Notes on a Flash

March 24, 2014 By Visual AIDS

Last month, inspired by recent conversation, Visual AIDS hosted, Flash Collectives: Creating Agile Strategies for Social Change at the Brooklyn Community Pride Center with artist Avram Finkelstein and members of the Fucklaws collective out of Montreal.

The event began with a warm up discussion around PrEP, PEP, and HIV Criminalization - topics of which many people are still unaware, or have been given incorrect information about. Then, Avram led a discussion on the power of collectives, as someone who has started and been a part of many. In Montreal recently for the Concordia HIV/AIDS lecture series, he spoke about the one day Flash Collectives workshop he did in Canada, resulting in Fucklaws. Organized around ending HIV Criminalization, the collective shared experience and knowledge around the topic, and then in one day with institutional support, produced buttons, a digital billboard, stickers, cards, and a tumblr site.

Members of he Fucklaws collective were on hand at Flash Collectives to discuss their experience, provide best practices, and share questions they were left with. Wrapping the evening up, activist Joshua V Pavan asked the group the following questions, important considerations:

- One of the premises of the day was that we would set political differences aside and not let ourselves get bogged down in fighting over details. And it was very productive. But how much of this was due to the fact that we were aiming for an introductory-level pamphlet? As we move forward on different projects that have more complex analyses, can we still just set try to politics aside or will those differences just manifest in different ways?

- We had a very effective day creating and producing the materials, but since then have been less effective at the actual distribution of the work. Can the flash collective model be applied to the distribution side of activism as well, or is it structurally-biased towards creation?

- Working under the imperative to JUST DO SOMETHING got us off our asses and got things done. But again as we move forward and start new projects, how do we ensure that these fit into a

larger strategy and into a larger movement?

To learn more about the Fucklaws expereince, read member Jenny Doubt’s essay: Collective Strategies on Visual Production on HIV Criminalization
To learn more about the Flash Collective, download the event notes (below).
If you have started a Flash Collectives around HIV/AIDS feel free to tell us about it: info@visualaids.org

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