

# BookViews.com - Reviews by Alan Caruba

## Picks of the Month -- February 2009

### Advice for the Perfect Life

Bookviews may have noticed that I rarely include books of advice on how to live one's life. As 2009 dawned, however, the scale of the financial crisis and a general uneasiness appears to have generated an increasing number of advice books on how to cope successfully.

From the author of *Too Soon Old, Too Late Smart*, Dr. Gordon Livingston, MD, comes *And Never Stop Dancing: Thirty More True Things You Need to Know Now* (\$12.95, Da Capo Press, softcover). The author, a psychiatrist who has seen his own sorrows as a Vietnam War veteran and a parent twice bereaved, understands the necessity to persevere and maintain hope in a world that can offer up a full measure of suffering. He reminds us that forgiveness is the gift we give ourselves and that we are drowning in information, but starved for knowledge. In *Creating Space for Happiness: The Secret of Giving Room* (\$16.95, Prometheus Books, softcover) by Dr. Anthony J. Castro, a clinical psychologist who treats young children, adolescents, adults and couples, and uses vignettes from their lives to outline his views on how to make difficult changes to tackle problems that threaten our well-being. I often think that every family has at least one "toxic" member who just creates a lot of grief for those around him or her. He reveals how some patients had to assert their independence from their parents while others needed to develop a mutually respectful marriage or to become wise parents.

This is good, jargon-free, advice on how to create the happiness you deserve. By all rights love should remain a great mystery, but **Cindi Sansone-Braff** has devoted a great deal of time and effort to understand it fully and has written a thick tome, *Grant Me a Higher Love* (\$25.99, available at Amazon.com and from her website at <http://www.grantmeahigherlove.com>.) It is a step-by-step spiritual guide to loving with the heart, soul, mind, and body; an actual program you can follow to achieve that most unique of all bonds, the love of a true soul mate. She's been a professional children's entertainer, a dancer, a choreographer, director, playwright, and has taught her skills in continuing education programs on Long Island where she resides. For a true mystic, she nonetheless brings a practical approach to this subjective and often illusive topic.