
Guide to the AIDS Healing Alliance Records

Collection number: 1991-6

Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society
San Francisco, California

Processed by:

Josué Hurtado

Date Completed:

March 2005

Encoded by:

Rebekah Kim

© 2007 The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society. All rights reserved.

Descriptive Summary

Title: AIDS Healing Alliance records

Dates: 1983-1989

Collection number: 1991-6

Creator: AIDS Healing Alliance

Collection Size: 1 linear foot2 manuscript boxes

Repository: Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society
San Francisco, California 94105

Abstract: Records of a self-help alternative treatment organization that dissolved in 1989. This group promoted awareness of alternative therapies in treating HIV infection and conducted workshops conducted by long-term survivors.

Physical location: Stored at the Archives of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society in San Francisco, California.

Languages: Languages represented in the collection: English

Access

Collection open for research.

Publication Rights

Copyright to unpublished manuscript materials created by the donor has been transferred to the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

Preferred Citation

AIDS Healing Alliance records, 1991-06, Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Historical Society.

Acquisition Information

Donated to the Historical Society by Steve Kuttner, January 25, 1991.

Biography / Administrative History

The AIDS Healing Alliance (AHA) was a pioneering self-help organization founded in 1986. The group's stated purpose was to "dispel the myth that AIDS or ARC inevitably result in death." The organization had several key goals: establish a network of long-term survivors, provide a forum where their knowledge of the successful use of alternative therapies could be shared, catalog all available alternative therapies, and promote the concept that health management is a personal responsibility. As one member, Steve Kuttner, put it, "We operated from the philosophy that disease is more than a physical crisis; it presents some kind of personal lesson which offers an opportunity for inner healing as well as outer cure." Through workshops, a phone line and the "First AIDS Pack," the organization attempted to collect and disseminate

information on treatments, clinics or practitioners who were having some success in retarding or curing the condition of AIDS. They also developed an in-depth, long-term survivor's questionnaire (though this was never actually administered). The group was particularly interested in the scientific literature on the etiology and epidemiology of the disease and on potential treatments and how these treatments were tested and developed. Notably, the group refused to subscribe to the view that HIV was the proven cause of AIDS, that AIDS had a single cause or that AIDS was the same disease in every person. The organization dissolved in 1989.

Scope and Content of Collection

The Records of the AIDS Healing Alliance consist of the internal records, correspondence, information packets, surveys, grant proposals, correspondence, and information regarding "alternative therapies" for AIDS treatment produced by the organization. The records document AHA's efforts to find alternative approaches to treating and curing AIDS. This collection documents one response to the AIDS epidemic - one that was skeptical of mainstream medicine -- as well as the uncertainty and unease which particularly characterized the first decade of the epidemic.

Arrangement

The collection is arranged in 4 series: Activities, Related Organizations, Administration, and Alternative Therapies.

Indexing Terms

AIDS Healing Alliance
AIDS (Disease) Alternative treatment United States
AIDS (Disease) San Francisco History
AIDS (Disease) Etiology.

Series 1. Administration 1986-1989

Physical Description: 8 folders

Series Description

This series documents the structure, organization, and activities of the AHA, including meeting minutes, grant proposals, correspondence, phone logs, and newsletter materials.

Box: Folder 1: 1 **1986-1987**
Box: Folder 1: 2 **1986**
Box: Folder 1: 3 **1987-1989**
Box: Folder 1: 4 **1987-1988**
Box: Folder 1: 5 **n.d.**
Box: Folder 1: 6 **n.d.**
Box: Folder 1: 7 **1986**

Series 2. Activities 1986-1988

Physical Description: 10 folders

Series Description

This series consists of materials documenting the main activities of the AHA. Included is the "First AIDS Info Packet," a collection of sources and articles regarding alternative therapies for HIV as well as alternative theories for the causes of AIDS. There are also materials produced for workshops and forums put on by the organization, two versions of the "Long Term Survivor Survey," and materials relating to meetings with San Francisco City Supervisor Larry Britt regarding developing alternative approaches to healing in the AIDS/ARC epidemic.

Box: Folder 1: 8-9 **1987**
Box: Folder 1: 10 **n.d.**
Box: Folder 1: 11 **1987**
Box: Folder 1: 12 **1988**
Box: Folder 1: 13 **1987**
Box: Folder 1: 14 **1988**
Box: Folder 1: 15 **1986-1987**
Box: Folder 1: 16 **n.d.**
Box: Folder 1: 17 **1988**
Box: Folder 2: 1 **1986**

Series 3. Alternative Therapies 1984-1989

Physical Description: 9 folders

Series Description

This series consists of materials relating to alternative therapies for treating AIDS. Included in this series are resources for people seeking such treatments and a petition urging the city of San Francisco to support the dissemination of information about alternative therapies being used by long-term survivors of AIDS. The "AIDS Etiology Controversy" folder contains articles expressing skepticism or rejection of the HIV theory of AIDS.

Box: Folder 2: 2 **n.d.**
Box: Folder 2: 3 **n.d.**
Box: Folder 2: 4 **1987**
Box: Folder 2: 5 **1987**
Box: Folder 2: 6 **1986**
Box: Folder 2: 7 **1987**
Box: Folder 2: 8 **1984-1989**

Series 4. Related Organizations 1987-1988

Physical Description: 2 folders

Series Description

This series consists of materials produced by related organizations, correspondence between AHA and these other organizations, and other materials which highlight the networks and circles in which the AHA operated.

Box: Folder 2: 9 **1987-1988**

Box: Folder 2: 10 **n.d.**