

Proposed Over the Rainbow Project Policies

General Information:

The Over the Rainbow (OTR) Project of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Round Table (GLBTRT) of the American Library Association creates an annual, annotated bibliography of books for general adult readers aged 18 years or older that have commendable literary quality and significant, authentic gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgendered, queer, or questioning (GLBTQ) content. OTR will work with the Book Awards Committee, the ALA Rainbow Project, the newsletter, and creators of subject bibliographies to promote the improved quality and accessibility of GLBTQ 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 at 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 GLBTQ 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.

OTR Jurors and Officers:

OTR shall be composed of six (6) to ten (10) members (called jurors). OTR jurors serve a two-year term beginning at the conclusion of the ALA Midwinter Meeting. Each juror is eligible for a second two-year term). Jurors are selected by the Chair and with the approval of the continuing jurors. A one-year hiatus before consideration for reappointment is required after completion of two consecutive terms. OTR will make every effort to maintain gender parity. Incoming jurors and officers begin their terms following the conclusion of the ALA Midwinter Meeting.

OTR jurors will select books that exhibit commendable literary quality and significant, authentic GLBTQ content for adults age 18 and over. Jurors will be expected to actively seek and nominate books and to read nominated books.

Leadership duties of OTR are assumed by a Chair and a Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect. The Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect serves in that capacity for one year and then assumes the Chair position the following year. Chairs are not reappointed unless there are extenuating circumstances. The Chair also serves as a member of the GLBTRT Steering Committee.

Eligibility and Book Nominations:

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 nomination at the beginning of the first ALA Midwinter Meeting is eligible for nomination during the following year if it meets the eligibility requirements. Any book nominated and discussed at ALA Midwinter Meeting will be ineligible for nomination during the following year.

Jurors must read a book in its entirety before nominating it. All jurors will nominate books and discuss nominations electronically.

Anyone may recommend a book to OTR jurors for nomination consideration. If a book is suggested by someone not on OTR, at least one juror must read and nominate that book for it to be considered. The deadline for non-juror recommendations is September 30. Recommendations for nomination 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 nomination of the book. A short statement describing why the book is being recommended for nomination shall accompany the request, which is to be submitted to the OTR Chair. Juror nominations must be sent to other OTR jurors by October 31.

OTR jurors are encouraged to read as many of the nominated books as they can. All jurors will be informed of each nomination 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 nominated and those being considered for nomination. Jurors will also be expected to read book reviews of nominated books, either by consulting review sources directly available to them or by reading reviews posted or otherwise distributed by other OTR jurors.

Selection:

Much of the process of discussing and selecting the books will be carried out electronically. Jurors will nominate books, discuss nominations, and participate in straw polls electronically prior to the ALA Midwinter Meeting. The results of the straw polls will be compiled and disseminated to the jurors of the Project 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 five 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 Selections:

The Chair will notify the authors and publishers of the selected books as soon as soon as the final decision is made. At the ALA Midwinter Meeting the Chair will notify the Co-Chairs of the GLBTRT and the American Library Association, particularly the ALA Public

Information Office and the ALA Office for Literacy and Outreach Services, of the selections

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

Requirements and Duties of OTR Jurors:

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

Jurors may not nominate a book 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:

- Keep abreast of current GLBTQ publishing and notify the Committee of eligible nomination candidates.
- Read and critically evaluate as many current literature and nonfiction GLBTQ books as possible.
- Participate actively in Committee discussions of books both nominated and eligible for nomination.
- Submit nominations of GLBTQ books throughout the year for the OTR list.
- Work collaboratively to acquire and relay to the Committee book reviews and other information pertinent to nominated books being considered for nomination.
- Follow the rules and procedures of the OTR Project Committee and meet the deadlines established by the Committee Chair and Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect.
- Perform other duties as deemed necessary by the Chair and Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect.

Jurors completing terms on OTR are strongly encouraged to participate on other committees within the GLBTRT.

Requirements and Duties of the Chair and Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect:

In addition to the requirements and duties of OTR jurors, the Chair and Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect are proscribed from holding any other official positions within the GLBTRT throughout the course of their terms.

The Chair and Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect shall work together in a collaborative and communicative manner. The Chair shall serve on the Steering Committee of the GLBTRT.

The Chair and Vice-Chair/Chair-Elect shall adhere to the following requirements and responsibilities, dividing leadership in a mutually agreed upon manner:

- Select OTR jurors in a way that maintains a balance of geographical regions of the United States, racial and ethnic groups, and types of libraries. The committee will make every effort to maintain gender parity.
- Keep abreast of the publication of eligible books and compile lists of eligible books.
- 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.
- Pursue and advocate for adequate funding for the OTR Project with the GLBTRT and the American Library Association.
- Report on the Committee's work to the Steering Committee of the GLBTRT and its general membership via appropriate Round Table discussion lists and newsletters, and at American Library Association conferences/meetings.
- Perform other duties as deemed necessary by the Committee and the GLBTRT.