



GLBTRT Newsletter

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

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

Vol. 23, No. 3

Winter 2012

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From the Chair:



Later this month ALA's Midwinter Conference will take place in Dallas. As I prepare for this conference, I cannot help thinking about the images of the then Gay Liberation Task Force at the 1971 ALA annual conference in Dallas. The first book award, the kissing booth in the exhibits, a sit-in by 4 task force members of an Intellectual Freedom Committee program, and the 'crowning' of Barbara Gittings as coordinator of the task force were all part of the convention media coverage and raised awareness of this new group.

This conference in Dallas will also draw attention to the round table and raise awareness of our work. The Rainbow Project and Over the Rainbow will announce their book lists for 2011, and the Stonewall Children's/Young Adult award will be announced as part of the youth media awards for the second year. There will also be updates on the Stonewall Book Award Endowment. This

spring, the round table will elect five "directors at large," in addition to a chair-elect and secretary.

After the annual conference, an executive board comprised of the chair, past chair, chair-elect, secretary, treasurer, councilor, and directors at large will replace the current steering committee. This structure will offer more opportunities for involvement in the round table and give members more choice in the type of volunteer activities available.

Speaking of volunteers, I would like to thank Karen Schneider and Nel Ward for stepping forward to assume the positions of interim secretary and newsletter chair respectively.

I would like to thank and acknowledge the members of the Stonewall Book Award, The Rainbow Project and the Over the Rainbow Project committees for their dedication and hard work. I know we are all looking forward to hearing the results of their year of consideration.

For those of you who are attending Midwinter, I will look forward to seeing you at our meetings and social.

Midwinter GLBTRT Social:

One of the highlights at Midwinter is the Round Table's Social. You'll learn which books won Stonewall Book awards in Literature and Nonfiction (Youth awards are at the big ALA Youth Media Awards event the next morning), get a chance to see which books are in the Rainbow Project and Over the Rainbow final lists, enjoy time with friends and colleagues, and partake in some refreshments. In Dallas, the Social will be catered by local Mexican restaurant Pepe y Mitos (vegetarian options available). This restaurant will be featured in the spring on the Food Network's *Diners, Drive-ins and Dives*.



The Social will be at Dallas's Central Library, 1515 Young Street, 4th floor, (214) 670-1671. The Central Library is in walking distance of the Convention Center, and the fourth floor (Fine Arts) has been recently renovated. Friends, family, and local librarians are welcome at the Social, whether or not attending the Midwinter Meeting.

Thanks to Dale McNeill for organizing this and submitting the photo.

Newsletter Deadlines:

Spring 2012	3/15/12
Summer 2012	5/31/12
Fall 2012	8/31/12
Winter 2013	11/31/12

Midwinter 2012 Schedule

Saturday, January 21, 2012

Steering Committee I	8 – 10am	SHER - Houston Ballroom B
All-Committees Meeting Time	10:30 – noon	SHER - Majestic 03
Over the Rainbow Committee I	1:00 – 5:00 pm	SHER - Pearl 1
*Stonewall Book Awards Committee I	1:30 – 5:30 pm	SHER - Pearl 5
Rainbow Project Committee I	2:00 – 5:00 pm	SHER - Trinity 3

Sunday, January 22, 2012

Rainbow Project Committee II	9:00 – 5 pm	SHER - Trinity 3
Over the Rainbow Committee II	1:00 – 5 pm	SHER - Pearl 1
*Stonewall Book Awards Committee II	2:00 – 4:00 pm	SHER - Pearl 5
Social	6:00 – 8:00 pm	Dallas Public Library (P. 1)

Monday, January 23, 2012

ALA Youth Media Awards presentation	7:30am - 9:00 am	Dallas Convention Center Theater
Steering Committee II	9:30 – 11:30 am	DCC - C144

*Closed Meetings

Other Events of Interest to GLBTRT Members:

Progressive Librarians Guild—Discussion topic, "What Is Critical Librarianship?" (1/21/12) 4:00-5:30 pm
Dallas Convention Center D170 [followed by PLG dinner at 7:00 pm—Jorge's Tex/Mex Cafe, 1722 Routh Street #122 in the Dallas Arts District (includes some vegetarian options)]

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Sunrise Celebration (1/23/12) 6:30-7:30 am Dallas Convention Center A2

From the Chair-elect:

Currently the duties of the chair-elect are not decided but I've been keeping busy. I've been working on drafting [language for the roles of our officers and board members](#). My draft language is an aggregation of material from other ALA organizations like ACRL and LITA. I've also been helping Anne and Dale with launching our new [Stonewall Book Awards 40th Anniversary Fund Raising Campaign](#).

Other future plans are advocating for developing our [Procedure Manual](#) to its full potential and formalizing some processes like proposing projects with this [draft form language](#). Because we also need to articulate our expectations of GLBTRT Liaisons and Representatives, I have prepared [draft language about liaisons and representatives](#). Another important goal is forming the [GLBTRT Ad Hoc Resources Committee](#); hopefully there will be time to discuss this process at Midwinter. There is already a great list of [volunteers](#). If you would like to join them, e-mail me at david.vess@gmail.com.

For the last year I've also been busy with my duties as past-chair of the web committee. I'm proud to say that the round table website was one of the first groups to migrate into ALA's new Drupal content management system last Fall. **At the time of migration the round table also adopted the official information architecture (navigation bar) all ALA sites are required to use.** Over the Fall we also adopted the [ALA Committee Volunteer Form](#). This tool will help track appointment processes, automate appointment notifications, automatically update the ALA committee roster database. This database generates the very nice rosters that appear on each committee's web page ([Steering Committee example](#)). To see full contact information of committee members, log in with the link at the top of any page.

On Halloween I began my new job as Digital User Experience Librarian, Assistant Professor, and Librarian to the Department of Social Work at James Madison University in Harrisonburg, Virginia. I'm fortunate to have found a dream job with a wonderful family of colleagues. I'm also thrilled to be back in the Shenandoah Valley. My family home is only an hour away.

As always, if you're interested in volunteering, have a look at our [Committees](#) page and volunteer using our [form](#). Note that we need volunteers for our [Fund Raising Committee](#).

David

GLBTRT Newsletter (ISSN 1533-7219) is an official publication of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender Round Table of the American Library Association. It appears quarterly in March, June, September, and January.

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The GLBTRT Newsletter needs your help!

Please send any information you would like published in the newsletter. Some of my ideas are interviews, national and international news about LGBT libraries/books/etc.; descriptions of programs, special collections locations; a calendar of events; ALA/GLBTRT issues, and political decisions that impact libraries. If you want to contribute any of these or write an article or column, let me know!

News from the Round Table Officers/Committees

From Dale McNeill, Treasurer: Thanks for your membership in and support of the GLBT Round Table of ALA! Your membership dues are the primary source of income for the round table. In ALA's last fiscal year (which ended August 31, 2011), income from dues was \$10,365.82. Sales of the Stonewall Book Award seals have been increasing. Last year, income from those sales was \$3,225.97. Total income for the year was \$22,342.79.

We keep the price of meal functions as low as possible (though I know that \$55 for breakfast seems like a lot!). Income from meal functions last year was \$7,915.00. Meal function expenses (which include the Socials as well as ticketed events) were \$10,268.62.

The Stonewall Book Awards are the other large expense. The three winning authors receive a check for \$1,000.00 each. Total expenses for the fiscal year were \$19,988.04. We finished the fiscal year with net income of \$2,354.75.

A more complete treasurer's report is available at <http://connect.ala.org/node/163941>. I'm happy to address any questions at dale.mcneill.ala@gmail.com. (Thanks for the work on the Social, Dale!)

From Peter Hepburn, GLBTRT Councilor: Currently, there has been little Council discussion that directly relates to LGBT issues in libraries and librarianship, but GLBTRT members are encouraged to volunteer for ALA committee vacancies. (Hepburn has been elected to the Committee on Committees (COC) which is currently working with President-Elect Maureen Sullivan to craft the slate of nominees for the Executive Board. Congratulations, Peter!)

From Lynn Evarts, Chair of The ALA Rainbow Project: The committee will be discussing 54 titles for youth at Midwinter and publishing the list by the end of the conference. Evarts concludes her run as chair at the end of Midwinter; Michael Cart will take over the reins at that time. (Thanks for the work, Lynn, and welcome, Michael!)

From Arla Jones, Chair of the Over the Rainbow Project: After being an ad hoc committee for over a year, the Over the Rainbow (OTR) Project was elevated to a standing committee during the GLBTRT Membership Committee at Annual last summer. The purpose of this committee is to annually prepare a current bibliography of commendable adult LGBT books.

Jones reports that the committee has identified 263 potential titles for its 2012 list to be determined by the end of Midwinter 2012. Publication dates for these books are July 2010 through December 2011. Of the potential titles, 140 have at least one juror nomination; 103 are from small independent publishers, university presses, or self-publishers.

A blog of nominated books has been updated monthly until the nomination deadline on Halloween. Thanks go to David Vess who provided such detailed information about blog visitors, including the 2,604 visits between May and December 19, 2011 with a majority of these in November when the final list of nominations was published. (Good work, Arla, and good luck to new chair, Danielle Pollack!)

Program Committee Plans For Next Two Annuals

Shawn Vaillancourt, Chair of the Programming Planning Committee, is working on details for the 2012 programs for Anaheim.

Following are the proposed programs:

Safe Space Training from GLSEN:

There will likely be numerous sessions of this training running so that the session sizes will be more manageable for the trainers from GLSEN

LGBTQ Publishing with Lambda Literary Foundation:

This program will have participation and highlights from Over the Rainbow Committee and The Rainbow Project.

The committee also has preliminary ideas for the 2013 Annual in Chicago:

Workplace Equality with Out and Equal Workplace Advocates:

They have indicated willingness to speak on topics of workplace equality with librarians at a conference.

LGBTQ Graphic Novels: Based on the popularity of our last program on this topic as well as inquiries since then, revisiting this topic seems like a good idea for the other Coast if we can gather speakers.

Shawn also invites members to submit more suggestions! Thanks, Shawn!

RT Makes Changes in Steering Committee, Needs Candidates

At the end of the 2012 Annual Conference in Anaheim, the governing body of the round table will significantly change in accord with the vote taken by the membership last year. At present the governing body is called the Steering Committee and is composed of the officers and the committee chairs. After the Anaheim Conference, the governing body will be called the GLBTRT Executive Board and will be composed of the officers and five (5) Directors-at-Large. The officers are the Chair, Chair-Elect, Immediate Past Chair, Secretary, Treasurer, and GLBTRT Councilor.

The authority and responsibilities of the governing body will not change, but the name and composition will. The new Executive Board, like the current Steering Committee, sets the direction and manages the affairs of the round table, determines its policies or changes therein, actively encourages support for its goals, establishes financial policies of the round table, and is accountable for round table assets.

One change that resulted from last year's vote has already taken place. Instead of having two co-chairs of different gender identity, the round table will have a single chair who is elected to a three-year term on the Board--the first year as chair-elect,

the second as chair, and the third as immediate past chair. This year our chair-elect is David Vess, the chair is Anne Moore, and the immediate past chair is Dale McNeill.

The duties of the Directors-at-Large are to share in the authority and responsibilities of the Executive Board. The Directors must attend and vote at all meetings (face-to-face or by electronic means) of the membership and the Executive Board and carry out assignments given to them by the Executive Board.

The new structure of the governing body will change elections. First, every year there will be an election for Chair-Elect, who will serve for three years as stated above. Second, the round table will elect Directors at-Large. So that all five of the Directors will not start and leave office at the same time, creating a big problem for maintaining continuity, the first election of Director-at-Large will elect the three candidates who receive the most votes to two-year terms and the two candidates who receive the next highest votes to one-year terms.

Please consider running for officer or Director-at-Large. We want to have a diverse group of candidates and winners.

Larry Romans

Book Recommendations from across the Internet



One of the most important tasks that librarians perform is to connect books with people. Fortunately, others help us do the same thing. One of LGBT's most important allies is Dana Rudolph who has a [website](#) and writes a column for *Bay Windows*, Boston's GLBT newspaper. "[The Best Lesbian and Gay Parenting books of 2011](#)" is the topic of her

December 15, 2011 column.

In this column Rudolph writes about the following books: *Donovan's Big Day* by Lesléa Newman; *Monday Is One Day* by Arthur A. Levine (Scholastic Press); *Sing You Home* by Jodi Picoult; *Times Two: Two Women in Love and the Happy Family They Made* by Sarah Kate Ellis and Kristen Henderson; *Invisible Families* by Mignon Moore; and *Adoption by Lesbians and Gay Men: A New Dimension in Family Diversity* edited by David Brodzinsky and Adam Pertman. An earlier [column](#) lists more books. Watch for an upcoming column by Rudolph about The Rainbow Project. She has been one of its strongest supporters since its inception.

The [Make It Safe Project](#) is pretty awesome just from the concept of donating LGBT books to schools and youth homeless shelters with the end goal of keeping students safe. Even more impressive is that the founder is fourteen years old. On the project's website, San Francisco resident Amelia Roskin-Frazer not only explains how to request a 10-book package of classic LGBTQ books but also offers assistance in beginning or joining a GSA (Gay-Straight Alliance) in schools. She knows whereof she speaks: she started a GSA in her own middle school.

[Photo thanks to [GLAAD.org](#)]



[Jill Guccini](#) has started an amazing new column, *Your New School Library*, in the lesbian pop culture site [afterellen.com](#) with book reviews that "highlight the expanding role of lesbian, bisexual, transgender and strong female characters in literature for children and young adults today."

According to Guccini, "While Nancy Garden's *Annie on My Mind*, released in 1982, was practically the only teen lesbian selection on bookshelves for well over a decade, there's now enough literature for gay teens to have a number of literary awards designated specifically for them. The Stonewall and Lambda awards now each have a Children's/Young Adult category; the American Library Association publishes their top gay youth selections in their annual Rainbow List."

Her introduction also explains the importance behind GLBTRT's annual youth awards and bibliographies: "We have to fight for these crucial books to be celebrated. Reading a book where you find yourself on the page can often be an even more personal, nuanced experience than seeing yourself on the screen, and it's an act that has the potential to save lives."

Guccini agrees with Malindo Lo (below) that "the dudes have the slight upper hand in queer lit for youth. As an aspiring educator and children's librarian, I've made it my mission to devour as many of these gay books possible, and the majority have been told from the gay male perspective. While I still love these stories, and a lot of them seem to feature a good sassy dyke friend side character, my brain still screams, 'Dude, where are the ladies?'"

And "ladies" are the focus of this column in its reviews of "female-centered queer lit for youth ... good reads featuring strong female protagonists." Her January 2012 column has reviews of *Parrotfish* by Ellen Wittlinger (Simon & Schuster); *Down to the Bone* by Mayra Lazara Dole (HarperTeen/HarperCollins); and *How Beautiful the Ordinary* edited by Michael Cart (HarperTeen/HarperCollins).

Another useful [afterellen](#) column for readers of adult books is Trish Bendix's *2011 Year in Review: Books*. Lambda Literary also has *Best Books 2011: Authors' Choice*. So many books, so little time!

**Recommended
2011 Books**

Publishing Stats on Youth LGBTQ Books Discouraging

Noted YA author and past author of [afterellen.com](#) [Malinda Lo](#) has an excellent blog on the state of publishing LGBTQ youth books—and it isn't good news! Using information from Christine Jenkins and Michael Cart, experts in this field, Lo analyzed the number of books published in this field for the past 43 years and discovered something that The ALA Rainbow Project also knows: last year had far fewer LGBT youth books published than during the year before.

Her information includes graphs of LGBT books for youth published during the past 43 years, books from different publishers during this century, and LGBT YA books by gender. According to Harold Underdown, approximately 4,000 YA titles were published in 2010; only 11 LGBT YA books were published in that year—0.2 percent of all YA books.

This year Lo projects that 0.6 percent of YA books will be LGBTQ, and not all these have non-straight characters as protagonists. This blog and its many comments is must-reading for anyone interested in LGBTQ youth books.

News from the Committees (cont.)

Nel Ward, Chair of the Newsletter Committee: Following the former chair Sarah Wright, Ward has completed the Midwinter issue of the GLBTRT Newsletter and plans another one to cover the Midwinter events to be published by the end of February. Deadline for news in the Winter Supplemental issue is February 15. The other deadlines are posted on the front page. (Thanks for all the hard work, Sarah!)

Tracy Nectoux, Former Reviews Editor for the Newsletter Committee: As of last fall, Nectoux turned over this position to Joyce Meggett. Nectoux reports that the committee has 43 reviewers and has reviewed 43 books and films since Annual 2011. Part of the reviews are published on the blog; the remainder will be on the blog by the end of January. During the last eight months of 2011, the blog received 3,752 visits. Nectoux also completed the Reviews Editor section for the Procedures Manual. (Welcome, Joyce, and enjoy your retirement from book reviews, Tracy!)

Lewis Day, Chair of the Stonewall Book Awards Committee: The 14 members have (since ALA annual) examined nearly 200 books in consideration for the 2012 awards. The books, covering a publication year of October 1, 2010 to September 30, 2011, represent publications in English from across the world. The committee made the cut to a long list of 15 titles in each of three areas (Literature, Non-Fiction, and Children's and Young Adult Literature) on November 21, and then whittled that long list to a short list of five titles in each category on December 16.

The committee will meet in two closed sessions in Dallas to select winners and honor books. Winners of the two adult categories will be announced at the GLBTRT Social on Sunday, January 22; the winner of the children's/YA title will be made at the ALA's Youth Media Awards on Monday, January 23. The awards will be presented at the Stonewall Book Awards Brunch on Monday, June 25, 2012. (Thanks, Lewis!)



Kevin Keller got married! Riverdale's first openly gay character in *Life with Archie*! is not only gay but an active U.S. military officer who is marrying African-American partner, Clay Walker.

Author Dan Parent said, "The world of Riverdale has to reflect contemporary culture and to show it is an accepting, diverse place. And that's why Kevin is important, to show that everybody is welcome in this all-American town we've embraced for over 70 years."

DC Comics' *Teen Titans* are adding gay Miguel Jose Barragan, aka Bunker, to their team.

Supposedly he can project bricks and shapes with his mind. Explaining Bunker's earrings and pink attire, artist Brett Booth said on his blog that they wanted to show a character whose homosexuality is part of him, "not something that's hidden."

Request for Submissions

Rachel Wexelbaum is looking for writers for *Queers Online: LGBT Digital Practices in Libraries, Archives, and Museums*. Formal chapter proposals and abstracts are due on April 1, 2012.

Queers Online will be published as part of the Series on Gender and Sexuality in Information Studies by Litwin Books and Library Juice Press.

A "digital practice" in libraries, archives, and museums includes, but is not limited to, the digitization of physical objects; the creation of online resources and services that improve access to these objects; the use of online catalogs, etc.

GLBTRT Chooses Name for Newest Stonewall Award: The Mike Morgan and Larry Romans Children's & Young Adult Literature Award

The newest Stonewall Book Award, the Children's & Young Adult Literature Award, has a name—The Mike Morgan and Larry Romans Children's & Young Adult Literature Award.

In recognition of a significant gift to the GLBTRT endowment, the name recognizes long-time GLBTRT member Larry Romans and his partner of over 40 years, Mike Morgan.

Established in 2010, the award joined the other Stonewall Book Awards—the Barbara Gittings Literature Award and the Israel Fishman Non-Fiction Award—as one of the first and most enduring awards program for GLBT books.

Since Isabel Miller's Patience and Sarah received the first award in 1971, the Stonewall Book Awards have honored the best gay, lesbian,

bisexual, and transgender literature and the authors who bring GLBT experiences to light.

"Librarians and families still have a hard time finding GLBT children's and young adult books of good quality that reflect positively on our lives. Stonewall award-winners and honor books give young people a starting point for quality reading. The Stonewall Awards are the most enduring GLBT book awards in the country, and Mike and I are honored to be associated with the Awards," said Larry Romans of his gift to the GLBTRT endowment.

"It was fitting to have the first two Stonewall Book Awards named in honor of our early activists and founders. It is now fitting that this recent award is named for a gay couple who

have truly supported our mission," said Anne Moore, GLBTRT Chair.

The annual Stonewall Book Awards go to English-language works of exceptional merit relating to the gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgender experience. They are announced at the ALA Midwinter Meeting and presented to the winning authors or editors at the ALA Annual Conference in early summer.

Romans' gift comes during a new cycle of fundraising for the GLBTRT endowment.

All donors will be recognized in the Stonewall Book Awards Brunch program at the ALA Annual Conference, and donors of \$50 or more will be recognized on a special [web page](#). More information on the fundraising campaign is at <http://www.ala.org/glbtrt/fundraising>

Membership Chair Larry Romans Develops GLBTRT 'Buddy' Program for Conferences

Thanks to GLBTRT Membership Chair Larry Roman, the round table now has a "Buddy Program" for veteran and novice GLBTRT members. The goal of this program is to bring together active round table members with new and/or prospective members or members becoming active for the first time or after a long absence. The program is formally for only one conference but can continue if the pairings wish.

The active GLBTRT member is asked to commit to the program for one conference; attend the GLBTRT Social; touch base with the "buddy" before the conference; meet with the "buddy" before or at the Social; introduce the "buddy" to people at the Social; give advice and information about GLBTRT meetings/activities; and, if possible, meet at least once more at the conference after the Social. Matchings will hopefully be with people who work or hope to work in the same type of library. The active volunteer will receive a packet of information to give the "buddy."

Assignments have already been made for Midwinter 2012, but there's plenty of time to get involved in this project for Annual. Roman plans to announce the buddy program to the members before annual conferences and mid-winter meetings. GLBTRT will announce the new buddy assignments about two weeks before the meeting begins.

Both novices and veterans are invited to answer the questions at the online GLBTRT [Buddy page](#). The online form includes a space to indicate names for a match. Questions should be addressed to Romans at larry.romans@vanderbilt.edu.

Get ready for Annual 2012!

News from the LGBT Library World

Largest Youth LGBTQ Book Collection in Country at CSU

Thanks to two GLBTRT members, California State University, Fresno, now has the nation's largest collection of gay and lesbian literature for children and young adults.

After Michael Cart, The ALA Rainbow Project chair-elect, gave several hundred books to the Arne Nixon Center at the university, K.T.

Hornig, director of the Cooperative Children's Book Center of the School of Education at the University of Wisconsin-Madison and past member of the Project, donated another 144 LGBTQ-themed books.

The Arne Nixon Center collects and preserves materials of historical and artistic significance related to literature for young people.

California is the first state in the nation to mandate the teaching of contributions from LGBT role models

in public schools. The law went into effect on January 1 because of the Fair Education Act (SB 48) signed by Governor Jerry Brown July 14.

Past GLBTRT Co-chair Nancy Silverrod has also pledged to give the Center books.

Although none of the books at the Arne Nixon Center is available for circulation, the Center is open from 8 am to 5 pm, Monday through Friday at the Henry Madden Library at CSU.

Institute Researches LGBT Statistics

Keeping LGBT people visible is an important goal if our community is going to gain equal rights. An important source of information for this visibility is the Charles R. Williams Institute on Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Law and Policy at the University of California, Los Angeles, School of Law. Their research includes snapshots of census results, health issues, and employment discrimination.

Judge Vaughn Walker cited Williams research more than 30 times in his 136-page opinion on repealing Proposition 8 in California while refuting the unsubstantiated anti-gay "research."

Census figures counter the stereotype of the LGBT population as wealthy, white, and living in urban gay neighborhoods. Upcoming reports from the Williams Institute will offer greater insight into some of the most pressing and headline-grabbing LGBT issues, including a demographic portrait of binational gay couples, who lack immigration sponsorship rights because of the Defense of Marriage Act.

Chuck Williams, a Los Angeles business consultant and philanthropist, has given \$13 million to his namesake organization, which has 20 staff members, a 19-member founders council composed of major donors (Williams also sits on the council), and a think tank that has attracted donors including the Gill Foundation, Arcus Foundation, and Ford Foundation.

Order Free Anti-Bully Film

Schools are invited to order a free copy of the 40-minute film "Bullied: A Student, a School and a Case That Made History," a documentary that **chronicles one student's ordeal at the hands of anti-gay bullies** and offers an inspiring message of hope to those fighting harassment today. It can become a cornerstone of anti-bullying efforts in middle and high schools. Order it from <http://www.tolerance.org/bullied>

Anti-Discrimination Laws on Map

States that ban discrimination against sexual orientation and gender identity/expression are shown on a map at http://www.thetaskforce.org/downloads/reports/issue_maps/non_discrimination_6_11_color.pdf

Education Secretary Tells Schools about GSA Requirements

U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan has released a letter telling public schools of their obligation to let Gay/Straight Alliances and other LGBT clubs meet as long as at least one other club is meeting at school.

Citing the federal Equal Access Act (EAA), Duncan's letter emphasizes that schools must treat all student-initiated groups equally. He points to the benefits of groups that address issues related to students who are lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender in particular, and notes the verbal and physical abuse these students sometimes experience.

With the letter are legal guidelines issued by the Education Department's (ED) General Counsel

Charles P. Rose.

"By encouraging dialogue and providing supportive resources," Duncan said, LGBT groups "can help make schools safe and affirming environments for everyone."

His letter begins: "Harassment and bullying are serious problems in our schools, and lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) students are the targets of disproportionate shares of these problems.

Thirty-two percent of students aged 12-18 experienced verbal or physical bullying during the 2007-2008 school year; and, according to a recent survey, more than 90 percent of LGBT students in grades 6 through 12 reported being verbally harassed—and almost half

reported being physically harassed during the 2008-2009 school year.

High levels of harassment and bullying correlate with poorer educational outcomes, lower future aspirations, frequent school absenteeism, and lower grade-point averages. Recent tragedies involving LGBT students and students perceived to be LGBT only underscore the need for safer schools.

The letter also discusses how GSAs have been unlawfully excluded from schools and explains the laws that require schools to provide access to them and that the Dept. of Education Counsel is providing legal guidelines.

The full letter is available at <http://www.edweek.org/media/gay-straight-letter-blog.pdf>

Those Who Led the Way

"The LGBT civil rights movement stands on the shoulders of Frank Kameny."
 —Malcolm Lazin, Executive Director, Equality Forum

William Perry Moore IV (1971-2011), openly-gay author, screenwriter, and film director, was author of award-winning *Hero*, a YA novel about a homosexual teenage superhero; he died on February 17, 2011.

Joanna Russ (1937-2011) was an openly lesbian science fiction author who played an important role in the field of feminist science fiction; she died on April 29, 2011.

Rudolf Brazda (1913-2011) was believed to be the last surviving man to wear the pink triangle, showing homosexuals in Nazi concentration camps, when he died at the age of 98 on August 3, 2011.

Arthur Evans (1942-2011) helped found and lead the Gay Activists Alliance, the movement that formed after the Stonewall Revolution; he died on September 11, 2011 at his home in San Francisco.

Paula L. Ettelbrick (1955-2011) was a leading legal figure in the LGBT rights movement and law professor at New York University Law School and Barnard College; she died on October 6, 2011.

Frank Kameny (1925-2011) helped initiate gay activism in Washington, D.C. and continued to initiate the effort to reverse the classification by the American Psychiatric Association of homosexuality as a mental illness; he died on October 11, 2011, Coming-Out Day.

Barbara Grier (1933-2011) was founder of Naiad Press with partner Donna McBride, a former librarian, in 1983 to give lesbian authors a venue they could not find in mainstream publishing; she died on November 17, 2011.

John Lawrence (1943-2011) was plaintiff in *Lawrence v. Texas*, the U.S. Supreme Court Case that erased sodomy laws in 13 states; he died on November 20, 2011.

Paul Varnell (1941-2011) was an activist in the gay community and columnist for the *Windy City Times* and *Chicago Free Press*; he died on December 9, 2011.

Dorothy M. Broderick (1929-2011)--author, librarian, and noted library educator--was a champion of intellectual freedom and co-founder of VOYA (Voice of Youth Advocates) with her long-time partner, Mary K. Shelton; she died on December 17, 2011.

Thanks to Lisa Johnston, Associate Director of Sweet Briar College Library (VA), for providing this information.

Dates to Commemorate:

January 23-27: No Name-Calling Week— an annual event when schools engage in educational activities aimed at ending name-calling and verbal bullying of all kinds; inspired by the young adult novel *The Misfits* by James Howe.

February 12: National Freedom to Marry Day—a non-official United States holiday to promote same-sex marriage. The holiday was founded in 1999 by Lambda Legal.

Check Out Your Employee Rights!

One consideration for LGBT people while looking for a job in the 21st century is determining the workplace rights for a partner, spouse, etc. With no federal laws protecting LGBT people, states can ride roughshod over previous laws; the conservative states have worked overtime to do this.

Arizona Gov. Jan Brewer, for example, removed health insurance coverage for same-sex domestic partners of people employed in the state government. In Wisconsin Gov. Scott Walker is supporting members of the Wisconsin Family Action in their lawsuit that argues the state domestic partnership registry violates the state's constitutional ban on gay marriage. Walker is using a two-year-old legal opinion from Republican Attorney General J.B. Van Hollen to declare the registry unconstitutional.

Lambda Legal has a website that shows workplace rights—and discrimination—in each state of the country. They show that almost half LGBT workers have no explicit state-level sexual orientation and gender-identity antidiscrimination laws.

David Hutsell, an undergraduate at East Tennessee State University, needs participants **for an online research survey to be used in his honors thesis. The study's goals are to** gain a better understanding of the attitudes and personal experiences of LGBT individuals about the LGBT community and how its members interact. Anyone over 18 years of age who self-identifies as LGBT is invited to complete the survey which takes about 30 minutes to complete. All responses are anonymous and confidential.
www.lgbtintragroup.com.

Book Reviews: YA/Adult Graphic Novels

Merely, I like. *a + e 4EVER*.

Advance Reader Copy. Maple Shade, NJ: Lethe Press, 2011. Paperback. 214p. \$18.00. ISBN: 978-1-59021-390-2.



a + e 4EVER follows a year in the lives of Asher and Eulalie, two gender- and sexuality-ambiguous misfits who find each other on the fringes of high school society.

Asher is an androgynous newcomer to the school where Eu has spent several years unsettling the mainstream crowd with her heavy-metal-listening butch ways. Their developing friendship, built through drawing sessions, raves, and a shared love of alternative music, forms the basis of this graphic novel.

The first chapter introduces us to Ash's fear of being touched, born of a long history of unpleasant and non-consensual physical

encounters. Later chapters address many more of the emotional and physical abuses that non-gender- and non-sexuality-conforming teenagers face, from schoolyard bullying to rape. Merely handles these topics in a way that brings to mind the UK television show *Skins*, addressing the trauma that is often ignored with an unsentimental directness.

The visual presentation of *a + e 4EVER* is as unconventional as its topic—revelations about the protagonists unfold via multiple fonts and drawing styles, giving the book a disjointed and rebellious feel. Readers may conclude that format was designed with more thought to defying convention than to readability, as many of the fonts are nearly illegible, and some of the characters visually indistinguishable from each other.

However, these formatting choices do contribute to a feeling of authenticity, and readers will feel thoroughly immersed in the confusing

world of adolescents who are figuring out how to live in a hostile world without any adult figures to provide guidance.

Although the topics of this novel are timely, previously mentioned stylistic issues such as the variety of indecipherable fonts make this a weak graphic novel from a purely technical point of view. Finally, though it does portray the realities of adolescence for many LGBTQ people, it lacks the poignancy and warmth that draws so many readers to similar coming of age titles, such as **Craig Thompson's Blankets**.

a + e 4EVER is suitable for adults and older teens, due to its graphic sexual and violent content. I recommend it for public libraries that already have a sizable collection of LGBTQ-themed YA materials.

Reviewer: **Emily Grantz**
Learning Resources Technician
Ohlone College, Fremont (CA)

Weselcouch, Katy. *The Floundering Time*.

San Jose, CA: SLG Publishing, 2011. Paperback. 159p. \$12.95. ISBN: 978-1-59362-222-4.



This "graphic novel" may speak to 20-somethings just leaving college or about to leave college—at least a comfortable, middle-class, isolated women's college (aren't they all?)—with no outward concerns

beyond their own close community of friends and love interests, but it left me bored and disinterested within the

first few pages. Perhaps it's because I just came off a *Sandman* marathon, or I'm old fashioned and like story arcs, transitions, character development, conflict, resolution, even in my comics.

The Floundering Time is Weselcouch's first comic, following a history of writing zines. It tells the story of Emma and Joey, best friends, in the last week of their senior year at a women's college, as they plod through the usual drunken parties, car trips, and packing, all while avoiding the future. Several flash-

backs round out the relationship concerns that form the bulk of the story. Emma spends most of her frames mooning over her transgender friend Elliot.

The Floundering Time should find a home in a young-adult fiction collection in a fairly liberal public library that houses an extensive collection of graphic novels.

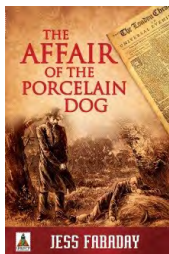
Reviewer: **Morgan Gwenwald**
Sojourner Truth Library
SUNY New Paltz

Many school and public libraries require reviews for acquisitions. Reviews from the *GLBTRT Newsletter* can help get books with GLBT themes into libraries. If you would like to write reviews, please contact Joyce Meggett at jmeggett@chipublib.org

Book Reviews: Mysteries/Speculative Fiction

Faraday, Jess. *The Affair of the Porcelain Dog*.

Valley Falls, NY: Bold Strokes Books, 2011. Paperback. 236p. \$16.95. ISBN: 978-1-60282-230-6.



The summer of 1889 finds Ira Adler is living in luxury as the kept boy and confidential secretary to London crime lord Dr. Cain Goddard. Born and raised in the slums of Whitechapel, 25-year-old Ira is trying to decide whether he

loves Cain or merely the luxurious life Cain provides him.

Cain's life is in danger of unraveling, however, due to the theft of a porcelain dog that contains details of the risqué life that led to his dismissal from a teaching position at Cambridge. Sent to retrieve the porcelain dog from a pawn shop, Ira is interrupted by

Cain's rival's lover, Dr. Timothy Lazarus, who is, as chance would have it, Ira's ex. After a struggle, Ira gains possession of the dog only to have it stolen by a nimble-fingered yet surprisingly strong prostitute.

Feeling the need to redeem himself, Ira sets out to track the dog down in the complex and dangerous underworld of London.

Help appears in the form of Cain's rival, Andrew St. Andrews. He, too, is being blackmailed with evidence hidden in **the dog. Unexpectedly, Ira's childhood friend Nate** appears with information both useful and confusing.

Opium, a gay brothel, an Afghan war hero, martial arts, and a men-only restaurant all play a part in the mystery. Along the way Ira discovers things about himself and his relationship with Cain.

The Affair of the Porcelain Dog is an excellent mystery. The characters are complex and in general not what they seem on first sight. Many unexpected twists and turns keep the novel intriguing right up to the end. The historical setting of late Victorian London is portrayed accurately.

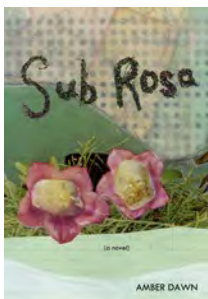
It is recommended for mystery collections at public libraries, especially those in gay- and lesbian-friendly areas, and college and university collections.

Jess Faraday has written several short stories and translated three books. This is her first novel. It is also available in Kindle and Nook editions and as an eBook from the publisher.

Reviewer: Paul Hubbard
Retired Public Reference Librarian

Dawn, Amber. *Sub Rosa: A Novel*.

Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2010. Paperback. 310p. \$19.95. ISBN: 978-1-55152-361-3.



In Amber Dawn's first novel, runaway Little is rescued from a bad night at the Legion and taken to a mysterious haven isolated from the city.

Sub Rosa is a place above memory where sex workers with unusual charms fulfill the needs of the

"live ones" who find their way in. Sub Rosa exists between the city (where life continues as before) and the Dark,

where zombie men and ghosts reside.

Little settles into life on Sub Rosa, but after one member of the family escapes back to the city, the community starts to change. When the city threatens to impinge on Sub Rosa, Little uses her knowledge of it to help preserve the delicate way of life. As Little forgets and remembers and rebuilds her past, **she learns that she can't find** everything she needs on Sub Rosa.

The magical realism of Sub Rosa remains grounded in Little's

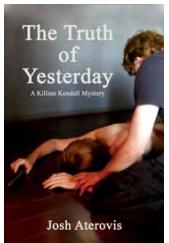
steady narration. The book contains some short, but graphic descriptions of sex and attempted assault, as well as some coarse language. It won the 2011 Lambda Literary Award for Lesbian Debut Fiction.

It is recommended for any public or academic library, particularly those collecting contemporary Canadian literature.

Reviewer: Kelly McElroy
Undergraduate Services Librarian
The University of Iowa Libraries

Aterovis, Josh. *The Truth of Yesterday*. Killian Kendall Mystery Ser. #4.

Clayton, N.C.: P.D. Publishing, 2011. Paperback. 365p. \$22.99. ISBN: 978-1-933720-81-4.



This fourth book in the Killian Kendall mystery series continues the adventures of gay, teen, sleuth Killian Kendall as he juggles college courses, his personal and romantic lives, and his work as a private investigator trainee.

Encountering his first and second real cases basically on his own but with guidance from his trainer, Killian enters the world of male escorts, hidden lives, and political peccadilloes.

Killian's home life is also fraught with change and adventure: his gay, adoptive

father and partner are working to make a bed and breakfast survive (despite a ghost **who haunts the visitors**); **he's becoming** active in his college's gay-straight alliance; **and he's dealing with the ghost of his best friend, the son of his now adoptive father.**

Killian is not only a private investigator in training but also a medium who communicates with ghosts, whether he wants to or not. He solves mysteries of the past and present, and progresses much further along in his own self-discovery and relationship with his boyfriend, Micah.

Filled with angst, mystery, romance, and supernatural elements, *The Truth of Yesterday* will entice and entertain fans of several different genres. Suitable for those

who are gay, straight, or questioning, this book will help all readers understand the nuances and issues of the GLBT world of both school and work, while also providing a riveting murder mystery that entangles with other events: love gone astray and the world of male escorts. The discovery of hidden lives of loved ones will hit home with anyone in a partnership. Additionally, fans of police or investigator stories will also enjoy this novel.

A definite must-read and must-have for any mystery or speculative fiction collection.

Reviewer: [s.n.]

Book Reviews: Romance

Erastes. *Mere Mortals: A Novel.*

Maple Shade, NJ: Lethe Press, 2011. Paperback. 245p. \$15.00. ISBN: 978-1-59021-043-7.



It is the year 1846. The location is the Norfolk Broads, a marshy area of Norfolk, England, that is bleak, empty, and cold when the story opens in November.

Crispin Thorne has just arrived at his mysterious new home in the Norfolk Broads, Bittern's Reach. Also newly arrived at Bittern's Reach are Jude Middleton, a tall, charming tease, and Myles Graham, a brawny athletic lad. The three have been made the wards of a gentleman named Philip Smallwood, the owner of Bittern's Reach.

Philip is away on business when the three arrive at Bittern's Reach, leaving them some time to explore their new home and learn about each other. Bittern's Reach is an opulent, yet isolated mansion set on an island in Horsey Mere, one of the Norfolk Broads.

Wandering around their new

home they encounter drawing rooms, dining rooms, a library, gardens, and a boathouse. They soon begin become accustomed to servants dressing them and elaborate meals prepared for them. They eventually discover that that they are both orphans who have been educated as charity students at mediocre prep schools and whose prospects in the world of the Victorian age upper classes are dim.

Another thing they have in common is that each was dismissed from their school for improper behavior with other boys. Neither of them had known or heard of Philip before he became their guardian.

When Philip returns, he inaugurates a series of courses to teach the three men proper upper class manners and activities for a well-bred English gentleman: riding, fencing, music, dancing, and conversation. The three also begin to discover their feelings for each other.

Why is Philip lavishing Crispin,

Jude, and Myles with this unexpected and unearned attention?

Mere Mortals is a gay historical romance and a coming-of-age story. However, it is also a good mystery with an unexpected ending. It makes for light reading, perfect for a dreary winter day in front of the fire.

It is recommended for academic libraries and fiction collections at public libraries in gay- and lesbian-friendly areas.

Erastes is the penname of the author, a native of the Norfolk Broads. She is a Lambda Literary Award finalist for her gay romance novel *Transgressions*.

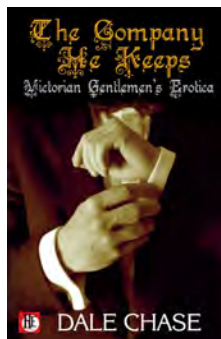
Mere Mortals: a Novel is also available in Kindle and Nook editions and in PDF format from the publisher.

Reviewer: Paul Hubbard
Retired Public Reference Librarian

Book Reviews: Erotica

Chase, Dale. *The Company He Keeps: Victorian Gentlemen's Erotica.*

Valley Falls, NY: Bold Strokes Books, 2011. Paperback. 270p. \$16.95. ISBN: 978-1-60282-226-9.



Do not let the title fool you; *The Company He Keeps: Victorian Gentlemen's Erotica*, is not erotica written in the Victorian era.

Instead, it is a delightful collection of short, erotic stories based in the mid to late nineteenth century. But while the setting is nineteenth century, the

language is decidedly twentieth century.

Because Chase provides enough character development and plot movement to keep the reader involved, *Company* is not purely erotica. The stories are fun, fast-moving, and not too long for a short story collection. Moreover, while the tales are based on upper-class men, there are a few that include lower-class men, which is a refreshing change to see.

All of these elements are seen in one of the short stories, "Letters from Abroad," which provides not only erotic situations but also a plotline

about a missed lover and what happens when he eventually returns with an unexpected guest.

The Company He Keeps is perfect for readers who love the Victorian era and gay erotica or for those who want to branch out from reading only nineteenth century classics. Public and academic libraries that have an erotica collection should add this book.

Due to the explicit nature of *Company*, I would recommend it only to ages 18 and up.

Reviewer: Talia Earle
St. Catherine University

Book Reviews: Fiction

Soehnlein, K.M. *Robin and Ruby*.

New York: Kensington Books, 2010. Paperback. 295p. \$15.00. ISBN: 978-0-7582-3219-9.



Siblings Robin and Ruby first appeared in Karl Soehnlein's 2000 Lambda Literary Award-winning novel, *The World of Normal Boys*.

This sequel is set about seven years later, in 1985. Robin is spending the summer in Philadelphia, living with

his friend George and trying to maintain a long-distance relationship with Peter, his graduate student lover back in Pittsburgh.

George has gotten Robin a job waiting tables at a "New U.S." (Upscale Southern) restaurant, where Robin—the only white-skinned

employee—is working to save money for school, although his barely competent performance keeps his employment in jeopardy. Robin has just learned he's been bumped up from the waiting list to acceptance into a senior-year semester studying acting in London.

Then—under Peter's accusation that Robin's behavior is "too unexamined"—the relationship falls apart. Ruby heads to the Jersey shore for a weekend with her nerdy boyfriend Calvin, leaving a cryptic message about running into an old friend from her troubled past. Her subsequent disappearance on the eve of the anniversary of a family tragedy leads to a search reverberating with memories and past emotions, as Robin and George

find a possibly long-unacknowledged attraction stirring.

Soehnlein has created very believable characters in Robin and Ruby and it's a pleasure to encounter them again. As in his previous novels, including *You Can Say You Knew Me When* (2005), the author is adept at capturing the feeling of the time period. Although the main characters are in their late teens, the novel contains material that might be inappropriate for some young adult readers. This enjoyable novel is recommended for most fiction collections.

Reviewer: **Michael Colby**
Librarian, Shields Library

Cox, Daniel Allen. *Krakow Melt*.

Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2010. Paperback. 151p. \$15.95. ISBN: 978-1-55152-372-9.



Nominated for several awards, *Krakow Melt* is a book that readers will either love or hate for a variety of reasons: pyromania; homophobia; art; Pope John Paul II hovering near death; brief chapters with headings

that are not always descriptive or representative of the content within; writing that is provocative, expressive,

and at times insulting.

Set in Krakow (Poland) in 2005, the main characters grapple with homosexuality and fitting in, just as Poland is struggling to fit into the European Union. Radek, a bisexual artist and pyromaniac, meets Dorota, a literature student and, herself, a budding pyromaniac.

Together they find love and a sense of belonging, while fighting religion, government, and the LGBT

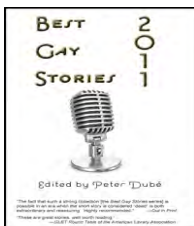
community to which they do not feel a sense of belonging—all while dealing with rage and sexual curiosity and exploration.

Krakow Melt's language will draw pictures in readers' minds, both vivid and beautiful, yet also painful and hurtful. This book does not offer easy reading, but it is a work that will meet the high literary mind's standards.

Reviewed by, [s.n.]

Best Gay Stories 2011. Ed. by Peter Dubé.

Maple Shade, NJ: Lethe Press, c2011. Hardcover. 206p. \$15.00. ISBN 978-1-59021-226-4



Lethe Press began this annual series in 2008, and the first three volumes were edited by Lethe Press founder Steve Berman. I gave the 2009 volume a "thumbs up" rave review. This

year, a new editor, Peter Dubé of Montreal—novelist, biographer, and cultural critic (PeterDube.com)—is, like Berman, "into" queer, speculative and surreal fiction. I trust this influenced the passing of the torch on to him.

"Gay" refers to the stories—all relate to gay males—although not to all the authors. Based on their bios, at least two of the authors are women. Also 2011 refers to the volume's publication date. All the stories were copyrighted in 2010.

Dubé's introduction stresses his

search for diversity in gay stories, and he certainly found it. In terms of style and topic, these stories are all over the map, with only traditional coming out stories notably absent.

The stories are also diverse in length, ranging from two pages to the 34-page final story which features a handsome HIV-positive Russian immigrant and his mixed-up lover from Ann Arbor who is struggling to free himself from his psychologist mother and absent professor father ("It Takes All Kinds" by Michael Alenyikov).

My favorite story is the opening one, "Diana Comet and the Lovesick Cowboy" by Sandra McDonald, about a cowboy mourning his lost lover with drink who is rescued by an assertive transgender woman.

My second favorite story is another long one, "thirteen o'clock" by David Gerrold. Although at first I was turned

off by the lack of apostrophes and the disdain for capital letters and periods, I was soon drawn into a kind of stream-of-consciousness rant by a gay Vietnam vet commenting on his gay life and hassles. In the end, I recognized "thirteen o'clock" as a philosophical treatise on love.

Some stories might strike the reader as a little strange; e.g., one about a gay nose, another about crows channeled through a medium, and a third in two columns with the challenge: "I want you to wonder which side is true."

Every library (and reader) serious about current gay fiction must get this volume.

Reviewer: **James Doig Anderson**
Professor Emeritus of Library and Information Science, Rutgers University

Book Reviews: Graphic Novels

Kirby, Rob, ed. *Three*, #1.

Minneapolis: Robert Kirby, 2010. Paperback. 32p. \$6.25. ISBN: 9780615377346.

Kirby, Rob, ed. *Three*, #2.

Minneapolis: Robert Kirby, 2011. Paperback. 32p. \$6.25. ISBN: 9780615480619.



Three is a full-color graphic anthology serial edited and published by Robert Kirby, artist/author of the comic strip *Curbside* and the editor of cartoon zine *Boy Trouble*. As with *Boy Trouble*, Kirby did both the editing and publishing himself, allowing him and his fellow GLBT cartoonists the opportunity to more directly reach their fans.

Issue 1, *Debut Issue!* has stories by Eric Orner, Joey Alison Sayers, and Robert Kirby. Orner's piece, "Weekends Abroad," tells us of one Tel Aviv weekend in particular. The narrator, a gay American Jew in Israel on a short-term contract that keeps getting extended, escapes Jerusalem to the more lively, cosmopolitan Tel Aviv. As he wanders lost through the city, he sees its beauty and humanity and realizes Israel has become his home.

The panels of this story are tinted yellow, and I was impressed with how well that worked, both to highlight the bodies in the bar and the sun on the beach.

"Number One," by Joey Alison Sayers, shows three women working

for a yard service agency. One of them has to use the bathroom of the lady whose property they are working on, and the owner is not pleased. Sayers uses vibrant, full color for this exploration of class and culture, in which the lady of the house turns out to have less social grace than the laborers.

Robert Kirby didn't just edit this issue—he contributed the bittersweet "Freedom Flight." The narrator, Drew, has a long history of fading into the background. One day, brushed off by his boyfriend, he decides to just walk, exploring his life without a partner. Eventually, he wanders back home to his indifferent boyfriend, who never even noticed he'd left.

Issue #2 contains three stories, each a collaboration between two people. "Dragon," the first, is written by Sina Evil and drawn by Jon Macy. The story is of a young comic artist who, upon meeting his idol, immediately develops a crush on him. He wants to be with this man but knows he only has two days before he must return to London. That might be for the best – he'll do anything to feel closer. The artwork is gorgeous and erotic without being explicit, combining with the storyline to create a subtle air of yearning.

Jenifer Camper and Michael Fahy worked together on "Help Wanted." They alternated strip by strip on this fun and funny tale of Leo, a gay man who falls in love with Raoul, a Brazilian FTM. It opened up a whole new world of experiences for Leo, including parenthood.

The third story, "Nothin' but Trouble," has Craig Bostick and David Kelley each telling one side of a hustler pick-up. A country singer falls for his one-night-stand, but the hustler is strictly business. After they meet again—and the hustler saves the singer from a gay-bashing—they part, each realizing they can't be together but a little wistful nonetheless.

I ordered both of these at the same time, directly from robkirbycomics.com. I can't promise you'll get the same bonus I did, but editor Rob Kirby included a quick sketch and thank you note on a post-it note. Issue #3 is due out in 2012. I recommend this anthology zine for public and high school libraries serving GLBT populations, and for academic libraries with zine, comic book, or GLBT collections.

Reviewer: **John Bradford**
Head, Automation & Technical Services

MacIsaac, Steve, Justin Hall, and Ilya. *Shirtlifter* #4.

Long Beach, CA: Drawn, Out Press, 2011. Paperback. 80p. \$12.95. ISBN: 9780979134944.



I've been waiting for issue #4. I liked the first two issues of *Shirtlifter*, but I was hooked by MacIsaac's story, "Unpacking," that started in *Shirtlifter* #3.

Shirtlifter #4 picks up the story of Matt, a Vancouver graphic designer just out of an eight-year relationship, and Conner, a closeted and married man from Australia via California. Matt is gun-shy because of how his ex hurt him, and Conner doesn't think two men can love each

other. But the sex is good so they keep seeing each other, anyway, giving the spark between them the chance to grow.

As I said in my review of the first three issues of *Shirtlifter* (GLBTRT Newsletter, Spring 2011), when looking at MacIsaac's work, I am reminded of Japanese gay erotic manga artist Gengoro Tagame. MacIsaac, though, creates more realistic gay men, in more likely scenarios. Still, both clearly share a taste for musclebeats.

Between the two chapters of "Unpacking" is work by two other artists. Justin Hall gives us another excerpt from his graphic novel *The*

Liar: Ariel is hitchhiking away from his relationships and responsibilities. Barry picks him up, and Ariel starts preparing Barry to be the next victim of his charm.

Ilya contributes seven strips from his "Dick" cartoon, which follows the course of a slow and romantic conversation over dinner and after. The humorous effect is heightened by the bright colors, giving a rest from the effective but dark and saturated palettes of MacIsaac and Hall.

Reviewer: **John Bradford**
Head, Automation & Technical Services

Book Reviews: Nonfiction

Jonathan Katz, David C. Ward, and Jennifer Sichel. *Hide/Seek: Difference and Desire in American Portraiture.*

Washington, D.C.: Smithsonian Books, 2010. Hardcover. 295p. \$45.00. ISBN: 978-1-58834-299-7.



Hide/Seek is the companion volume to an exhibit of the same name presented at the National Portrait Gallery, Smithsonian Institution from October 30, 2010 to February 13, 2011. Martin E. Sullivan, director of the

National Portrait Gallery, writes in the foreword that this was the "first major museum exhibition to chart the influence of gay and lesbian artists on modern American portraiture."

Co-curator Jonathan Katz, in his lengthy and thoughtful introductory essay, places the works within a historical context and describes a more expansive intention. He writes that "Hide/Seek features straight artists representing gay figures, gay artists representing gay figures, and even straight

artists representing straight figures (when of interest to gay people/culture)."

Opening with Thomas Eakins's 1891 photograph of Walt Whitman, the 98 featured portraits trace the sweep of societal change from a time before same-sex desire had crystallized into a social identity, through gender nonconformity and the "New Woman" of the 1920s to recurrent outbreaks of concern over "public hygiene," Joseph McCarthy's Lavender Scare, post-Stonewall celebration and liberation, the age of AIDS, and beyond.

A great many of the artists will likely be familiar to readers with an interest in twentieth century art. There is an insouciant male nude by John Singer Sargent; Romaine Brooks's formidable self-portrait (and one of a dandified Una, Lady Troubridge, complete with monocle and dachshunds); Carl Van Vechten's charming photograph of Antony Tudor and Hugh Laing, discreetly holding hands; Alice Neel's painting of Frank O'Hara, and Jasper Johns' diptych inspired by an O'Hara poem; an

exuberant (and chaste) self-portrait by Robert Mapplethorpe; Andrew Wyeth's illustration of his nude and rather godlike neighbor standing in a wheat field; Keith Haring's "Unfinished Painting," created the year before his death; several works by Andy Warhol; and many other solemnities and delights.

The original exhibit drew controversy when David Wojnarowicz's short video "A Fire in My Belly" was removed by the Smithsonian in deference to complaints from the Catholic League and U.S. Rep. John Boehner. No stills from the video appear here although there are a number of Wojnarowicz's photographs, including one in which he has nearly vanished into the soil.

Includes 98 plates, endnotes, a bibliography, and an index.

Recommended for libraries with an interest in art or GLBT history.

Reviewer: **Joyce Meggett**
Division Chief for Humanities

Leung, Helen Hok-Sze. *Farewell My Concubine.*

Queer Film Classic ser. Vancouver: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2010. Paperback. 129p. \$14.95. ISBN: 978-1-55152-362-0.



Part of the Queer Film Classic series, this small volume is the perfect accompaniment to Chen Kaige's ground-breaking film of the same name. Released in 1992,

Farewell My Concubine won the Palme d'Or at

Cannes and was nominated for a Best Foreign-Language Film Oscar. It tells the story of Beijing Opera performers Cheng Dieyi and Duan Xiaolou, whose

lives are intertwined from their early days in harsh apprenticeships to their critical acclaim on the Beijing stage. Dieyi trained for dan (female) roles, while Xiaolou performs lead male roles.

In her book, Leung views the film within its historical and cultural contexts, offering insights into the film industry in China, the Cultural Revolution, and the film's critical reception. The threads of gender performance and homosexuality are followed throughout the text, in this small but dense volume. Leung,

Associate Professor in Gender, Sexuality & Women's Studies at Simon Fraser University in Burnaby, BC, Canada, has written widely on queer cinema.

This book should be included in any collection that holds the film *Farewell my Concubine*, and every library should own this unique and provocative film.

Reviewer: **Morgan Gwenwald**
SUNY New Paltz

Rosenberg, Corey. *The Gay Man's Guide to Timeless Manners and Proper Etiquette.*

New York: Chelsea Station Editions, 2011. Paperback. 111p. \$15.00. ISBN: 978-0-9832851-4-4.



These twenty-five brief chapters present tidbits of advice that are directed towards gay men, although many apply to society as a whole.

Whether learning to be the proper host and the polite guest, how to deal with wine with a meal at home or in a restaurant, how to negotiate the paths of friendship, or decipher the rules of

netiquette, readers will enjoy this tongue-in-cheek guide to behavior appropriate for any situation.

Neither preaching nor directive, Rosenberg entertains as he educates, sharing the wisdom he gained through a series of mishaps.

While clearly labeled chapters make the specific topics accessible, readers may find themselves reading cover to cover for the sheer delight of hearing more of Rosenberg's witty delivery. Besides eti-

quette, grooming and dressing tips, recipes, and brief biographies of "gays who paved the way" and "noteworthy gay artists," there is a glossary of terms used.

While the content is applicable, for the most part, to any person, the title will dissuade many from reading or wanting to follow the advice given. Whether a junior high school student or a senior citizen, all can benefit from this work.

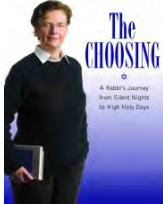
Reviewer: **Sine Nomine**

Book Reviews: Memoirs & Biographies

Myers, Andrea. *The Choosing: A Rabbi's Journey from Silent Nights to High Holy Days.*

New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2011. Paperback. 185p. \$19.95. ISBN: 978-0-8135-4957-6.

ANDREA MYERS



The story of a Lutheran' girl's transformation from (outwardly) straight, rich, medical school-bound girl to Jewish, lesbian, rabbi.

Demonstrating through personal experience and allegories from the Jewish texts, Myers shares wisdom, knowledge, successes, and failures as she navigates finding herself spiritually, religiously, sexually, and more.

Painting images with her words, these vignettes illustrate the power of love and the value of being true to

oneself, as well as the importance of keeping an open and humorous view toward life.

Whether recalling a Lutheran mother changing the menorah lights to be more colorful, or the security **agent warning against "being like one of those" people of whom one is a part**, this book will provide inspiration and a new outlook to many.

While the content is strongly Jewish and has aspects only someone familiar with Jewish traditions will appreciate, explanations and definitions of terms and activities are integrated seamlessly into the narrative, enabling all to enjoy the wit and knowledge being shared.

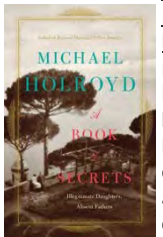
Spanning a childhood spent questioning traditions and religion, college life as a non-Jew at Brandeis University, the decision to convert to Judaism and the conversion process, living in Jerusalem, finding love, life as a wife, mother, and rabbi, this book will resound not only with those questioning their religion and beliefs but also those questioning their sexuality and seeking words of guidance and advice on how to successfully be true to oneself.

This biographical narrative is a must add to any Jewish or GLBT collection for adults or young adults.

Reviewer: Sine Nomine

Holroyd, Michael. *A Book of Secrets: Illegitimate Daughters, Absent Fathers.*

New York, NY: Farrar, Straus Giroux, 2011. Hardcover. 241p. \$26.00. hardcover. ISBN: 978-0-374-11558-6.



Michael Holroyd's memoir-infused biography will amuse not only those whose hearts flutter for Merchant-Ivory films, but also those who delight in reading about the intersections of artistic lives or lives artfully lived.

Holroyd employs the Italian village of Ravello as a thread to connect the lives of artists and those in their orbits. He focuses on the stories of two women: Eve Fairfax and Violet Trefusis née Keppel.

Enchanted decades previously when seeing a Rodin bust in the Victoria and Albert Museum, Holroyd researches its subject and discovers the Victorian-steeped story of a woman without means. With beauty but without money, the striking Eve Fairfax must marry, and becomes engaged to the fickle Ernest Beckett, who during their engagement commissions Rodin to sculpt a bust of his bride-to-be. Although their engagement does not result in marriage, it provides Fairfax with the friendship of a lifetime with Rodin.

Led by his scholarly curiosity, **Holroyd follows Fairfax's story and Beckett's wives and mistresses.** Notably, Beckett has a love affair with the married Alice Keppel, later the mistress of King Edward VII, and fathers a daughter, Violet.

Holroyd credits his interest in the life of this daughter, Violet Trefusis, to the enthusiasm of Tiziana Masucci, a young Italian academic enamored by Trefusis. In Part II, he introduces the reader to the world of the articulate, imaginative and vibrant Trefusis during a time of crisis: her not-so-closeted affair with writer, Vita Sackville-West. Holroyd beautifully introduces the Edwardian saga of love lost against the backdrop of ancestral homes, genteel social mores, mother-daughter relationships, and literary ambition.

For those long obsessed with the turbulent love story of Sackville-West and Trefusis, Holroyd does not provide new information or any provocative revelations. Holroyd and Masucci hold **that Violet's literary reputation has been maligned by previous recounts of the affair.** However, the LGBT community has never been compelled to choose sides.

Indeed, it is likely that those with interest have copies of works by both authors in their collections: acknowledging that in love we have all been Violet and we have all been Vita--in the end unequivocally marked by love.

Without question, the book not **only succeeds in furthering Masucci's** mission of engendering interest in literary works by Trefusis, but also in the works of Sackville-West and, of course, the more luminous writers of their acquaintance such as Virginia Woolf, Lytton Strachey and E.M. Forster.

Holroyd's narrative brims with the excitement of discovery and is deft enough to include light meditations on belonging (familial or otherwise), love, possession and longing. The slim book also includes a family tree for reference, a select bibliography, and an index.

Book of Secrets is a splendid companion read to 2011 Stonewall Honor book, *Great Unrecorded History: A New Life* of E.M. Forster by Wendy Moffat.

Recommended for public and academic libraries.

Book Reviews: Nonfiction

Persistence: All Ways Butch and Femme. Ed. by Coyote, Ivan E./Zena Sharman. Trans. David Miller. Vancouver, B.C.: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2010. Paperback. 134p. \$12.95. ISBN: 978-1-55152-344-6.



This collection of personal essays was written by individuals who identify on points all along the butch-femme continuum.

Persistence opens with a foreword by Joan Nestle, co-founder of the Herstory Archives and editor of the 1992 classic *The Persistent Desire: A Femme-Butch Reader*.

Nestle describes her original opposition to the similar title of this new book before relating how its themes won her over: "The voices of another generation, of other cultural positions, new possibilities of gender discourse, and erotic adventuring are presented here, and these extend in complex ways the passionate and embattled conversation of

the now out-of-print *Persistent Desire*."

Indeed, the voices in *Persistence* reflect a diversity of gender identities, racial identities, class backgrounds, and sexualities. While many of the writers identify as lesbians or queer women, there are transgender writers and even a cis gay man here and there. Far from reinforcing any binary, many writers celebrate the mutability of butch and femme: there are repeated references to femmes who kill spiders and butches who **bake**. **One writer coins the term "futch"** to describe her personal blend of gender presentation. In one of the most reflective chapters, singer-songwriter Rae Spoon, a transgender man, remembers scoring "**high femme**" on an online quiz.

Most of the essays are reflections of personal experiences with butch and

femme, although a few investigate more theoretical frameworks. Throughout, writers honor the history of butches and femmes who went before, for pioneering a culture where gender can be performed in a variety of ways.

The authors, largely Canadian, include poets, musicians, essayists, novelists, professors, and sex writers.

As an extension of the themes in *The Persistent Desire*, this book belongs in any collection of queer studies or gender studies. Because of the personal nature of many chapters, it may also be of interest to a nonacademic audience, particularly to queer folks exploring butch and femme in their own lives.

Reviewer: **Kelly McElroy**
Undergraduate Services Librarian
University of Iowa Libraries

Cusset, François. *The Inverted Gaze: Queering the French Literary Classics in America.*

Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2011. Paperback. 142p. \$17.95. ISBN: 978-1-55152-410-8.



From the back cover: "François Cusset (author of the acclaimed French Theory) investigates the queering of the French literary canon by American writers and scholars in this thought-provoking and free-minded journey across six centuries of literary classics and sexual polemics."

From the Middle Ages to the present, Cusset critiques the critics, not so much offering fresh interpretations as laying out the reasons for his skepticism.

Cusset writes with many puns that sexualize what could otherwise be a dry text, but the result can be distracting to the reader. Nevertheless, this may well be an enjoyable read in the original French, but the translation by David Homel is not as accessible as it might be.

While the text is somewhat difficult, I would still suggest *The Inverted Gaze* to

those with an interested in the subject, as it is a great introduction to how American queer critics interpret French texts.

I would recommend this book to an academic library, especially one with both a strong English program and a strong program in Queer Studies.

Given the complexity of language and ideas in the book, I would suggest this for those who are 18 and older.

Reviewer: **Talia Earle**

Petrow, Steven. *Steven Petrow's Complete Gay & Lesbian Manners: The Definitive Guide to LGBT Life.*

Uncorrected proofs. New York: Workman Publishing, 2011. Paperback. 395p. \$17.95. ISBN: 978-0-7611-5670-3.



This comprehensive guide to LGBTQ manners covers it all, from first dates to public sex to coming out on Facebook. **Petrow's acceptance of such practices as bathhouse sex and online hookups—subjects not usually discussed in etiquette**

guides—mean that he's not judgmental. Topics like how to get out of a boring conversation at a club prove that the author understands what etiquette really means, and it's not whether the water glass goes on the left or the right. It's about treating people with kindness and respect.

The guide is up-to-the-moment

without forgetting the past; a page on internet dildo purchases sits next to a decryption of the old-school hankie codes. This balanced look at the queer community continues throughout the book.

Petrow realizes that the queer population has its own set of rules, but also that we have straight friends and family: in the helpful Q&A sidebars, for example, he puts a gay twist on some questions that otherwise apply just as well in the straight world ("**I lent my friend money for his business but he spent it on a gay cruise**"), while some are specific to queers ("**My friends want to set me up with all the gay guys they know just because they're gay**").

It's refreshing to read dating advice that doesn't assume the partners are of different genders. The section on blind dates, for example, uses same-sex couples

throughout its coverage, offering much of the same information that would be addressed in a conventional etiquette or dating book—safety first, what to do if you want to end the date early, etc.

A book that focused only on the gay aspects of dating or etiquette would be incomplete: some of the human experience **is, after all, universal. It's better to have the info all in one place than to have to purchase a "regular" etiquette book along with a supplemental gay one—how othering!**

There is nothing out there like this book. Highly recommended for public and academic libraries.

Reviewer: **Daisy Porter**
Manager, KACY (King Access, Children's, and Youth)

Book Reviews: Nonfiction

Out behind the Desk: Workplace Issues for LGBTQ Librarians.

Ed. by Tracy Marie Nectoux. Library Juice Press, 2011. Paperback. 294p. \$30.00. (Litwin Books/Library Juice Press Series on Gender and Sexuality in Librarianship, no. 1). ISBN: 9781936117031.



This volume brings together twenty-seven narratives authored by twenty-nine librarians, all of whom identify as being part of the LGBTQ community. At least one of the six parts--trajectories (or coming-out stories), sex and the institution, the rest of the rainbow (beyond L and G), coming out in time, coming out in place, and coming out in the field--will hit home with any reader.

Baring their souls, the authors inspire as they educate, not only on individual scenarios but on the lives as LGBTQ librarians throughout the United States.

Whether just starting out and searching for a type of library and environment, seeking a career change, or pondering the right time to come out LGBTQ people will benefit from this book. It covers not only the personal issues but also the history of librarianship as related to LGBTQ persons and topics, domestic partnerships, and attitudes toward LGBTQ.

Similar to first person narratives in *Daring to Find Our Names* edited By J. V. Carmichael (Greenwood, 1998) and

Liberating Minds edited by N. G. Kester (McFarland, 1997), this is the first collection in over 10 years that demonstrates the changing times and attitudes not evidenced earlier because of changes in the past decade.

Contributors include the well-known such as Ellen Greenblatt and the unknown such as a pseudonymous legislative librarian.

This is a must read for any professional collection, and would work well as additional readings for any library school course addressing diversity.

Reviewer: [s.n.]

Pasfield, Scott. *Gay in America: Portraits.*

New York: Welcome Books, 2011. Hardcover. 222p. \$45.00. ISBN: 978-1-59962-104-3.



"If I had realized growing up that there were so many options--that I didn't have to be this kind of gay or that kind of gay--had I been able to take comfort in knowing I was not alone in my feelings, it would have made a huge difference in how and when I accepted and learned to love myself."

This statement from Pasfield in the *Huffington Post* describes his motivation for traveling 52,000 miles through all 50

states to find the 150 gay men highlighted in these stunning personal portraits. Activists, farmers, professionals, fathers—all these men have one thing in common: they are all openly attracted to other men, sometimes with severe consequences and other times profound rewards.

This book, the first photographic look at gays in their

homes, includes an extensive range of age, class, and ethnic backgrounds from a modern Manhattan apartment to a small town outside Fargo. Both narratives, written by the men themselves, and telling images intimately show Pasfield's deep respect for his subjects as he avoids the stereotypes of contemporary gay men and celebrates the diversity of family life in the contemporary gay community. The men in these breathtaking images cover the gamut of emotions--happy and sad, hopeful and accepting—as they tell their stories of life and death, positive in the face of adversity.

Pasfield has accomplished his goal, "to create a book that would change opinions and educate," by showing these men as neighbors and friends, vital especially for people who live where gays are not typically closeted. This is a must addition for all public and upper-level libraries.

Reviewer: Nel Ward

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