Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (AIDS) was first described in America in 1981. African HIV viruses predate 1981 by many years, possibly hundreds of years. In 1983 the virus itself (actually more than one variant) was discovered by scientists at Paris’ Pasteur Institute, and they were later awarded the Nobel Prize, along with expectations for a speedy vaccine cure. Dr. Gallo in America was close on their heels, but the French got the glory.

Previous to anybody publishing their laboratory discovery there was no known cause of this syndrome, and no treatment. That’s where I naively and curiously stumbled into the picture:

In 1983 I was in Santa Fe, New Mexico. I had just been appointed editor of the nationally respected tabloid monthly, New Life News, published by a large local natural foods co-op with 5,000 members in a city of 50,000. I had also formally studied for a year with the nation’s top clinical herbalist.

When I took over the editorship I looked at the 24 blank pages staring at me, along with some ads, and started building my first edition. I had just heard of a strange malady in Albuquerque that had two afflicted people, both of whom died. What caught my interest was that nobody knew how or why they died. The French HIV discovery was not yet published.

It took me about five minutes of thinking to figure out that the mystery Albuquerque deaths were caused by a virus, and clearly nothing else. I also worked up a seed-and-soil model for its treatment, explained in a later booklet. I never had a laboratory to isolate that mystery pathogen, so no Nobel Prize for me. That’s fair, since diligent scientists had been puzzling over this elusive problem since 1981.

Being the new editor, I had freedom to insert whatever articles I chose. I placed on page 20 of the 24 pages a half-page article, complete with an original commissioned illustration. [View it below at 300% zoom.] The previous editor sharply chastised me for wasting space on something not worth writing about, since there had only been two deaths in another New Mexico city.
Two years later I was living in Dallas near the epicenter of the Dallas gay culture, and also working as editor for another local publication. By then I was ready to come up with a booklet for AIDS sufferers. I wrote a thirty-page manuscript and distributed it for free within Dallas and Houston: *Aid Your Immune System* was a valuable resource, but was not accepted by most of its intended readers for three reasons: **One**, I was not an MD (as if MDs had anything to offer back then). **Two**, I was married and not gay (as if gays had some special empathy or insight). **Three**, I didn’t offer a magic pill, but instead prescribed a collection of botanicals and individual actions that could help. I no longer have any copies of that 1985 booklet.