

# Seeing the full picture

## BOOKS

**Jennifer Kemp** reviews  
AFRICA AIDS EDUCATION SERIES FOR  
SECONDARY SCHOOLS:

■ AIDS — WHY AFRICA

By Mindy Stanford and Dr Clive Evian

■ LIFE WITH HIV AND AIDS

By Lynn Barnes and Dr Clive Evian

■ EXPLORING THE IMMUNE SYSTEM AND THE HIV VIRUS

By Mindy Stanford, Cecile Mather (PhD) and Dr Clive Evian

■ FROM AWARENESS TO ACTION — PREVENTING AIDS

By Terry-Ann Selikow, Lynn Barnes and Dr Clive Evian

■ QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT SEX, DRUGS AND HIV

■ QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT THE SCIENCE OF HIV AND AIDS

By Seth C Kalichman and Dr Clive Evian  
(Awareness Publishing)

**A**frica Aids Education Series for Secondary Schools is an integrated series of books aimed at giving the full picture of the HIV/Aids scenario and some of the questions related to it. The series is very attractive, with clear text and illustrations.

Each book boasts a “Word Help”, which gives the meaning of unusual terms in the text immediately, an enormous improvement on the old idea of a glossary at the back of the book. Another innovation is the “More Info” information bits.

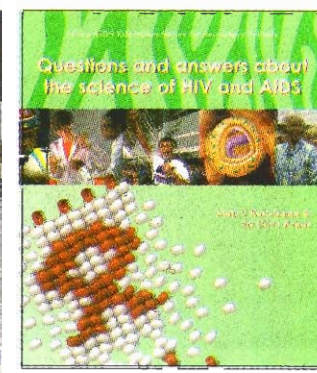
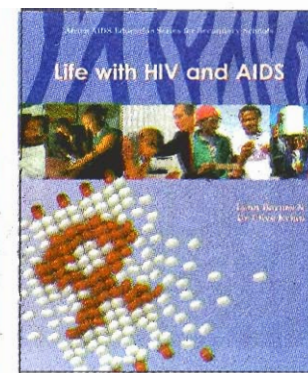
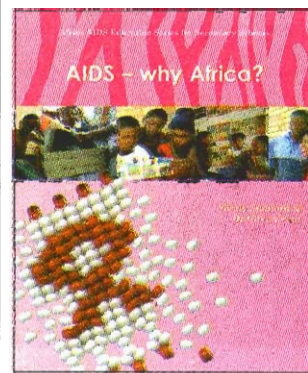
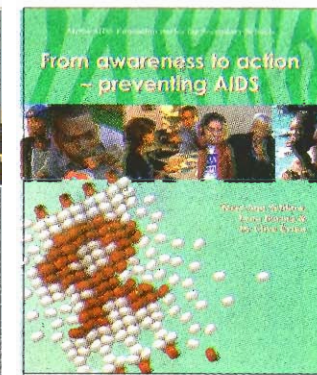
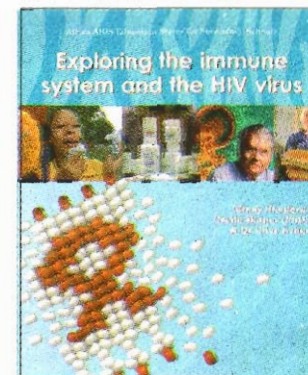
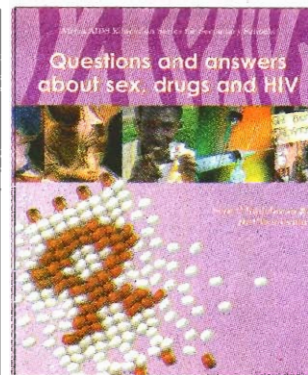
*Aids — why Africa?* outlines the questions that will be answered in the series and thus sets the framework of the enquiry. It puts HIV/Aids in the broader historical perspective of epidemics, while detailing the unique nature of HIV. The courage and struggle of millions of orphans whose parents have died of Aids is highlighted, as are issues such as the social stigma of the disease and individuals’ responsibility to protect themselves.

I found the illustrations of HIV and how it operates in *Life with HIV and Aids* fascinating and enlightening. This book details the deadly and insidious spread of the disease. The authors use photographs, diagrams and maps in a fresh and stimulating way.

The dangers of contracting HIV/Aids from a person who has been tested, but in whom the disease is in the “window period”, are stressed. The book highlights the importance of using condoms, but does not spend much time in discussing the advantages of celibacy. Diet and denial are also covered.

The authors of *Exploring the Immune System and the HIV Virus* say: “If you enjoy natural science, you will find this book interesting.” However, the illustrations tell the story — even for those who are not interested in natural science — in a compelling and easily understandable way. Stunning and revealing photographs and drawings of bacteria, “germs”, models, red and white blood cells, a macrophage and lymphocytes show just how HIV binds to a CD4 receptor on a T-helper lymphocyte. This is followed by two critical photographs, one showing a normal uninfected T-helper cell, and the other the terrifying reality of a cell infected with HIV.

*From Awareness to Action — Preventing Aids*



emphasises the responsibility people have to acquaint themselves with the facts of HIV/Aids.

The reader is led through the thickets of which behaviour and secretions can cause HIV/Aids. The authors detail safer sexual practices and highlight the advantages of abstinence and satisfying alternatives to penetrating sex. These alternatives are ways of telling young people there are other choices.

In *Questions and Answers about Sex, Drugs and HIV*, the authors explore sexual contact, oral sex, kissing, anal intercourse and sharing needles. It gives information about HIV testing, setting out the advantages of getting tested. The authors compare male and female

condoms and, since women are more at risk than men, it highlights the fact that women and girls can take action to protect themselves.

The authors of *Questions and Answers about the Science of HIV and Aids* stress that Aids is simply the end of the HIV continuum, because of the confusion around the relationship between the two. I thought the section covering blood transfusions should have stressed the dangers associated with this, rather than giving readers a false sense of security.

While the series has much to recommend it, I feel it is a pity that it does not include an educator’s guide as the set for the primary schools did. This is due to be remedied, though, as one is currently being developed.