

## 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.

Cambridge University Press  
978-1-108-42577-3 — Mapping AIDS  
Lukas Engelmann  
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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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UNIVERSITY PRESS

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[More Information](#)

## CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom  
One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA  
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia  
314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,  
New Delhi – 110025, India  
79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

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[www.cambridge.org](http://www.cambridge.org)  
Information on this title: [www.cambridge.org/9781108425773](http://www.cambridge.org/9781108425773)  
DOI: 10.1017/9781108348959

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First published 2018

Printed in the United Kingdom by TJ International Ltd. Padstow Cornwall

*A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.*

*Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data*

Names: Engelmann, Lukas, 1981- author.

Title: Mapping AIDS : visual histories of an enduring epidemic / Lukas Engelmann.

Other titles: Global health histories (Series)

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2018. | Series: Global health histories | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2018023525 | ISBN 9781108425773 (hardback : alk. paper) | ISBN 9781108444057 (pbk. : alk. paper)

Subjects: | MESH: Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome—history | HIV Infections—epidemiology | History, 20th Century | History, 21st Century | Atlases

Classification: LCC RA643.83 | NLM WC 17 | DDC 614.5/99392—dc23  
LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2018023525>

ISBN 978-1-108-42577-3 Hardback

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To Kate

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## Acknowledgments

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Writing about the history of AIDS would not be possible without the tireless efforts of those who have struggled and fought to save lives and to change the course of AIDS. This book pays tribute to the memory of the lives lost in the epidemic and is dedicated to the remembrance of the past of a devastating disease that continues to disrupt our present.

Pointing out beginnings is difficult. But I would like to start with a series of undergraduate seminars organized by Isabell Lorey and Linda Hentschel, which introduced me, first, to the adventures of thinking visually about history and, second, to thinking politically about disease and immunity. From developing my master's thesis to the completion of my dissertation, which forms the basis of this book, I am profoundly grateful to my advisers: the historian of medicine Volker Hess and the feminist sociologist of knowledge Sabine Hark. Volker Hess provided persistent and patient guidance into the historical worlds of medicine; his extensive expertise on the production of medical knowledge was an essential and tenacious foundation for this project. Sabine Hark has shown me how to conduct a history of the present and has been a brilliant guide in learning to negotiate the complex political waters of HIV/AIDS with zeal, integrity and political compassion.

The colloquium at the Center for Interdisciplinary Women's and Gender Studies (ZIFG) at Technical University–Berlin allowed me to unpack intricate and difficult questions in an inspiring forum, characterized by a shared commitment and rare intellectual friendship. The colloquium at my graduate school "Gender as Category of Knowledge" boasted an abundant wealth of expertise, experience and knowledge that I have come to miss ever since. I would like to thank all who have contributed to the lively and productive discussions in these thought-incubators. Among the peers and colleagues, of which many have become friends, I would like to warmly thank Nana Adusei-Poku for knitting together visual frameworks in search of our academic milieu; Mike Laufenberg for the pleasure of reading and teaching Canguilhem

and Foucault together; Sarah Speck for balancing intellectual collaboration with political comradery in fundamentalist times; Lisa Malich for together uncovering new ways of doing medical history; and Gabriele Dietze for resolute questions about my project's stakes. I would like to thank Gregg Bordowitz, who came to Berlin to share his impressive work. And I am indebted to Brigitte Weingart, whose book on infectious words has been my key reference for many, many years and whose commentary on my project was generous, insightful and productively challenging.

Without the support of Ilana Löwy, I would have not taken up a visiting PhD student fellowship at the Department for the History of Science at Harvard University. Thanks largely to the fantastic mentorship from Jeremy Greene, my term at the department has been an enriching and inspiring experience. My gratitude to the graduate students and especially to Lisa Haushofer for a warm welcome, David Jones for taking me on his course, Peter Galison for advice on atlases, Charles Rosenberg for his thoughtful comments on the normalization of AIDS and Allan Brandt for his generosity in sharing deep insights into the history of AIDS. It was a most remarkable experience to witness the premiere of "United in Anger" in New York's MoMA in 2012, and I am deeply indebted to Jim Hubbard for the generous invitation and for sharing thoughts about his life and work.

Finishing the PhD, supported by a helpful write-up retreat at the Fondation Brocher in Geneva, would have not been possible without the critical and careful reading that Mike Laufenberg dedicated to my manuscript. My gratitude goes also to Sarah-May Dang, whose feedback and patience carried it through to the printer. The transition into this book began at the Institute for the History of Medicine, now the Center for Medical Humanities at the University of Zurich. I would like to extend my warm thanks to Flurin Condrau for supporting my work all the way through and giving me the pleasure of collaborating with the brilliant Janina Kehr on the blurred lines between anthropology and history and between tuberculosis and HIV/AIDS. Many thanks to Mark Honigsbaum, Sandra Eder and Niklaus Ingold. In Zurich, I was also fortunate to be able to consolidate collaboration with Beate Schappach and Sophie Junge along the lines of our shared commitment to AIDS history.

In Cambridge, working on the visual history of bubonic plague since 2014, I would like to thank Christos Lynteris, who showed compassion and inspiring encouragement towards this book. Warm thanks to Branwyn Poleykett, Nick Evans, Emma Hacking, Catherine Hurley,

xii Acknowledgments

Simon Goldhill, Tim Lewens and all members of CRASSH for their inputs, questions and helpful critiques. Also, closer to the end, many thanks to Richard McKay, Karen Jent and Lisa Haushofer for their feedback on the final manuscript. Furthermore, this book became real through the encouragement of Sanjoy Bhattacharya, the series' editor, and Lucy Rhymer, who I am thrilled to call my editor at Cambridge University Press. And finally, my thanks to the anonymous reviewers for their attentive and productive feedback.

But beyond all these inputs, friendly and fierce critiques, one outstanding person deserves my utmost gratitude. Kate Womersley has single-handedly given me the courage to translate my German thesis; she has shared her incredibly sharp intellect, her brilliant eye and her impeccable writing skills to teach me invaluable insights into my work and into the finesse of style and tone in English, and she has lent an unsurmountable amount of dedication and commitment to the book. Thank you, this book would not be here without you. I am lucky to call you my partner, and I am sure our shared and deeply intermingled future will allow me to give back. Here's to many more books you and I will write together.

I owe my parents a great deal, but also this book. Without their enduring support and their unshakable belief in my work, I would have struggled to maintain focus and my economic independence. Also, Emanuel Kann has contributed more to this book than he would believe. Friends are essential, and without them this book would have remained an impenetrable mental obstacle. My warmest thank you and big hugs for engaging discussions, caring commitment and brilliant distractions to Anne Lenz and Lotte Lenz, Michi Brosig, Resa Haeckel, Magali Mander, Sonja Neuweiler, Mathias Boehm, Paul Buntzel, Vojin Saša Vukadinović, Tatjana Kononenko, Vanessa De Vries, Lena Kahle and my siblings Julez and Jonas.

What is left is to express thanks to all the participants in workshops, conferences, seminars and meetings who, over the years, generously engaged with my presentations. Financial support has been given to this book through a fellowship of the DFG in Germany and through a fellowship from the Fondation Brocher in Switzerland. My thanks also to the staff of the Staatsbibliothek zu Berlin and the Widener Library as well as the Countway Library in Harvard for their invaluable support in writing this book.