Summer Reads

Recommendations to enlighten and entertain, wherever your HIV interests may lie

June 29, 2020 By Trent Straube

The American People: Volume 2: The Brutality of Fact

By Larry Kramer

The iconic AIDS activist and playwright, who died May 27, continues his over-the-top satirical reimagining of U.S. history in which nearly every leader seems to be gay or is hell-bent on destroying gay people—all while a plague ravages the nation.

Blood Criminals: Living with HIV in 21st Century America

By Jonathan W. Thurston

This is not a book focused on HIV crime laws. Instead, the true stories of six individuals living with HIV combine to create a less-than-rosy narrative highlighting sex education, HIV diagnoses, HIV care, love and, yes, also HIV criminalization.

The Deviant’s War: The Homosexual vs. The United States of America

By Eric Cervini

This look at the historical fight for LGBT rights in the 1960s—of note for its lasting influence on today’s civil rights discourse and our HIV landscape—centers on the activist Frank Kameny, who was fired from his government job for being gay.

The Impatient Dr. Lange: One Man’s Fight to End the Global HIV Epidemic

By Seema Yasmin

Dutch HIV scientist Joep Lange, MD, PhD, died en route to the International AIDS Conference in 2014 when his Malaysia Airlines flight was shot down. While reporting on Lange’s global advocacy and career, the author also recounts the history of HIV.

Like a Love Story

By Abdi Nazemian

This hopeful young adult novel follows three teens (and a gay activist uncle with AIDS) in 1989 New York City: aspiring fashion designer Judy; her gay bestie, Art, who’s a budding photographer; and her new boyfriend, Reza, an Iranian transplant harboring a secret that threatens to devastate Judy.

My Epidemic: An AIDS Memoir of One Man’s Struggle as Doctor, Patient and Survivor

By Andrew M. Faulk, MD

An AIDS doctor in Los Angeles and San Francisco during the 1980s who has lived with HIV for nearly 30 years shares his unique perspective. “Every patient’s illness,” he writes, “became a mirror of my own disease.”

My Memory Told Me a Secret

By Jeremy C Bradley-Silverio Donato

A fraught love story between white London lawyer Austin and noncommittal Noah—a Muslim man dealing with personal and family issues—gets more complicated with each page. When drugs, HIV and stigma enter the relationship, so does tragedy.

In the Shadow of the Bridge: A Memoir

By Joseph Caldwell

A chance meeting on the Brooklyn Bridge in 1959 turns into an intense but short-lived relationship. Decades later, the lost love reemerges in the dark days of New York City's AIDS epidemic. In between, playwright Caldwell grapples with his homosexuality and Catholicism.

© 2026 Smart + Strong All Rights Reserved.

http://beta.docker.poz.com/article/summer-reads-hiv