Bookmarks

Vivid characters, stellar prose and big ideas make these books must-reads.

February 21, 2013 By Trent Straube

Finding true love and graduating from college are difficult quests on their own, but try tackling them while living with HIV in the early 1990s in North Carolina. Shelby Smoak, a heterosexual hemophiliac and talented writer, did just that—and he lived to tell the very entertaining tales in his memoir Bleeder.

In Jennifer Anne Moses's fictional novel-in-stories, Visiting Hours, the down-and-out Southerners at an AIDS residence in Baton Rouge, Louisiana, are all approaching death. But morbid and depressing this is not. The book, like each of these memorable and colorful characters, is brimming with life.

The title—Rethink HIV: Smarter Ways to Invest in Ending HIV in Sub-Saharan Africa—says it all. This collection of reports from the best HIV thinkers offers insights and cost-benefit analyses on possible solutions. Two stand-out suggestions: Invest in girls' schools, and end gender-based violence.

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