

Rear View: March 2022

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

15. Women and AIDS, Positively Women and Immunity

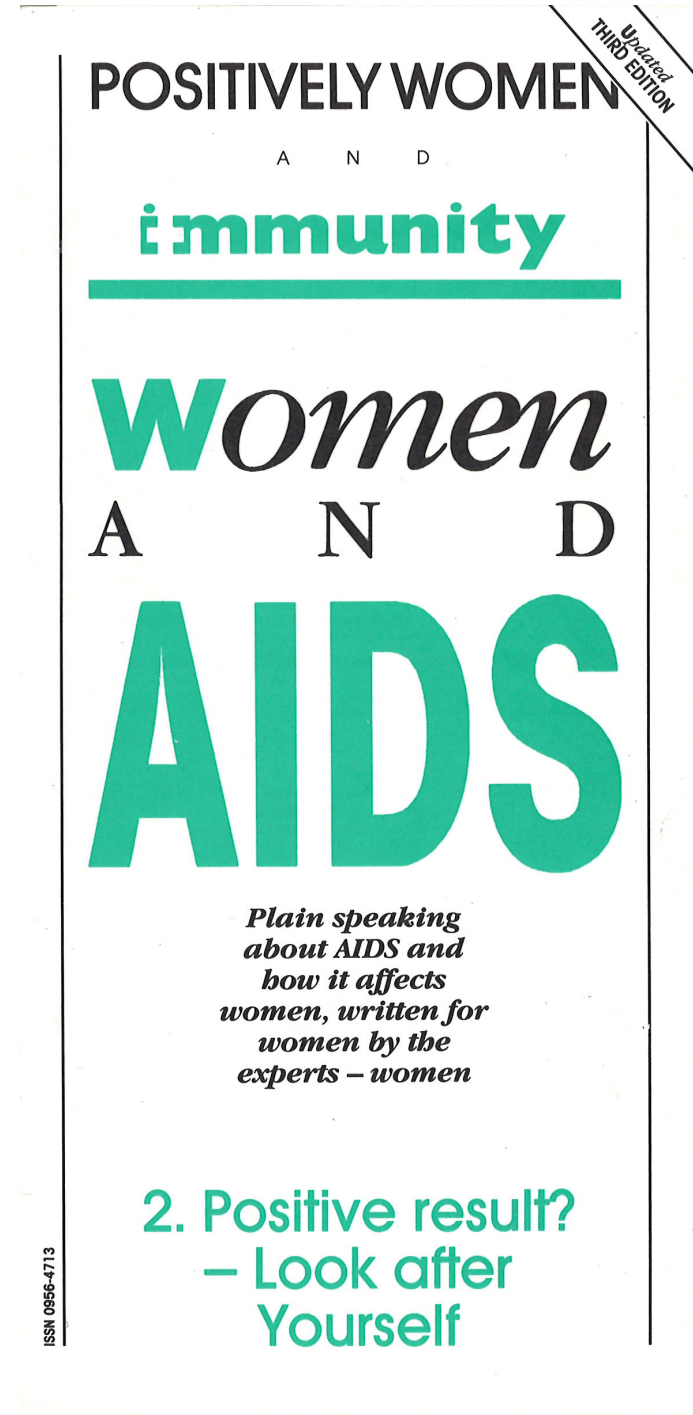
Leaflet. A4 folding to 1/3. 3rd edition, 1990.

Chosen by Ford Hickson:

“Given my research and advocacy work has mainly been about the sexual health of gay and bisexual men, I might have been expected to choose a safer sex brochure. Instead I chose this item because it recalled many and important memories for me. Public health crises are always opportunities for social control and always have the potential to generate or exacerbate human rights inequalities.

This leaflet from 1990 was jointly produced by two small community-based HIV organisations that each made a big impact – Immunity and Positively Women. Immunity responded to the legal needs of people with HIV/AIDS, whose rights were so badly abused in the 1980s. They forwarded the use of the law to drive change and were key supporters of the UK Declaration of Rights for People with HIV and AIDS. Positively Women was founded in 1987 as a self-help group by and for women. It was committed to connecting people with shared experience of HIV. As both epidemic and services changed, PW grew into Positively UK, one of our most valued NGOs. I’ve always believed that the most useful thing a person just diagnosed with HIV can do is to speak with other people who live with the virus and that HIV NGOs are best fronted by people living with HIV.

I joined the Terrence Higgins Trust in the autumn of 1988 as a ‘helper-cell’, someone who would do practical tasks for people living with AIDS. My first task was a painting job for an African lady living with her two small children in a London suburb. Women have always been part of the picture of HIV/AIDS in the UK and recognising the diversity of the HIV+ community is vital. HIV strength. Queer strength. Black strength. Female strength. Trans strength.”



GROUPS AND SERVICES

Also Combined Helpline Service: Broad spectrum advice, specialist services and support. If open 10am-6pm National AIDS Helpline (0800 947 123).
Open: 10am-6pm. **Helpline:** London (area codes included) phone the National AIDS Helpline (0800 947 123) or your local helpline. **London:** 0800 947 123.
Body Positive Women's Group: Helpline. Meets monthly at Body Positive Centre to provide mutual support and plan women's responses to HIV infection and AIDS. For info and membership details write: 115 Probuson Gardens, London SW8 9ES. Phone: 0171 833 1043.
Childline: Confidential counselling for children and young adults in trouble or danger. Write: Freephone 1111. London EC4B 4BB. Phone: 0800 1111-1111. **Open:** 24 hrs.
CLASH (Central London Action on Street Health): Young women's advice and support on anything to do with health. Write to: Soko Hoaghe, 50/2 Queens Square, London W1. Phone: 017 734 1794. **Open:** 10am-5pm. **Other:** Street awareness activities.
Centres who help people who have HIV infection and people who have AIDS: NHS Special Needs Clinic, Guyton Street, London SE1. **Mon:** 10am-5pm. **Tu, We:** 9am-noon. Phone: 017 630 8436 or ask the Subject of Care and Medicine Health Authority. Phone: 017 253 3020.
Feedback: Mutual help and support group for people who have AIDS. Write to: Service Progress Trust, 52-54 Emrys Ave Road, London WC1E 6JG. Phone: 017 631 0330.
Homophobia Society: Information, advice and support for everyone who has homophobia - and special representation of people infected with HIV through using Factor 8. Write: 123 Westminster Bridge Road, London SE1. Phone: 017 493 2020.
Immunity's Legal Centre: Free legal specialist legal services. See also HIV research and health education charity for anyone with legal problems connected with HIV infection or AIDS. Will-making, advice and court and tribunal theory representation on offer. Also welfare rights advice. Contact: 1st floor, 100, Strand, London WC2R 0JF. Phone: 017 493 2020.
London Employment Rights: New AIDS specialist food on night at work. Write: Room 202 Southbank House, Black Prince Road, London SE1 7JL. Phone: 017 587 1038. **Mon-Fri:** 10am-5pm.
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POSITIVELY WOMEN

is an organisation run by women for women with HIV infection, AIDS - or any of the conditions associated with it. We offer the following services: support group, open only to women who have HIV infection, AIDS, or an associated condition, telephone and one-to-one counselling and consultancy services. Write to us at 5 Sebastian Street, London EC1V 0HE or phone us on 071-490 5515.

WHAT'S AIDS?

AIDS is short for the Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome. If you have AIDS your body's defence system is severely weakened. That leaves the body vulnerable to serious infections, which can kill you. That condition is called AIDS. It develops in you.

SO WHAT'S HIV?

HIV stands for the Human Immunodeficiency Virus. The virus was discovered in 1983. Since then it's been called LAV and HTLV-III, but since 1986 its official name has been HIV. It may cause AIDS to develop in you. To get infected you have to let someone's body fluids - blood, semen, vaginal fluids and, possibly, breast milk - get into your blood stream. There are no known cases of infection through tears and saliva. HIV isn't like most viruses because, when you're infected it lives inside blood cells which are part of your body's defence system. As the cells divide and multiply, so does the virus. Many scientists assume that anyone with HIV infection is at risk of developing AIDS.

HOW DOES IT SPREAD?

It is very difficult to get infected with HIV. You can put yourself of risk of getting infected.

- By having sex with someone who has HIV infection. You can cut the risk of infection by making sure he wears a condom - and remember, the more partners you have penetrative sex with, the greater your risk of coming into contact with the virus. Anal penetration is far riskier than vaginal penetrative sex.
- By sharing needles or syringes with someone who's infected with the virus.
- By sharing sex toys, whether you're straight or lesbian.

The virus can't be transmitted by social contact - by kissing, cuddling, shaking hands, sharing cups, towels, using toilets or by any close contact that doesn't involve the exchange of body fluids.

immunity

260A KILBURN LANE, LONDON W10 4BA TELEPHONE 081-968 8099

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POSITIVELY WOMEN

A N D

immunity

women A N D

AIDS

*Plain speaking
about AIDS and
how it affects
women, written for
women by the
experts - women*

2. Positive result?
- Look after
Yourself

Special
hard edition

March Guest Curator

Ford Hickson is Associate Professor of Public Health at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine, where he shares knowledge with young health advocates from around the world and promotes better measurement of sex, gender and sexuality in public health research.

ford.hickson@lshtm.ac.uk

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