

KIYOSHI KUROMIYA

b. May 9, 1943

d. May 10, 2000

**AUTHOR/
AIDS ACTIVIST**

“I really believe that activism is therapeutic.”

Kiyoshi Kuromiya was a Gay Pioneer and an early HIV/AIDS expert.

Kuromiya was born in a Japanese internment camp in rural Wyoming during World War II. He became active in the civil rights and antiwar movements as a student at the University of Pennsylvania.

Kuromiya participated with Frank Kameny, Barbara Gittings and other Gay Pioneers in the first organized gay and lesbian civil rights demonstrations. These “Annual Reminders,” held at Independence Hall and the Liberty Bell each Fourth of July from 1965 to 1969, laid the groundwork for the Stonewall Riots and the GLBT civil rights movement.

In 1970, Kuromiya served as an openly gay delegate to the Black Panthers convention, where the organization endorsed the GLBT liberation struggle. He assisted Buckminster Fuller in writing “Critical Path” (1981), an influential book about technology and its potential to improve the world.

Diagnosed with AIDS in 1989, Kuromiya became a self-taught expert on the disease, operating under the mantra “information is power.” He founded the Critical Path Project, which provided resources to people living with HIV and AIDS, including a newsletter, a library and a 24-hour phone line. Around the same time, Kuromiya helped found

ACT UP Philadelphia, a pioneering organization that helped bring AIDS to the national consciousness. He worked with many AIDS organizations, including We the People Living with AIDS/HIV.

In addition to his service-oriented work and street-level advocacy, Kuromiya was involved in impact litigation, including a successful challenge to the Communications

Decency Act, which criminalized the circulation of “patently offensive” sexual material. He was the lead plaintiff in a federal class action lawsuit on behalf of patients seeking permission to use medical marijuana.

Kuromiya was a nationally ranked Scrabble player. He died at 57 from AIDS-related complications.

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