Epidemics play an urgent role at the intersections of human rights and global public health efforts. They impact health providers and patients, alter social and political landscapes, and influence artistic expressions. Prevention and treatment are connected to issues of race, gender, and sexuality. This conference investigates what we can learn from past epidemics and how we may prepare for new challenges. Furthermore, the definitions of what constitutes an "epidemic" are explored in the context of non-communicable diseases and suicide.