



GLBTRT Newsletter

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

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

Vol. 18, No. 4 ♦ Winter 2006

From Your Editor

Book Reviews (Pages 7-10):

- *The Teahouse Fire*
- *Cirkus*
- *Blood Sisters*
- *The Zookeeper*
- *Mosaic Virus*
- *Behind the Moon*
- *The Future is Queer*
- *Ex-Gay Research*
- *Fun Home*
- *Cruise Control*
- *And Tango Makes Three*

No, there has not been a coup! Neither of your co-chairs, **Norman Ericksen** or **Cal Zunt**, was able to find time this quarter to write a column for the newsletter. Since we massively redesigned the newsletter this issue, I took the extra space to point out some of the alterations. I'm hoping, next issue, one or both co-chairs will be addressing you in this space again and I can go back to penning just a brief note.

You'll see lots of changes this issue. We hope they make this newsletter more complete, more useful, and more enjoyable.

We jumped from a two-column to a three-column format. The font size was adjusted down to approximately the size used in the Haworth Press ads. I tried to leave some white space in the layout and went to a ragged right margin. We developed a cleaner, tighter look and one that affords us more space for content.

With the Haworth Press magnanimously underwriting a four-color printing, it seemed silly to so severely restrict the color. I looked for a color scheme that would include the pink used in the GLBTRT logo and was pleasantly surprised to find some of my favorite colors and shades complemented it well.

The graphics we had been using were designed for a monochrome world, and took up too much space. We achieved better breaks between articles by using different colors for the headlines and text. I am hoping getting away from monochromatic also means we got away from monotonous.

I hope you like all the changes. This is your newsletter, though: Send suggestions, complaints, and particularly your articles to me at jpbmls@yahoo.com.

Thanks to everyone that contributed articles and input and, as always, I know everyone joins me in thanking Haworth Press for their continued generosity in sponsoring the GLBTRT newsletter.

John Bradford
Editor, GLBTRT Newsletter
Head, Automation & Technical Services
Villa Park (IL) Public Library
jpbmls@yahoo.com
Librarian, Leather Archives & Museum

Selecting the Stonewalls

On behalf of this year's Stonewall Book Award Committee, I want to thank the members of the GLBTRT for submitting your recommendations for the 2007 awards.

We are busy reading and considering over one hundred (!) books for nomination. In mid-December we will select five titles in each category. At the Midwinter conference the committee will vote for the titles in non-fiction and literature that best exemplify "exceptional merit of the GLBT experience"; the remaining four

titles in each category will be awarded "honor book" status.

The winners of the Barbara Gittings Book Award for Literature and the Israel Fishman Book Award for Nonfiction will be announced at the GLBTRT social to be held at the Seattle Public Library on January 21, 2007, at 6:00 pm.

I look forward to seeing you there.

Robin Imhof, Chair
Stonewall Book Award Committee
rimhof@pacific.edu

GLBTRT Officers

Norman Ericksen
Co-Chair, 2005-2007
nericksen@brooklynpubliclibrary.org

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Secretary, 2006-2008
lewis_day@harvard.edu

Deadlines for the newsletter for the next year will be:

Spring 2007	March 17, 2007
Summer 2007	May 15, 2007
Fall 2007	August 15, 2007
Winter 2007	November 16, 2007

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.

GLBTRT Midwinter Schedule set

Steering Committee 1/All Committee	Saturday, 1/20	8:00 am-12:30 pm	Westin - Vashon
Book Awards Committee 1 (Closed)	Saturday, 1/20	1:30-6:00 pm	Hilton Seattle - Chinook
Book Awards Committee 2 (Closed)	Sunday, 1/21	1:30-3:30 pm	W Seattle - Studio 2
GLBTRT Social	Sunday, 1/21	6:00-8:00 pm	Seattle Public Library
Steering Committee 2	Monday, 1/22	8:00 am-12:30 pm	Red Lion Hotel - Bainbridge

New York City to Host GLBT ALMS 2008

I am extremely pleased to announce that New York City will host the 2008 GLBT ALMS (Archives, Libraries, Museums, & Special Collections) Conference.

Specific dates will be announced by the New York Conference Committee, led by representatives from CLAGS, the Center for Lesbian and Gay Studies, at the City University of New York. We expect late spring or early summer dates. For more information on CLAGS, go to <http://web.gc.cuny.edu/clags/index.html>

New York was selected as the 2008 site after months of discussions and consultation with other potential sponsors. The New York site will allow for the best access and travel options for many of our European colleagues. We also expect access to an impressive list of speakers, authors, and experts, in addition to the great GLBT resources available to tour in the New York area. Future conferences will include a 2009 GLBT ALMS Conference in Europe, perhaps in London, and 2010 in Atlanta, Georgia. I

am still working to gather information about a potential European site with several of our colleagues in that part of the world. The Atlanta site is confirmed for 2010, with local representatives from Emory University and the Atlanta History Center serving as the Conference Committee.

Mark Ranum, Director
Plum Creek Library System
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Kameny Papers Added to Library of Congress

In a ceremony October 6, 2006 at the U.S. Library of Congress, long-time civil rights activist **Franklin Edward Kameny** officially presented more than 70,000 letters, documents and memorabilia to the nation. The gift represents a lifetime of Kameny's personal papers destined for the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress along with several rare protest and picket signs to be made part of the permanent collections of the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

In addition to these gifts to the federal repositories, many of the remaining picket and protest signs will be donated to gay and lesbian history archives throughout the United States for their collections.

"Nearly fifty years ago, the United States Government banned me from employment in public service because I am a homosexual," Kameny said. "This archive is not simply my story; it also shows how gay and

lesbian Americans have joined the American mainstream story of expanded civil liberties in the 20th century. Today, by accepting these papers, the nation preserves not only our history but marks how far gay and lesbian Americans have traveled on the road to civil equality."

The Kameny archive includes thousands of pages of letters, government correspondence, testimony, photographs, picket signs and other memorabilia. They trace the arc of the gay civil equality movement in the U.S. through Kameny's life and activism from the 1950s to the present. The collection includes original photographs of gay men and women picketing the White House in 1965 along with the original picket signs; the original policy statement of the U.S. Civil Service Commission (1966) ex-

plaining to Kameny the legal arguments why homosexuals "are not suitable for federal employment"; documents tracing the formation and advocacy of The Mattachine Society of Washington; documents from the American Psychiatric Association and the fight to "de-list" homosexuality as a mental illness; and impassioned testimony by Dr. Kameny in defense of scores of homosexuals being stripped of security clearances, and fired from their government jobs.

The Kameny papers now become part of the nation's repository of personal papers in the Manuscript Division of the Library of Congress where they will become available to historians and researchers after they are processed by the Library.

From the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History press release, 10/6/2006

Every Library Needs at Least One

GLBTRT Newsletter (ISSN 1533-7219) is an official publication of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered Round Table of the American Library Association. It appears quarterly in March, June, September, and December. Subscriptions are included in your membership fee to the round table via annual membership to the GLBTRT.

American Library Association
50 E. Huron St.,
Chicago, IL 60611

Letters to the editor, correspondence to the above address care of:

John Bradford,
GLBTRT Newsletter Editor
jpbmls@yahoo.com

An elderly female called the reference desk. She wanted to know the meaning of a phrase she had just come across in something she was reading. She continued, rather hesitantly, to give me the phrase: "It's two words," she said. "The first word is 'glory' (she actually spelled it out) ... and the second word is 'hole'."

"OK. . .," I stalled, wondering how I was going to answer this one. I thought maybe she'd been reading the local gay paper, or else a religious tract about what some members of our community get up to (so to speak).

"At all costs," I thought, "avoid the Internet!" (If she had shown up in person, I've since realized that many would have seized the opportunity to spin their screens around and show her how to use Google. I've since

confirmed that this would have been a Very Bad Thing!)

"This is an old-school question," I told myself (quite calmly, I thought). "Use an old-school source." *Brewer's Dictionary of Phrase and Fable* is always at hand, and it came through (so to speak): "Glory hole. A small room, cupboard or the like, where all sorts of odds and ends and junk are dumped."

"Yes!" the elderly caller exclaimed. "That's what I tried to tell my friend!" The Goddess of Reference had smiled. I breathed a sigh of relief. But I'll always wonder what her poor friend had been told by some unsuspecting (and non-GLBT) librarian!

Mike Sainsbury
sainsbury_michael@hotmail.com

Out in Seattle

A compilation from various sources (chiefly *Seattle FunMap*, *Damron's Men's Travel Guide*, & gaycities.com) of GLBT-friendly places in Seattle to eat, drink & play.

Clubs / Bars / Lounges

The Bad Juju Lounge

(Gay/Straight mix)
1518 11th Ave (at Pike)
206-709-9951

The Baltic Room

(Gay/Straight mix)
1207 Pine St (at Melrose)
206-625-4444

CC Attle's (Men)

1501 E Madison (at 15th Ave)
206-726-0565
also Veranda Room, Men's Room

The Crescent Lounge (Men)

1413 E. Olive Way (at Bellvue)
206-720-8188

The Cuff (Men, Levi)

1533 13th Ave (at Pine)
206/323-1525

Double Header (Men)

407 2nd Ave S Extension (at Washington)
206-464-9918

Eagle

(Men, Levi/Leather)
314 E Pike St.

Eastlake Bar & Grill

2947 Eastlake Avenue East
206-957-7777

Elite Tavern

(Men & Women, beer & wine only)
622 Broadway East
206-324-4470

The Full Circle Bar (Men)

1413 14th Ave (at Madison)
206-323-2158

Guppy's (Men, Women)

4752 California Ave SW (at Edmonds)
206-932-6996
Sat, Sun brunch

Hana's Restaurant & Lounge

(Men)
1914 8th Ave (at Stewart)
206-340-1591

Jade Pagoda (Men)

606 Broadway (at Mercer)
206-322-5900

Madison Pub (30s, 40s)

1315 East Madison Street
206-325-6537

Manray

(Men, 30s, 40s, Stand & Model)
514 East Pine Street
206-568-0750

R Place (Men)

619 E Pine St (at Boylston)
206-322-8828

Rosebud Restaurant & Bar

719 East Pike Street
206-323-6636

Sonya's Bar & Grill (Men)

1919 1st Ave
206-441-7996

Thumper's (Men)

1500 East Madison Street
206-328-3800

Timberline Spirits (Men, Women)

1828 Yale Ave
206-883-0242

Wildrose (Women)

1021 E Pike St
206-324-9210

Restaurants / Cafes

BRASA Restaurant

2107 3rd Avenue
206-728-4220

Cafe Amore

2229 5th Avenue (Belltown)
206-728-6033

Cafe Flora

2901 East Madison
206-325-9100

Eastlake Bar & Grill

2947 Eastlake Avenue East
206-957-7777

Galerias On Broadway

611 Broadway East
206-322-5757

Greenlake Bar & Grill

7200 East Green Lake Drive North
206-729-6179

Julia's On Broadway

300 Broadway East
206-860-1818

Rosebud Restaurant & Bar

719 East Pike Street
206-323-6636

Compiled by Louis Lang

Technical Consultant

Leather Archives & Museum

Adding GLBT to LCSH

The University of Washington has contributed dozens of new GLBT subject headings to LCSH, including these just in the past year (2006):

Asian American sexual minorities; Bisexual high school students; Children of sexual minority parents; Coming out (Sexual orientation) in literature; Drag shows; Ex-gays; Gay caregivers; Gay discotheques; Gay erotic films; Gay men's writings, Philippine; Gay skinheads in motion pictures; Gay teenagers in literature; Gays in the civil service; Gays in the military; Gays' writings, Basque; Gays' writings, Catalan; Gays' writings, Galician; Gays' writings, Portuguese; Gender identity--Law and legislation; Heterosexism in high schools; Heterosexism in higher education; Heterosexism in medical care; Heterosexism in medicine; Heterosexism in nursing; Heterosexism in schools; Homophobia--Law and legislation; Homophobia in medical care; Homophobia in medicine; Lesbian erotic literature; Lesbian online chat groups; Lesbian teenagers in literature; Male homosexuality in advertising; Male homosexuality in motion pictures; Sexual minorities--Identity; Sexual minorities in literature; Sexual minority college students; Sexual minority parents; Unsafe sex; Young bisexual men; Young gay men.

We keep a Web site listing by year all of the new LCSH that were created by University of Washington catalogers: <http://www.lib.washington.edu/Msd/Lcsh.html>.

Other SACO (Subject Access Cooperative Program) libraries also regularly contribute GLBT and other headings of interest to LCSH, including the following from the Leather Archives & Museum in 2006:

Enema--Erotic aspects; Erotic drawing, American; Erotic drawing, Finnish; Kake (Fictitious character); Sadomasochism--Law and legislation; Sadomasochists; Urination--Erotic aspects.

Adam Schiff

Principal Cataloger,

University of Washington Libraries

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Librarian, Leather Archives & Museum



Membership Committee Makes Plans

The Membership Committee is extremely pleased with the number of responses to the membership profile found on the

To take the GLBTRT membership survey, go to:
<http://isd.usc.edu/~trimmer/glbtrt/memberprofile.html>

GLBTRT Website. If you have yet to complete this form, please do so soon! The information we gather will help the RT in its numerous endeavors.

This past quarter, the Membership Committee has been performing some internal housekeeping, such as updating the volunteer form and deciding the best venue for contacting the membership. Additionally, we have been busy keying in all the information provided by the profile, and developing a formal mentorship proposal to present to the Steering Committee.

A long range goal is to develop a Needs Assessment Survey, so that we can ascertain in which direction the RT members desire us to grow. As always, any comments, suggestions, or ideas are welcomed. Please direct them to **Paul Higdon**, at higdonp@limalibrary.com. Thanks, and we hope to see you in Seattle!

Paul Higdon, Chair
 GLBTRT Membership Committee
higdonp@limalibrary.com

GLBTRT Volunteer Application

The GLBT Round Table needs your time, talent, and energy if our success in contributing toward libraries and library professionalism is to continue. Tell us how you can help!

Name:

Membership: help to recruit & retain GLBTRT members

Are you willing to serve in a leadership position with one of the committees? If yes, please indicate committee preference.

Library/Organization

Social hour: make local arrangements for our social hours, held during ALA Midwinter & Annual

Address

Newsletter: write/edit/layout book reviews and articles

Are you willing to serve as an elected officer?

City, State Zip

Nominating: discover candidates for GLBTRT elections

Yes No

Phone Number

Program Planning: plan programs and preconferences

What special skills, talents or assets do you have that you would be willing to share with the Round Table?

E-Mail address

Read-Aloud: coordinate & moderate program at ALA Annual **(NOT CURRENTLY AVAILABLE, BUT IF YOU ARE INTERESTED, LET US KNOW.)**

On which of these committees would you be willing to serve?

Book Award: choose the Stonewall Award-winners (Although this committee is currently full, we are accepting names to be placed in the queue.)

Website Committee: develop & maintain GLBTRT Website

Additional comments:

Breakfast/ Brunch Planning: plan GLBTRT Book Award Breakfast event held at ALA Annual

On which committees have you served in the past, and in what capacity?

Please mail this form to:

External Relations: disseminate Round Table information to interested parties inside and outside ALA

Paul Higdon
 Lima Public Library
 650 W. Market St.
 Lima, OH 45801

Fundraising: locate external funding for GLBTRT

or email your interests and questions to Membership Committee Chair Paul Higdon at: higdonp@limalibrary.com

GLBTRT Mentoring Program Created

The Membership Committee recently announced it was developing a formal mentorship program for the Round Table. To find out more about it, I asked **Amanda McKay**, the Mentorship Coordinator a few questions.

John Bradford: Thanks for agreeing to be interviewed, Amanda.

Amanda McKay: My pleasure, John.

JB: First, why don't you tell us: why now? The RT has been doing OK this far without a formal mentoring program.

AM: When I first joined the RT, I felt more than a little lost. I didn't know how I could help, or what the RT had done or was doing. The structure was confusing. I recently participated in the ALA program "Mentoring in the Millennium: New Views, New Climate and New Action," and several audience members asked the speakers if the GLBTRT had a mentoring program. The answer was a stunned, "No" from other GLBTRT members in the room. I remember thinking how useful something like that would have been for me, so I decided to create one. I joined the Membership Committee, and five months later, we're almost ready to launch.

JB: Would you provide the details as to how the program will work? What exactly would the mentors and mentees do?

AM: Sure. Participation in the program is entirely voluntary. Persons interested in becoming mentors will complete a simple

form that will be found on the Website, as well as in the newsletter. The questions will primarily regard professional interests, but will also include items such as: Do you want to live geographically close to your mentee or is a virtual relationship OK? We realize that some RT members may not be comfortable maintaining an exclusively virtual relationship with their mentee, and we want to ensure that everyone feels welcomed to participate.

The mentees would also fill out a form to make sure that they are partnered with the best possible match. As coordinator, I will attempt to match each mentor request with the most ideal match in the mentor database. While I'll do my best to match appropriate persons, should either party believe the partnership is not working as well as it should, they are welcome to dissolve the mentorship at any time. I'll then try to find a better fit for both parties.

The mentor is primarily there to guide the mentee, and answer questions. Of course, one of the nice potential off-shoots of this type of relationship when it works really well is other benefits, such as career advice and upward movement. The mentor gets the opportunity to pass along knowledge, and help shape the next generation of the RT.

JB: So who exactly is the program for?

AM: Absolutely anyone can apply for a mentor. Although we designed it for new members of the RT, anyone who believes

they will benefit from having a mentor is welcome to request one. In order to be a mentor, we ask that a member have at least six months experience in the RT. We're hoping that both parties find value in the partnership.

JB: When can we expect the program to be up and running?

AM: We're hoping to launch right after Midwinter, 2007. However, as we all know, Murphy likes to stick his hand in, so that date is a little flexible.

JB: How will you determine the success of the mentorship initiative?

AM: These types of relationships seem to work best when there is a lot of flexibility--no one is *required* to be a mentor and no one is *required* to be a mentee. Six months after launch, we'll look at participation numbers, as well as at the number of new members and rates of retention. We'll compare those figures with the numbers from last year, and are hoping to see a significant increase in both retention and new enrollment. After a year, we will do the same analysis. Periodically, I will be checking in with both mentors and mentees to ascertain the satisfaction level of both parties.

JB: Thanks, Amanda. If members have any questions, they should contact you?

AM: Yes. Any member questions can be sent to: amckay@lincolntail.info.

Fundraising Committee Aims to Fully Fund Book Endowment

During the past few months, members of the Fundraising Committee have been working to reinvigorate and strategize ways to reach the goal of \$75,000 that would fully-fund the GLBT Round Table Book Endowment.

When I volunteered to chair the Fundraising Committee at Annual in New Orleans, I really had no idea what that might entail, but decided that there must be others who felt as I did that the Round Table needed support. Following the conference I met with the former chair, **Jim Simonis**, Director of the Noreen Reale Falcone Library at Le Moyne College in Syracuse, to review the status of the Endowment, and get the various files that he had worked on for several years. Thank you, Jim. Then, over the course of the summer, I looked for individuals who might be willing to serve with me on the committee.

Among those who volunteered are **Ron Fark**, Gateway Services of Rockefeller Library at Brown University; **Rod MacNeil**, Manager of Customer Services in the Dept of Information Services at University of Pennsylvania School of Medicine; **Dale McNeill**, Director, Community Library Ser-

vices Department at the Queens Library; **John Mitchell**, SACO Coordinator, Cooperative Cataloging Team at the Library of Congress; and **Kathryn Whitacre**, Regional Librarian with the Free Library of Philadelphia. **Dustin Larmore**, Assistant Professor and Technical Services Librarian at the Karl E. Mundt Library and Learning Commons at Dakota State University, and the GLBTRT Treasurer, also is an ex-officio member.

Once again the committee is asking the membership to support this endowment. Since the American Library Association requires that all awards sponsored by ALA be self-supporting, through either donations or an endowment, getting it fully-funded is very important to the stability of the Round Table. This endowment will create stable funding for the book awards that will provide interest income to fund the \$1,000 award given to each winner, as well as fund their travel and lodging at the ALA Annual Conference where the awards are given. This will allow funds that the Round Table currently spends from our regular budget to support the book awards to be used to support and expand programming and other endeavors.

During the past several weeks, each of you should have received a letter asking you to consider a donation, pledge toward meeting our goal. If you have given in the past, we thank you, and ask that you consider another donation this year. And, if you have never given, please include the GLBT Round Table as one of your charitable donations this year.

To donate simply go to <http://www.ala.org/Template.cfm?Section=SupportForALA> or mail your check payable to:

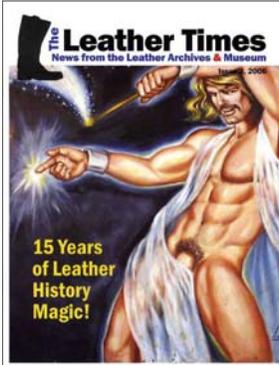
American Library Association,
Development Office,
50 East Huron Street,
Chicago, Illinois 60611-2795
(Specify "GLBTRT Book Award Endowment")

Thank you for your support, and I look forward to reaching our goal.

David Gray
Chair, Fundraising Committee
Director of Communications & Public Information,
Massachusetts Board of Library Commissioners

Leather Archives & Museum History Chronicled

In a continuing celebration of its fifteenth year of existence, the Leather Archives & Museum used a special issue (2006, No. 3) of its quarterly newsletter, *The Leather Times* (ISSN 1552-1915) to recount its history. With accounts and illustrations of



each year's highlights, the newsletter provides a look inside one of the alt-sex community's most innovative and enduring institutions.

The unique collection

of artifacts, publications, and archival materials held by the Leather Archives & Museum covers all aspects, individuals and groups that make up the BDSM/fetish community. From its start in the combined collections of 1st Amendment pioneer and bar owner **Chuck Renslow**, his lover **Dom Orejudos** (the artist **Etienne**), and community activist **Tony DeBlase**, the holdings of the Leather Archives & Museum have been built up through donations.

Leather Times Editor **Justin Tanis** points out, "This edition of the newsletter is essentially a story of our history-keeping and history-making. It shows glimpses of fifteen years of collecting, preserving, and cherishing what has happened in the lives of individuals and a community."

Adds **Rick Storer**, Executive Director of the Leather Archives & Museum, "Thanks to our passion for taking care of ourselves, we are

a strong, vibrant, passionate community that can be proud of the way we have sex, the way we live, and the way we will pass our stories on to future generations. Without a connection to our history, we are powerless and lost...just a bunch of freaks having a good time. With a connection to our history, we become immortal...a powerful force pushing social change that will make tomorrow better than today."

Electronic copies of the newsletter can be downloaded at <http://www.leatherarchives.org/resources/issue29.pdf>

John Bradford
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Librarian, Leather Archives & Museum

Leather Archives & Museum Announces Online Catalog

The Leather Archives & Museum (LA&M) announces LASH, an online public access catalog for the institutions' collections. LASH [Leather Archives System for Holdings] is available at <http://www.leatherarchives.net/amlibweb>.

The catalog now contains records for books and a limited number of archival papers and records. Magazines, museum art and artifacts, electronic resources and other collections will be added to the catalog over the next several years. "Our initial focus is on the content within the catalog" said Executive Director **Rick Storer**. "After our patrons have used the catalog for a period of time, we'll turn our attention to restructuring the search functionality and aesthetics" he added.

LA&M Librarian **Natalie** noted: "We're working hard to assure that our catalog is created using professional standards so that our records can be shared with other libraries, easily added to union catalogs and used in joint projects. This is critical for collections like the Leather Archives, because there are so many unique resources here that are not available at other libraries."

The volunteer team of librarians and IT professionals who have donated over 1,000 hours over three years include **John Bradford**, **Natalie**, **Louis Lang**, **John Myers** and **Adam Schiff**. The public release of LASH is the culmination of this team's efforts to move the library book collection from a room full of unorganized boxes of books to a fully accessible collection of

leather culture and history.

Additional volunteer librarians are sought to help; please contact the LA&M for more information. Volunteers need not live in the Chicago area.

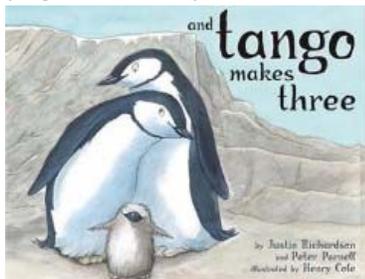
The Leather Archives & Museum is a recognized cultural institution dedicated to the preservation of and access to the leather lifestyle and alternative sexuality. The LA&M library contains over 5,000 books, 10,000 magazines, multimedia collections and electronic resources. For more information about the library, please contact archives@leatherarchives.org.

From Leather Archives & Museum press release, 12/04/2006

Parents Miffed At Book With Gay Penguins

A popular children's book about two male penguins who raise a baby penguin has raised the ire of parents in Shiloh, an Illinois community about 20 miles east of St Louis, with demands that it be removed from the bookshelves of a local school.

And Tango Makes Three (see review, page 10) is based on the true story of two male penguins, named Roy and Silo, who



adopted an abandoned egg at New York City's Central Park Zoo in the late 1990s. The book, written by **Peter Parnell** and **Justin Richardson**, was moved to the non-fiction sections of Rolling Hills' Consolidated Library's branches in Savannah and St. Joseph in northwest Missouri.

Silo and Roy are chinstrap penguins. They set up housekeeping together and for six years were completely devoted to each other and inseparable. Their chief keeper, **Rob Gramzay** discovered that the couple put a rock simulating an egg in their nest and sat on it, keeping it warm in the folds of their abdomens.

Gramzay finally gave them a fertile egg that needed care to hatch. Things went perfectly. Roy and Silo sat on it for the typical 34 days until a chick, Tango, was born. For the next two and a half months they raised

Tango, keeping her warm and feeding her food from their beaks until she could go out into the world on her own.

Some parents at Shiloh Elementary School say the book deals with homosexuality and that, they say, is a topic for parents not schools. The school board is resisting calls for the book's removal but parents say they will continue fighting.

Zoologists say that it is an over simplification to call the penguins gay, but exactly what bound the two, and other examples of same-sex relationships among animals, remains a mystery. Early last year, after *And Tango Makes Three* was written the penguin couple broke up. For a brief period Roy lived with a female penguin.

*by 365Gay.com Newscenter Staff
Posted November 16, 2006*

Book Reviews: Fiction

Avery, Ellis. *The Teahouse Fire*

New York: Riverhead Books. January 2007. 400 p. ISBN 1594489300 \$24.95

Set in Meiji era Japan, this novel depicts the lives of two women as they interact with the many changes that are happening within Japan as it adopts western cultural attitudes.

The story is set in the imperial capital of Kyoto in the household of a Tea Master Shin. Shin Yukako his only daughter finds Aurelia, a western orphan who takes shelter in the Baishan teahouse on the grounds of the Shin compound after a fire forces her to flee from her uncle, a French Catholic Priest. For the next 25 years Aurelia now Urako lives her life as a Japanese servant and learns the Art of Tea from Yukako.

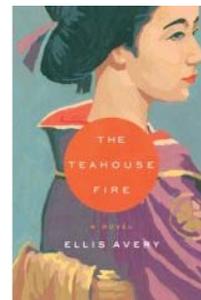
Both women work together to preserve the traditional arts of the tea ceremony and related industries and adapt them to the changing world around them. The reader is introduced to the old world of the Shogun and the Samurai while observing the rapid

changes made to all parts of Japan as part of the Meiji Restoration. Urako is introduced to the "floating world" of the Geisha in which she encounters Inka a servant girl to Koito, a Kyoto Geisha. Inka and Urako spend one evening together which results in longing on the part of Urako which is unfulfilled when Inka goes to Tokyo with her mistress.

Politics and society create many obstacles that the household and its inhabitants must overcome in order to survive and preserve the traditional arts for future generations. Ellis Avery has taken the bare bones life of the historical figure Shin Yukako and created a vivid character that brings to life the conflicts that occur when two culture interact.

It is very obvious that the author has spent time learning the Art of Tea and has studied Japanese culture. Her use of language en-

ables the reader to envision the various tasks that make up the life of a Tea Master and the servants – setting up and preparing the tea house for a ceremony, the tasks involved in dressing in a kimono, the cleaning and care of the kimono, and the daily bath.



This book should be purchased for public libraries and university libraries with a Japanese studies collection.

Reviewed by **Norman Eriksen**
Chief Librarian for Language
and Literature, Brooklyn Public Library

Fraze, Patti. *Cirkus*

Boston: Alyson Books, 2006. 336 p. ISBN: 1555839355 \$24.95

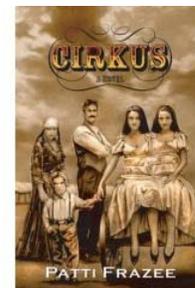
Fraze's debut novel is set in the world of a Bohemian circus troupe traveling the American Midwest at the turn of the 20th century. The cast of characters (typical of the circus sideshow coterie - fat lady, thin man, dog woman, strong man, etc.) is headed by Shanghai, a fire-throwing dwarf with a closely-guarded secret (he is physically a woman).

Shanghai is reeling from a love affair with a trapeze artist who stayed behind in Prague to marry a man. His memories of their relationship, however, are inhibited by the gypsy Mariana, wife of the circus manager, who has cast a spell on him, stolen his diary, and confiscated his mail. Entering this company of "anomalies" are conjoined twins Atasha and Anna, whose father sells them to the circus. Pandemonium and a series of disasters ensue when Shanghai and Atasha have an affair and Anna, with the complicity of Mariana, unwittingly in-

forms their father of Shanghai's true gender.

Even in this community of aberrations, homosexuality is so abhorrent as to be beyond tolerance. Would any queer reader living in the real world find this transparent theme so incredulously shocking? Probably not, but those who feel revulsion at the physical deformities of the protagonists might well be indignant that they fall beneath them on the scale of acceptance, thus the point of the novel. Unfortunately, despite no small talent in storytelling technique, the author's efforts to present these characters as complex and fully-realized human beings (if that is her intention) is mitigated from the start by the fable-like aura she creates through the magical abilities of Mariana. Nor is the premise as unique as one might imagine. A number of recent titles (minus the transgendered aspect but all favorably reviewed) explore

the travails of conjoined twins. Readers interested in novels set in the circuses should check out *Chang and Eng* by Darrin Strauss (2000), *Geek Love* by Katherine Dunn (1989), or *Cabinet of Wonders* by Renee Dodd (2006). A more in-depth and non-circus presentation of the lives of conjoined twins is available in *The Girls* by Lori Lansens (2006) and, finally, to round out the circus genre, there is the popular current bestseller *Water for Elephants* by Sara Gruen (2006).



Reviewed by **Roseann Szalkowski**
Senior Cataloger, Skokie (IL) Public Library

Jacobsen, Mary. *Blood Sisters: A Novel of an Epic Friendship*

New York: Haworth Press, 2006. 289 pp. ISBN: 978-1-56023-322-0 \$16.95

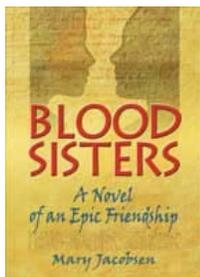
Jacobsen's first novel is told in twenty years of detailed, elaborate letters between former college roommates Val and Ashmont. Val's letters are lengthy and emotional, usually beginning with a vow of love for the seemingly asexual Ashmont, and then detailing her own latest fling with an unsuitable woman. Ashmont's replies, which she does not mail, are less revealing; they generally start off scolding Val for failing to

learn from her past romantic mistakes, and then change as she ponders a philosophical question. Interspersed with the letters are chapters in a saga the two women collaborate to write about critical events in the history of their friendship. The Epic of Gilgamesh, which Val and Ashmont studied in depth as undergraduates, inspires this tale.

The novel is gracefully written but structur-

ally flawed; the epistolary framework doesn't suit the story or characters. Ashmont's decision not to mail any of her letters limits her character's development, because we know only her thoughts, not Val's reactions to them. Real-time scenes, alternated with letters describing them, would give the reader greater perspective. Scenes from the friendship epic fill in some of the blanks, but these chapters wouldn't be necessary if the

Blood Sisters, continued....



friendship epic filled in some of the blanks, but these chapters wouldn't be necessary if the epistolary device worked.

Another failed trick is the attempted parallel to *The Epic of Gilgamesh*. This goes

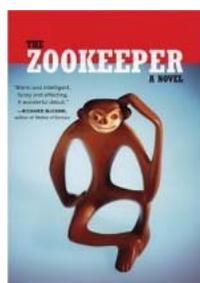
beyond Val and Ashmont's efforts to write the saga of their friendship. The novel ends with each woman's critical synopsis of the ancient epic, written as part of their coursework in their sophomore year of college. Jacobsen intends for these different takes on *Gilgamesh* to foreshadow the students' attitudes toward love and relationships as adults, and that in itself is a lovely detail. However, each synopsis ends with a paragraph by the teacher explaining what the essay says about its writer, and that doesn't

give the reader enough credit. Ultimately, while Jacobsen shows great promise as a novelist, she would do better to let her considerable writing talent shine rather than hiding it beneath layers of structural gimmicks.

Reviewed by Daisy Porter
Senior Librarian
San Jose Public Library
Educational Park Branch

Maclennan, Alex. The Zookeeper: A Novel

New York: Alyson Books, 2006. 279 p. ISBN: 9781555839369 \$14.96



This is not an easy novel, for the reader. It is not a fun book to take to the beach or the ski lodge.

Alex Maclennan, a former zookeeper (or at least a zoo employee) himself, has chosen to chronicle the mostly

sad frustrating life of an other-directed, insecure just-beginning-a-career young man, who has spent his life trying to please

others, many of whom are difficult – his mother, his sister, her son, his boss at the zoo, his snazzy new boyfriend, and his best friend, a woman who gives up her struggling restaurant in Dupont Circle to return to Pennsylvania to care for her Alzheimer's-afflicted mother.

At least the superficially successful boyfriend encourages the zookeeper to start standing up for himself and pursuing his life in a way that suits him. In the end, finally in the last few pages, he does just that and tosses the boyfriend aside.

The characters are carefully drawn, psycho-

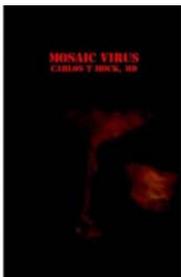
logically, but I never had a clear picture of what they looked like. I wanted a little more physical description, to help me along. The book is nicely designed, but flashbacks are in tiny and difficult to read italic type.

This is a serious literary novel, befitting its author's first attempt as a teacher of writing. Libraries collecting serious gay literature will want to consider it.

Reviewed by James D. Anderson,
Professor Emeritus of LIS
Rutgers University
Ometeca Institute, St. Petersburg, FL

Mock, Carlos T., MD. Mosaic Virus

Chicago: Floricanto Press, January 2007. 268 p. ISBN: 9780915745791 \$24.95



The year is 1983 and a series of unexplained deaths of priests has the Vatican Secretary of State worried, so he summons a Jesuit priest to investigate the cause of the deaths. Is it Stasi, KGB, CIA, FBI, former Nazi scientists or NIH? The story

moves across the globe from Vatican City to New York to Washington DC to Moscow and South Africa as Father Janiver Barraza and

FBI agent Lillian Davis Lodge follows the clues that bring them closer to the truth that threatens to destroy many lives and institutions.

This medical thriller examines the idea that the AIDS virus was created in a laboratory to be used as medical weapon. Cold War attitudes, Colonial and Post Colonial views toward the African peoples, the anti Gay and the Catholic church's fear of the past are vital elements in the story as Father Barraza learns more about the way the world operates and what has been done in the past by Germany, the United States and the Catholic Church which causes him to

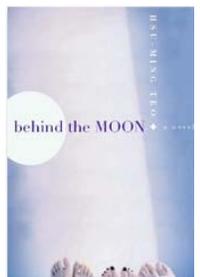
question what he has been taught to believe.

The characters are realistic, the settings are real locations and the author makes good use of the historical facts of the period. The book is a quick read but it does make you think about the possible reality of this kind of biological warfare. I would recommend the book for purchase for public libraries.

Reviewed by Norman Eriksen
Chief Librarian for Language
and Literature
Brooklyn Public Library

Teo, Hsu-Ming. Behind the Moon: A Novel

New York: Soho, 2007. 372 p. ISBN: 9781596474402 \$13.00



This is a novel of identities- how they are formed, shattered and constantly re-forged through a mixture of personal decision and cultural imperatives.

The gay thread is expressed through the life of Justin Cheong

and his relationship with his childhood friends Tien and Nigel "Gibbo" Gibson, each of whom is seeking to balance tradition-whether expressed as classic poetry or a screaming Australian soccer match-with their own personal dreams. Their searches for meaning take place against the cultural backdrop of the Vietnamese classic poem *The Tale of Kieu*, whose expectations of filial duty and definitions of love provide points of reference for several of the characters.

In this colorful and smoothly written second novel, Hsu-Ming Teo explores the often bewildering options of personal choice in a context that may be somewhat unfamiliar to Northern hemisphere audiences, the several waves of Asian immigration to Australia and the problems of their attempts to find space for themselves in the new land. Her liberal use of Chinese and Vietnamese slang terms that lends spice to the text is made accessible by the thoughtful inclusion of a detailed glossary, although readers

Behind the Moon, continued...

unfamiliar with Australian English may find themselves reaching for a dictionary from time to time, as well as atlases of the city of Sydney and Australia.

This novel would be a valuable addition to the GLBT fiction collections of college and university libraries, although public libraries serving Asian American communities should consider acquiring it as well.

Reviewed by **Robert Ridinger**,
Professor and Electronic Information
Resources Manager
Northern Illinois University Libraries

The Future Is Queer: A Science Fiction Anthology

Edited by Richard Labonté and Lawrence Schimel. Vancouver, B.C.: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2006. 224 p. ISBN 1551522098. \$17.95

Science fiction has long been a vehicle for exploring different sexual and gender constructions, and the eight stories collected in this anthology present us with varied and imaginative realities.

Set in the future, with some technological innovations and different societal structures, the stories address some of our current GLBT concerns and discussions, such as gays in the military and GLBT mainstreaming, and gender transformation, for example.

Other stories address the more universal

concerns of love, relationships, break-ups, longing and sex, albeit within a queer vision. The last story is about the longing that comes when one does not relate or identify with ones body, and could be an excellent starting point for discussion of transgender issues.

The Future is Queer offers interesting insights into a future that may be here before we know it. It is a quick, entertaining read; the stories are well written and gripping to the end. It might not please those who enjoy a more technologically based science fiction, but will please those who use sci-

ence fiction to reflect on our current realities.

Reviewed by
Michael Waldman
Head, Collection
Management
Baruch College Li-
brary, New York, NY.

**Book Reviews: Non-Fiction*****Ex-Gay Research: Analyzing the Spitzer Study and Its Relation to Science, Religion, Politics, and Culture***

Edited by Jack Drescher and Kenneth J. Zucker. New York: Harrington Park Press, 2006. 352 p. ISBN 978-1-56023-557-6 \$34.95

The idea of the ability of gay, lesbian, and bisexual people to change their sexual orientations to completely or primarily heterosexual has been a highly contested debate for the past several years. Psychiatrist Robert Spitzer significantly increased the intensity of these arguments after discussing at the 2001 American Psychiatric Association Conference a controversial study in which he concluded that some people can change their core sexual orientation through the secular-based method of reparative therapies and spiritually-based methods such as ex-gay ministries. His study was also published in a volume of scholarly journal. ("Can Some Gay Men Change Their Sexual Orientation?: 200 Participants Reporting a Change from Homosexual to Heterosexual Orientation." *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, 32(5) (2003): 403-417.)

Incorporating two journal issues—the one

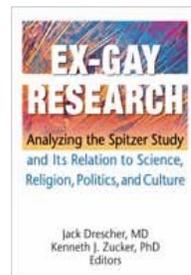
cited above as well as vol. 7, no. 3 of Harworth Press's *Journal of Gay & Lesbian Psychotherapy*—this informative and well-researched text contains 34 articles by scholars and health professionals who specialize in GLBT studies. Most of the authors criticized Spitzer's biased methodology and rigid conclusions. His use of study subjects who worked for organizations whose missions are to help GLB people to change their sexual orientations was especially criticized.

Three authors praised the article, including Richard Nicolosi, the founder of reparative therapy. Compliments included the study's wide scope of questions, recognition of people who have apparently changed from homosexual to heterosexual contrary to the opinions of most mental health organizations, and Spitzer's willingness to provide the complete data set of his study. This latter aspect was praised by nearly all the authors.

One article explained the media's distortion of the results of a study like Spitzer's as well as limit the types of discussion about the study in order to entice and excite the public.

An interview with Spitzer concludes the text. Due to its highly-intellectual style, this book is recommended for academic and GLBT-focused special library collections.

Reviewed by **Dustin P. Larmore**
Assistant Professor and
Technical Services Librarian
Dakota State University

**Build Your Vita! Write Reviews!**

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 **Lisa Johnston** at: lnjohnston@sbc.edu

Bechdel, Alison. *Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic.*

Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2006. 232 p. ISBN 9780618477944 \$19.95



Fun Home is an odyssey back and forth across the decades as Alison Bechdel works to understand her relationship with her father, Bruce.

Bruce lived nearly his entire 44 years within the cramped confines of an isolated Pennsylvania community.

While he had inherited his father's job as the town's undertaker, the funeral home did not pay well enough to support his family. Bruce loved books: He took a second job teaching literature to high school students. He even operated a lending library of his own books for his students—and if these promising students were generally male, Alison thought

little of it. Even as she began to recognize her own same-sex affections, she missed those of her father except in retrospect.

Alison's voyage of self-discovery comes to a head when, away at college, she writes her parents that she is a lesbian. Her mother replies with her own bombshell: Bruce, Alison's father, is a gay man and for years has had affairs with his high school students. Suddenly, an awful lot became clear to Alison: why her father wandered off alone on family trips to Christopher Street, why there were always young men popping in to borrow books or help with the yard-work, even an odd legal entanglement.

Even after he knew Alison knew, Bruce can't quite declare his homosexuality. He is very good at accepting hers, perhaps sensing she can go farther with her life than he chose to do. The small opening he made

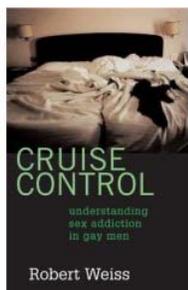
slams shut only a short time later, when Bruce is hit by a truck and killed, days after his wife asks for a divorce. To the end, Alison doesn't know: Was this just a stupid accident or was it suicide as Bruce's façade of family crumbled around him?

Alison Bechdel is best known for her comic series, *Dykes To Watch Out For*, syndicated in GLBT and alternative papers and collected in several volumes. *Fun Home's* style is more detailed and more evocative. While there may be some resemblance between *DTWOF's* Mo and the Alison depicted in *Fun Home*, Alison finds a better comparison with Wednesday from *The Adams Family* (the cartoon, not the TV show). Recommended for all libraries.

Reviewed by **Louis Lang**
Technical Consultant
Leather Archives & Museum

Weiss, Robert. *Cruise Control: Understanding Sex Addiction in Gay Men.*

New York: Alyson Books, 2005. 224 p. ISBN 1555838219 \$15.95



In *Cruise Control*, Robert Weiss opens some of the most difficult issues gay men face in becoming healthy individuals and life partners. Writing sympathetically from his clinical background he lays out the difference between healthy and manageable sex and the destructive be-

havior of addicts. How do crystal meth and other addictive substances threaten already addicted gay men and their loved ones? Weiss gives answers not just to the management of addictive symptoms, but also to the causes of dangerous acting out.

Examples drawn from his practice at a recovery center provide concrete instances that clarify what the author is saying. He gives the reader ways of setting boundaries and establishing goals for health and self-esteem. Weiss discusses both the benefits and drawbacks of Twelve Step programs,

and he offers advice in choosing a therapist. He also outlines written plans that can be used by addicts and their partners for long-term self help.

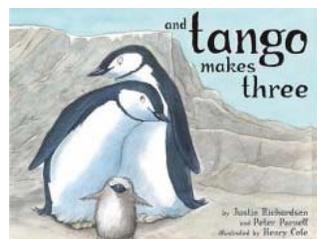
Adult readers, whether addicted or not, will gain valuable insight from Weiss' frank and non-moralistic approach to this important human issue. Recommended,

Reviewed by **Paul Scaer**
Information Specialist/Librarian
Science Leadership Academy

Book Reviews: Children's

Richardson, Justin and Peter Parnell. *And Tango Makes Three.* Illus. by Henry Cole.

New York: Simon & Schuster, 2005. ISBN 978-0689878459 \$14.95



And Tango Makes Three tells the story of Roy and Silo, partnered male penguins who are entrusted with an egg in need of care. They hatch it and care for their daughter Tango; all three still frolic in the penguin house at Central Park Zoo.

A lightly fictionalized account of true events at New York's Central Park Zoo,

Richardson and Parnell tell the story sensitively; particularly poignant is the description of how Roy and Silo, males unable to produce an egg to nurture, shared time trying to hatch a rock of the right color and shape—and how a sympathetic zookeeper saw a way to grant them their dream of a family and rescue an egg that would otherwise have been abandoned.

A brief, one-page author's note provides a few more details on Roy, Silo and Tango.

While homosexuality in the animal kingdom is well documented (see Bruce Begemihl's *Biological Exuberance: Animal Homosexuality and Natural Diversity* (1999)), this gen-

tle children's book has raised concerns among some parents in southwest Illinois and northwest Missouri (See accompanying story, page 6).

Realistic but muted watercolors by Henry Cole accompany the text to make a moving and uplifting tale appropriate for all ages. This ALA Notable Children's Book is recommended for all elementary school and public libraries.

Reviewed by **Louis Lang**
Technical Consultant
Leather Archives & Museum