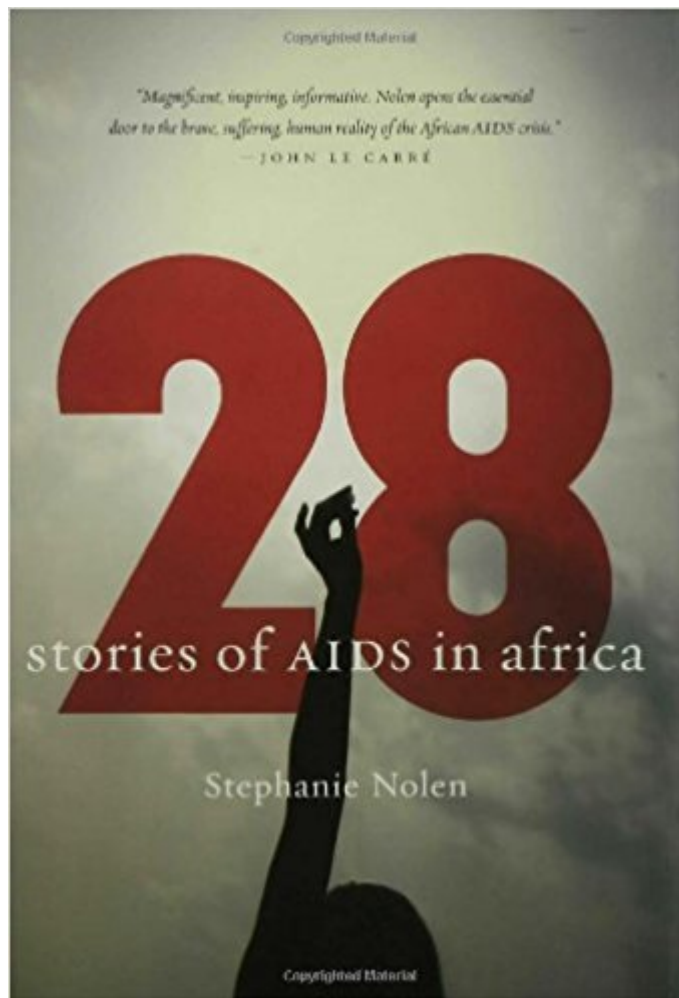


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## 28: Stories Of AIDS In Africa



## Synopsis

For the past six years, Stephanie Nolen has traced AIDS across Africa, and *28* is the result: an unprecedented, uniquely human portrait of the continent in crisis. Through riveting, anecdotal stories, she brings to life men, women, and children involved in every AIDS arena, making them familiar. And she explores the effects of an epidemic that well exceeds the Black Plague in scope, and the reasons why we must care about what happens. In every instance, Nolen has borne witness to the stories she relates, whether riding with truck driver Mohammed Ali on a journey across Kenya; following Tigist Haile Michael, a smart, shy fourteen-year-old Ethiopian orphan fending for herself and her baby brother on the slum streets of Addis Ababa; chronicling the efforts of Alice Kadzanja, an HIV-positive nurse in Malawi; or interviewing Nelson Mandela's family about coming to terms with his own son's death from AIDS. Nolen's stories reveal how the disease works and spreads; how it is inextricably tied to conflict and famine and to the diverse cultures it has ravaged; how treatment works, and how people who can't get treatment fight to stay alive with courage and dignity against huge odds. Imagine the entire population of New York, Chicago, and Los Angeles combined infected with HIV, and its magnitude in Africa is clear. Writing with power and simplicity, Stephanie Nolen makes us listen, allows us to understand, and inspires us to care. Timely and transformative, *28: Stories of AIDS in Africa* is essential reading for anyone concerned about the fate of humankind. [Click here to learn more about Stephanie Nolen and her book, \*28: Stories of AIDS in Africa\*.](#) [Click here to listen to an interview with author Stephanie Nolen, as she talks about some of the people she has met covering AIDS in Africa.](#)

## Book Information

Hardcover: 384 pages

Publisher: Walker Books; 1 edition (May 1, 2007)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0802715982

ISBN-13: 978-0802715982

Product Dimensions: 6.3 x 31.9 x 245.4 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.5 pounds

Average Customer Review: 4.4 out of 5 stars 26 customer reviews

Best Sellers Rank: #740,972 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #96 in [Books > Health, Fitness & Dieting > Diseases & Physical Ailments > AIDS](#) #151 in [Books > Medical Books > Medicine > Internal Medicine > Pathology > Diseases > AIDS & HIV](#) #711 in [Books > Politics & Social](#)

## Customer Reviews

Starred Review. According to UNAIDS, the number of HIV-infected people in Africa is 28 million. But Nolen, veteran Toronto Globe & Mail Africa bureau chief, doesn't believe it: after nine years of reporting on the epidemic, she thinks that number is conservative. Here she offers 28 searing portraits of Africans affected by the deadly virus. Scattered across the continent from the slums of Lagos, Nigeria, to the bush in southern Zambia, these Africans present a mosaic of a continent in crisis and a collective cry for help. She examines the role of soldiers, a "key vector" for AIDS, through the tale of Andualam Ayalew, a commando who was kicked out of the Ethiopian army after testing positive for HIV. He learned of AIDS prevention at a clinic and, risking arrest, returned to his unit to teach his former comrades and other soldiers about using condoms. Agnes Munyiva, a prostitute for 30 years, who has had contact with thousands of men in a slum outside Nairobi, Kenya, does not have HIV. Her natural immunity has brought doctors and researchers from as far away as Canada to study her. With a seasoned journalist's finesse, Nolen effortlessly weaves technical information—health statistics, disease data, NGO reports—into these deeply intimate glimpses of people often overlooked in the flood of contemporary media. Nolen's book packs a real emotional wallop. Photos, map. (June) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved.

Nolen puts a very human face on HIV/AIDS in Africa, verbally and visually. A photograph accompanies each of the book's 28 personal histories (one subject stands for one million infected people in sub-Saharan Africa). The faces in the photos appear no different than faces of everyday Americans, but that appearance belies the horrific reality of lives shredded by devastating disease. The stories, ranging from those of orphaned children on their own, struggling to keep from being raped by adult neighbors, to that of an HIV-positive beauty queen, couldn't be more illustrative of the dissimilarity of Africa to North America. To cite one example, there is 12-year-old Lefa Khoele, stuck in grade 3 because every year he has been too sick to take end-of-year exams. His is a common situation for infected African children. Nolen sees beneath the surfaces of these individuals, estranged and all but destroyed by governmental ineptitude and denial, and evinces their loves and hopes and family ties, their humanness, with which all others can identify. Chavez, Donna Copyright © American Library Association. All rights reserved

It sounds weird to say it, but I couldn't put this book down. All the stories are so compelling and so well-written. Nolen doesn't tell one story over and over, but tells many stories using very diverse people. Her courage is obvious: she hung out with a long-haul trucker, a sex worker, and people with AIDS who had only days left to live. I was especially intrigued by the stories of the infected ones who became powerful advocates. What this book left me with wasn't the sense that "these people are pathetic victims we richer folk need to help," but that these are resilient, strong, interesting human beings suffering a horrid situation with little or no resources, and we should help them help themselves. As a journalist, I'm in awe of Stephanie Nolen in every respect. As a reader, I'm compelled to respond. I highly recommend the related website, [...], where you can read about each of the 28 briefly, and see a video interview of several. The website and book both give many ideas for how you can help. Start by reading a book that could change your life.

I bought this book after hearing an interview with the author on NPR. Then it rested on a pile of books to read for over a year. It didn't seem like the type of book you want to take to the beach or vacation. Or a book to read and put yourself to sleep at night. Then I started to read it one day after hearing of relief work in Africa from a friend. I read several of the profiles/stories. I kept thinking, ok, she has put the most dramatic ones in the front of the book. They can't be that much different after a few. And I was proven wrong. Every story was unique. They are unique from so many different perspectives. Yet they all have the common theme and sensitivity brought to the reader by a very skilled and aware reporter. Nolen doesn't just drop in on someone and do a quick interview. She wraps many dimensions around each story--human, family, love, economic, political, education and so much more. I encourage interested readers to look at the other reviews. Then buy the book. But don't wait to read it.

I haven't read this book yet, it arrived today, but, I am aware of the epidemic of HIV in Africa, it's not 28, it's over 28 million, I buy hand crafted jewelry made by HIV + women in Africa, it's beautiful , inexpensive and I git it when ever I can.

I have spent somewhat extensive time in both East and West Africa and I feel that this book not only portrays the way AIDs is stigmatized but also how little some groups actually understand AIDs. After reading 28, I have a changed perspective on AIDs around the world both through how I act when I am abroad and how I talk to people in the US about it.

Nice montage of stories. Being from South Africa, I was hoping for more local stories--I just read the ones from RSA first and then picked and chose the others.

Wonderfully written to make you want to do something about AIDS in the world. The individual stories really bring out the different, yet similar cause for the vast spread of AIDS.

What a moving, powerful and educational read. A MUST!

Very eye opening to the struggles women face because of HIV/AIDS

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