



## Book review

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**SEDUCTIVE DELUSIONS: how everyday people catch STDs**  
by Jill Grimes MD

This book, written by a family physician, is intended to educate readers about the risks of sexually transmitted infections and the need for diagnosis and management through short stories featuring nineteen male and female characters. These short stories are easy to read but selectively explicit. They describe the nature of examinations and discussions between patients and their doctors in detail. When it comes to describing the sexual contact that led to the risk of infections, the writing errs on the side of clinical descriptions rather than erotic. Indeed, this is an apparent dilemma that the book creates for itself. It has a sexy title and cover page featuring red heeled shoes and a discarded tie, yet does not describe the sexual contact that leads to the risk of infection in a way that might resonate with lay readers.

The book, however, certainly meets its aim of imparting information in each of the interspersed fact sheets about STIs, and these are factually correct and well simplified. However, the main feeling from reading the book is that patients who suspect they have STIs should go for tests, and they will meet non-judgemental, friendly clinicians. In terms of true prevention, it might have been helpful to read more detail of the stories of acquisition as they relate to the use of alcohol, drugs and other factors, and to draw in to patients how the indicator STI or fear of an STI might help them to modify risk taking behaviours fuelled by other adverse health behaviours.

In summary, this is a book which goes three quarters to meeting its objective, but misses an opportunity to really confront the determinants of sexual ill health, and perhaps through writing explore the reasons why people seek casual sexual contact and how, through knowledge and insight, they can reduce their risk of an adverse psychological and physical health outcome from these experiences.

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