



# GLBTRT Newsletter

A publication of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered  
Round Table of the American Library Association

<http://www.ala.org/glbtrt>

Vol. 20, No. 3     ♦     Fall 2008

## From Your Co-Chairs

### Book Reviews (Pages 6-9):

- *Uncle Bobby's Wedding*
- *If You Believe in Mermaids ... Don't Tell*
- *Ardennian Boy*
- *The Age of Dreaming*
- *The Necessary Hunger*
- *Southland*
- *Death Vows*
- *Gay Games VII*
- *Ministry among God's Queer Folk*
- *Since My Last Confession*
- *A Prophet in His Own Land*

### DVD Reviews (Page 10):

- *For the Bible Tells Me So*
- *In Good Conscience*

Your Co-Chairs have been very busy with Round Table work since we got home from ALA Annual. We touch base at least a few times a week. One of the big things is that we've been busy recruiting people for a few open positions. We finally have Fundraising Committee Chair and an up and running Book Awards Brunch Planning Committee. If you're a real statistics nerd, please speak up! We need you to be our liaison to the Research and Statistics Assembly. We have a couple of people attending the Professional Ethics Committee who can send reports to us but we could use someone who can definitely also attend at least one GLBTRT Steering Committee meeting.

One thing we decided at Annual was that we need more specific job descriptions for officers, committee chairs, and committee members, and that we need to amend the bylaws to include procedures for removing and replacing people in a timely manner if they aren't fulfilling their duties. We want to prevent people from being unduly burdened by taking on extra responsibilities.

Along with amending the bylaws for this purpose, we are also asking the Bylaws Revision Committee and Committee Chairs to review the bylaws and make other suggested changes by Midwinter.

As some of you have probably heard, it was decided at Annual that it didn't make sense for the Rainbow List to be a subcommittee of the Membership Committee, and that status will be ended at

Midwinter. Meanwhile, members of the Steering Committee are working on a plan for more formally defining the role of the Rainbow List and its relationship to our Round Table. We held a late August conference call with some members of the Steering Committee, some of the Rainbow List members, and Satia Orange from the OLOS office. We'll continue these discussions face-to-face at Midwinter to come up with a plan that is satisfactory to everyone involved which can then be presented to the membership.

You can tell your Co-Chairs are really going to put people to work! And if you haven't been involved in the past but would like to be in the future, please look at our committee descriptions on the web site ([its.usc.edu/~trimmer/glbtrt/committees.htm](http://its.usc.edu/~trimmer/glbtrt/committees.htm)) and email us to let us know your areas of interest. I'm already compiling lists of potential committee members for future needs.

Even if you aren't on a committee, your ideas are welcome. You can nominate books to the Book Awards Committee; you can make fundraising suggestions to

the Fundraising Committee; if you have ideas about how to increase RT membership, particularly of allies, you can contact the Membership Committee, etc. (Check the last page of this Newsletter for their email addresses.) If you don't know who to contact, just get in touch with your Co-Chairs and we will pass your ideas along.

If you want to know what we're doing on a day-to-day basis, you can be our friends on Facebook. For instance, on August 14th, you could have found out that K.R. always needs caffeine, and on August 11<sup>th</sup> Nancy wished for clarity.

You can join the Round Table Group on Facebook ([www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=5265244609](http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=5265244609)), and ALA has a presence there as well, including a new Banned Books Week group ([www.new.facebook.com/pages/Banned-Books-Week/20181651661](http://www.new.facebook.com/pages/Banned-Books-Week/20181651661)). Check out ALA's Banned Books Web site ([www.ala.org/ala/oif/bannedbooksweek/bannedbooksweek.cfm](http://www.ala.org/ala/oif/bannedbooksweek/bannedbooksweek.cfm)) for information and ideas for cele-

*Continued on page 2*

Deadlines for the newsletter for the next year will be:

<i>Winter 2008</i>	November 20, 2008
<i>Spring 2009</i>	March 20, 2009
<i>Summer 2009</i>	May 29, 2009
<i>Fall 2009</i>	August 22, 2009

Please try to get your reports, articles, book reviews, etc. in by these dates or let us know if there will be a short delay so room can be saved for them in the newsletter.

## From Your Co-Chairs, continued...

brating Banned Books Week, as well as information on dealing with challenges to materials. You will note that sexuality, homosexuality, and sex education are a regular theme in books that have been banned. Does your library celebrate Banned Books Week? Share your ideas with us.

And for a little fun: found on *American Libraries Direct*, 8/13/08 is a link to The Shifted Librarian [theshiftedlibrarian.com/archives/2008/08/07/star-in-your-own-read-mini-poster.html](http://theshiftedlibrarian.com/archives/2008/08/07/star-in-your-own-read-mini-poster.html) where you can create your own READ posters. Nancy had fun making one of my dog at the beach that says, "Read books, don't eat them."

**K.R. Roberto**  
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**Nancy Silverrod**  
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## Profile: Nancy Silverrod



### What was your first library (or library-related) job?

I worked at Novi (Michigan) Public Library, partly doing preschool services, and partly doing adult reference work.

### Tell us about your

#### current job.

I work in General Reference at the Main Library of San Francisco Public Library. I have worked in a number of capacities here, starting on the children's bookmobile, working in the branches as a children's and young adult librarian, and then in adult reference for the last 8+ years.

### Did/do you have a mentor?

No, but I had inspirations: **Christine Jenkins**, a good friend who is now teaching in the Library School at UIUC, and then my school librarians, **Mrs. Graham**, and Miss **Sarita Davis**. There are people I work with that I respect and look to for advice when I need it, particularly my former supervisor, **Thomas Tavis**.

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### What are you reading right now? Would you recommend it?

I read constantly and eclectically! You should become my friend on [Goodreads.com](http://Goodreads.com) to try to keep up with where I'm going. I just finished *The Art of Detection* by **Laurie R. King**. She writes two mystery series, one set in present-day San Francisco, featuring lesbian detective Kate Martinelli; the other features Sherlock Holmes in his elder years, now married (much to his gruff surprise) to a younger woman, with whom he now solves mysteries. *The Art of Detection* is one of a couple of her books where she ties the two together in interesting ways. And yes, I recommend both series, and you have to start at the beginning. I also just finished reading *Gods of Manhattan* by **Scott Mebus**. Written for grades 5-8, this alternate/parallel world fantasy has so many real-world historical characters that and a strong enough plot, that I think older teens and adults will get even more out of it. I have a special interest in LGBT books for kids and teens, and have a large collection at home.

### What is your favorite movie? Song? TV show?

Hard questions! My most recent favorite movie was *Juno*. I don't go to the movies nearly as much as I'd like, so if any of you live in the Bay Area and want to go see a movie, let me know. Movies I've seen repeatedly include *Harold and Maude*, *The Madwoman of Chailot*, *Brother from Another Planet*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *West Side Story*, *Gone With the Wind*. I obviously date myself. Likewise with music—I'm pretty much stuck on stuff from my teen years in the late 60s and early 70s: rock, folk, a little jazz, some blues, occasionally still listen to women's music. Lately, I've been listening to bluegrass and old time music on the radio and am even considering trying to learn mandolin. I admit to owning a TV, but it lives in the garage, and the only time I've watched it since 1993 was when 9/11 happened (that's how I manage to get

my reading done). I used to be hooked on *Hill St. Blues*, *LA Law*, and whatever the medical show was that came on somewhere in there—I generally had a show a week. I only get 2 channels where in my neighborhood, and I'd have to fork out big time for the special cable channels to watch the stuff that sounds interesting: National Geographic and other nature and history channels.

### Social networks—yes or no? (LJ, Blogger, Second Life, WoW, MySpace, etc.)

I'm on *Facebook*, which started because my niece in Spain is on it. I think it has its limitations, but I can bore everyone with frequent new pictures of my dog. As I mentioned earlier, I'm on *Goodreads*, and I like that because I get to find out what my friends are reading and get some good suggestions that way – and vice versa, a bit of an online book group. I want to know who has time to read all the blogs that are out there!

### Anything else you'd like to add?

I live with a beautiful Rottweiler/beagle mix and a green-cheeked, yellow-sided conure who love each other and they keep things entertaining. Pip, the bird, likes to lean on Ginny, the dog's cheek and bob his head up and down to announce his adoration. He is not so amused when Ginny licks him, but he always goes back for more. The two of them keep me sane—despite some library book destruction on Ginny's part. I like to knit, but I'm always torn between that and reading, so I don't get that much done. I have a nice garden that needs some work—I remain in hopes that I will feel less stiff at some point, but meanwhile, it's overrun with California Poppies, foxglove and roses.

GLBTRT Co-chair **Nancy Silverrod** is a Librarian at the San Francisco Public Library—the librarian who in 2001 identified the vandal responsible for mutilating over 600 (mostly GLBT) library books. For more on the crime and SFPL's artistic response, see the online exhibit at: [sfppl.lib.ca.us/news/onlineexhibits/rv](http://sfppl.lib.ca.us/news/onlineexhibits/rv)

## Stonewall Book Award Endowment Surpasses \$75,000 Goal

The Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Round Table of the American Library Association surpassed its \$75,000 goal, permanently endowing the Stonewall Book Awards.

The announcement was made June 30, 2008 in Anaheim by GLBTRT Fundraising Chair David Gray, principal of Gray PR & Marketing of Palm Springs, at the 37th Annual Stonewall Book Award Celebration.

"We are delighted at having met this fundraising goal for our endowment," said GLBTRT Co-Chair K. R. Roberto, Serials/Electronic Resources Librarian at the University of Denver's Penrose Library. "The Stonewall Book Awards have been devoted

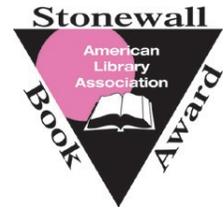
to recognizing the best LGBTQ works of literature since 1971, and establishing a standing endowment can only improve upon the work we're doing. The awards are widely acknowledged to be an excellent resource for both libraries seeking to build and maintain strong LGBTQ collections and readers who are queer, questioning and allies."

Fundraising to endow the two current Stonewall Book Awards, the Barbara Gittings Book Award in Literature and the Israel Fishman Book Award for Nonfiction, kicked off at the 2000 ALA Annual Conference. Through the generosity of more than 200 GLBTRT members, several publishers and others, the Endowment passed the

\$75,000 mark in early May.

Fundraising continues in hopes the Stonewall Book Awards can expand to offer future awards for children's and young adult-themed literature, continued Gray.

Individuals or organizations interested in contributing to the Stonewall Book Award Endowment are encouraged to contact the GLBTRT Treasurer Dale McNeill at [dale.mcneill.ala@gmail.com](mailto:dale.mcneill.ala@gmail.com) or by donating online at [www.ala.org/cfapps/donations](http://www.ala.org/cfapps/donations) and selecting the GLBT Round Table.



## Profile: Dale McNeill

### What was your first library (or library-related) job?

My first library-related "work" was in the 5th grade. The public library provided books at my school and the librarian often asked me to read particular books to see if I thought they were appropriate/interesting for other students. But I don't guess that's exactly what you meant about first library job! I worked in a welding shop for a few years, then decided that I really wanted a job with air conditioning! I found a job as a circulation clerk & shelver at the Ada (Oklahoma) Public Library, in a beautiful Carnegie building, in about 1980. I've worked in public libraries ever since.

### Tell us about your current job.

In my current position, Director of Community Library Services at the Queens Library, I provide oversight and direction to the 61 community libraries throughout the Borough of Queens in New York City. I'm really fortunate to be working here; it's a great library system that is providing traditional library services along with adult literacy, social workers for teens in some locations, very new technology, and generally innovative services.

### Did/do you have a mentor?

I've been lucky to know and be shaped by several librarians who were in many ways my mentors. I'll mention 3 in particular, sadly all now deceased: **Virginia Atchinson**, a junior high school librarian who was completely connected with teens, teen music, and books; **Dr. Elfreda Chatman** who set the highest of academic standards, who tried to get me to love theory, and

who passionately believed that public libraries should serve the entire public; and **Jean Harrington**, a tireless director of a small town library who engaged the community with the library and the library with the community in her many years as director. Virginia inspires me to use humor in my work; Elfreda's work and thoughts strengthen me and remind me to be *smart*; Jean reminds me that libraries should be essential in their communities.

### What are you reading right now? Would you recommend it?

As a member of the GLBTRT book award committee, I'm reading of lot of new books! In between, I've been re-reading the novels of **Andrew Vachss** and of **Henning Mankell**. I'd highly recommend both writers. Vachss' private investigator novels, set far outside the mainstream, even for New York City, are full of fascinating characters, intricate plots, and a clear theme. Most of Mankell's work is a series of police procedurals set in a Swedish town. Both are dark, but (to me at least) ultimately very hopeful.

### What is your favorite movie? Song? TV show?

I don't really have a favorite movie, though there are many I enjoy. I had seen about 5 movies before I was 18, when I saw *American Gigolo*. Movies have been a source of great delight ever since.

I do have a favorite song: "Suzanne", written by **Leonard Cohen**. I used to have a mixed tape of nothing but various covers of this song. I guess my favorite recording is **Nina Simone's**.

### Social networks—yes or no? (LJ, Blogger, Second Life, WoW, MySpace, etc.)

When I first moved to New York, I started a blog, really just to tell my friends and former co-workers what it was like to make that big move from Dallas to NYC. I don't write there every day or even every week, but I do enjoy it. And you can find me on [Facebook](https://www.facebook.com/dale.mcneill) pretty easily as well.

### Anything else you'd like to add?

I've been a member of what's now GLBTRT since I joined ALA—27 years ago, when I was only 20 years old. I know that's no kind of record, but it's been a fun 27 years and I'm looking forward to at least that many more! In our Round Table, as with many things in our profession (and in life), so often if you're wishing that someone would just \*do\* something, the person to get that started might be...you. I've tried to apply that idea and encourage others to do the same. Oh, and I guess I should mention that I'm your Treasurer and that I donate to the GLBTRT every month. Donations of money, time, and ideas are always welcome!

Thanks for the opportunity to be "interviewed" for the GLBTRT newsletter!

**Dale McNeill**, ALA and GLBTRT member since 1981, GLBTRT Treasurer, and Director of Community Library Services at the Queens Library, New York City.



## Gay Left Publications Added to Rainbow History Project Site



Rainbow History's Web site now includes ten new documents of the gay left in the 1970s, including issues of *Come Out Fighting*, *Red Flag*, and *Gay Left*, and readers from the organization Lavender & Red Union. The documents can be accessed from

[www.rainbowhistory.org/gayleftUS.htm](http://www.rainbowhistory.org/gayleftUS.htm).

The Rainbow History Project formed November 4, 2000 in a meeting at the Cyber-Stop Cafe on 17th Street NW following a notice placed by **Mark Meinke** in the *Washington Blade*. The notice came out of frustration at trying to identify archives and sources of information on gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered history in metropolitan Washington DC.

The Rainbow History Project's mission is to collect, preserve, and promote an active knowledge of the history, arts, and culture relevant to sexually diverse communities in metropolitan Washington DC.

*From Committee on Gay/Lesbian History press release, 5/19/2008, and Rainbow History Project's Web site, [www.rainbowhistory.org](http://www.rainbowhistory.org), accessed 08/15/2008*

## Leather Archives & Museum Raises \$55K at IML



the Leather Archives & Museum.

The thirtieth annual International Mr. Leather Weekend raised \$55,000 for

to the Leather Market, memberships to the LA&M, a two-night silent auction, and special events to benefit the museum. Special events included a birthday party for **Sandy "Mama" Reinhardt** hosted by Kaos Kontrol, a Gear Fetish party hosted by [Gearfetish.com](http://Gearfetish.com) and a Pro-Domme social hosted by Mistress **Eve Minax**.

The funding will also help preserve and provide access to the institution's many historical and cultural collections.

The Leather Archives & Museum is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit charitable organization dedicated to the preservation of and access to the history and culture of the leather and fetish community. The 10,000 sq. foot museum is located in Chicago's Rogers Park neighborhood and includes eight exhibition galleries, a 164 seat auditorium and community center and a research library and archives. For more information, visit [www.leatherarchives.org](http://www.leatherarchives.org) or call 773.761.9200.

*From Leather Archives & Museum press release, 6/11/2008.*



The event, held May 22 - 26, 2008 drew over 16,000 people to Chicago to celebrate IML 30. Support for the LA&M was raised through contributions from visitors

"Support from IML Weekend really boosts the programming the LA&M can offer" said Executive Director **Rick Storer**. He added, "It's fantastic that so many people having such a good time can raise this much money for our history". Money raised at IML weekend will be used to support LA&M Programs including new exhibitions, a traveling Road Show exhibition, and a 164 seat auditorium and community center.

## Hoosiers Who Sell Mature Materials Not Adult Bookstores



A federal court declared unconstitutional July 1 an Indiana law that required sellers of any materials that could be deemed harmful to minors to register with the secretary of state and pay \$250 to be licensed as an adult bookstore. Eleven plaintiffs, ranging from the American Library Association's Freedom to Read Foundation to the Entertainment Merchants Association, challenged the statute, slated to go into effect the same day U.S. District Judge **Sarah Evans Barker** ruled it unconstitutional.

**Deborah Caldwell-Stone**, deputy executive director of ALA's Office for Intellectual Free-

dom, told *American Libraries* that FTRF joined the suit because "libraries who sell books at Friends sales or on their own and who are selling books that may fall under the definition of 'sexually explicit' would fall under the law, as would any library employee or volunteer who is selling the books." The statute defined sexually explicit a product or service that appeals to a prurient interest or "is harmful to minors even if the product or service is not intended to be used by or offered to a minor."

"Clearly, a vast array of merchants and materials is implicated by the reach of this statute as written," Judge Barker wrote. "A romance novel sold at a drugstore, a magazine offering sex advice in a grocery store checkout line, an R-rated DVD sold by a video rental shop, a collection of old *Playboy* magazines sold by a widow at a

garage sale—all incidents of unquestionably lawful, non-obscene, non-pornographic material being sold to adults—would appear to necessitate registration under the statute."

By targeting sellers exclusively, the Indiana law was narrower in scope than a Colorado bill considered earlier this year that banned the sale or dissemination to minors of any materials that could be considered harmful to them. Cosponsored by Sen. **Ted Harvey** (R-Highlands Ranch) four years after he introduced an almost identical bill as a state representative, S.B. 125 died in a senate committee after the Colorado Library Association and other First Amendment advocates expressed strong opposition.

*From article in American Libraries Online, [www.ala.org/ala/online](http://www.ala.org/ala/online), posted 7/3/2008 and accessed 7/14/2008*

## Censorship Mission Accomplished, Trustee Resigns

In the process of revisiting for the third time whether minors should be denied access to two books about sexuality, the board of the Nampa (ID) Public Library approved June 2 policy changes that restrict children's access to any holdings that may fall under Idaho's harmful to minors statute.

First, trustees voted 3-2 to keep *The New Joy of Sex* and *The Joy of Gay Sex* off the shelves and in the director's office, where patrons must specifically request them to access them. The board moved the books to the director's office in March by the same 3-2 vote in response to a patron whose quest to have the books removed altogether was first considered by trustees in 2006. "I don't think it's inappropriate for a community to say, 'I think we should limit [access],'" board member **Kim Keller** said.

Keller, who wrote the motion to keep the books sequestered, also proposed requiring parental permission for minors to access any books the library may purchase that state law deems "harmful to

minors"; that motion also passed 3-2. Trustee **Bruce Skaug** also introduced a policy, which barred the library from buying movies rated NC-17 or X; it passed 3-1 with one abstention.

Library Director **Karen Ganske** noted that she was unaware of any items in the collection with those MPAA ratings. Trustee **Sandi Levi** countered that NPL owned an unrated DVD of *The Vagina Monologues*, which she characterized as including graphic language, and declared, "I would not want my child, my friend's child, checking that out," Levi explained, according to the *Idaho Press-Tribune*.

The socially conservative blog for the Idaho Values Alliance offers "kudos to [Nampa] Mayor **Tom Dale**, who appointed family-friendly members to the board to replace members who insisted that gay porn remain accessible for young children." Dale confirmed to *American Libraries* in 2006 that he had e-mailed a concerned constituent that he would "help the board understand that they do have broad authority in determining the books placed in the library collection, and

their status therein.

Trustee Skaug announced his resignation June 10, declaring, "My short-term mission is accomplished." His resignation became effective July 1.

Nampa social worker **Delmar Stone**, an outspoken supporter of keeping the books on the library shelves, said he was glad to see Skaug resign. Stone said Skaug made "bigoted" comments regarding gays and lesbians while serving on the library board.

"I hope that whoever replaces him will respect all of the residents of Nampa, including her gay and lesbian citizens and her single parents," Stone said.

From articles in *American Libraries Online*, [www.ala.org/ala/alonline](http://www.ala.org/ala/alonline), posted 6/6/2008 and accessed 7/14/2008; and the *Idaho Press-Tribune*, [www.idahopress.com](http://www.idahopress.com), posted 6/10/2008 and accessed 7/15/2008.



## Shortbus Banned in Bloomington, IL

After a single patron complaint, an award-winning film was pulled from the Bloomington (IL) Public Library.

On July 14, Library Director **Georgia Bouda** said a library committee formed to review the independent film *Shortbus* unanimously agreed to remove the DVD.

*Shortbus* is an unrated movie released in 2006, which director **John Cameron Mitchell** describes as "an honest film about sex." Based on Brooklyn's D.U.M.B.O. club, the film follows the crossing of paths of the main characters: Sofia - a sex therapist who is "pre-orgasmic" and her partner Rob, gay couple Jamie and James looking to open up their relationship, and dominatrix Severin (just looking for a "real human interaction"), all stage managed by Justin Bond

- the mistress of *Shortbus*. Notably, the sex in *Shortbus* is real, not simulated.

Bloomington resident **Bill Swearingen** had complained about the movie and was happy to learn his challenge had led to the movie's ban. "I think that's great," Swearingen said. "I'm not a prude but it really was soft porn and to me I don't see why it should be in the library."

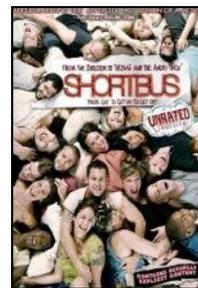
Bouda was not certain why the movie was selected for the library's collection. As part of the material review process, Bouda picked several librarians to watch the movie, read reviews, and research whether other libraries similar to the Bloomington Public Library carried the film.

Swearingen said he believes the process worked, and Bouda and the other librarians

demonstrated their support of the community's values.

The decision to ban *Shortbus* brought an outcry from the majority of posters to the blog of the *Pantagraph*, a daily newspaper serving Bloomington and central Illinois. A strong minority, though, supports the action and there are no plans to return *Shortbus* to the shelves.

From the *Pantagraph Web site*, [www.pantagraph.com](http://www.pantagraph.com), posted 7/15/2008, and the *Summer 2008 Nine Tails*, [www.chicagoleatherclub.org/newsletter](http://www.chicagoleatherclub.org/newsletter), posted 7/9/2008; both accessed 7/31/2008



**GLBTRT Elections**

This year, the GLBTRT has 2 open elected positions: Male-identified Co-Chair and Treasurer. We hope there will be much competition for these two essential posts.

For descriptions of the duties of these two elected officers, please see Section IV of the GLBTRT Bylaws, at <http://its.usc.edu/~trimmer/glbtrt/bylaws.htm>

If you are interested in running for election, please contact any member of the Nominating Committee:

**Lisa N. Johnston**, Chair  
ljohnston@sbc.edu

**Emily W. Edwards**  
lushkav@gmail.com

**Chet Mulwaka**  
mulwaka@smcl.org

**Joel Nichols**  
nicholsj@freelibrary.org

## Build Your Vita! Write for the GLBTRT Newsletter!

To become a part of the team of reviewers that publish in the GLBTRT Newsletter, or to receive a copy of our guidelines for book reviews, email Book Review Editor Tracy Nectoux at: [tnectoux@yahoo.com](mailto:tnectoux@yahoo.com). Or, if journalism is more your style, send in articles about GLBT library services and collections in and around your community to GLBTRT Newsletter Editor John Bradford at: [jpbmls@yahoo.com](mailto:jpbmls@yahoo.com).

## Uncle Bobby's Wedding Defended in Douglas County, CO



In June, a Douglas County (CO) Libraries patron made what appears to be the first formal challenge of the children's book *Uncle*

*Bobby's Wedding*, by **Sarah Brannen**.

In the book, guinea pig Chloe is distraught when she learns her favorite uncle Bobby plans to wed. Bobby and his beau Jamie, also guinea pigs, allay her fears by doing fun things—ballet, boating, roasting marshmallows. When Bobby and Jamie hold their spring nuptials, Chloe is their flower girl. (See **Tracy Nectoux's** complete review, immediately following this article.)

Library Director **Jamie LaRue** wrote a reasoned but compassionate note in reply to the patron's request for reconsideration—and placed it on his blog as a model for other libraries facing challenges of the same book. After reviewing the Web site of the author ([www.SarahBrannen.com](http://www.SarahBrannen.com)), *Uncle Bobby's Wedding*, and his 1960 *Webster's* (College Edition), LaRue examined the patron's objections, point by point.

"First, I think you're right that the purpose of the book is to show a central event, the wedding of two male characters, as no big

thing. The emotional center of the story, of course, is Chloe's fear that she's losing a favorite uncle to another relationship. That fear, I think, is real enough to be an issue for a lot of young children. But yes, **Sarah Brannen** clearly was trying to portray gay marriage as normal, as not nearly so important as the changing relationship between a young person and her favorite uncle..."

The patron's opinion that the subject matter was "inappropriate" for a children's book, was answered: "Children's books deal with anything and everything. There are children's books about death (even suicide), adult alcoholism, family violence, and more. Even the most common fairy tales have their grim side.... There is a lot out there that is confusing, or faintly threatening, and even dangerous in the world. Stories help children name their fears, understand them, work out strategies for dealing with life.

"You feel that a book about gay marriage is inappropriate for young children.... There are gay parents in Douglas County, right now, who also pay taxes, and also look for materials to support their views. We don't have very many books on this topic, but we do have a handful....not every parent is looking for the same thing...."

A firm defense of the First Amendment challenged the patron's declaration that the book was contrary to the vision of America's founding fathers. No, counters LaRue, the nation's founders believed the state was there "...to preserve individual liberties, not to dictate them."

LaRue rejected the patron's limited view of marriage: "[On] your belief that marriage was between a man and a woman. My *Webster's* actually gives several definitions of marriage.... Word definitions change; legal rights change. In some parts of America, at least today, gay marriage is legal. If it's legal, then how could writing a book about it be inappropriate?"

While space issues prevent me from including his complete response, these excerpts only give a sense of the exquisite care with which LaRue responded to this patron's request for reconsideration. I encourage you to read it in its entirety on his blog at:

[jaslarue.blogspot.com/2008/07/uncle-bobbys-wedding.html](http://jaslarue.blogspot.com/2008/07/uncle-bobbys-wedding.html)

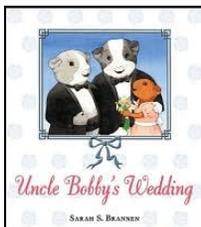
### John Bradford

Head, Automation & Technical Services  
Villa Park (IL) Public Library  
Librarian, Leather Archives & Museum

## Book Reviews: Children's

### Brannen, Sarah S. *Uncle Bobby's Wedding*.

G. P. Putnam's Sons. New York: 2008. paperback. ISBN:9780399247125. \$15.99.



When young Chloe learns that her Uncle Bobby is marrying his boyfriend Jamie, her reaction is what many children might have to such startling news: where will she fit in her favorite

uncle's new life?

**Sarah Brannen's** charming and delightfully drawn book is not about gay marriage (or even Uncle Bobby); indeed, the words "gay" or "homosexual" do not appear once in the story. Instead, *Uncle Bobby's Wedding* is

about a little girl (or rather, a guinea pig) coming to understand that people have the capacity to love more than one person, and highlights a family's joy as a beloved member pledges his life to another.

Because Chloe has not been taught that some types of love are "wrong," it is not *who* her uncle is marrying that concerns her, but rather *that* her uncle is marrying at all (regardless of gender). And because Bobby and Jamie do not have to focus their energies on justifying their relationship to Chloe (or to anyone), they are able to spend time with her, reassure her that they love her, and show her that she is welcome

in their lives.

Thus, Brannen's story takes something that is, regretfully, still not normative in our society and asks, "what if it was?" In doing so, it shows us how a child can be made to feel safe and loved, and how her life can be enriched when she is protected from the burden of being taught to fear others who are different.

Unhesitatingly recommended for all children's libraries.

Reviewed by **Tracy Marie Nectoux**  
Cataloger, Illinois Newspaper Project  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

## Book Reviews: Young Adult

### Philips, A. A. *If You Believe in Mermaids... Don't Tell.*

Indianapolis, IN: Dog Ear Publishing, 2007. 150 p. ISBN: 9781598583595. Paperback. \$12.95.

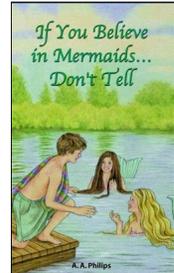
Having just completed the minefield of seventh grade, Todd is faced with his father's demand that he attend summer sports camp. When he finds a brochure for a nature camp, Todd enrolls there in order to avoid what he describes as, "a dismal choice of torture camps." Still, Todd is worried about how other campers will perceive him, with his feminine ways, and practices his "boy walk" and masculine façade.

Philips' intent here is great; she develops a character who is trying to be his own kind

of boy: a gentle, feminine boy, a boy who fantasizes about mermaids and dreams about looking pretty, in a world where that is frowned upon. However, while Todd's character is well-defined, the story falls short of appealing to any audience. While Todd is 13 years old, his mermaid fantasies and the desire to swipe a Barbie doll make him seem much younger. In contrast, a portion near the end of the book relates an incident where the camp bully gets a girl drunk, which gives Todd an opportunity to take a stance, but this scene doesn't quite work and seems disconnected from the

story. At one point, Todd is called a "fag," and at the end of the story, he sees men in dresses during the high heel race in D.C. Finally, there are editing errors in the book that make some passages awkward to read. Not recommended.

Reviewed by **Sharon Flesher-Duffy**  
Library Media Specialist  
Nashua High South (NH)



## Book Reviews: Fiction

### Maltese, William and Wayne Gunn. *Ardennian Boy.*

Albion, NY: MLR Press, 2007. 236p. ISBN: 9780979311031. hardcover; \$32.99.

*Ardennian Boy* focuses on the relationship that poets **Paul Verlaine** and **Arthur Rimbaud** shared. The concept is interesting in that some of the explicit poetry that they wrote about each other has been used to put together a fictitious account of their graphic affair. Each chapter is an exhausting read, as each is seemingly centered around an explicit sexual experience that seems to go on and on in excruciating detail. The bulk of the book is made of erotic escapades that are told from both Verlaine's and Rimbaud's point of view. A sliver of a story

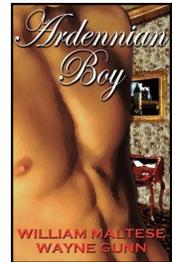
propels the plot forward.

Instead of tantalizing, however, the effect is annoying and makes a very tedious read. Verlaine is torn between a normal life with a wife and one with Rimbaud that is hedonistic and sexually charged, yet isolating from everything he has ever known. Rimbaud's concern is that Verlaine is not as fully appreciated for his literary skill as he should be. Rimbaud embarks on a task to shake up Verlaine's world for the sake of his craft. The poetry they wrote to each other can be seen as evidence of the quest they under-

took.

If you enjoyed the movie *Total Eclipse*, this book describes possibly offensive sexual antics in more detail and then some. Not recommended for any library other than one's personal collection.

Reviewed by **Johnnie N. Gray**  
Interlibrary Loan Librarian  
Christopher Newport University



### Revoyr, Nina. *The Age of Dreaming: A Novel.*

New York: Akashic Books, 2008. 327pp. ISBN: 9781933354460. trade paperback; \$15.95.

### Revoyr, Nina. *The Necessary Hunger.*

New York: St. Martin's Griffin, 1998. 368pp. ISBN: 9780312181420. reprint, trade paperback; \$15.95.

### Revoyr, Nina. *Southland.*

New York: Akashic Books, 2003. 350pp. ISBN: 9781888451412. trade paperback; \$15.95.

Readers looking for LGBT content won't find it in Revoyr's latest, which tells the life story of a fictional Japanese-American silent film star, and focuses on the circumstances regarding his early retirement. The book is beautifully written, unfolding quietly at first and slowly building tension, and is recommended for all fiction collections; however, the only gay action involves one minor character and is all off-

screen. Advise your Revoyr-loving patrons that this is a good one, but not a gay one.

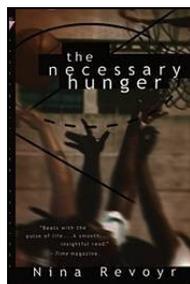
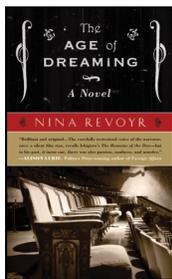
Revoyr's other novels are more appropriate for review here:

*The Necessary Hunger* (1997; reviewed in the Spring 1998 *GLBTRT Newsletter*) follows Nancy and Raina, teen lesbian basketball players going through the college recruitment process together. Japanese-

American Nancy has a crush on African-American Raina, who's dating another girl; to complicate matters, Raina's mother falls in love with Nancy's father, and the two families meld to share a household. Despite this drama, the author avoids a soap-opera feel; Revoyr ably switches between fast-paced basketball action and gritty urban scenes, and Raina and Nancy are believable,

*Continued on page 8*

## Revoyr, continued...



appealing characters.

*Southland* (2003), like *The Necessary Hunger* and *The Age of Dreaming*, is set in Los Angeles. Jackie, a Japanese-American lesbian, investigates four unsolved murders that took place at her grandfather's store during the Watts riots. Her quest takes her all over LA and back in time via relatives' papers, police re-

ports, and witnesses' anecdotes. Here Revoyr transcends the conventional mystery genre to include elements of historical, romantic, and literary fiction.

Reviewed by **Daisy Porter**  
Senior Librarian  
San José (CA) Public Library

## Stevenson, Richard. *Death Vows*.

Albion, NY: MLR Press, 2008. 198p. trade paper. ISBN: 9781934531334 \$14.99



*Death Vows* is the ninth mystery novel by **Richard Stevenson** (pseudonym for writer **Richard Lipez**) featuring the private investigator Donald Strachey. Strachey lives with his long-time partner, Timothy and the books are typically set in the Albany area. This case draws Strachey across the state line into Massachusetts, where two wealthy and snobbish gay men solicit his services to investigate a young man with a sketchy

past who is set to marry a friend of theirs (Massachusetts being one of the few places in the country where two men can marry). While their questions about the intended betrothed are not unfounded, he turns out to be but one of the characters who isn't quite what he seems.

Stevenson's Strachey novels are fast-paced and full of the twists and turns expected in this genre. There's also a bit of humor tossed in. So far, four of the books in the series (*Third Man Out*; *Shock to the System*; *On the Other Hand*; *Death*; *Ice Blues*) have been dramatized for the here! television network. This book could be intended for the

same treatment; whole pages often consist of little but dialog.

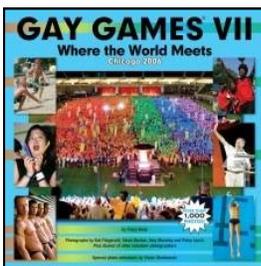
Stevenson's books don't carry the literary weight of **Michael Nava's**, nor do they tackle themes as dark as those found in the writing of **John Morgan Wilson**. The style is closer to that found in the work of **Mark Richard Zubro**. Nonetheless, they are satisfying in their own right and sure to please mystery fans. Recommended for popular reading collections.

Reviewed by **Michael Colby**  
Shields Library  
University of California, Davis

## Book Reviews: Nonfiction

### Baim, Tracy. *Gay Games VII: Where the World Meets*.

Chicago: Windy City Media Group, 2007. 208 p. paperback. ISBN: NA \$49.30



*Gay Games VII: Where the World Meets* is a pictorial showcase of Chicago's successful effort to host the 2006

Gay Games. The opening section of the book provides the reader with an adequate historical overview of the Gay Games movement, which places the Chicago Gay Games in proper context. Additional text covers the struggles the Chicago committee had to overcome in order to land the games.

The main section of the book presents

1,000 high-quality photographs (selected from over 60,000)—taken by both professional and amateur photographers during the games—of participants, spectators, sponsors, and committee members. Photographs from the opening and closing ceremonies are included, and are arranged alphabetically by event.

There are a few flaws which weaken the book's research functionality. The lack of a comprehensive alphabetical index makes it difficult to locate information efficiently. Photographs of committee members, celebrities, and sponsors are captioned, while photographs of participants and spectators in the main section do not carry captions.

This reviewer would have liked to have seen information on the location, duration, and

event participants at the start of each event's section. The absence of these items indicates this is a companion piece to the Federation of Gay Games website ([www.gaygameschicago.org](http://www.gaygameschicago.org)), the official website for the Chicago Gay Games. It should be noted that standard book trade sources, such as Books-in-Print, do not have a listing for this book.

Recommended for libraries with a GLBT athletic/sports collection.

Reviewed by **TJ Lusher**  
Assistant Dean  
Automated Library Systems  
Northern Illinois University

## Kundtz, David J. and Bernard S. Schlager. *Ministry among God's Queer Folk : LGBT Pastoral Care.*

Cleveland: Pilgrim Press, 2007. ISBN: 9780829817065. trade paperback. \$25.00.

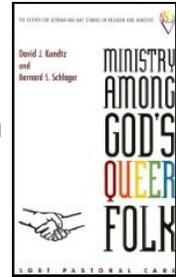
The fourth book in the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies in Religion and Ministry series, *Ministry among God's Queer Folk* is a practical handbook for pastoral caregivers reaching out to LGBTQ persons within, as well as outside, their congregations and communities. The authors draw a distinction between pastoral care and pastoral counseling, arguing that the latter is the province of those specifically trained in therapy, while the former is open to all sufficiently trained ministers and lay people.

This book assumes no experience with the

LGBTQ community on the part of the reader and covers a broad range of issues important to those beginning pastoral work with this community. A definition of pastoral care and a discussion of its function, coming out, creating communities of care and caring for relationships are all included with specific focus on how pastoral work with the LGBTQ community is unique. The authors include many descriptions of specific examples of pastoral work with LGBTQ persons to illustrate their points. Particularly useful are full and half page callouts of bullet points on important subjects.

The authors give this sensitive subject respectful and through treatment. Recommended for seminary and theological school libraries.

Reviewed by  
**Sarah Corvene**  
Baker Library, Harvard  
Business School



## Pomfret, Scott. *Since My Last Confession: A Gay Catholic Memoir.*

New York: Arcade Publishing, 2008. 288p. hardcover. ISBN: 978-1-55970-869-2. \$26.00

Is it possible to be both an out, proud, sexually active gay man and an observant Catholic? Why would anyone want to be? These are the questions at the heart of **Scott Pomfret's** hilariously ribald memoir.

Pomfret opens with a list of dramatis personae that introduces such characters as Father Bear-Daddy, the lay minister trio known as the Hale Marys, Father Butterballino and his lesbian parishioners Joan of Arc & Clare of Assisi, protestor Mr. Sodomy (he's against it) and Bill the Breviary (he is, too). Obviously, some names have been changed to protect confidentiality.

Despite the humor, Pomfret has a serious purpose as he recounts his attempts to

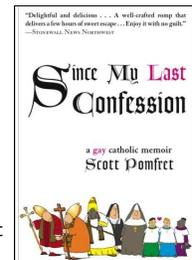
engage Boston's Archbishop (later Cardinal) **Sean O'Malley** in honest discussion, inviting him to "witness the dignity and power of love between men and to acknowledge that a gay man [can] be as good a Catholic as any other." Along the way, Pomfret visits the gay Catholic groups Dignity, which permits sex, and Courage, which doesn't. He rails against clerical cravenness and hypocrisy and wrangles with the conservative pieties of his brother and sister-in-law. Most poignantly, he examines his own heart for an answer to his atheist boyfriend's question, "Why do you keep going to a church that hates you?"

Amusing and sometimes instructive sidebars, including "Thousands of Years, My

Ass: A Short History of Matrimony" and "Excommunication FAQ" occur throughout.

Recommended for general collections. Pomfret is co-author of the Romantics line of explicit romance novels featuring gay men.

Reviewed by **Joyce Meggett**  
Division Chief for Humanities  
Chicago Public Library



## *A Prophet in His Own Land: A Malcolm Boyd Reader: Selected Writings 1950 - 2007.* Edited by Bo Young and Dan Vera.

Brooklyn: White Crane Books, 2008. 322 p. hardcover. ISBN: 9781590210116. \$33.00

This anthology of essays was gathered to honor gay Episcopal priest **Malcolm Boyd's** 85th birthday (celebrated this year) and is introduced by gay Episcopal Bishop **Gene Robinson**.

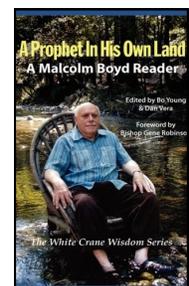
The entry "Superchrist of a Superstate: Political Manipulation of Christian," written in 1975, reads as a nearly contemporary review of the ongoing debates between liberal and evangelical views of the social gospel.

Other essays detailing Boyd's work in African American voter registration in the southern United States during the 1960s, his work with **Martin Luther King, Jr.**, his view of the place of Dr. King in historical perspective, and his legendary work with **Dick Gregory** at the 'hungry i' are equally memorable.

*A Prophet in His Own Land* is highly recommended for church libraries, larger public libraries, and academic libraries collecting in

United States 20th-century religion.

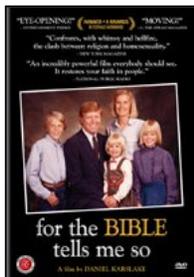
Reviewed by  
**Dave Combe**  
EP Foster Library  
Ventura County [CA]  
Library



## DVD Reviews: Nonfiction

### *For the Bible Tells Me So.*

Produced and directed by Daniel Karslake. New York: First Run Features, 2008. 98 minutes. DVD. \$24.99.



*For the Bible Tells Me So* recounts the coming-out experiences of five Christian families who have a gay son or lesbian daughter, and examines theological responses to literal readings of the Bible which condemn homosexuality.

While the sons and daughters do describe a little of their trepidation about coming out, and their evolving relationships with their parents, most attention is given to the reactions of the parents themselves. At first, these include concern, fear, confusion,

and profound disappointment; over time, all of the parents engage in difficult questioning of long-held beliefs, and reach at least some degree of acceptance.

Interwoven with the families' stories are the observations of Christian theologians from several denominations, who provide a brief introduction to Biblical interpretation that takes cultural settings and translation issues into account. For the most part, the spiritual transformation the parents experience is less about interpreting scripture and more about realizing how literal readings of the Bible threaten their child's well-being when that child is gay or lesbian.

With the focus on the parents' experience,

*For the Bible Tells Me So* speaks most directly to non-gay people who are attempting to reconcile religious beliefs with acceptance. GLBT folk themselves may also find it useful; however, the experience of questioning one's own nature in the context of religious teachings is captured more powerfully in the 2001 release *Trembling Before G-d* (featuring GLBTRT founder **Israel David Fishman**), about gay men and lesbians who are Orthodox or Hasidic Jews. Public and academic libraries should have both films in their collection.

Reviewed by **Ruth Ann Jones**  
Special Collections Cataloger  
Michigan State University Libraries

### *In Good Conscience: Sister Jeannine Gramick's Journey of Faith.*

Directed by Barbara Rick. New York: Out of the Blue Films, Inc., 2006. 82 minutes. \$29.95 for purchase by individuals; \$100.00 for public libraries/high schools; \$195.00 for community/religious groups; \$299.00 for colleges/universities.



**Barbara Rick** has created a wonderful documentary about a nun's journey as she speaks out for better acceptance of gays and lesbians in the Catholic Church, taking her message of hope all the way to the Vatican.

Sister **Jeannine Gramick's** mission was inspired by the question, "What is the Church doing for my gay brothers and sis-

ters?" Because of this, she has been an outspoken member for the gay community, much to the consternation of the Church hierarchy. As the documentary progresses, Rick shows that the church has forbidden Sr. Gramick from speaking out on behalf of the gay community on several occasions. Using her wit and charm, Sr. Gramick confronts protesters with a message of hope, understanding, and love.

Part of the documentary focuses on Sr. Gramick's trip to the Vatican, where she shares ideas on heterosexist doctrines within the Church and tries to obtain an

audience with then-Cardinal **Joseph Ratzinger**. Instead of disclosing her own orientation, she focuses on her mission and her ministry.

*In Good Conscience* is similar to the gay documentary *A Jihad for Love* (2008), and is a welcome addition to the hard-to-come-by documentaries on homosexuality and religion. Rick's film is recommended for any public or academic library serving teen and adult patrons.

Reviewed by **Johnnie N. Gray**  
Interlibrary Loan Librarian  
Christopher Newport University

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