

Check Them Out

These stories recount life in the presence of HIV.

August 6, 2013 By [Trent Straube](#)

✘ In this hot mess of a memoir, Mark Okun (a blond adopted by a Jewish family, hence the title *A Short Jew in the Body of a Tall W.A.S.P.*) recounts his party days in 1970s and '80s New York. Only when AIDS and AA appear does his life, and this book, take a much-needed focus.

Keith Boykin has collected stories and essays written about and by gay men of color. This population is at high risk of HIV, so the viewpoints presented in *For Colored Boys Who Have Considered Suicide When the Rainbow Is Still Not Enough* make for valuable reading.

Jamie Gentile, now in her 30s, contracted HIV during a blood transfusion when she was 3. Her memoir, *Surviving HIV*, which mostly focuses on her childhood and youth, is at once insightful, hopeful and immensely fun.

My Life After Now, a well-paced young adult fictional novel by Jessica Verdi, veers from the preachy and sticks to the human interest and drama when precocious 16-year-old Lucy contracts HIV after a reckless night.
