

Changes to [Over the Rainbow Committee page](#)

Charge

Promote the improved quality and accessibility of LGBTQIA+ literature through the provision for adult readers of an annual annotated bibliography of books for general readership published within the assigned calendar year or between July 1st and December 31st of the previous calendar year. Committee members select titles that exhibit commendable literary quality and significant authentic LGBTQIA+ content and are recommended for adults over age 18. The Over the Rainbow Book List Committee (OTR) coordinates with other GLBTRT committees to promote the improved quality and accessibility of LGBTQIA+ literature.

About

The Over the Rainbow Book List is a committee of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table (GLBTRT) of the American Library Association (ALA). OTR creates an annual, annotated bibliography of books for general adult readers aged 18 years or older that have commendable literary quality and significant, authentic lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, or questioning (LGBTQIA+) content. OTR will work with the Stonewall Book Awards Committees, Rainbow Book List Committee, GLBTRT News Committee, and creators of subject bibliographies to promote the improved quality and accessibility of LGBTQIA+ literature.

Each annual bibliography will cover books published within the assigned calendar year or between July 1 and December 31 of the previous calendar year. OTR will release the list of titles by the end of the American Library Association (ALA) Midwinter Meeting, usually held in January.

The bibliography is not meant to be all inclusive, but is intended as an annual core list for readers and librarians searching for recommendations of a cross-section of the year's LGBTQIA+ titles. Although the bibliography attempts to present a variety of reading tastes and levels, no effort will be made to balance this bibliography according to subject, area of interest, or genre.

For more information:

- [Over the Rainbow Books](#) (the blog is the official home of the bibliographies)
- [Facebook](#)

Questions and Suggestions:

- Questions may be sent to: booksotr@gmail.com
- Suggestions should be shared on the OTR Suggestion Form: <http://www.glbtrt.ala.org/overtherainbow/suggestions>

Committee Composition and Terms

The Over the Rainbow Book List Committee (OTR) consists of eight to twelve members (jurors) and is led by a Chair and Vice-chair. The committee will have a liaison from the GLBTRT Executive Board.

Chair and Jurors begin their terms following the conclusion of the ALA Midwinter Meeting. OTR Jurors serve two years, after which they must complete a one-year hiatus before being eligible for another appointment to the committee. The exception to this is for the Vice-chair and Chair. In the second year of serving, a member will take on the responsibility of Vice-chair, and in the third year of serving, will be Chair. The OTR Chair serves a one-year term and shares leadership duties of the committee with the Vice-chair.

When possible, appointments will maintain a balance of geographical regions of the United States, racial and ethnic groups, types of libraries, and gender.

Requirements and Duties of OTR Jurors

Jurors must be members of the American Library Association and the GLBTRT.

Jurors may not suggest a book for consideration that they have contributed to, edited, or in any other way been affiliated with, or a book authored or edited by a member of their immediate family or anyone with whom they currently share a household.

Jurors shall adhere to the following requirements and responsibilities:

- Select books that exhibit commendable literary quality and significant, authentic LGBTQIA+ content for adults age 18 and over.
- Actively seek and recommend books for consideration.

- Keep abreast of current LGBTQIA+ publishing and notify the Committee of eligible candidates.
- Read and critically evaluate as many current literature and nonfiction LGBTQIA+ books as possible.
- Participate actively and regularly in Committee discussions of books both recommended for consideration and those eligible for consideration.
- Submit recommendations of LGBTQIA+ books throughout the year for the OTR list.
- Work collaboratively to acquire and relay to the Committee book reviews and other information pertinent to eligible books.
- Follow the rules and procedures of the OTR Project Committee and meet the deadlines established by the chair.
- Perform other duties as deemed necessary by the chair.
- Not be a member of another media selection or award committee during their term on OTR.
- Jurors completing terms on OTR are strongly encouraged to participate on other committees within the GLBTRT.

Requirements and Duties of the Chair

In addition to the requirements and duties of OTR jurors, the Chair is proscribed from holding any other official positions within the GLBTRT throughout the course of their term.

The Chair shall adhere to the following requirements and responsibilities:

- Offer the GLBTRT Chair-elect/Chair recommendations for committee members who will maintain a balance of geographical regions of the United States, racial and ethnic groups, and types of libraries. Every effort will be made to maintain gender parity.
- Keep abreast of the publication of eligible books and compile lists of eligible books.
- Track votes for titles, oversee creation of annotations, and facilitate creation of a Top Ten list.
- Ensure that small and academic presses are given the same consideration as large trade and mass-market press publications.
- Ensure that the Committee complies with American Library Association and GLBTRT policies and procedures, as well as its own.
- Set and meet deadlines agreed upon by the Committee, the GLBTRT, and the American Library Association.

- Report on the Committee's work to the GLBTRT Board and its general membership via appropriate Round Table discussion lists and information channels, and at American Library Association conferences/meetings.
- Perform other duties as deemed necessary by the Committee and the GLBTRT.

Committee Procedures

OTR jurors are expected to read as many of the books under consideration as they can. All jurors will be informed of each new recommendation as it is made. Review copies of a book will be requested from its publisher as available. During the year, jurors will actively participate in ongoing discussions of books, both those under consideration and those merely suggested. Jurors will also be expected to read book reviews of books under consideration, either by consulting review sources directly available to them or by reading reviews posted or otherwise distributed by other OTR jurors.

Eligibility of Books

To be considered for the list, a book must be published within the assigned calendar year or between July 1 and December 31 of the previous calendar year. Eligibility of books originally published outside the United States will be determined according to the original publication dates in the United States. Books must be distributed in the United States during the period of eligibility to be considered for the list. Revisions of previously published books will be considered if the revision is to such an extent as to make the book substantially different from the previous edition. Any book removed from consideration the previous year is eligible for consideration during the following year if it meets the eligibility requirements. Any book recommended for consideration and discussed will be ineligible for consideration during the following year.

Recommendations for Consideration

Jurors must read a book in its entirety before recommending it for consideration. All jurors will make recommendations and discuss them virtually.

Anyone may suggest a book to OTR jurors for consideration. If a book is suggested by someone not on OTR, at least one juror must read and recommend that book for it to be considered. The deadline for non-juror suggestions is September 30. Suggestions will not be

accepted from the publisher of a proposed book, agents, or representatives of the author, or anyone else who may stand to gain directly from the recommendation of the book. A short statement describing why the book is being suggested shall accompany the request, which is to be submitted to the OTR Chair or to the OTR Suggestion Form on the OTR website <http://www.glbtrt.ala.org/overtherainbow/>. Juror recommendations for consideration must be sent to other OTR jurors by October 31.

Bibliography Selection Process

The process of discussing and selecting books will be carried out virtually. Jurors will recommend books, discuss them, and participate in straw polls virtually prior to the ALA Midwinter Meeting. The results of the straw polls will be compiled and disseminated to the jurors within a week.

The official selections will be made by the conclusion of the ALA Midwinter Meeting. Decisions will be reached by consensus, meaning that each juror accepts the decision. If the group cannot come to consensus, the decision will be made with no more than one person dissenting. For a book to be put on the list, at least half of the active OTR jurors must have read the book and agreed with its inclusion. The book is then annotated by the jurors. Jurors can only participate in the final discussion of books they have read in their entirety.

Announcement of the Over the Rainbow Book List Bibliography

The Chair will notify the authors and/or publishers of the selected books as soon as the final decision is made. By the ALA Midwinter Meeting, the Chair will notify the GLBTRT Board and the American Library Association, particularly the ALA Public Information Office and the ALA Office for Diversity, Literacy, and Outreach Services, of the selections.

In collaboration with the ALA Staff Liaison to the GLBTRT, the Chair shall prepare a press release announcing the selections. Copies of this announcement shall be sent to the Chair of the News Committee, the ALA Public Information Office, library and bookselling periodicals, publishers, booksellers, periodicals, and newspapers that address library professionals and LGBTQIA+ books. The press release shall also be distributed widely through electronic discussion groups, blogs, social media, etc.

Version History

- 2018 October Amendments PDF - Amendments to further align procedures with a board vote to make the OTR a virtual committee, board terms, and adoption of the term LGBTQIA+

Origin

The Over the Rainbow Book List Committee was officially voted a virtual committee by the GLBTRT Executive Board at its meeting September 2018.