

Research: the rhetoric surrounding aids in the 1980s

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Throughout the 1980s, AIDS (Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome) was a relatively new disease, which was at first associated with gay men. This was because men who were gay were one of the first peoples to contract AIDS, which led to more hatred amongst the ever-growing LGBTQ+ community. Combining the disease with also the anti-gay hatred, created tension throughout the country and the world. Surprisingly, studies show that in 1986 half of Americans believed that AIDS was related to being gay and this statistic had not changed in 2006, twenty years later. Also different groups of people do not realize that HIV/AIDS is still an impending problem, especially people of the white race have tended to blame AIDS on Latinos and African Americans.

Although AIDS is significant in all ethnicities/races, minorities are usually to blame in instances where groups are affected negatively. Additionally, there was a popular poster created in 1983, which displayed the predominant views of anti-AIDS campaigners. The poster read, " AIDS causes blindness." This represented another way in which people did not know what AIDS could do someone. Blindness and deafness seemed to be popular among symptoms of new diseases before the real ones were known.

Many people ignorantly judged people who had AIDS as either people who did drugs or who were thought to be promiscuous. However, this was not the case all the time. Ryan White who was a hemophiliac contracted AIDS at age 13 through a blood transfusion and many people jumped to the conclusion of him being gay, which was not true. In *Tell the Wolves I'm Home*, Uncle Finn had AIDS and he was also a gay man, so when an article was posted in the newspaper about him being gay and having AIDS, Greta reacted in line with <https://assignbuster.com/research-the-rhetoric-surrounding-aids-in-the-1980s/>

society's prejudices (1980s). Chapter Sixteen is when the newspaper article gets published and Greta says, " I don't want a big picture of me hovering over the word AIDS, okay? Is that okay?" Greta can be seen visibly upset over the article, but that's how the majority of people across the country reacted. Although the novel is a work of fiction, it takes place in 1987 and Uncle Finn fits the stereotype of what the first victims of AIDS were like.

He was gay and he most likely contracted AIDS from Toby who either carried it or had AIDS. Mr. and Mrs. Elbus also act fearful of the illness and believe that, " Toby is a murderer." However, they do not have the full story.

June, unlike the rest of her family does not conform to society and although hesitant about first meeting Toby, she is curious about finding out the full story. Even though her family thinks that, " Toby is a murderer," June does not believe that because she learns that Toby misses Finn as much as she does. Just because Toby might have given Finn AIDS, it does not make a him a murderer because he, Toby might not have even known. Works Cited:
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