: ACT UP Manchester via Wellcome Collection under CC BY-NC 4.0.

Document F

The AIDS Quilt, Shown in Washington, DC, October 11, 1996



The mile-long AIDS Memorial Quilt is displayed on the National Mall in front of the U.S. Capitol, on October 11, 1996. The showing of the quilt, containing more than thirty-seven thousand panels for people who have died of the virus, highlighted a weekend of activities to heighten AIDS awareness.

Source: Reuters.

Document G

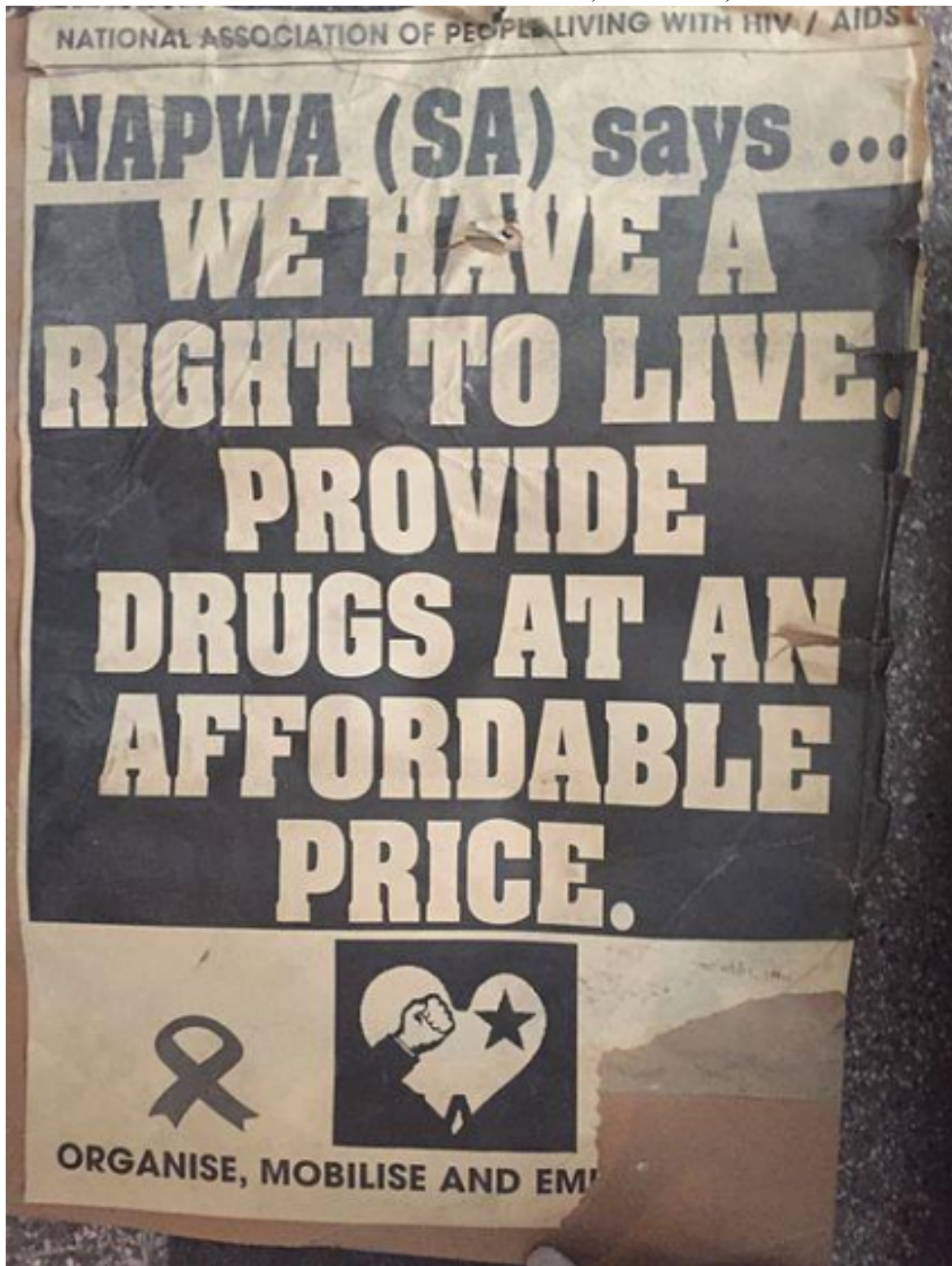
Protest in India, April 10, 2013



Demonstrators hold a rally in New Delhi, India, on April 10, 2013, to protest a potential free trade agreement between the European Union and India that could restrict exports of cheap anti-HIV medicines to developing countries. Source: Mansi Thapliyal/Reuters.

Document H

Poster From the Durban AIDS Conference, South Africa, 2016



Source: Christian Michelides via Wikimedia Commons under CC BY-SA 4.0.