



GLBTRT Newsletter

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

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

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Fall 2013

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Does ALA have your current email address, phone number, etc.?

- log in to ala.org (top right)
- click "update your profile"
- click "Contact information"
- you can change your mailing and email address in this box
- if you change anything, click save and continue at the bottom of the page.



From the Chair:

Welcome to the Fall issue of the GLBT Round Table newsletter. Let me take a moment to introduce myself. I've been a member of the RT since 1981 when we were the Gay and Lesbian Task Force of SRRT. I've been co-chair before, back when we had those as well. I was treasurer when we transitioned into a Round Table. I've also been active in ACRL Arts and have been on the Stonewall Book Awards Committee a couple times. Currently I am Head of Access Services and Space Planning at the Library of Columbia College Chicago. You will find my contact information on the last page of this issue. Feel free to contact me anytime.

The Executive Board proposed at Midwinter 2013 to set up an ad hoc committee to examine the Stonewall Book Awards Committee structure and procedures. The proposal was approved at Annual this past June. This committee is now in place. The members are KT Horning, Tess Goldwasser, Holly Mercer, Dave Combe, Steve Stratton, and Miguel Figueroa; Larry Romans is Executive Board Liaison to the committee. They will report at the 2014 Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia.

The RT is still in a state of transition. We moved from a "Co-Chairs with a Steering Committee" mode to a "Chair, Chair-elect, and Past Chair" mode with an Executive Board of eleven positions. We recently extensively revised the bylaws, drew up charges for committees, and are now working to develop virtual meetings in compliance with what ALA has suggested. All of these actions are to make the RT more transparent and more accessible. As always, members are encouraged to participate on committees or in any other capacity you are able. We have been working with ALA and our great Liaison in the Office for Literacy and Outreach Services (OLOS), John Amundsen, to make use of all the systems available through ALA in responding to all the inquiries and volunteers we do get. It's not been an easy process--technology is challenging--but we are getting there. I also want to welcome new Executive Board Members Lisa Johnston and Ingrid Henry Abrams and our new Liaison to the ALA Executive Board, Sara Kelly Johns.

I have to send a public and very heartfelt THANK YOU to David Vess, now Past-Chair, for all his work while he was Chair-Elect and Chair of the Round Table. He was instrumental in shaping RT technology and getting us aligned with ALA technology, to mention just a couple of his many accomplishments. This is a major accomplishment and I am very grateful he was able to do all of this before yours truly got here, as I am NOT a tech-person. And I want to also welcome aboard as Chair-Elect, Ann Symons, a long time friend of the RT, and someone who has been constantly involved with ALA on many levels. She was even an ALA President once, so we heartily welcome her participation in the Round Table. I'm looking forward to working with David, Ann, and the rest of the Executive Board to facilitate continued growth in the Round Table. See you in Philadelphia.

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GLBTRT Chair-Elect Ann Symons started her term as GLBTRT Chair-Elect with the following memoranda to the Board dealing with her goals and her goal to produce a GLBTRT Advocacy Toolkit.

Greetings.....

Each of us who volunteer in ALA comes with a purpose. Getting re-involved with ALA has made me take a look at what is important and what we can accomplish together to move the Round Table forward as it continues the transition from Steering Committee to Executive Board.

I've been thinking about this for quite a while, but at Annual Conference issues became clearer to me. I'm very goal driven - that's how I get things done and I do want to leave the RT better than I found it. I don't mean to imply that the RT is not in good shape and doesn't have motivated members who have great interest in progress.

These are the goals I have put on my paper list. It is an ambitious list which may need prioritizing. Any feedback would be welcome:

- ◆ Involve younger people and newer members in the organization's work, accomplished through the appointment process;
- ◆ Produce a GLBT@your Library Advocacy Toolkit, initiated by a proposal to the board for an ad hoc committee to work on this;
- ◆ Restructure the formal communication process through the Newsletter Committee;
- ◆ Target allies through an individual membership campaign through the Membership Committee;
- ◆ Prepare a new membership brochure with dynamic and drop dead eye-catching graphics throughout.

I am most interested in the Advocacy Tool Kit; below is the proposal to the Executive Board requesting an ad hoc committee for this purpose.

Proposal for Ad Hoc Advocacy Toolkit Committee

It's time for a GLBTRT Advocacy Toolkit. I'd like to propose that the board approve, at an upcoming Executive Board conference call, an Ad Hoc GLBT Advocacy Committee to begin Midwinter of 2014 with a finish date of Annual Conference, June 2015. I believe that libraries, particularly school and public libraries, could benefit nationwide from the expertise of the RT in focusing attention on serving GLBT Families and their allies in this country and welcoming those who have not yet been library users.

The rationale for approving the ad hoc committee before Midwinter Philadelphia is to appoint the committee and its chair, allowing the committee to meet at Midwinter Meeting and initiate their work.

The committee charge:

- ◆ To support the efforts of advocates for library service to GLBT Families and their allies through wide dissemination of a GLBT Toolkit modeled on other ALA advocacy toolkits.
- ◆ To develop and highlight resources in a toolkit for advocates at the local, state, and national level with particular emphasis on the grassroots level.
- ◆ To work with other ALA units including the youth divisions, PLA, the Chapter Relations Committee and the Committee on Library Advocacy to integrate GLBT advocacy efforts into their planning and priority.
- ◆ To produce a draft toolkit by Midwinter Meeting 2015 for digital distribution digitally and as a "brochure" by Annual 2015.

Committee Structure: 10 to 12 RT members with background in ALA advocacy, communication, and digital skills.

Sample Content: Talking Points, Making the Case, Outreach to Patrons and the Public, Talking to the Media, Working with Local Officials, Library Checklist, Resources, and Contact

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Midwinter	11/15/13							
Spring	2/15/14							
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GLBTRT Committee Appointments/Volunteer Now!

What are you doing from July of 2014 for a year or two?

Get Involved with GLBTRT!

Volunteer for a committee with the [ALA Committee Volunteer Form](#).

Volunteers are sought for the following committees:

- [External Relations Committee](#)
- [Fund Raising Committee](#)
- [Membership Promotion Committee](#)
- [Newsletter Committee](#)
- [Over the Rainbow Book List Committee](#)
- [Program Planning Committee](#)
- [Rainbow Project Committee](#)
- [Stonewall Book Awards Committee](#)
- [Web Committee](#)
- [Resources Committee](#)

From Chair-Elect Ann Symons:

As I start my term as chair-elect, I want to thank David Vess and Roland Hansen for their leadership and willingness to be my mentors in my new role as GLBTRT Chair-Elect. Although I have been a member of ALA for 30+ years and a member of GLBTRT, I have not been actively involved in any of the round tables except the Exhibitor's Round Table. I'm learning fast, and we have an exciting year ahead of us. My primary role this year is committee appointments. Note that appointments to committees whose service begins in February will be made this fall by Roland Hansen.

The Ad Hoc Stonewall Book Awards Committee will present their report to the Executive Board at Midwinter Meeting in Philadelphia. After the report, we will know the committee structure for 2015 and make appointments.

The Round Table is seeking to balance its committees so that half of the committee goes off each year to

provide overlap and continuity. The volunteer form is on RT website, and we want you to express your interest in one or more of the RT committees now. Appointments will not be announced until after Midwinter Meeting 2014, but NOW is the time to volunteer. As Chair-elect, it is my job to make appointments. Be assured that I will consult with my RT [round table] colleagues.

At the Membership Meeting in Chicago, the main concern was that people said they wanted to volunteer and then never got any feedback. I assure you that everyone who volunteers will be informed of the appointment. If you are not appointed, we will also send you a personal message.

Serving on a GLBTRT committee provides an opportunity to become involved, to network, to learn the issues, to be informed, and to learn leadership skills. Committees are an excellent way for members to become as active and involved as they'd like. The people we meet and work with on committees often become friends and conference colleagues.

Volunteering for a GLBTRT Committee:

- ◆ Applications will remain open until November 1. If there are not enough applications, we will reopen the process.
- ◆ Appointments to the Rainbow Project Committee and Over the Rainbow Book List Committee are made in the Fall.
- ◆ Visit the committees' pages to learn more about each committee; log in to the site (links above) to see contact information (refresh the page to see contact information).
- ◆ Contact committee chairs with questions about committee work.
- ◆ Contact the GLBTRT chair and chair-elect with any questions about the process; log in to the site (links above) to see contact information (refresh the page to see contact information).

Get Involved with GLBTRT!

- [Volunteer for a committee with the ALA Committee Volunteer Form](#).
- [Learn more about round table committees and volunteering here](#).

2013 Annual Conference Programs

The Program Planning Committee would like to thank everyone who came out and attended our programs.

We had 70 people join us for our Safe in the Stacks: Community Spaces for Serving Homeless LGBTQ Youth program.

There was a lot of excitement around this program. It consisted of mostly non-librarians who are intimately involved and experienced in the needs of this group and opened the door to possible future collaborations between libraries and organizations like these. **There was so much to cover that all of it just couldn't possibly fit in one program, but we hope attendees left with some great info!**

If you weren't able to make this program we have handouts from the program as well as links to the participating organizations being posted on the programs page soon!

We had over a dozen brave people who trekked to the Hilton to join us for Access denied! Filtering: Trouble, Tyranny and Triumph.

It's unfortunate that a late change in the schedule saw us removed from the convention center, so we're very happy with how many people managed to make it!

And for those of you who were not able to make the trek, we're going to be sharing a lot of great information from the session our [programs page](#), so keep an eye for it there!

We hope to see you again in Las Vegas!

—Shawn Vaillancourt

As New York's queer [bookstore](#) **The Bureau of General Services—Queer Division** works to get donations, it moved from the Strange Loop Gallery to The Cage on 83A Hester Street for the months of September and October. The bookstore will also join The Cage in its project room at The New York Book Fair, September 20-22. The fundraising goal is \$50,000 to obtain a storefront, build the store, purchase necessary equipment, add a café, and create an e-commerce page on our website. A map of the few queer bookstores left in the country is available at <http://www.ala.org/glbtrt/tools/glbtrt-bookstores> You can add others on the GLBTRT page.

Time Warner Cable has announced the latest stipend as part of its Research Program on Digital Communications. This newest one supports *The National Broadband Plan—An LGBT Perspective*, written in collaboration by the [LGBT Technology Partnership](#) and Jesse Daniels of Hunter College. Its goal is to increase understanding of the **broadband and digital communications needs of Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender (LGBT) communities** and provide recommendations on how government policy makers can address those needs and ensure inclusion of those communities in the full benefits of broadband. Research will focus on how broadband affects LGBT special concerns such as privacy, confidentiality, public safety, and cyberbullying.

A new book from ABA Publishing, *Transgender Persons and the Law* by transgender attorney Ally Windsor Howell, covers a myriad of issues from changing a birth certificate to the affects of court decisions on housing, military service, and veterans benefits. **This resource for legal practitioners** offers a state-by-state view of the legal issues and practical hurdles for transgender people. An accompanying CD contains forms for all 50 states and the District of Columbia for name changes and, for those jurisdictions that allow it, birth certificate changes. More than a compendium of law and cases, the book provides stories of people who have been harassed and fatally harmed people because of their gender identity. Price: \$129.95; ordering information: 800-285-2221 or <http://ambar.org/transgender> [Information from press release]

From Sami Gardner comes this tip about Project [Unicorn](#), **a series of free lesbian YA short stories** written by Sarah and Jenn Diemer. Their goal is to include almost every kind of lesbian and YA genre, such as transgirls, butch girls, femme girls, girls of color, robotgirls, witchgirls, birdgirls, etc. The website is updated twice weekly on Mondays and Thursdays.

Over a year ago, Marvel Comics hosted its first same-sex wedding in the June 20 issue of Astonishing X-Men when speedster Northstar tied the knot with longtime partner, Kyle, also the first interracial and mutant-human marriage. Six months later, Archie Comics joined the marriage equality revolution when Kevin Keller wed his partner, an African-American doctor who he met as a soldier in Iraq. When Creator Dan Parent spoke with HuffPost Live **about Archie Comics' first gay kiss, he talked about how the conservative One Million Moms' boycott against Archie Comics inspired the depiction of Kevin's first kiss this summer.** Parent used the "Moms" in the background of the kiss.

Soon after Archie wedding, DC Comics' Batwoman, Kate Kane, asked Maggie Sawyer, her secret girlfriend to marry her. Since then, the Supreme Court has declared the banning of marriage equality to be unconstitutional, but **DC is refusing a wedding for the lesbian couple**, resulting in the announcement of co-authors J.H. Williams' and W. Haden Blackman's decision to leave *Batwoman* after December's Issue #26.

Cheers to publishers Marvel and Archie Comics and writers Parent, Williams, Blackman, and Marjorie Liu (Astonishing X-Men) for their support of marriage equality!

Around the Youth Circuit: News Snippets by Jenna Goodall



YALSA's "The Hub" blog posted "[A Guide to YA Novels with LGBTQ Characters](#)" featuring a visually appealing guide with book covers that can be downloaded as a PDF. The list is divided into similar groups such as classics (like *Annie on My Mind* by Nancy Garden), coming out stories (*Will Grayson, Will Grayson* by John Green and David Levithan), and speculative fiction (*The Culling* by Steven Dos Dantos). Other categories include graphic novels, books featuring a transgender character,

and historical fiction. Suitable titles not on the guide are suggested in the comments section, many by the authors themselves but also from YA lit enthusiasts. Also in the comments section is a discussion about YA LGBTQ literature featuring protagonists of color.

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National Bullying Prevention Month is coming up in October, and Gillian Engberg at Booklist is putting together a [list of "Books About Bullying"](#) from picture books through teen titles. Annotations designate a recommended age range for each title. TeachingBooks.net compiled a list of [multimedia resources](#) for many of the books from the list such as interviews with the authors and links to their websites, blogs, and book trailers.

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On the ALSC listserv, there was recently a request for picture books about different types of families. A few librarians jumped in with recommendations of all-inclusive picture books for any kind of family. Some of the titles were *The Great Big Book of Families* by Mary Hoffman, *Who's In My Family?: All About Our Families* by Robie H. Harris, *The Family Book* by Todd Parr, and *All Kinds of Families!* by Mary Ann Hoberman.

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A [Kickstarter campaign](#) for a LGBT friendly comic for all ages raised over \$18,000 from 387 backers, surpassing their goal. [Prism Comics](#) describes: "Mahou Shounen FIGHT! (translated: Magical Boy FIGHT!) is a tongue-in-cheek but loving homage to the 'magical girl' genre of Japanese comics (think *Sailor Moon*) united

with a personal mission. Dusty and JD together have written a comic full of characters with whom queer and genderqueer readers can identify, wrapped up in a fun, genre story appropriate for young teens. The comic is also available to view [online](#).

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GLSEN hosted a webinar for advocates of LGBT Youth on July 10th titled "The Experiences of LGBT Youth Online." A [free archive](#) of the webinar can be found on their website. The website states: "Join us for a GLSEN Research Learning Series webinar that will discuss findings from our forthcoming report on LGBT youth online. This free webinar will highlight findings related to LGBT youth's experiences online, including bullying/harassment and use of the Internet to access relevant information, find supportive peers, and be civically engaged. We will also examine how online experiences differ between LGBT and non-LGBT youth, and how online experiences and resources may influence well-being. Finally, we will recommend some strategies for educators and advocates of LGBT youth to support the needs of LGBT youth both online and in person."

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Great news for transgender students going back to school this fall in California: Governor Jerry Brown has signed [Assembly Bill 1266](#). This bill gives students in public K-12 schools the opportunity to participate in sex-segregated activities, such as sports teams, that match the gender they identify with as opposed to their birth gender. The bill is scheduled to take effect on Jan. 1, 2014. Meanwhile, another bill in California is making its way towards approval. Proposed by California State Senator Ricardo Lara, SB 323, the [Youth Equality Act](#). "ensures nonprofit youth organizations that receive special state tax privileges comply with California's nondiscrimination laws. Specifically, this bill revokes the special tax status rewarded to nonprofit youth organizations should they violate our state's nondiscrimination laws." At the time of this writing, the Youth Equality Bill had passed both the Assembly Tax and Revenue and Judiciary Committees on its way to the Assembly Appropriations Committee. Check the [website](#) for the latest news.

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[Jenna is Youth Services Librarian at Deerfield (IL) Public Library.]

Ad Hoc Committee on the Organization of the Stonewall Book Awards: GLBTRT Board has appointed a committee to evaluate the organization of the Stonewall Book Awards committee and make recommendations about any changes. The decision to create this ad hoc committee came after discussion about the increased workload for the committee because of the third award of a youth book.

One topic is whether to maintain the current structure of the committee or establish subcommittees or separate committees for each award. Questions include how any proposed change would affect availability of Stonewall volunteers and if membership should require any expertise in a specific reading area.

Recommendations for any changes and their implementation will be reported to the Executive Board at the ALA 2014 Midwinter Meeting. The committee will be soliciting opinions from GLBTRT members. For more information about the ad hoc committee, please see the charge on [ALA Connect](#) — Tess Goldwasser

Helping Put LGBT Lives in Order

In the past few years, changes in legal rights for LGBT people have been astronomical: in just one decade marriage equality has been legalized in 13 U.S. states plus additional jurisdictions, Congress allows gays and lesbians to openly serve in the military, the Supreme Court overturned both sodomy and DOMA, and the federal government is chewing away at the 1,138+ anti-LGBT laws by slowly giving them to all same-sex couples.

Social security still honors only married same-sex couples who live in areas that recognize their marriage, but the IRS gives benefits to any legally married couple, no matter the jurisdiction, and a federal judge has overturned the VA declaration against giving benefits to any spouses in same-sex marriages.

To help LGBT people find their way through the maze of legal issues, Carrie Stone, co-owner and operator of RainbowLaw.com, and John G. Culhane have provided Same Sex Legal Kit for Dummies. Obviously no book is going to be a replacement for a live lawyer, and any book will be out-of-date before it's actually published.

Given these caveats, this book is a goldmine of thoughtful advice in the myriad legal areas, explaining how LGBT people can protect themselves and the ones they love. Marriage, civil unions, domestic partner-

ships, adoption, tax issues, discrimination, living together, combining assets, illness, estate planning, breaking up, immigration, military life, relatives—these are some of the topics that the authors tackle.

A bonus to the book is the CD that gives a break-down of state laws for different issues and a collection of forms that can be used as a basis for wills, medical advance directives, co-parenting agreements, disposition of remains, etc. From the thorough table of contents through the meticulous index, this book provides invaluable information.

As an older lesbian, I especially appreciated the information on estate planning and wills. A little-known fact may be that a person's will becomes invalid in the case of marriage. With so many gays and lesbians marrying after DOMA was overturned, it is important to make out a new will.

The best thing any adult can do for family and friends while planning for life and death is to have planning records for both life and after death. Same-Sex Legal Kit for Dummies gives people a start. Every library should have a copy.

[Wiley, 2013. PB. 364p. \$34.99. 978-1-118-39521-9]

Reviewer: Nel Ward

GLBT Books, People

YALSA's committee Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults has chosen GLBTQ as one of this year's three themes. The nomination list thus far is available at <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/booklists/poppaper/nominations>. This is the third time that they chose this theme; the last two times were gay and lesbian tales in 1997 and GLBTQ in 2006. Those bibliographies are at <http://www.ala.org/yalsa/popular-paperbacks-young-adults>. Thanks to Ana Elisa de Campos Salles, GLBTRT's YALSA liaison, for the information.

In 2014, Duke University Press is **launching *TSQ: Transgender Studies Quarterly***, edited by Paisley Currah and Susan Stryker, the first nonmedical journal dedicated to transgender studies. The press release can be read [here](#).

The Lambda Literary Foundation awarded Nicola Griffith and Trebor Healey with the 2013 James Duggins Outstanding Mid-Career Novelist Prize. Sassafras Lowrey and Carter Sickels received the Dr. Betty Berzon Emerging Writer Award.

Last May, then-Chair David Vess announced that **Rae-Ann Montague** is currently the GLBTRT representative to AASL. **Anyone interested in being representatives** can consider applying by looking at the [job description](#) and representatives' [roster](#).

Ed Hermance, owner of the historic Giovanni's Room in Philadelphia since 1976, is **selling the LGBT bookstore** with 48,000 titles because he is retiring. New owners can move the store, rent the facility from Hermance, or buy the property. The proceeds from any sale of the buildings will go to the Delaware Valley Legacy Fund, advancing philanthropy for the LGBTI community, after Hermance's death.

Ray Barber recommends an **article in the September 1, 2013 issue of *Kirkus*** on *Two Boys Kissing* and other fall gay-themed YA fiction.

As of June 1, **David John became the executive director** of the world's largest collection of LGBT historical artifacts and documents, the [Stonewall National Museum & Archives](#) (SNMA). John moved to the facility in Fort Lauderdale (FL) from his position as executive director of the Gay Men's Chorus of Washington, D.C.

Book Reviews: Fiction

Julian E. Farris. *The Sin Warriors*.

Lethe Press, 2012. PB. 263p. \$15. 978-1-59021-274-5.

Even though national stories tend to steal the historical spotlight, most people's struggles happen on smaller, though still important, scales. In *The Sin Warriors*, Julian E. Farris tackles the mid-20th century struggle for homosexuals in Florida's university system to escape fear and entrapment from a system out to get them.

Based on true events, this book portrays state Sen. Charlie Johns's efforts to remove all homosexual teachers and students from every college in the state through coercion, blackmail, and fear-mongering tactics reminiscent of Joe McCarthy and the Red Scare during the 1950s. Caught in the middle of all this are David Ashton and John Smith, who must not only overcome the dysfunctions in their own histories but also face down a state bureaucracy that hates them for who they are.

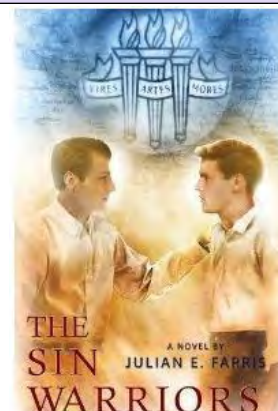
Farris does a good job of bringing verisimilitude to this era of history. He honors the victims of the

Johns Committee (1956-1961), and brings to light a dark period during Florida's evolution on gay rights. The mood and feeling of this time in Florida's history are sumptuously evoked, transporting the reader to the exact place and time of these events.

The book is not without its rough spots, starting with the slow pacing of the first part of the book. Although the writing picks up, it may be a barrier to some readers.

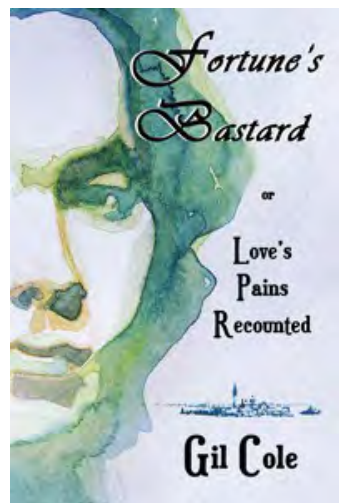
A tale of illegal power and intimidation, this book is recommended for library collections of gay rights struggles on the state level, especially the South and Florida.

Reviewer: John Mack Freeman



Gil Cole. *Fortune's Bastard or Love's Pains Recounted*.

Chelsea Station Editions, 2013. PB. 247p. \$18. 978-1-937627-01-0.



In this historic romance novel readers are drawn into the life of Antonio, son of a wealthy merchant and shipping family who escapes his family and fate during the religious hysteria of Renaissance Florence.

Using the style and language of the Elizabethan period, including lines from Shakespeare's plays interspersed without credit, Cole describes Antonio's adventures on the sea and land as a pirate, itinerant actor, fugitive, and merchant.

Excitement abounds when Antonio encounters the open love aboard a pirate ship, a life of only males, who all find sexual release with each other in Cole's graphic descriptions. After the pirate captain's former lover sets Antonio adrift at sea, Antonio reencounters the traitor years later when he saves him in a world opposed to same-sex trysts. With two strikes against him—a pirate and a gay man—Antonio's life goes full circle from the life his father wanted for him as a mer-

chant and his reckless desire for older men to a life as a merchant endangering his own life to support the lives of young men drawn to older men.

Underlying this outward appearance of a pretty young man adrift is the thread of romance and sex during a time when Antonio, a sex- and attention-starved gay man, is denounced by the Church and society.

Antonio's various roles demonstrate different ways sexuality might have been dealt with in the time, hidden from acceptable society but never far from the knowledge of those who wished to participate. His tale illustrates his personal values, not wanting to hurt a woman by marrying her without any sexual interest in her. Hunted by the people who once held illicit trysts with him, Antonio is forced to hide behind traditional marriages that pretend to preserve the society that wants to kill him. Betrayal, lust, love, and desire abound in this novel.

Well researched and historically accurate, the adventure draws the reader into the life of Elizabethan Italy. Although the language can be confusing at first, it becomes part of the experience and necessary to the narrative. Suitable for historic and romance sections of a public library, the book contains specific sexual acts.

Reviewer: s.n.

Book Reviews: Fiction

Hakan Lindquist. *My Brother and His Brother.*

Bruno Gmunder Verlag, 2011. PB. 169p. \$14.95. 978-3867870856.

Jonas is searching for his brother, Paul, who was hit by a train and died seventeen months before Jonas was born. Paul's photo on top of the television has always prompted Jonas's interest. He kept asking his parents questions about Paul such such as why he was on the railroad tracks and why he didn't hear the train coming. After he finds Paul's suede jacket in the attic with a note in the pocket addressed to "Princi," Jonas's quest begins in earnest.

Finding Paul's treasure box behind the baseboard of their room, Jonas uses a number of sources--his parents, his mother's gay friend Daniel, Paul's diaries, photographs, and old newspapers--to fill in the words of a crossword puzzle. An important piece of the puzzle is that Paul was gay and in love with a Czech boy named Petr. As Jonas finds out more about Paul, he discovers more about himself, as well as about the other main characters and their ways of dealing with guilt and grief.

Jonas's easy acceptance that his brother was gay, his comfort at being around Daniel, and his reaction to other

events suggests that he may be gay himself. The author leaves us to guess.

As narrator, Jonas uses first person, dreams, talking to Paul, and diary entries. In his journey to solve the puzzle, he also composes a third-person narrative of how their last day together. The final clue eludes him until almost the end.

The title has a double meaning. The book is about both **Jonas, Paul's biological brother, and about Petr, Paul's soul brother.**

I recommend this excellent short novel to all readers.

Reviewer: Larry Roman



Tom Cardamone. *Green Thumb.*

BrazenHead/Lethe Press, 2012. PB. 142p. \$13. 978-1-59021-367-4.

The author of *Pumpkin Teeth: Stories* and *The Werewolves of Central Park* introduces Leaf, a young boy who was changed from human to a cross between human and plant as his family and life were dying out. Alone on an island with his dying Nanny, Leaf survives through his ability to live like a plant on sunlight and rainwater.

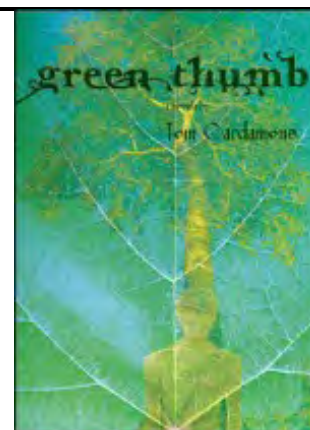
In a universe left destitute, many are mutants amidst pirates, suffering from lack of food and order in a world rewarding the fittest and strongest. Leaf attempts to **save a friend's father from the pirates but fails.**

Hard to follow and weak in plot, the graphic sex scenes are not only couples but also group as Leaf en-

counters love, lust, rape, and forced sex.

Fans of alternate universes will be disappointed as will those seeking a book of young love.

Reviewer: s.n.



Elliott Mackle. *Captain Harding and His Men.*

Lethe Press, 2012. PB. 177p. \$15. 978-1-59021-329-2.

Set in a remote Air Force base in Libya during the Vietnam War, this novel continues the saga of Captain Joe Harding and his fellow officers and airmen in *Captain Harding's Six-Day War*. At the beginning of this sequel, a C-130 bound for Southeast Asia explodes upon takeoff from Wheelus Air Base. Joe Harding realizes the cargo list was faked, as were other facts regarding the flight as well as past events related to this disaster.

Encountering a sexually abusive wing commander, a closeted Pentagon official, an imposter CIA agent, a vengeful **American ambassador who resents Joe's relationship with her underage son, and an inquisitive sister of a dead colleague who was tangentially involved in the whole messy situation,** the reader follows the plot of illicit romance, military relations, and secrets through the lives of people on the base. The **kidnapping of an ambassador's son leads to the discovery of illegal shipments of British weapons and other support resources to anti-royalist rebels, and quiet acceptance by the ambassador of her son's relations with Joe.**

The events occur during the time before *Don't Ask Don't Tell* and its subsequent repeal, and this novel reminds readers of what horrors were faced, not only on the field but in all other aspects of military life by gays who wish to serve their country. Lovers of the television series *M*A*S*H* will find this novel a welcome read, with humor amidst the horrors of war and the bureaucracy of the military and governmental ranks across countries and borders.

A welcome addition to romance and military fiction collections, *Captain Harding* belongs in any adult fiction collection.

Reviewer: s.n.



Book Reviews: Fiction

Laura Antoniou. *The Killer Wore Leather: A Mystery.*

Cleis Press, 2013. 400p. PB. \$16.95. 978-1573449304.

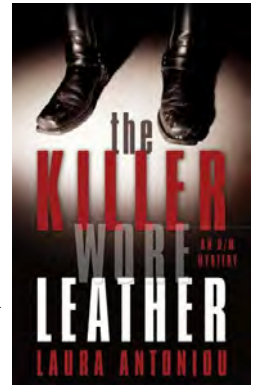
This is the second mystery in recent years to be set in the leather community, following the 2011 work by Chicago-area writer Mark Zubro, *Black and Blue and Pretty Dead Too* (MLR Press). Where Zubro's work places his established characters of openly gay Chicago detective Paul Turner and his pun-infected straight partner Buck Fenwick in a killing at a major leather event, *The Killer Wore Leather* is an expansion of author Laura Antoniou's skill with short stories into the framework of a satirical crime novel.

Antoniou, well known for her collections of erotic fiction and nonfiction writing on leather, most recently as a contributor to the anthology *Fifty Writers on Fifty Shades of Grey* (Perseus, 2012), sets her tale in the context of the weekend of "Mr. Global Leather" (modeled on the International Mr. Leather contest) and draws upon her own extensive familiarity with the kinky community in populating her array of suspects. People unfamiliar with this subculture can identify with the

character of a mainstream news reporter who is assigned to cover the event and winds up coping with both alternative culture shock and the stresses of following an ongoing murder investigation.

The plot is fast-paced, the characters engagingly realized, and the book deftly spiced with dry humor that makes the reader both laugh and think for a moment about the point being made. The accurate information provided on the standards of behavior and the consensual nature of kink/BDSM for both gay and heterosexual practitioners make this novel a distinctive addition to any LGBT collection.

Reviewer: Robert Ridinger



Astrid Fiano. *Gabriel's World: The Hanged Man.*

Self-published, 2012. PB. 494p. \$16.99. 978-0-985700-1-0.

In this first book of the planned *Gabriel's World* series, 36-year-old Gabriel Ross, a licensed New York City private investigator, devout Buddhist, and righter of wrongs, is hired by lawyer and philanthropist Raymond Booth to investigate an incident involving Nazis at his charitable foundation. Soon after he is hired, Ross finds Booth dead at his home, apparently of a botched BDSM encounter. Sensing something is wrong with the scene, Ross is hired by Booth's sister and his lawyer to investigate Booth's death, drawing him into a much larger and more sinister secret than anyone thought.

Well-researched setting, history, and Nazi culture, the thriller follows Ross as she unravels the secret surrounding an underground organization that influenced Nazism, the Tertullian Society. Ross becomes a target of the organization as he adds an investigation into the original events to his search into Booth's death.

Ross also faces turmoil on the home front after an ex-boyfriend, Joel, reappears to make amends following several years of absence at the same time that Ross is starting a rela-

tionship with news reporter Alex. Juggling two boyfriends, trying to stay safe, and continuing his other jobs, Ross tries to stay sane and alive.

While the storyline is intriguing, the numerous grammatical errors can detract from the reading experience. Although the beginning is slow, the novel picks up speed, drawing the reader in to find out more about this secret society, who killed who, who is involved in the society, and how everything ties together.

The book ends with answers to the questions related to the case, but Ross's love life is still in the air, leading the reader to look forward to the second book. A [website](#) offers additional information such as background, character sketches, short fiction, and interactive components.

Reviewer: s.n.



Jeffrey Luscombe. *Shirts and Skins.*

Chelsea Station Editions, 2012. PB. 223p. \$18. 978-1-937627-00-3.

In the first novel by the author of short fiction in publications such as *Chelsea Station*, *Tupperware Sandpiper*, and *Zeugma Literary Journal*, a young man growing up in contemporary times on the wrong side of Hamilton, an industrial city in southwestern Ontario. Luscombe describes Josh Moore's wanting to escape from the downtrodden, dirty area in which he lives while he is continually beaten each time he seems to be getting ahead in a rollercoaster of triumphs and setbacks. Josh wants a better life than that of his family as his father gambles away the rent money earned at the local steel mills.

Although he succeeds in high school college-track classes, Josh ends up at the steel mill, only to become injured. Even returning to college on a career track of computers doesn't get him out of the hole he keeps sliding down.

In the depths of despair, standing outside looking in,

Josh touches the hearts of those who have lost their way to their dreams and aspirations. His inability to find himself finally leads to an epiphany of his hidden, yet acknowledged, desires and the reasons for his past.

The novel is written through a series of vignettes rather than a chronological approach as Josh finds himself. Although the gay content is minimal, there are graphic descriptions of heterosexual encounters.

Recommended for adult fiction collections.

Reviewer: s.n.



Book Reviews: Fiction

Fiona Zedde. *Broken in Soft Places.*

Bold Strokes Books, 2013. PB. 308p. \$16.95. 978-1-60282-876-6.

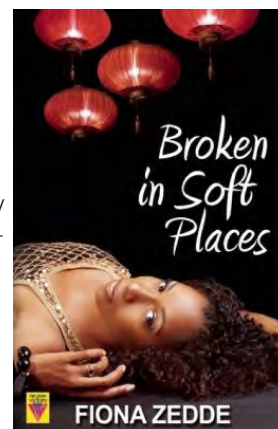
In this novel, three people come together, initially not a unit, as they learn about themselves and others, about love, lust, adoration, and separation. Rille and Sara became partners in college, but not equals, as Rille continued sexual relations with others who fed into her need for admiration and adoration while Sara focused solely on Rille. They separate, but come back together after Sara is assigned to represent Rille in a case of a professor sexually harassing taking a student. Steve enters the relationship when Rille wants another member of her harem. Sara resents his addition but reluctantly accepts him because she does not want to lose Rille.

Rille is the sun around whom Steve and Sara orbit, wanting all to love and yield to her desires, without thinking of what others need or want. Beneath the narrative of Rille lie the stories of Sara, facing a mother who is homophobic and the loss of her beloved older brother that impacted the entire family, and of Steve, who broke off his relationship with Lance because of **Steve's own inner demons uncovered after the death of his parents.**

Filled with stereotypical college sex scenes, as well as edgy sexual scenes such as fisting and group sex, this book may not be appropriate for younger audiences although the awareness of **focusing on others beyond one's own self** is an important theme. Also of value is the concept of a trio relationship among a bi-man, a bi-woman, and a lesbian woman, not often explored in terms of the impact on the individual members.

Zedde's vivid language paints pictures of the lower class Jamaican family recently immigrated to the southeastern U.S., the wealthy, and the middleclass. Confusing at times as the story changes in time and focus on individuals, the writing is graphic and the storyline draws one in. The rich language and attention to detail will entice readers.

Reviewer: s.n.



Book Reviews: Drama

Jon Marans. *A Strange and Separate People.*

Chelsea Station Editions. 2012. PB. 122p. \$16. 978-0-9832851-5-1.

When Stuart called Phyllis to cater his Orthodox dinner party, he never expected that their initial meeting could set in progress the events that would tear apart a marriage and rock a synagogue to its core. **Stuart isn't just a potential client; he's also a client of Phyllis's husband, Jay. And he's Jay's boyfriend.** The play explores what happens when Phyllis discovers their **relationship and how the characters' Orthodox Jewish background influences their responses.**

One of the most successful parts of this play is the presentation of the religious culture and practices in an accessible and understandable way. Although the title *A Strange and Separate People* seems to most aptly apply to the Orthodox community in this play, it can equally refer to LGBT people and the autistic community represented by Phyllis's son. **This play hammers home the idea that just because someone is different doesn't mean that there isn't room for understanding, growth, forgiveness, and acceptance. It just takes time and the will to do so.**

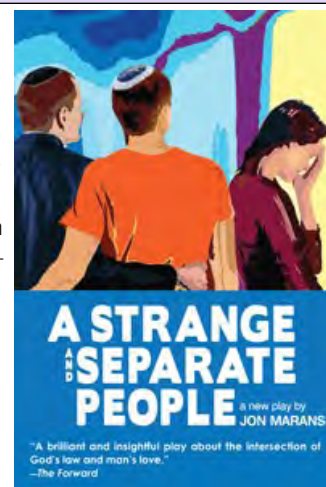
A play is not meant to be experienced by simply **reading it; the story's nuances come from the production's actors, directors, and designers.** With just reading the play, some of the dialog seems stilted, especial-

ly when characters address the audience or unseen other characters. These divergences might be better handled in performance, but in the reading they seem to break the rules of the play by taking the reader out of the experience.

A Pulitzer finalist, playwright Jon Marans is no stranger to the stage. His other works include *Old Wicked Songs*, *The Temperamentals*, *A Girl Scout World*, *Jumping for Joy*, and *Irrationals*. *A Strange and Separate People* had its first performance on October 6, 2005 with the Penguin Repertory Company in Stony Point, New York.

This play is recommended for any library that collects contemporary drama or has a strong collection in Jewish studies or the relationship between religion and LGBTQ persons.

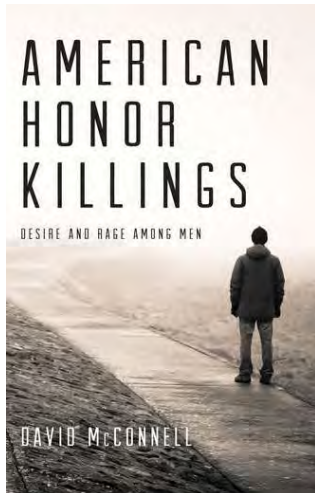
Reviewer: John Mack Freeman



Book Reviews: Nonfiction

David McConnell. *American Honor Killings: Desire and Rage among Men.*

Akashic Books, 2013. PB. 256p. \$15.95. 978-1-61775-132-5.



How does one approach the murders of gay men in America? David McConnell deftly tackles this tough subject using a number of different cases to try to understand what he terms "American Honor Killings." The journey involves traveling to places across the country and talking to friends of the deceased as well as, in several cases, the murderers themselves.

The odyssey is as difficult for the author as it is for the reader. What, we wonder, drives them to murder, and why target gay men? Sometimes the standard explanations fail to grasp the true complexity of motivation, ranging from the mad, hyper-religious insanity of Matthew Williams, to the repressed and fearful homosexuality that led Darrell Madden to participate in the murder of a gay man.

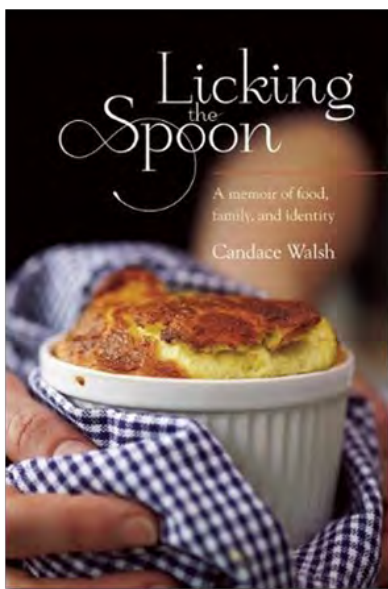
McConnell's investigations lead him on a long and winding path, trying to answer why these men killed gays and taking us to some very unsettling places. No small consideration is the attempt to answer the related question of just what defines masculinity because notions of what it is to be a man drive some of the murders in the work. In some instances, homosexuality (whether acts or the simple desire itself) is seen as an offense to a code of honor, a poisonous idea that led to the murder of Billy Jack Gaither. McConnell finishes with a long discussion of the murder of journalist George Weber and a meditation on the complexity of motives that underlie the murders in the book.

Those who would like to learn more about hate crime murders, as well as those who enjoy "true crime" narratives, will find this book interesting. While much of the information came from interviews, the book would have benefited from a bibliography, or at least a list of works for further reading. This book is recommended for public libraries.

**Reviewer: Brady Clemens, Director
Juniata County Library, Mifflintown (PA)**

Candace Walsh. *Licking the Spoon: A Memoir of Food, Family and Identity.*

Seal Press, 2012. PB. 321p. \$16. 978-1-58005-391-4.



In this heart-breaking and heart-warming memoir, Walsh shares a story of confusion, love, hate, seeking love, and search for identity, and soul searching.

From a broken family that goes from healing to breaking and offers hope before danger and despair, Walsh, the eldest, seeks to find her true self. She doesn't fit at school or socially, her mother berates her for her body, and her father figures keep changing.

Interspersed with remembrances of food and meals, this memoir hits home with the late-identified, the abandoned, and those from broken homes or labeled misfits.

Walsh does not yet realize her lesbianism, alt-

hough Walsh acknowledges her lack of sexual release when with men and her attraction to women, she does not recognize herself as a lesbian while she is young. When beginning to explore lesbianism, Walsh has heterosexual encounters until she decides that they are not satisfactory. These elements, combined with her inability to find a suitable job, frustration with her therapy, and continued abandonment, create an upward battle towards happiness. Set in Manhattan, Buffalo, Long Island (NY), and Santa Fe as well as western European cities, the book takes readers with Walsh on an emotional and geographical journey.

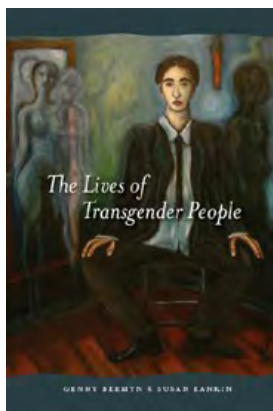
With several recipes included at the end, this book will appeal to the culinary-oriented by title, although the cooking journey is only a small part of the entire narrative of personal, spiritual, and sexual journeys. Readers who enjoy books of self-awakening will find pleasure in this down-to-earth and heartfelt memoir of a life of searching. Occasional foreign words without definitions might at first be confusing, but this infrequent lack of translation contributes to the sense portrayed by the book. Recommended for public libraries and readers of memoirs.

Reviewer: s.n.

Book Reviews: Nonfiction

Genny Beemyn and Susan Rankin. *The Lives of Transgender People.*

Columbia University Press, 2011. PB. 230p. \$27.50. 978-0-231-14307-3.



The diversity of transgender people is shown through the results of the author's online survey of 3,474 participants between November 2005, and February 2006, the most comprehensive survey to date. Using a design to gather data not previously sought, the authors made every effort to include people who identify outside the usual binary gender assignments.

They group respondents into four categories: "female-to-male/transgender, male-to-female/transgender, female-to-different-gender, and male-to-different-

gender." Overall, the female-to-male/transgender respondents and those who identify as genderqueer were younger than those who identify as cross-dressers or male-to-female/transgender.

Discussions of gender always struggle with language. This difficulty is particularly evident when respondents try to categorize their sexual orientation. According to the authors, "throughout the book, we use a number of terms and concepts with highly contested and unstable definitions." They also use gender neutral pronouns rather than the circumlocutions that have popularly replaced the generic masculine. At birth, sex is assigned by a doctor based on the presence or absence of a visible penis: "gender assignment is thus medicalized, phallogocentric, and dichotomous."

In asking about genderism, transphobia, and gender bashing, the authors learned that harassment and discrimination rates, as well as the likelihood of violence, are much higher for people of color who are gender variant. "Genderism is the negative cultural ideology, gender prejudice is the emotional expression of that ideology, and gender bashing is the violent manifestation of those emotions." Their research pro-

vides justification for more inclusive hate crime laws. According to a study by Genderpac, "homicides classified as hate crimes were about one-and-a-half times more likely (50 versus 33 percent) to result in the apprehension of a suspect."

Earlier studies tended to lump together all transgender people and to view them in sequential stages of "becoming." The survey shows that similar events are experienced differently by persons who identify as female-to-male transgender, male-to-female transgender, cross-dresser, or genderqueer. The authors emphasize the importance of not defining people by surgeries.

Despite the much wider availability of information about transgenderism, many of those under age 23 do not find it any easier to accept that they are transgender. In general, children who are labeled male experience more pressure to conform to gender expectations and therefore may become aware of their gender difference earlier. Children labeled female are often able to behave in ways that fit their internal gender, at least until puberty.

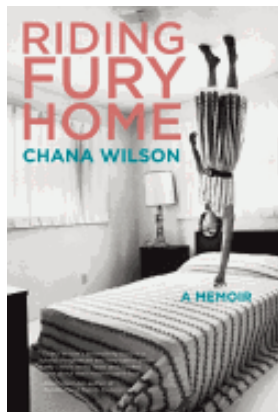
Those who identify as genderqueer, or as some other non-binary gender, sometimes encounter hostility within the LGBT community, as well as struggles in a society that presumes there are only two choices on everything from forms to sports. Of particular interest was the discovery of how higher education can become more welcoming. College campuses that have taken a step toward inclusivity, such as offering domestic partner benefits, are more likely to have LGBT individuals willing to come out and to report any harassment.

Unfortunately, survey participants did not include significant numbers of transgender people in the military or blue-collar work. Otherwise, this research will be valuable for agencies that provide services to transgender people, whether the organization's focus or simply part of the population served. The book would not be a first choice for someone needing basic information about what it means to be transgender.

Reviewer: Carolyn Caywood, Retired

Chana Wilson. *Riding Fury Home.*

Seal Press, 2012. PB. 384p. \$17. 978-1580054324.



Chana Wilson's memoir *Riding Fury Home* chronicles her remarkable, challenging relationship with her mother that ranges from the height of dysfunction to a bond so deep most people could only imagine having with a parent.

The narrative begins with Wilson as a lonely child in 1950's New Jersey, feeling the loss of a mother who is basically incapacitated because of the radical treatment and heavy drugs she receives at various mental institutions.

As a twenty-something, politically active lesbian in the Bay Area

during the early 1970's, Wilson is happy to be free of the burden of her mother. The twist is that after Wilson comes out as gay, her mother follows suit. Her declaration that she is a les-

bian paves the way for reconciliation and for her mother to reveal her experiences of confinement in mental institutions and a loveless marriage with Wilson's father. Wilson comes to the realization that "homophobia had shattered us all."

While the story that Wilson presents is a dramatic one, dealing with strong personalities, intense political movements, and the worst of homophobia, the writing is at times a bit too timid, too careful. Much of the book is spent on Wilson's childhood and college years. It doesn't really get moving until 200 pages in, but it's worth the wait. The writing is very accessible, at times funny and other times sad, with the main focus on relationships, both familial and romantic. The women's movement and gay liberation are primarily left as backdrops.

Riding Fury Home is light reading on heavy subjects and a good addition to any public library biography collection.

**Reviewer: Kevin Coleman
Library Specialist I, Alameda Free Library**

Book Reviews: Youth Fiction

David Holly. *The Moon's Deep Circle*.

Bold Strokes Books, 2013. PB. 282p. \$16.95. 978-1-60282-870-4.

Swim teams, pagans, and mysteries, oh my! Holly's young adult novel follows Tip Trencher, a high school senior in a rural Oregon community, as he seeks to discover the reason for the mysterious disappearance of his two older brothers 15 years earlier. On a fluke, he gains access to their locked bedroom and starts to unravel a mystery that puts his brothers in a gay pagan group at odds with the small town's conservative values. As Tip is drawn into his brother's journals, he begins to explore his own sexual awakening with two fellow seniors on the swim team. This story of the awakening of new youth and old rituals is an enjoyable erotic romp.

While the story was engaging and moved quickly, the novel has some problems. The weakest section of the whole book by far is the first 20 pages with some clunkily-worded passages that may put off readers. In addition, some word choices may distract the reader because of their oddness. For instance, reading about a movement described as "widdershins" had me scrambling for a dictionary.

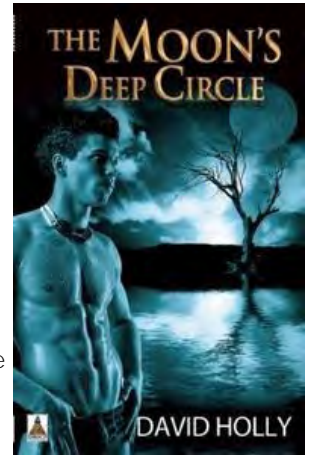
The dual nature of the narrative is a double-

edged sword for Holly that sometimes aids and sometimes hinders his story. While the introduction of the journal provides needed backstory (and a fast-track to erotic material), the constant bouncing back and forth between present day and the past can make the narrative feel disjointed.

A Portland (OR) native, Holly is a prolific author of gay erotica and romance. His stories can be found in the anthologies *Nice Butt*, *Erotica Exotica*, *Black Five*, and *History's Passion*.

The Moon's Deep Circle is recommended for libraries that cater to the general public and that seek to meet the personal reading interests of their clientele, including an interest in explicit language and sexual content.

Reviewer: John Mack Freeman



Lianne Simon. *Confessions of a Teenage Hermaphrodite*.

Faie Miss Press, 2012. PB. 244p. \$11.95. 978-0-9851482-0-1.

In this Christian romance set in 1970, the obstacles to happiness are first that Jamie has Mixed Gonadal Dysgenesis, and second that her parents insist she is a boy. MGD means that some of her cells have XY chromosomes while others are missing the Y, a medical condition resulting in a body quite small even for a girl—elfin as Jamie thinks of it. Her body had nonfunctional ovaries and cancerous testis which had to be removed. She would need hormone replacement in order to experience puberty in either gender. Her parents want her to take testosterone which Jamie fears would turn her into a hairy dwarf.

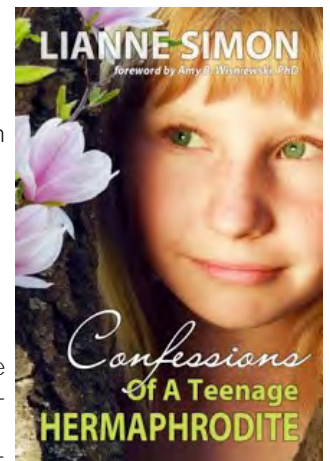
Jamie is home-schooled to protect her from bullying and to instill in her a strong desire to be the boy her parents want. (At that time, much of the medical profession believed in the malleability of gender and advised parents to stifle any variant gender expression.) She prays for some resolution, and gets a scholarship and admission to college at 16. There she begins to encounter people who accept her as she is, so she sheds the Jamison pretense she has been using to please her father. She also falls in love with a friend's brother who has enlisted for the war in Vietnam.

Because of the strong and pervasive element of Christian faith, this book has the potential to reach readers who might avoid LGBT-themed fiction. In so

doing, it may open more eyes to the realization that gender identity and sexual orientation are not genetically determined. Jamie appears to believe that her medical condition justifies her gender identity/sexual orientation and thus avoids any suggestion of homosexuality, an attitude which fit the 1970s but can be jarring if the story is read as set in contemporary times. Nevertheless, Jamie's anguish at being pressured to deny her core identity will ring true for readers who are transgender.

Confessions of a Teenage Hermaphrodite helps fill some of the great void in accurate and readable stories about intersex people. Although intersex is often described as rare, the Intersex Society of North America [states](#) that one in every 100 births is of a person whose body differs from biological male or female. Every public library needs to be aware of serving this population.

Reviewer: Carolyn Caywood, Retired Virginia Beach Public Library



Book Reviews: Youth Fiction

Bruce Brown. *Gordon the Giraffe: Original Graphic Novel.*

Arcana Studio, 2013. PB. 50p. \$5.95. 978-1-927424537.

Why is it that each minority group passes through a phase where all their stories feature a noble, self-sacrificing individual who rescues his or her oppressors? Gordon belongs to that tradition of needing to be twice as good as those you hope will accept you as an equal.

In this case, Gordon the giraffe is bullied because he plays "Mulunga Doo," a game of banana tossing and neck twining, with Gary instead of with a girl. Gordon's mother is supportive, and tells him to follow his heart, but the other boys decide to enforce their ideas of what's right. Their plan goes awry, and Gordon saves them from the fate they'd planned for him.

Another discordant note is the stereotype of Africa as a place of hidden kingdoms with names like "Ugladunga." Combined with those pseudo-African words, the names "Gordon" and "Gary" are jarring.

Arcana, a new Canadian publisher of graphic novels, has listed *Gordon the Giraffe* as a graphic novel for all ages. Visually, it appears to be a picture book with full page illustrations,

each facing a page of text, a format that may put off readers old enough to empathize with Gordon's dawning sexual attraction.

The lovely art work by A. Shelton evokes West African fabrics and savanna landscapes as it amplifies and explains the text, yet transitions sometimes seem to be missing, leaving the reader dependent on the pictures to follow the plot.

Nevertheless, there are so few books for elementary school aged children that attempt to address bullying of gay kids that this story will have value for now. The book will also work as a read-aloud selection for small audiences, and the text font is large enough to be readable for some children with impaired vision.

**Reviewer: Carolyn Caywood, Retired
Virginia Beach Public Library**



James Lecesne. *Trevor: The Story that Inspired the Trevor Project.*

Seven Stories Press, 2012. HC. 111p. \$14.95.

In this novella for children and young adults, the author shares the story that inspired the Trevor Project. Lecesne uses his own experiences to tell the story of adolescent Trevor who seeks to express his true self without fear of repercussion. Yet he is frequently told he is gay and faces discrimination, bullying, ostracism, and disbelief from his family. Each time Trevor feels he is succeeding he is betrayed, ridiculed, or attacked by a person he thought was his friend and ally.

Trevor's suicide attempt causes him to find help and acceptance from his family and the friends who learn to accept him for who he is. The novella shares a heartbreaking story of a call for help and acceptance, a plea for change in attitudes.

The afterword shares the birth and growth of the Trevor Project that would have changed Trevor's life if it were available

when he needed it. The "Resource Guide" in the back of the book can help readers get the assistance Trevor couldn't even dream of seeking.

This book belongs in any upper elementary, junior high, and high school collection, but adults will also benefit from this honest, poignant tale of a lost soul seeking help, whether for being gay or for being different and bullied in any other way.

Reviewer: s.n.



David-Matthew Barnes. *Wonderland.*

Bold Strokes Books, 2013. PB. 208p. \$11.95. 978-1-60282-788-2.

In this touching young adult book about giving others a second chance, Barnes displays the same writing style and experiences that he expressed in his plays and other writings. Although one character's parents are a same-sex couple and two other characters are gay and bisexual, the content is not blatantly gay. Instead it is a well-written story of true love and friendship that anyone can appreciate.

This heartwarming story begins when Destiny loses her mother to cancer and is sent to live on an isolated island in South Carolina with her uncle and his partner. She makes friends with two misfits, bisexual Tasha, who cares greatly for others and protects Topher, a gay boy who is the target of the bullies on the island. The two lead Destiny to find her family's secret, a magical place called Wonderland. Once there, Destiny learns that her family has the ability to give a second chance at life and love to one select person who knows the meaning of true love.

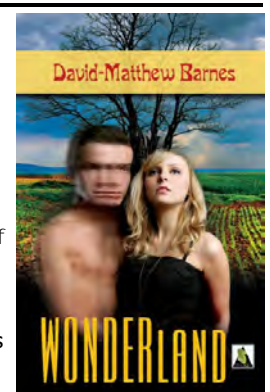
It is in Wonderland, currently led by Destiny's great-

grandmother, that the potential savior meets his or her target and then must decide if there is a desire to save this person. The decision for Tasha and Topher is easy: they meet the true love of their personal desires.

Destiny's choice is more difficult. She must decide whether to save her mother or the boy who will be Destiny's true love if she saves him. Barnes calls upon the reader to consider the meaning of true love and friendship as well as the reasons for sacrifice.

Although this novel belongs in any youth collection, adults will also appreciate the descriptive and evocative writing.

Reviewer: s.n.



Book Reviews: Poetry

This Assignment Is So Gay: LGBTIQ Poets on the Art of Teaching. Ed. by Megan Volpert. Sibling Rivalry Press, 2013. PB. 223p. \$24.95. 978-1-937420-42-0.



In his poem "Secret Admirer: An Essay," Benjamin S. Grossberg asks, "Why do people often end up contemptuous of the population they serve? Is there a way to avoid that?"

It's probably this question, more than any other, that *This Assignment Is So Gay: LGBTIQ Poets on the Art of Teaching* seeks to answer. Although not every teacher poet has the same answer, each of these poems struggles with the idea of being LGBTIQ, a teacher, and a person--all at the same time.

This collection contains 75 poems from the entire LGBTIQ spectrum. The reverse alphabetical order of authors gives a spark of the egalitarian nature of education. Each poet has between one and four poems in the collection, and most of the poems tend to be a page or less in length.

As with any anthology, everyone has a different fa-

vorites. For me, highlights include Jeff Mann, Terry Martin, Stephen S. Mills, Rebecca Lynne Fullan, and Benjamin S. Grossberg. The points in the collection that work the best are those that deal with teaching in direct, flowing language that speaks in equal measure from the heart and the gut. **These teacher poets don't have time for abstraction: there's too much to get done in a day.**

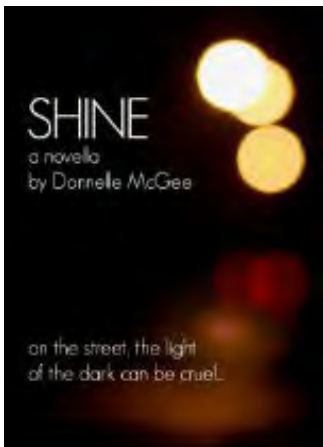
The repeated recurrence of the theme of fear is unfortunate, although hardly unexpected. Some poets express fear for their students, but many others express fear that their schools, coworkers, administrators, and/or students will discover that they are queer. While some poet teachers rise to the challenge, many turn and hide. This anthology provides a sobering cross-section of how far there is to go between the Briggs Initiative of the past to true at-homeness in the modern school workforce for LGBTIQ employees.

From humor to horror, from sadness to solace, this collection embodies the true breadth and depth of a teacher's life. **It isn't easy, these poets seem to agree, but it wouldn't be the same if it were. This collection is recommended for any library that collects poetry.**

Reviewer: John Mack Freeman

Donnelle McGee. *Shine.*

Sibling Rivalry Press, 2012. PB. 97p. \$14.95. 978-1-937420-19-2



Shine defies description. Yes, it is a poetry collection whose verses have an easy-to-read quality that makes them flow smoothly off the page. But the collection is also a mystery of what happened to Bray, a young street hustler who died in a seedy motel room right before he was planning to get out of the business.

It's also a Rashomon-style novella told from several different perspectives. And the collection plays with time and form, placing poetry with-

in poetry. In short, *Shine* can be hard to define. This doesn't detract from the fact that it is a fantastic collection, and well worth the effort.

Donnelle McGee delivers the story of *Shine* through 79 interlocking poems, almost universally Cormac McCarthy-esque dialogues with ambiguous speakers and no quotation marks. The short bites delivering pieces of the story make the reader as much a sleuth as the detective investigating Bray's murder. But McGee makes you want to know what's happened, and you want to know it right

now. I finished *Shine* in a single sitting, but the reader is rewarded by going back for more.

If anything negative can be said about *Shine*, it's that the reader has to pay attention or risk missing out on something. McGee does not waste a single word in this collection; thus the ambiguous narrators, unclear time periods, and out-of-order story could be confusing to some readers. However, McGee always shows up just at the right moment, providing just a little bit of narrative help, pointing out who the narrator is or what the time period for this particular poem might be. He forces the reader to work for the full story but he leave them adrift without a paddle.

McGee has previously published poems in a variety of journals, but *Shine* is his first independently published work. A forthcoming novel is expected soon. More examples of his work can be found at <http://www.donnellemcgee.com/>.

Shine is recommended to any library looking for a reader's gateway into poetry. The poems combine together into a narrative mystery that drives the reader on to the very end. In the same way, it has the potential to drive readers into considering poetry that may have never considered it before.

Reviewer: John Mack Freeman

Calendar:

September 20: Anniversary of End to "Don't Ask, Don't Tell"

September 23: Bisexuality Day

September 22-28: Banned Books Week

October: LGBT History Month

October 2013: Giovanni's Room celebrates its 40th anniversary.

October 4-6: 20th anniversary [celebration](#) of LGBT Resource Center at the University at Urbana-Champaign

October 11: National Coming Out Day

October 26: Intersex Awareness Day

November 1: Deadline to volunteer for committees (see p. 3)

November 20: Transgender Day of Remembrance

December 1: World Aids Day

December 1: Deadline for submission of books to the [26th Lambda Literary Awards](#)

June 30, 2014: Deadline for matching funds for the Stonewall Book Awards Endowment Fund: Mike Morgan and Larry Romans have announced that they will match contributions of \$25 or more (\$10 for text donations) up to \$15,000 in a year-long effort to grow the Fund. Donations at www.ala.org/giveala or \$10 donations via SMS by texting "ALASTONE" to 20222.

August 9-16, 2014: The Gay Games in Cleveland+Akron. For the ninth quadrennial celebration of Participation, Inclusion, and Personal Best, over 10,000 participants from more than 65 countries are expected to come together. Finalist cities for 2018 are London, Paris, and Limerick, Ireland.



Time to Sign up for a GLBTRT Office!

Presidential candidates are lining up for the 2016 election almost three years early. Much closer, however, is the next GLBTRT election to the Executive Board that governs the RT and directs the work of the RT's committees.

Running for round table offices and voting in elections is extremely important, and you need to consider your involvement in one of these open offices in the 2014 election:

- ◆ Chair-Elect (2014–2015 and continuing as chair 2015–2016 and past-chair 2016–2017)
- ◆ Secretary (two-year term 2014–2016)
- ◆ Directors-at-Large (three openings for two-year terms 2014–2016)

To be eligible, you should be a member of ALA and GLBTRT as well as have these abilities:

- ◆ Attend meetings at Annual Conferences and Midwinter Meetings
- ◆ Engage in deliberations via email throughout the year
- ◆ Attend scheduled virtual meetings

Register in the ALA election system by early February 2014!

GLBTRT Executive Board Roster

Roland Hansen, 2013-2014

Chair

rchansen@colum.edu

Dale McNeill, 20013–2015

Treasurer

dale.mcneill.ala@gmail.com

Larry Romans, 2012–2014

Director-at-Large

larry.romans@vanderbilt.edu

Ann K. Symons, 2013–2014

Chair-Elect

ann.symons@gmail.com

Peter Hepburn, 2013–2016

GLBTRT Councilor

Peter.Hepburn@canyons.edu

Ingrid Henny Abrams, 2013-2015

Director-at-Large

magpielibrarian@gmail.com

David Vess, 2013–2014

Past Chair

david.vess@gmail.com

H. Frank Cervone, 2012-2014

Director-at-Large

fcervone@purduecal.edu

Lisa N. Johnston, 2013-15

Director-at-Large

lnjohnston@sbc.edu

Andrew Johnson, 2012–2014

Secretary

afj@nwlink.com

Lewis Day, 2012-2014

Director-at-Large

lewis_day@harvard.edu

J. Linda Williams, 2010-2013

ALA Executive Board Liaison

jwilliams@aacps.org