

# MORE BOOKS

## AIDS and the Arrows of Pestilence

Dr. Charles F. Clark  
(Fulcrum Publishing)

Dr. Charles F. Clark, an adjunct associate professor at the University of South Florida Center for HIV Education and Research, provides a clear, concise and readable look at the AIDS epidemic confronting the world.

Beginning with an historical overview of disease and, in particular, epidemics throughout the history of man, Dr. Clark prepares the reader to see the big picture and to recognize AIDS as both a physiological and cultural problem. Dr. Clark identifies the standard risk groups as gay men and intravenous drug users, but he cautions that historically epidemic diseases filter through to all classes and groups in society and provides examples of the contamination of the blood supply and the presence of HIV in the heterosexual population.

Dr. Clark indicates that "moral judgements about innocence and guilt, victims and criminals do not help us understand the HIV epidemic. Individual behaviours do not cause epidemics. Even high-risk individual behaviours do not cause epidemics. Evolutionary biology gives us the infectious disease microorganism, and social organization determines who will be at high risk or at low risk for infection."

Dr. Clark argues that since the social organization or culture provides the fertile ground in which an epidemic takes root, the most effective action to curtail the spread would be social or cultural modification. He also suggests that two social/cultural actions could prevent the incremental spread of AIDS: These actions are "widespread, consistent condom use" and the legalization of "heroin and cocaine". These actions will reduce the spread of AIDS within the at-risk populations and prevent or, at least, reduce the spread into low-risk populations.

Dr. Clark's arguments are supported by historical precedent and current research. This reviewer has followed the HIV/AIDS story over the years and, based on the ongoing failure of modern science and medicine, believes that Dr. Clark's proposals may hold the brightest and best hope of this society to curtail the epidemic of the 1990's.

-- David Schneider

## In Search of Cigarette Holder Man: A Doonesbury Book

G.B. Trudeau  
(Andrews and McMeel)

*Doonesbury* is one of those old, eternally running strips that you either 'get' or you skip. I don't mean to insult non-*Doonesbury* fans, I'm just trying to make a point: *Doonesbury* is one of the few cartoon strips that combine both a large cast of well-defined characters with a continuous storyline based on current events. It's political and whimsical and just plain funny, all at once. Provided, of course, that you keep up on current events.

*In Search of Cigarette Holder Man* is a collection of *Doonesbury*'s best cartoons from 1993. That was the year that Whitewater turned out to be the biggest flop the scandal industry had ever seen, the J.F.K. assassination commemorated its 30th anniversary, and stringent new cigarette laws forced the tobacco industry to search out a market in Asia. How do I remember all of this? With a laugh, because Mr. Trudeau thoughtfully included them in his cartoon strip.

There's so much going on in this book that it gets to be like unravelling spaghetti from an egg-beater. It starts with Mr. Butts, a giant, walking, talking anthropomorphic cigarette trying to convince a group of sceptical young Chinese that American cigarettes are glamorous.

Mr. Butts: "Compare 'em to your own state brands-- What's the most popular?"

Chinese Teen: "Death-to-the-Four-Cockroaches 100's"

Mr. Butts: "No offense, but I rest my case."

And it continues in that vein throughout the book. Mark, the deejay, suddenly announces that he's gay... and everyone wants to stick him back in the closet ("Damn, I thought I'd have the family from Philadelphia..."). Professor Deadman discovers the perils of grading on merit as opposed to grade inflation when a frat member sues him over B+. Zon gets out of jury duty on a surfing exemption. Duke revamps his own personal addition to the JFK conspiracy when a photograph he faked to cash in on the 1967 conspiracy theories turns up at the 1993 convention of conspiracy buffs. His goals: book rights and million dollar movie deals!. The press gets irate when Whitewater proves a washout ("Cover up nothing?" "Yes, sir. Just to be on the safe side.") Old Nixon strips are reprinted with new, politically correct captions. And so on.

It's all tremendous fun. But there is one sour note. The graduation ceremony strip about the students' bright new future with the Gap is sadly all too true. But, as one student observes, "At least we got an 'education'."

You'll laugh, you'll cry, you'll wonder, "What the f--- was that supposed to mean?" And if you actually get the point of this marvellously intricate cartoon, you'll have a blast doing it.

-- Trent Drake

## Love is Hell Special Ultra-Jumbo 10th Anniversary Edition,

A Cartoon Book by Matt Groening  
Pantheon

*Love is Hell* is funny. It's not as funny as *The Simpsons*, the hilarious and wildly popular television cartoon from the same creator, but definitely funnier than *Full House* or *Married... with Children*.

*Love is Hell* is a collection of advice and observations by Groening's classic characters from the long-running comic strip *Life in Hell*. As they navigate the treacherous waters of the relationships, we feel the blast of every torpedo. Who among us hasn't wished for expert guidance regarding the nine types of boyfriend, the nine types of girlfriend or the 57 varieties of love? Groening makes me laugh because he allows me to say "Goo, even the moron I had a crush on in junior high wasn't this pathetic".

The art is probably not what sells Groening's comics. His rabbits look as much like rabbits as Bart Simpson looks like my next-door neighbour. It is what Groening says that is so entertaining. This leads to one minor complaint about his style. Many panels are too wordy.

Although I enjoy the bite in Groening's humour, this is not a cartoon book I would give to a child in elementary school (a lot of the panels aren't about love, they are about S-E-X). I wouldn't give this book to my mother either (see above reasoning). The book gains its laugh from making fun of men, women, sexual preference, dating, marriage, sex, religion, the school system, childhood, baby-hood, parenting, the workaholic 80's and the sensitive 90's. If you find any of the preceding offensive, you are undoubtedly justified and this is a book you should just pass on. If you agree that love and life in general can be hell, Matt Groening's *Love is Hell* would make the perfect Valentine's Day gift.

-- Shannon Younker

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