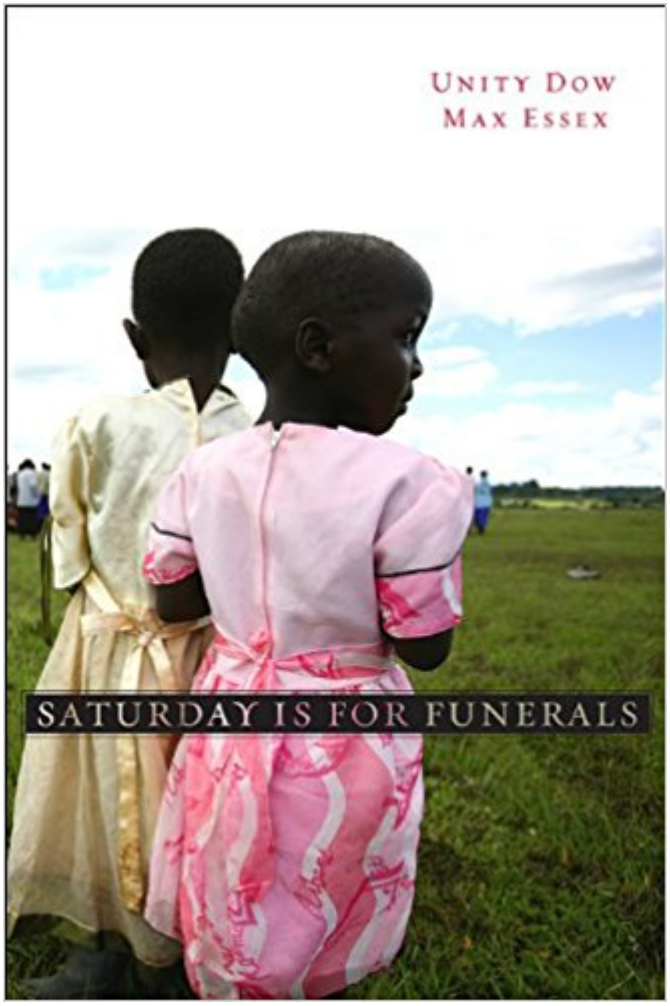
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Saturday Is For Funerals



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Synopsis

In the year 2000 the World Health Organization estimated that 85 percent of fifteen-year-olds in Botswana would eventually die of AIDS. In Saturday Is for Funerals we learn why that won't happen.Unity Dow and Max Essex tell the true story of lives ravaged by AIDSÃ¢â ¬â ¢of orphans, bereaved parents, and widows; of families who devote most Saturdays to the burial of relatives and friends. We witness the actions of community leaders, medical professionals, research scientists, and educators of all types to see how an unprecedented epidemic of death and destruction is being stopped in its tracks. This book describes how a country responded in a time of crisis. In the true-life stories of loss and quiet heroism, activism and scientific initiatives, we learn of new techniques that dramatically reduce rates of transmission from mother to child, new therapies that can save lives of many infected with AIDS, and intricate knowledge about the spread of HIV, as well as issues of confidentiality, distributive justice, and human rights. The experiences of Botswana offer practical lessons along with the critical element of hope.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

The HIV/AIDS epidemic in Botswana is explored with sensitivity and scientific rigor in this heartening book from Dow, a Botswana High Court judge and novelist, and Essex, a Harvard professor and medical researcher specializing in HIV/AIDS. The authors offer an empathetic account of everyday life in a country where the disease infects one of every four adultsÃ¢â ¬â •the constant funerals, the heroism of community workers and activistsÃ¢â ¬â •and miniature narratives from the lives of the

suffering and surviving: a teenager raising his siblings after being orphaned, a newlywed's discovering that her new husband is HIV-positive. In broad strokes, the authors cover the transmission and diagnosis of the disease, how drugs are researched and introduced on the market, and the humble and elaborate initiatives that have been so successful in Botswana: circumcision as well as HAART (Highly Active Anti-Retroviral Therapy). Although occasionally repetitive, this richly informative book dispels much of the mystery still surrounding HIV/AIDS, revealing how life goes on for those infected. Readers overwhelmed by (and even numbed to) the images of desolation that accompany coverage of the epidemic will find a realistic but optimistic assessment of a society successfully tackling the problem and a model for other afflicted nations. (May) Copyright Ã Â© Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

In 2000, the World Health Organization predicted that 85 percent of 15-year-olds in Botswana would eventually die of AIDS. Life expectancies were projected to be shortened by 44 years. But in 2006, Botswana began receiving antiretroviral drugs, and its health prospects turned around dramatically. Dow brings a legal and human-rights perspective and Essex brings a medical-research perspective to chronicling the extent of the devastation of HIV/AIDS and the lessons learned from treating the disease and beating back the dire predictions. At one point, deaths were so prevalent that every Saturday was set aside for funerals. The traditional yearlong mourning was cut short, and family members had to help overwhelmed hospital staff. Dow recalls his motherÃ¢â ¬â„¢s recitation of the long list of friends, relatives, and neighbors who died, the stigma and shame that has led to divorce in a nation that takes marriage very seriously. Essex details the course of the disease, the public health issues, and the private suffering of AIDS patients. Together, they present a compelling look at the toll of AIDS in Africa and some hopeful developments. --Vanessa Bush --This text refers to an out of print or unavailable edition of this title.

I read this book soon after it was released, and I appreciated learning about the AIDS epidemic from both a medical and a sociological point-of-view. The impact of HIV/AIDS, particularly in countries like Botswana, is all-encompassing. Max Essex is a forerunner in AIDS research, particularly in Botswana where the infection rates are somewhere close to 30%. The style of this book is written in two voices - Max Essex's and Unity Dow's. Max provides the scientific understanding of the disease, while Unity illustrates the consequences of the HIV/AIDS infection with faces and names. My favorite genre of books to read that of biographies/autobiographies. I like the way that Unity's

human-interest stories alternate with Max's explanation of the research that has been done. At first I had some difficulty identifying who was 'speaking' and when - but the book becomes more fluid with each chapter. It is interesting how culture comes up against research and how, given the incessant deaths from the disease, Botswana culture has had to accommodate these new challenges and adapt accordingly. I work as an administrator in this field, and I found that this book greatly helped my understanding of my work. I was interested enough to read this book in a day or two, and the images still remain in my mind. It is not often that you encounter a book that appeals on so many levels - and imparts complex information without being condescending or pedantic. I have read some of Unity Dow's other work as well, and she has a fine, narrative voice. She captures the spirit of her culture so well that it is difficult not to pay attention. I would highly recommend this book for anyone interested in learning more about the AIDS epidemic in Africa.

The pairing of the experiences of both Dow and Essex concerning HIV/AIDS makes for a powerful illustration of the burden and suffering created by the disease. Not only informative, but heart-wrenching. Beautifully done. Not just a great read for those interested in Africa and global/public health, but can be easily read by the average audience as well.

These authors have so much knowledge about this. The style of the book is perfect in helping the reader not only learn about the illness but also helping to relate to those with the disease and understand how HIV/AIDS affects more than just the body and those infected with it. A great read where you will learn much.

Beautifully presented book about the HIV epidemic in Botswana. I have so much admiration for the citizens and government of Botswana which obviously values each life.

Helpful book on getting several points of view and cultural aspects prior to my visit. After visiting Botswana for nearly a month, I cannot believe the tragedy that HIV/AIDS has brought to Batswana.

Living in the developed countries most of my life, I have never realized how widespread AIDS is in poorer places. The book is written by a Judge of the Interim Constitutional Court in Kenya and a Harvard Health Sciences professor.Each chapter tells a different story from each author's perspective, a story of how HIV and/or AIDS consumes lives of families in Africa. The Judge narrates what happened in a easy to read manner, while the Harvard professor summarizes the

story and gives a more sociological and scientific explanation of the situation.Each story is unique and true, based on the writers' introduction.I was completely engulfed in learning about culture in Botswana, especially knowing a few people who travel there regularly. Their beliefs and faith in traditional methods of treating disease are well described by the authors and are truly enlightening. A terrific book that is not only well-written but also raises important questions about the significance of education and public health in healthcare.

Saturday Is for Funerals is a moving collection of stories direct from those most affected by the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Unity Dow writes honestly and clearly about the people in her life that have been touched by HIV, and Max Essex explains the science behind her stories in layperson's terms. The book brings to light the every day experience of many Africans in a way that you can't ignore. The scope of the epidemic should be understood by every person alive today and this book is a great start for those wanting to know more. It's a quick and informative read and covers a variety of topics, from the process of getting an HIV test to AIDS orphans. Highly recommended.

Saturday is for Funerals is what I call a slice of life book. Each chapter brings you a story of life in Botswana in connection with the AIDS epidemic. At the end of the chapter is a commentary of the science related to the story. This is a format that I've not encountered being done before outside of text books and I do appreciate the results. The Honorable Unity Dow has an almost conversational writing style and a breadth of life stories to keep each chapter unique and still tied together. Dr Max Essex informs us of the science that underlies the story to open a broader view of the story. Together these two authors bridge the social and the science, the individual and the whole. My understanding of the People of Botswana and of the AIDS crisis in Africa has been increased and been made personal.

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