

Rear View: April 2021

Monthly spotlight on an item from the HIV/AIDS Graphic Communication Archive

SIÂN COOK APR 19, 2021 03:25PM

Welcome

Each month a different item from www.hivgraphiccommunication.com will be featured here in full.

(Click on the image to enlarge >>>> if viewing on a phone you may need to scroll right).

Visitors are invited to respond by adding comments, references, stories, reflections, links, recommendations etc. Please share.

Add a comment underneath the image or click the + to add a new post.

SIÂN COOK APR 30, 2021 08:37AM

Note on privacy

Comments can be posted anonymously, or self-identify if you wish. Comments will be preserved when the Padlet is archived each month and added to the main website here:

<https://www.hivgraphiccommunication.com/rearview>



SIÂN COOK APR 11, 2021 02:30PM

1. Sex...

Leaflet, The Terrence Higgins Trust, November 1985.

SIÂN COOK APR 19, 2021 05:31PM

One of the first UK-produced communications that attempted to engage and appeal to a young audience in a contemporary and realistic way in terms of design and tone of voice. Introducing us to new terminology, combining medical and vernacular language in order to inform and encourage, focusing on behaviours rather than gender or sexual identity. This leaflet also references the 'public panic' that the mainstream media was helping to fuel at the time, 10 years before the first public government campaign.

SIÂN COOK APR 26, 2021 01:43PM

...in response to Ted's comment (thanks Ted), some more technical info – this leaflet is a 12 page concertina fold, ('Sex...' on the front cover), 135x96mm page (pocket size), printed in 3 colours. I don't have distribution details – anyone know more about this?

Love the bright colours used in this (and the details, like the handwriting to encourage people to call or write), there's actually a sense of joy in it's design. – ANONYMOUS

Yes! A real effort made to celebrate 'safe' sex as a counterpoint to the grim news reports.

– SIÂN COOK

Jane here. I love this idea! Especially as a prompt for people's memories as that can really expand our understanding of what it was like to live through these times. It brings an archive alive. I don't remember this leaflet at all, but I imagine it was aimed at gay men – it doesn't reference vaginal sex although it does try to be non-specific. Language and design (esp. for AIDS info) feels WAY ahead of it's time. Sex positive, non-judgemental or scary. If only messaging had gone this route rather than lilles and gravestones. – ANONYMOUS

Thanks Jane, totally agree! – SIÂN COOK

Imy here. This is brilliant – love the spotlight on items from your vast collection! This is such a striking design and as you highlight has such a clear focus on actions and behaviours rather than gender or sexual identity. Looking forward to next month's highlight item! – ANONYMOUS

Ted here. I love this idea of a monthly spotlight. Thank you for doing it. As for this wonderful item, I like the social and political context you have provided. It is very useful to students, researchers, culture workers and random curious people on the internet! I wonder if in your description you may also want to add a bit more design / use info. Maybe mention how it was used. Maybe name that the image is a leaflet unfolded and made flat, and a line or two about how it would have been handed out and made available at bars, bathhouses, shops ect (I am purely guessing here!) And maybe some size info. xo Ted – ANONYMOUS

Fiona here. I also really like the idea of a monthly spotlight, with space for discussion, reflections, and recommendations. Ever the art historian, I'm really interested in the use of colour (blue, pink) and the artistic references used in this leaflet – Henri Matisse, but there are others, eg. the allusion to bodily fluids – and what that might suggest about how it circulated and amongst whom, as well as indicating how THT were thinking about how to share information without depicting people. It's so different from the later THT posters and leaflets that are in the Wellcome archive, for example. – ANONYMOUS

This is a great idea and a wonderful way of seeing materials that I missed back in the day of which this leaflet is a good example. One has to remember just how tricky even the simplest designs were to out together before computers and this design is a nice Matisse homage with the cutouts. Andrew – ANONYMOUS

Hi Sian, Theo here. This is a brilliant idea and works well. Might be nice to have as much info as possible that might enable people today to make something similar if wanted? – the extra technical info is great, in later features you could ask the writer to include info on how the group made it (i.e. what group circumstances enabled it, what the technology was to produce it?). – ANONYMOUS

Yes Fiona! I was thinking the same thing about the colours (also very 80s shades) and Matisse. Andrew – Took me a few views to see the erections in those cut-outs! – SIÂN COOK

Thanks Theo – it is easy to forget that this would have been produced pre-computer/desktop publishing and probably from hand-done artwork and paste-up. – SIÂN COOK
