

## **CHAPTER 4**

### **CONCLUSION**

In conclusion, the 1980s marked the emergence of HIV diagnoses in the United States, and the subsequent rise in cases highlighted the importance of increased HIV testing and treatment to prevent new infections. However, this period also witnessed the unfortunate development of societal stigmas and stereotypes against individuals with HIV. These prejudices have evolved into significant problems, fostering negative attitudes and discrimination towards both HIV and the affected individuals.

There are some Stigmatizing attitudes that have been widespread in the United States HIV such as fear or avoidance of casual contact with people who are infected, or assignment of personal blame for infection. HIV stigma and discrimination affect the emotional well-being and mental health of people living with HIV. People living with HIV often internalize the stigma they experience and begin to develop a negative self-image. They may fear they will be discriminated against or judged negatively if their HIV status is revealed.

Analyzing the movie "The Normal Heart" through the lens of Goffman's theory, it becomes evident that the film provides evidence of the creation and perpetuation of HIV stigma. This stigma, as depicted in the movie, has wide-ranging effects on its targets, discrediting both individuals and the entire group affected by HIV. The movie highlights two key factors contributing to this stigma: the expectancy confirmation process and automatic activation of stereotypes.

These factors were particularly relevant during the early stages of the HIV epidemic when information about the virus was limited. Consequently, many people formed unfounded assumptions based on inadequate sources such as newspapers, posters, and news reports.

Furthermore, these factors gave rise to additional problems, including negative treatment and discrimination towards people living with HIV, as illustrated in the movie through various scenes depicting how stigma operated in the 1980s concerning HIV. In essence, "The Normal Heart" serves as a poignant reminder of the lasting impact of stigma and discrimination on individuals and groups affected by HIV during that era.