

## Pre-visit Project 3: AIDS

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### **Objective:**

To explore perceptions of HIV/AIDS and AIDS education

Write **Ignorance = Fear/Silence = Death** on the blackboard. Brainstorm this phrase and its meaning with your students.

Look at Keith Haring's poster for ACT UP below and discuss it with your students. There is some information about the poster and suggested questions for discussion on the next page.



Keith Haring, *Ignorance = Fear/Silence = Death*, 1989, poster for ACT UP

### **Suggested Discussion with Students:**

**Keith Haring, *Ignorance = Fear/Silence = Death*, 1989, poster for ACT UP**

This poster was created by Keith Haring for an activist organization called ACT UP, which stands for AIDS Coalition to Unleash Power. Since it was founded in 1987, ACT UP has played an important role in promoting increased government attention and spending on AIDS research and education. The (pink) triangle was appropriated by ACT UP and other gay and lesbian organizations to reclaim and

transform a symbol used by the Nazis to identify homosexuals in concentration camps during World War II.

What are the connections between the images and the text?

What do the X's represent?

A pink triangle was used by the Nazis during World War II to mark homosexuals in concentration camps. Why would ACT UP want to use the pink triangles as its symbol?

Do you think that people who are different (gays/lesbians, people with AIDS, minorities) are still being persecuted? In what ways?

Discussion questions and project adapted from Simon Leung, "AIDS and Its Representation", in Susan Cahan & Zoya Kocur, Editors, *Contemporary Art and Multicultural Education*, New York, The New Museum of Contemporary Art/Routledge, 1996, pp. 282-306