

## Mapping AIDS

In this innovative study, Lukas Engelmann examines visual traditions in modern medical history through debates about the causes, impact and spread of AIDS. Utilizing medical AIDS atlases produced between 1986 and 2008 for a global audience, Engelmann argues that these visual textbooks played a significant part in the establishment of AIDS as a medical phenomenon. However, the visualizations risked obscuring the social, cultural and political complexity of AIDS history. Photographs of patients were among the earliest responses to the mysterious syndrome, cropped and framed to deliver a visible characterization of AIDS to a medical audience. Maps then offered an abstracted image of the regions invaded by the epidemic, while the icon of the virus aspired to capture the essence of AIDS. The epidemic's history is retold through clinical photographs, epidemiological maps and icons of HIV, asking how this devastating epidemic has come to be seen as a controllable chronic condition.

Lukas Engelmann is a Chancellor's Fellow at the University of Edinburgh.

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# Mapping AIDS

*Visual Histories of an Enduring Epidemic*

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Lukas Engelmann

*University of Edinburgh*



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