



GLBT Round Table Newsletter

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

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

Vol. 22, No. 3

◇ Fall 2010

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From the Co-Chairs

As many of us face cooler days and busier schedules, the 2010 ALA Annual Conference seems like a distant memory. Despite a couple of days of hot weather, it was a pleasant and enjoyable few very busy days. I think having the added novelty of World Cup matches to take in, either via large screen televisions in the Convention Center or in nearby pubs, along with tours of library facilities and all the programs, gave this conference a different tone.

The Round Table events were well attended and well organized. Kudos to the organizers of the various events for their hard work in making all of these events successful. Draft minutes for the two steering committee meetings can be found on the webpage, <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/rts/glbtrt/events/index.cfm> Events were held to honor the work of the Rainbow Project and the Stonewall Book Award committees. On Sunday, June 27, about forty people attended the Rainbow Breakfast, which featured authors Lesléa Newman, Ellen Hopkins, and Marcus Ewert. Tricycle Press, Margaret K. McElderry, and Seven Stories Press **have generously supported these authors'** journeys to Washington, DC to participate in the breakfast. For a listing of the Rainbow Project bibliographies see <http://rainbowlist.wordpress.com/>

A brunch to celebrate the Stonewall Book Awards was also held at the Convention Center,

on Monday June 28. This celebration of the 39th awards included the presentation of the **first award for Children's and Young Adult Literature**. Nick Burd was present to accept the award, with Marcus Ewert and Linas Alsenas also present as honor book authors. The Barbara Gittings Literature Award was accepted by David Francis. James Hannaham, honor book author, was also present. Nathaniel Frank accepted the Israel Fishman Non-Fiction Award, with honor author Stewart Weisberg present. All authors spoke during the awards. The awards were preceded by a short talk by Barbara Jones, Director of the ALA Office for Intellectual Freedom and Executive Director of the Freedom to Read Foundation. Approximately eighty people attended this event.

In addition, the Round Table featured two **programs this year**. The **'Rainbow Hollinger Box'** included Rebecka Sheffield from the Canadian Lesbian & Gay Archives, Steven G. Fullwood from the Black Gay & Lesbian Archive, and Phillip Clark from the Rainbow History Project in DC, with Shawn Vaillancourt (committee member) as moderator. The second program was cosponsored with YALSA, entitled *Queer Teens: LGBTQ Young Adult Novels*, with speakers Steve Berman, Lisa Jahn-Clough, Julie Anne Peters, and Pamela

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Deadlines for the newsletter for the next year will be:

Winter 2010	December 31, 2010
Spring 2011	March 15, 2011
Summer 2011	May 20, 2011
Fall 2011	August 31, 2011

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

Kid Stuff

About Young Readers for People Who Care

LGBTQ books for young readers have gained great visibility during the past decade through not only The ALA Rainbow Project and the new young adult Stonewall award from the American Library Association Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table but also bibliographies and reviews, professional books, articles, and blogs. With this richness of sources, however, have come increased attacks on those same books. *And Tango Makes Three* continues to stay at the top of the **challenged books' list**, and such groups as Glenn Beck's 9.12 Project demand the



removal of books from school and public libraries across the country. The most recent case in national news comes from Burlington County (NJ) where *Revolutionary Voices*, an anthology of writings by gay youth, was removed from both the school and the public library. The country library director, Gail Sweet, withdrew the book without any formal book challenge, calling it "child pornography."

Fortunately the ACLU is investigating this egregious situation although it was not involved in the West Bend (WI) case a year earlier when four library board members were not reappointed because they refused to censor books. Comfortable with the new appointments, protesters demanded the removal of 82 more books from the school library. This summer the Fremont (CA) school district rejected Dorothy Allison's *Bastard Out of Carolina* for required student reading in

Advanced Placement English.

Young people are the most vulnerable of the LGBTQ community. The diagnosis of gender dysphoria (discontent with the sex **assigned at one's birth**) in the **Diagnostic & Statistical Manual IV** is used almost exclusively to label children and youth. The soon-to-be-released DSM-V may be worse. First Amendment rights for LGBTQ students are nonexistent in many schools, despite the ruling of *Nabozny v. Podlesny* (1996) in which a rural Wisconsin jury concluded that permitting students to harass a gay teenager in a violent and demeaning way because of his sexual orientation violated his constitutional rights.

Some of the LGBTQ kids are fighting back. One blog post from a 15-year-old Kentucky boy about the lack of LGBTQ books in his library has gone national. Others, such as Mississippi lesbians Constance McMillen and Ceara Sturgis, are fighting against school boards for equal treatment as LGBTQ students. McMillen wanted to take her girlfriend to the prom, Sturgis wanted to wear a tux for her yearbook photo. Both were denied, but the national recognition for **their plight is a step toward kids' fighting** for their rights.

Librarians can make a positive difference in the lives of LGBTQ young people as **shown by McMillen's statement**: "My librarian was always kind to me while I was there and was a big comfort when I was upset. I don't know if she supported what I was doing but she looked past it to **the person I was.**" **As the young reader** population is developing their identities, LGBTQ kids tend to be library users **because they're searching for information.** They may not be able to use books and computers safely in their own homes, but they need to identify authentic representations of LGBTQ people.

Even in the library, however, the books that LGBTQ youth want and need are often not readily accessible because librarians are often not knowledgeable about the best resources or are unfamiliar with effective ways to combat censorship. As a professional library association, GLBTRT has the opportunity to develop a system to disseminate educational resources and guidance for librarians serving this population—a pro-active approach rather than a re-active one.

A beginning list of recent resources include Carlisle K. Webber's *Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Teen Literature* (Libraries Unlimited); Ellen Greenblatt's *Serving Lgbtq Library and Archives Users: Essays on Outreach, Service, Collections and Access* (McFarland); Martha Cornog and Timothy Perper's *Graphic Novel beyond the Basics: Insights and Issues for Libraries* (Libraries Unlimited); and

<http://www.slj.com/csp/cms/sites/SLJ/Articles/Censorship/index.csp>

The more LGBTQ books that conservatives find in libraries—and they won't stop at books for young readers—the madder they become. This growing awareness of books in the field presents both a need and an opportunity. Please send us information about programs/strategies/ resources that have helped improve library services for LGBTQ youth and issues/incidents that point out the need for intervention. This column will be a forum with contributions from people in the field. If you know someone who might help expand the scope and the influence of the Round Table through addressing this growing censorship problem, please let us know.

Two new books that everyone should consider for their collections are Sassafras Lowrey's *Kicked Out* (Homofactus Press) and Vivek Shraya's *God Loves Hair* (available at vivekshraya.com)—one from a small press and the other self-published. **I'll tell you why I think so in the next column.**

—Nel Ward (nelcward@charter.net)

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U.S. House of Representatives Honors GLBTRT



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE *111th* CONGRESS, SECOND SESSION

House of Representatives

Honoring the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Round Table of the American Library Association

HON. MIKE QUIGLEY
OF ILLINOIS
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
June 23, 2010

MR. QUIGLEY. Madame Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Round Table (GLBTRT) of the American Library Association, the first professional gay organization in the United States, which celebrates its 40th anniversary this year.

Throughout its forty years, the GLBTRT has worked to ensure information and access needs for gay, lesbian, bisexual, and transgendered individuals. In this welcoming and inclusive forum, they have worked to improve the lives of librarians, archivists, other information specialists, and library users who are part of the GLBT community.

The GLBTRT acts on many different levels to advocate for their community. Through their work in revising classification schemes, subject heading lists, and indices, the GLBTRT removes derogatory and hurtful terms. They also strive to eliminate job discrimination based on sexual orientation. Additionally, they promote education awareness of all library patrons by ensuring unrestricted access to information by or about the GLBT community. They also support other minority groups advocating for better representation and equal opportunity in the Association.

Madam Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in celebrating the anniversary of the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgendered Round Table and congratulating them on their successes and further efforts to reach equality in the library and information communities.

GLBTRT Compiles "Speaking OUT Against Bullying" Resources

In response to recent tragic events involving GLBTQ teens, the Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Round Table (GLBTRT) of the American Library Association (ALA) has compiled "Speaking OUT Against Bullying," a list of resources for kids in trouble and the people who care about them.

Reports of several teen suicides resulting from bullying have brought national attention to the issues of violence and discrimination against GLBTQ teens and college students.

"Many of us in the Round Table are deeply troubled by these tragic events," said GLBTRT Co-Chairs Anne Moore and Dale McNeill, in a joint statement on behalf of the round table. "In response, we want to turn our emotions into action. Time and again, we see the influence librarians have on our most vulnerable patrons. We have often heard from GLBT authors and activists about the importance libraries and librarians had in their journey to acceptance of their sexual orientation and gender identity. Librarians can make a small or huge difference in the lives of these patrons by creating a safe space and pointing out resources for these individuals to use when learning about themselves."

The "Speaking OUT Against Bullying" list is compiled by GLBTRT members and includes resources for teens, young adults and people that care about them.

To view the list, please visit: <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/rts/glbtrt/popularresources/bullying.cfm>.

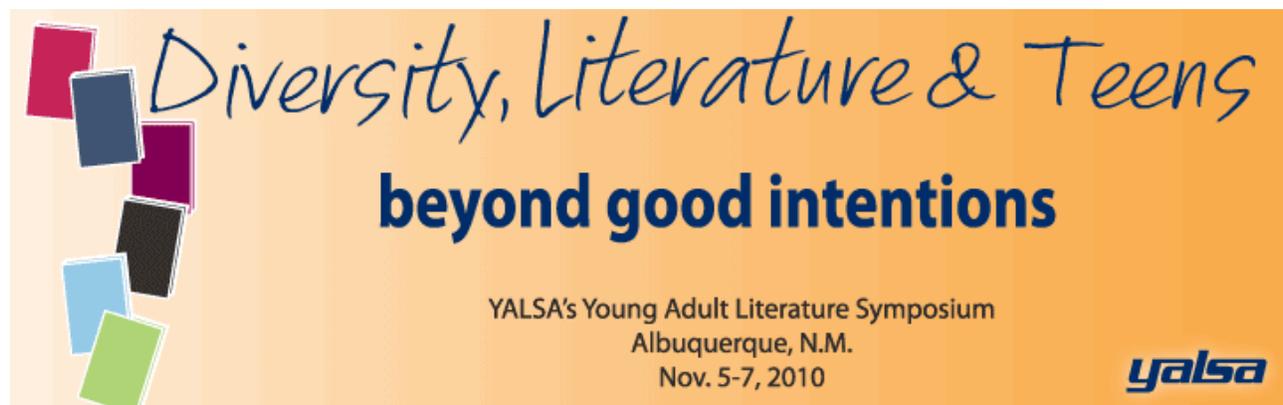
YALSA Literature Symposium

YALSA's Young Adult Literature Symposium will take place Nov. 5-7, 2010, in Albuquerque, N.M. YALSA will host special events requiring additional registration on Friday, with symposium programs taking place all day on Saturday and for a half-day on Sunday. The General Closing Session on Nov. 7 will feature Ellen Hopkins and Lauren Myracle.

The full-day preconference will take place Friday, Nov. 5. Additional registration required.

On Beyond Stonewall: The Uphill Journey of Young Adult Fiction with Gay/Lesbian/Queer Content, 1969-2010, 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Join YALSA for a full-day preconference examining the history and current state of LGBTQ literature for young adults. Presenters will trace the evolution of LGBTQ characters in YA lit, from early appearances to contemporary depictions, including significant and important titles, milestones, positive and negative examples, and more. Discussion will include current trends, persistent gaps, censorship, and how LGTBQ lit reflects the lives of today's teens. Joining Christine Jenkins and Michael Cart, co-authors of *The Heart Has Its Reasons* (a history of LGBTQ literature) will be a panel representing the new generation of authors of LGBTQ fiction.



Diversity, Literature & Teens
beyond good intentions

YALSA's Young Adult Literature Symposium
Albuquerque, N.M.
Nov. 5-7, 2010



From the Co-Chairs (Continued)

Ehrenberg (a DC-area author) as moderator. Both of these programs were well attended.

And last but certainly not least was the social. It was undoubtedly the grandest (and most expensive!) social we have had in our forty year history. Held in a ballroom at the historic Hotel Monaco, it featured a simple but plentiful buffet of cheese, veggies and fruit and a cash bar. We showcased a detailed history of the Round Table/Task Force displayed in panels created by the late Barbara Gittings and Kay Lahusen and a PowerPoint slide show of photographs of past events running throughout the event. Judith Armstrong, a friend of Kay Lahusen, was on hand to describe and discuss the content of

the panels. About 150 members, authors and guests attended. Kudos to Roland Hansen and Bill Berkfalk for yet another fabulous social event for the round table.

U.S. Rep. Mike Quigley (D-Ill.) introduced a resolution honoring the 40th anniversary of our founding. The press release is available at <http://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/news/ala/ala-glbtrt-40th-anniversary-recognized-us-house-resolution> and a likeness of the resolution is available on the webpage, <http://www.ala.org/ala/mgrps/rts/glbtrt/index.cfm>

Pictures from the conference can be viewed at the following webpages:

[Stonewall Book Awards images on Facebook](#)

[ALA's Flickr Photos of the Stonewall Awards Brunch](#)

Thanks to everyone who participated in making our events such a success at this conference.

Warmly
Anne, on behalf of
Dale & Anne

Incorporating LGBT Materials into a Career College

It was about a year and half ago that I came to work for the library I am currently with. Immediately after coming there to work, like any curious library employee, I began to investigate the collection. For a small, 5,000 or so, book collection, I was pretty impressed with the holdings. Being that it is a career college, about half of the material is program specific and the other half is for the **patron's enjoyment. There were books on just about every topical subject you could think of, and of decent quality as well.** Sadly, however, I came to realize the library was deficient of material for the LGBT community. **Saying "deficient" may be giving more credit than is due; there was not one book in the entire collection that pertained to any LGBT audience member. Right away, I was appalled, and felt very insecure about being a gay man in this library. I wouldn't have been so appalled if it wasn't for the collection being so diverse for a career college. But, as it turns out, the collection was pretty diverse, including two cases of biblical material. With North Carolina being in the "Bible belt", this didn't surprise me, but I still felt ashamed that there was nothing for the LGBT community.**

At first, I didn't say anything. I was only doing acquisitions for the fiction collection at the time, and I didn't want to get involved

where I wasn't needed. I was new and didn't want to start off on the wrong foot. After a while, though, I began to notice the number of LGBT students. I started to say to myself, "wow, there is quite a community here." I could not keep my observation to myself any longer. I went to the Head Librarian, who at the time was doing acquisitions for the general and reference collections, and I said something around the likes of, "I've noticed how impressive the collection is, however I was concerned that the collection is missing a vital subject area." We talked for a few minutes and she, to my amazement, immediately began apologizing, realizing the overlook. She began to order material rather quickly after that. I still think she has this idea that it is for me, and not the students, but at least she began to integrate this material into the collection. Soon after, I began doing acquisitions for material in all sections of the library. I include LGBT material as much as I can.

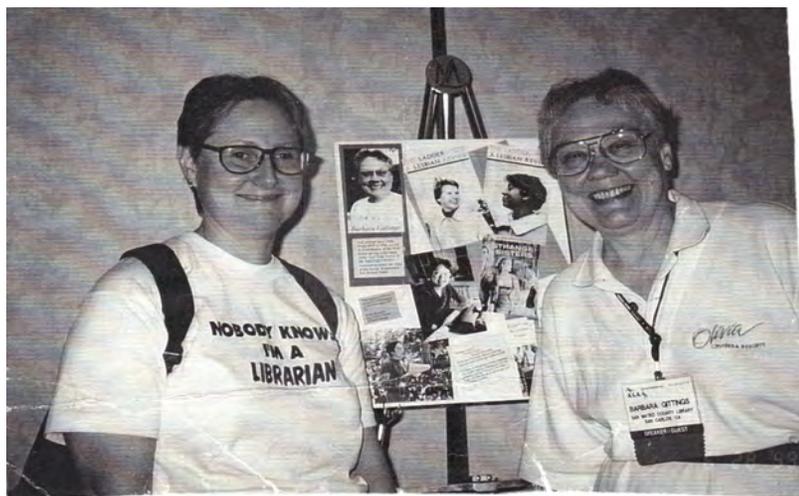
I was anxious, at first, to begin getting material for this collection. I knew that there **were LGBT students, but I didn't know if they would recognize the material or even care to view it.** I included material to cover a variety of interest including for example materials by popular gay author E. Lynn Harris, material covering homosexuality in religions,

feminism and LGBTQ general literature. ***Basketball Jones, Mama Dearest, and Just too Good to Be True***, all by Harris, became very popular among our African-America students. To a greater excitement, these fictional books, to my knowledge, were read by our heterosexual community as well. This is a great achievement in my opinion. As far as the non-fiction material that has been acquired, I find it difficult to get it to circulate. I have displayed and showcased the **material several times, but it just doesn't** make it out the door. I find many of these materials, however, in more private areas of the library, or in our study rooms. It would be my guess that students are not as comfortable bringing a book titled ***Islam and Homosexuality*** to the circulation desk, as they would ***I Say a Little Prayer*** by E. Lynn Harris. **The latter not being as "outing" as the first title.**

All-in-all though, I am happy that the material has come to this library and is getting used. Be it a private reading in a study room or making it through the library doors and into a cozy spot at home, the material has had a warm welcome by the students and some faculty members too.

Derek Daniels
Miller-Motte College
Raleigh, NC

Member Profile: Arla Jones



When or how did you know you wanted to work in the library field?

I guess I would really have to give my mom credit. After college, when I was working in a shopping mall AND as a clerk in a public library, I was complaining to her that I just didn't know what to do. She said--"well Arla, you've always liked hanging out in the library. DU has a nice library school, why don't we drive into Denver and see what they say?" So we did drive into Denver to visit the University of Denver's Graduate School of Librarianship and Information Management. Lucky for me, Camila Alire was working there at the time, and she told me the 5,000 reasons that I should become a librarian and made it sound really fun. Camila was a great mentor to all of us budding young librarians, and helped us all get to our first ALA Conference in Washington, D.C. I interviewed in the placement center and was offered my first professional library job at the New York Public Library, and well, as they say, the rest is history. All of that was more than 25 years ago, and I have to admit that it is really fun to be a librarian, and there are way more than 5,000 reasons to be a librarian.

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

Good question! My first library-related job was when I was in 6th grade and my dad, who was the principal of my elementary school asked me to read a book that the librarian had complained to him about. The librarian thought that the book might not be good for the kiddos to read, so Dad brought it home and asked me to read it and tell him what I thought. I wish that I could remember what I said, but I have no memory what happened after he handed me the book. That book was [insert drum roll] John Donovan's I'll Get There But It Better Be Worth the Trip. Unfortunately...I still have that book, which has my 6th-grade scrawly name written on the checkout card in the back of the book. Too bad nobody else at my school ever got to read it.

Tell us about your current job.

Ouch. Well, for the first time in 25 years I'm not actually working in a library. In the last round of budget cuts in my school district they cut one of the Lawrence (Kansas) High School librarians, so since the other librarian has more seniority than any other district employee, I had to be re-assigned. My principal is optimistic that our finances will change and that I can go back to our school's library eventually. So, for the time being, I'm teaching Chinese (facilitating is a more accurate term) and English As a Second Language at Lawrence High...as they say, it's complicated!

Did/do you have a mentor? Sort of. My first job in a library was in a Mid-Continent Public Library in Platte Woods, Missouri as a clerk. The librarian in our branch and the other ladies who worked there were really pressuring me to go to grad school, and not get stuck (their words, not mine) in a clerical position. I had just graduated from college and just wanted to relax for a while, but after one year they basically said I could come back and work for them if I still wanted to after graduate school. At the time, I didn't quite understand what they were up to, but now I'm thankful that they took me under their collective wings and coaxed me into doing what my parents were hoping I'd choose to do as well. The hilarious thing I remember about the Mid-Continent job was that I had to take a typing test when I applied. On a typewriter.

Do you have any heroes in library land? Barbara Gittings. She's been my hero for ever and ever. I remember when GLBTRT was working to become a round table her name would come up in meetings. When I finally had the opportunity to meet her and Kay, I could not stop gushing. Kay took my photo with Barbara one time, and I'd always regretted that we'd never made contact for me to get the photo from them. I mentioned it to Anne Moore years ago, so imagine my shock when I found out that Kay Lahusen kept the photo and just this last month sent me a xerox of it. I teach an independent study class at my high school once a year--Queer History Thru Film--and I insist that my students know about Barbara Gittings to get full credit in the class. She's in a number of the films I screen for them. I'm kind of mean about facts, being a librarian and all...

What are you reading right now? Would you recommend it? Right now, I'm reading lots and lots of books because I'm chairing the Over the Rainbow ad-hoc committee. You can visit our website to see what's been nominated so far. LOTS of good writing this year--

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

Eventually I'll have to pick my favorites, but so far I'd like to recommend as my personal favorites-- Sarah Schulman's *Ties That Bind Familial Homophobia and Its Consequences*.

Continued page 7

Build Your Vitae! Write Reviews or Articles for the GLBTRT Newsletter!

To become a part of the team of reviewers that publish in the GLBTRT Newsletter, or to receive a copy of our guidelines for reviews, email Reviews Editor **Tracy Nectoux** at: tnectoux@illinois.edu. Or, if journalism is more your style, send in articles about GLBT library services and collections in and around your community.

Member Profile: Arla Jones Continued

It should be required reading for all queers, their families and their therapists.

And then, in a shameless promotion of myself, I'd like to recommend a new book that Ellen Greenblatt edited for McFarland Press.

There's one chapter in particular, written by a scrappy high school librarian in Kansas, that I think everyone will enjoy. The book's title is **Serving LGBTIQ Library and Archives Users--Essays on Outreach, Service, Collections and Access**

Edited by Ellen Greenblatt ISBN 978-0-7864-4894-4. Ellen was such a pleasure to work with and was very gracious about helping me focus my writing.

What's the best part about being a member of the GLBTRT? I have to say

that I'm really proud of GLBTRT. Whenever I meet other queers who are members of professional organizations in other fields, they often remark that ALA's LGBT group was one of the first and one of the most famous. I've tried to stay as active in GLBTRT as I can through the years because I think we do important work. When I moved over to the public schools 13 years ago, I had to start paying my own expenses for any out-of-state travel. I continue to feel that it's a worthwhile investment for me to attend conferences as often as I am able.

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

I succumbed to Facebook mania because my friends and family badgered me into it, and then I was sucked into the vortex so deep that my partner bought me a per-

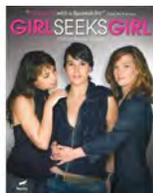
sonalized Farm Town t-shirt that said--"In Farm Town I am Known As Farmla." I am currently running the wordpress blogs/sites for 6 non-profit organizations and one for-profit company. I've been "living" on the internet for a long time and have had an email address for more than 25 years.

Anything else you'd like to add? Just a few fun library facts--I met my partner, Kimberley, at the Mid-Manhattan Branch of the New York Public Library. She was the manager of the Metropolitan Museum Gift Shop at the time and we've been together 22 years. My brother, Joel, is also a librarian, married to a librarian. Joel manages the Plaza Branch of the Kansas City (Missouri) Public Library. We have a lot of other librarians in our extended family, and we all wear glasses.

Film Reviews

Girl Seeks Girl (Chica Busca Chica).

Dir. Sonia Sebastián. With: Almudena Gallego, et al. Spanish with English subtitles. Wolfe Video, 2007. DVD. 153 min. \$19.95.



Girl Seeks Girl (Chica Busca Chica) has been billed as Spain's "L Word." The women are young and beautiful; they live a wild and exciting life; and they fit the common lesbian stereotypes: "the cheater" --

Nines, "the crazy one" --Monica, "newbie" --Ana, and the "straight girl that dykes fall for" --Carmen.

The scenes take place at the local lesbian bar, where Nines is a flirtatious bartender

with tricks (or should I say stray eyelashes) up her sleeve, and at Monica's apartment, where Carmen is moving out and innocent Ana is moving in. Drama ensues when Nines sleeps with Monica, despite being spellbound by Carmen.

This film's format is similar to a series of soap opera episodes, and its producers seem to be trying to ride Ilene Chaiken's coattails by marketing this as a comparison to *The L Word*.

Have you ever wanted to like a movie but just couldn't get behind it? This reviewer loves movies with subtitles, but despite the beautiful actors, the storyline is a bit

too simple and there is not enough character development. Perhaps this reviewer is showing her age when beauty and anything lesbian is no longer the only thing she seeks in watching great lesbian films.

This film is recommended for libraries that have a large video collection for entertainment and would like to include light GLBT videos.

Chica Busca Chica (Girl Seeks Girl) is available for purchase from [Wolfe Video](http://WolfeVideo.com), but can also be viewed online at Veoh.com or [Terra TV](http://TerraTV.com).

Reviewed by, **Lisa Forslund**

Decoding Alan Turing.

Dir. Christopher Racster. Frameline, 2008. US release date: March 2010. DVD Public Library price: \$35.00; University price: \$70.00. Public performance rights included in price. 17 min.



This documentary short, selected for several 2009 film festivals, including Outfest and Imagine Science, presents an overview of the life,

and suicide, of the British mathematician Alan Turing, who wrote a classic 1930s paper anticipating the personal computer, and helped lead the work that broke the German Enigma code machine, one of the

great espionage triumphs of World War II. Turing committed suicide after being outed as a gay man and undergoing a forced "medical" treatment that would supposedly cure his homosexuality.

The film is brief, leaving some questions unanswered, which could well serve as a way to promote analysis and discussion in several classroom disciplines.

Libraries collecting in film studies, gay

studies, twentieth century English history, math, and computer science should certainly select this DVD, and larger public libraries should also consider acquiring *Decoding Alan Turing*.

Reviewed by, **Dave Combe**
EP Foster Library
Ventura, CA

A Drag King Extravaganza.

Dirs. Clare Smythe and Meaghan Derynck. San Francisco: Frameline, 2008. DVD 43 min.



Don't go getting all excited that you are going to see a comprehensive video about the rich history and state of Drag King

performance in the US; that is still to be produced. What you get here is an in-depth history and footage from a single annual conference (International Drag King Community Extravaganza – IDKE),

that's been held the past ten years.

Initially launched in Columbus, Ohio, **IDKE's theme is "we thought we were the only people doing it."** And while their excitement and pride in their achievements is endearing, it is a quite narrow and limited view of this cultural phenomena.

If you have money in your budget go for

it, but if the budget is tight, there are other videos out there that would probably do a better job of rounding out your queer collection in this area.

*Reviewed by, **Morgan Gwenwald**
SUNY New Paltz*

Fun in Girls' Shorts 2.

Dir. Nicole Brending, Amy Neil, Erik Gernand, Kekeletso Khena, Robert Gaston. With Simon Aylott and Marianne Frith. Frameline, 2009. 83 min.



The seven short films in this collection have little in common. The criteria for inclusion are not stated, and there is no overarching theme

to tie them together. They vary widely in every possible regard: subject,

production quality, and even language.

Several of the films are award winners, while one suffered from poor sound quality which made it difficult to understand at times. The casts, themes, and locations are very diverse, ranging from New York City to an African village.

The films are primarily in English, but one

is in French and another in Zulu (both have subtitles in English only). Although the quality of the collection is somewhat uneven, the high points more than make up for the low ones.

Recommended for large video collections.

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

Half Life.

Dir. Jennifer Phang. Wolfe Video LLC, 2009. 106 minutes. \$24.95. ISBN: 9781935423119 1935423118.



Half Life, Jennifer Phang's first feature film, envisions a world in which the consequences of disconnection and neglect (at both social and familial levels) are clear.

The drama unfolds in a near-**future that's** characterized by global environmental crises (happening at a rate and scale that seem pre-apocalyptic). While most characters in the film ignore or deny this **reality, the film's central figure, eight-year-old Tim** (Alexander Agate), negotiates it by imagining – and perhaps magically manifesting – an alternate reality to which he escapes, along with his teenage sister, Pam (Sanoë Lake) and mother (Julia Nickson). Tim has some compelling reasons to want an other-place: like most of the characters in the film, he struggles with isolation and alienation, with fears of abandonment,

and with the problem of being not-known or unrecognized by his family members.

Though they all have these troubles in **common, the characters don't experience** them as shared struggles. Their romantic and familial relationships seem to be based on self-interest and a desire for security motivated by fear of loss (this is understandable in some cases, such as Pam and Tim, whose father has suddenly and unexpectedly left the family). Most relationships in the film suffer as parents, friends, or romantic partners do not fully recognize the whole personhood of others – especially around issues of sexuality, race, and ethnicity. In the worst cases, the lack of recognition leads to violence, emotional abuse, troubling sexual boundary-crossing, and suicidal depression, and in the better ones, to neglect, manipulation, and denial.

Half Life's two gay characters do not undergo significant transformations during the course of the film (this is not a coming-out or coming-of-age narrative), and while the ways in which they are mis-

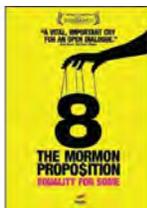
- or unrecognized are particular, they still find themselves in dysfunctional or damaging relationships with family, friends, and each other. That said, the film has moments of beauty and hope. Its animated sequences, which represent **Tim's fantasy-space**, are compelling dream-images. And Agate embodies Tim with great care, giving the most nuanced performance of the film.

Half Life would be a fine addition to film collections in academic and public libraries. Because of sexual scenes in the film, explicit language, the ways in which Tim is unevenly cared-for, and the **background story's environmental and global disasters**, this film is not suitable for children or young adults.

*Reviewed by, **Alana Kumbier**
Wellesley College*

8: The Mormon Proposition.

Dirs. Reed Cowan and Steven Greenstreet. David v. Goliath Films, 2010. Film. 80 min. Color.



Though folks' opinions on the relevance, purpose, or ideology of the act of marriage are wide-ranging and often heated, viewers will see that **8: The Mormon**

Proposition is a documentary that brings home the idea that the current debate over gay marriage is not about having all unions simply recognized; rather, it is about civil rights, being entitled to equal treatment and protection under the law and in our society, and how money can influence politics.

Through interviews with numerous politicians and activists in and outside the Mormon (LDS) community, **8: The Mormon Proposition** meticulously creates a context for the LDS Church's massive campaign to influence California's voters to pass Proposition 8 (legislation that would continue to define marriage in California as between a man and a woman), by describing the Church's "model" strategy created in Hawaii in 1998, when the campaign funded (but not fronted) by the Church resulted in

voters passing a constitutional amendment to define marriage in Hawaii as between a man and a woman.

We simultaneously follow the journey of a young male couple married in San Francisco in 2008, whose families are Mormon. As they describe how they were affected by battles over Prop 8 on both sides, the film continues to move deeper into the Mormon belief system in order to show why the Church has gone to great lengths to influence this legislation, and **how the Church's campaigns were implemented by using the religion's ideology and the insular culture of the LDS community to influence Church members to donate "means and time" to the campaign.** The film goes on to examine how this culture has affected GLBTQ people who live in Utah or who have grown up in the Mormon faith, with heart-breaking footage. The camera follows homeless youth in Salt Lake City into an abandoned building and, when the cameraman asks one of the kids about hope, the young man replies, **"There is no hope." People are** interviewed about their attempts at suicide after coming to the conclusion that their families will reject them for being gay or lesbian. One man recounts his experience as a student at Brigham

Young University not too long ago, when he was subjected to shock treatment after appearing on a list of possible gay students.

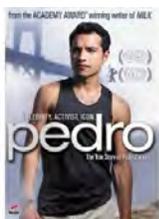
This documentary, narrated by Dustin Lance Black (who wrote the screenplay for **Milk** and is a writer on HBO's **Big Love**), is seamless in how it is shot and edited. This high polish quality does leave out certain issues however, such as how the LDS-funded advertising tapped into the feelings of California residents who voted for Prop 8, which includes issues of race and sexism. The film is, overall, white male-centered (though this, in part, is due to the makeup of the LDS community and ideology), and it does not make an attempt to delve into issues of race and gender.

Overall **8: The Mormon Proposition** is a fantastic documentary that would succinctly speak not only about gay marriage, but about human rights and the power of propaganda. Recommended for any GLBTQA collection, for academic and public libraries.

*Reviewed by, Jesse Nachem
Records Specialist at the University of California*

Pedro.

Dir. Nick Oceano. With: Alex Loynaz and Justina Machado. New Almaden, CA: Wolfe Video, 2009. DVD. 93 min. \$24.95.



Based upon on the real life story of Pedro Zamora, this DVD builds on the popularity of **The Real World: San Francisco**, which aired on MTV over 15 years ago. Pedro was

one of several housemates who are portrayed in this enactment of the behind and on scene third season of the series.

Pedro, who immigrated to Miami from Cuba on the Mariel boatlift when he was a boy, was diagnosed with AIDS when he was 17. He became an HIV activist, whose goal was to educate the MTV generation about the epidemic and prevention. The DVD says, **"In 1994, Pedro Zamora became the first openly gay, HIV positive man on television..."** and this lively film explores not only the man, but an inside view of reality television.

Pedro would be a good addition to a broad queer collection, especially if you have teens in your library."

*Reviewed by, Morgan Gwenwald
SUNY New Paltz*

Book Reviews: Young Adult

Green, John and David Levithan. *Will Grayson, Will Grayson*

New York: The Penguin Group, 2010. hardcover. 304p. \$17.99. ISBN 978-0-525-42158-0



Will Grayson, Will Grayson, a much anticipated YA novel by two well respected novelists, is about two teenagers that share the same name and live in two different

suburbs of Chicago. One Will Grayson is straight and one will grayson is gay. Both are somewhat socially awkward with will grayson leaning towards clinical depression. After they cross paths in a porn shop on an ill-fated trip to Chicago, they maintain contact through Will Grayson's best friend, Tiny Cooper, an openly gay football player who is described as "the world's largest person who is really, really gay."

The novel follows the group as they work through relationship problems, both romantic and platonic. It is a typical high school novel with very non-typical characters.

Will Grayson, Will Grayson is written in alternating chapters. John Green writes the chapters involving the straight Will Grayson while David Levithan handles the chapters with the gay will grayson. The story flows seamlessly from one chapter to the next. Each author gets a chance to write for Tiny Cooper when he becomes an integral part of both Will Grayson's lives. It is very impressive that both authors were able to maintain the integrity of the character of Tiny Cooper. In the past, I have read alternating chapter books and found it very difficult to follow the flow of the book, but this story is never hard to follow.

Some people may feel that the book might be a bit of a fantasy world, like David Levithan's *Boy Meets Boy* where gay issues are easily overcome, but I feel it reflects present day society, in that some teens are having an easier time coming out.

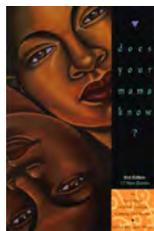
Will Grayson, Will Grayson is very appropriate for a teen audience (no sex, but some drinking and drug use), but I would also recommend it for older audiences. When I finished this book I missed the characters and wish I could spend more time with them.

Reviewed by, **Scott Clonan**
Adult Services Librarian
Rainbow Library
Las Vegas Clark County Library District

Book Reviews: Non-Fiction

Moore, Lisa C. *does your mama know?: An Anthology of Black Lesbian Coming Out Stories.*

2nd ed. Washington, DC: Redbone Press, 2009. paperback. 383p. \$19.95. ISBN: 0978625161.



The stories told in this work are salient for what *isn't* stated, but more importantly, they give shape and form to what many in the African American community have always known, but have chosen to keep on the down low. Generally speaking, black folks have a hard time admitting to themselves, let alone the outside world that black families produce children who identify as lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender just as much as their white counterparts.

Indeed, this commemorative edition highlights the coming out experiences of women of color from various socioeconomic backgrounds and cultures. Utilizing essays, poems, stories, and interviews, the authors offer a boundless perception into the entanglements of black women on their journey of self discovery and acceptance. *Me, Growing up, (part 1)* is a penetrating tale of two nine-year-old girls learning what feels good to their sexually-awakening bodies: ". . . we played softball and basketball on

alternating days: nights, we learned what felt good to nine year old bodies."

Tonda Clarke's immersing chronicle *I Guess I Never Will* delves into her life as a young girl budding into a full-fledged woman, complete with swelling breasts, pubic hair, and the contouring of her *woman hips*: ". . . I would observe this new body in my mirror, the changes seemingly occurring right before my eyes . . . stimulating and teasing it, loving the feeling of control . . ."

Soon, she had her first real girlfriend, and together they showed each other what it was like to be touched, kissed, and penetrated by someone of the same gender: ". . . I felt the wet and opened my thighs, wide, rubbing frantically against her; she was breathing hard, emitting little whimpers into my mouth as our tongues probed and explored . . ." Though Tonda's girl seemed to enjoy their secret rendezvous for a while, in the end she appeared overtly relieved when Tonda moved away. After several years, they ran into each other, made small talk, and Tonda discovered that her childhood love was now married with children. Upon learning of Tonda's lesbianism, her

laughter "sent a cold fire to [Tonda's] very soul," and she quipped "*You mean you never grew out of that?*" With old wounds finally closing, Tonda responded: "*I guess I never will.*"

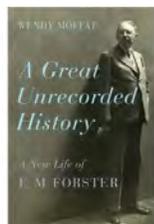
Moore's extraordinary assemblage of coming out stories sheds light onto the transcendence of SGL women of African descent, the black community, and what life really looks like behind the masks so many wear for reasons that run the gamut from trying to appease family members, to covering up shame and self-hatred, to the fear and resentment they get from a homophobic society. Readers will come away with a profound understanding about the intricate lives of black lesbians, whose searing voices make a loud thunder yearning to be heard.

Due to its exploratory and revealing content, *does your mama know?* is fitting for academic, public, and special collections. I also recommend this work for anyone over fourteen years old.

Reviewed by, **Michelle D. Dartis**
MLS degree Candidate
Indiana University-Purdue University,
Indianapolis

Moffat, Wendy. *A Great Unrecorded History: A New Life of E. M. Forster.*

New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2010. hardcover. 404p. \$32.50. ISBN: 978-0-374-16678-6.



Edward Morgan Forster was born in London in 1879, six years before the Labouchère Amendment under which Oscar Wilde would be convicted of "gross indecency" and sentenced to hard

labor. He lived until 1970, the year after the Stonewall riots.

By the time he was 45, Forster had long since made his literary reputation with *A Room with a View*, *Howards End*, and *A Passage to India*, along with two early novels and a dozen short stories. After that he published no more fiction, though he went on writing about literature and social topics, producing histories and biographies, giving lectures and making radio broadcasts, and – in his eighties – co-authoring his first and only libretto, for Benjamin Britten's opera *Billy Budd*.

Forster's intimates, however, always knew

that there was one more novel. Begun in 1913 and revised over the course of the next six decades, *Maurice* was its own genre, a gay love story with a happy ending. As Forster wrote, ". . . a happy ending was imperative. I shouldn't have bothered to write it otherwise. I was determined that in fiction anyway two men should fall in love and remain in it for the ever and ever that fiction allows." From the beginning Forster had shared *Maurice* with trusted friends, including eventually Christopher Isherwood, a generation Forster's junior. In 1933, 1938, and again in 1948 Isherwood urged Forster to offer *Maurice* for publication, but Forster never felt the time was right. Finally, in 1952, he agreed to allow *Maurice* to be published after his death and, in 1971, it was. (An award-winning Merchant Ivory film followed in 1987.)

Not even Isherwood knew what other troves there were – letters, diaries, essays, and photographs, all made accessible by the terms of Forster's will. Wendy Moffat spent ten years researching and writing this "great unrecorded history," visiting archives from Yale University and the Huntington Library

in Southern California to King's College, Cambridge, and interviewing Forster's surviving friends. (On her web page she notes that the title comes from a remark in one of Forster's letters that his love affair with a young Egyptian man was a part of the larger, secret homosexual history.) Now, for the first time, a portrait emerges that joins the public humanist and man of letters with the lover of men who made his own way, resisting labels and inventing ways of sustaining the relationships that sustained him.

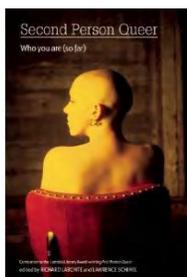
Includes sixteen pages of black and white photographs, a detailed index, extensive notes, and a lengthy bibliography.

Enthusiastically recommended for public libraries and for academic libraries with a concentration in English literature, gay history, or English history.

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

Labonte, Richard and Lawrence Schimel, eds. *Second Person Queer: Who You Are (So Far).*

Vancouver, BC: Arsenal Pulp Press, 2009. softcover. 223p. \$18.95. ISBN: 978-1-5515-2245-6.



A companion to the Lambda Literary Award-winning *First Person Queer*, these forty essays speak to the reader from a variety of stances, views, and attitudes on five major areas:

- (1) Looking into the Queer View Mirror;
- (2) Getting Your Queer On; (3) Queer Wisdom: Our Past, Present, and Future;
- (4) Practically Queer; and (5) Finding Yourself, Queerly.

Bringing out what persons who identify as LGBT (or Queer) often feel (but others aren't aware of), this work makes all readers aware of the impact of being part of this society, whether intentional or not. The voices in this

book speak not only to the straight, or non-queer world, but also to the queer world, demonstrating the wide variance in this culture that is not really a culture, just as male or female is not a culture.

Although each chapter is one specific entry, each chapter can apply to other subsections of the culture. Whether discussing psychological issues, relationships and sex identification, acceptance by parents and others, the act of sexual behaviors, or other issues, this work makes the reader think. While some chapters are more graphic than others, and some have content that might insult rather than educate due to the tone of the author, these chapters can open great discussions and would be wonderful additions to book groups or other tolerance groups as reading material.

Second Person Queer cannot be added to a collection open to children, as the content is not readily identifiable as potentially

offensive, but the content is important for those who need to hear these stories "from the horse's mouth." This book can also be used as an example of writing in the second person, samples of which are not always easily found in such a down-to-earth way on topics that have the potential to be controversial.

*Reviewed by, Sara Rofofsky Marcus
Electronic Resources / Web Librarian
Queensborough Community College*

Book Reviews: Fiction

Beale, Elaine. *Another Life Altogether*.

New York: Spiegel & Grau, 2010. hardcover. 402p. \$26.00. ISBN: 978-0-385-53004-0.



Jesse Bennett's mother has just attempted suicide. Her befuddled father's response is to relocate the family to a rundown house in a seaside village for a fresh start. Thus begins

Jesse's thirteenth summer. Hoping to start over as part of the popular crowd in her new school, Jesse befriends the mean girl Trace and her trio of followers, the Debbies. Membership to this group, however, requires Jesse to stand by and watch as a boy is terrorized by homophobic bullies. Jesse learns soon that she must guard two secrets to insure her new status as a popular kid. Trace and the Debbies **must never learn of her mother's mental illness** and they must never learn that Jesse may be a lesbian, for she has fallen in love with Traces' beautiful older sister, Amanda.

Author Elaine Beale heightens dramatic tension by unveiling details that chronicle life with a mentally ill family member in the pre- Prozac 1970's. **We see the blood stained bathtub and the wall plaster that crumbles like broken teeth after Jesse's mom attacks it with a sledgehammer.** However, we escape with Jesse in the stories she writes about Amanda, which she carefully hides in a biscuit tin in the back of her closet. **Most who have read Fitzhugh's Harriet the Spy** may feel a twinge of dread when Jesse decides to move the stories to her school satchel in a misguided attempt at keeping them from being read.

Most of the characters are well developed, with the exception of a hippy English teacher who seems one-dimensional, although the first person point of view might explain this minor irritant. It is easy to excuse a limited perspective of an idolized authority figure by a protagonist who is only thirteen. Librarians may be gleefully appalled by the horrible bookmobile driver who considers *Jane Eyre* and *Sons and*

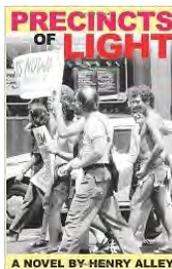
Lovers to be pornography. The slang and fashions of the characters are distinctly working-class English circa early 1970's. These time- and place-specific details though, do not present obstacles for the reader. Rather, they are woven together into a kind of spell that creates a multi-textured world for characters who feel so real as to seem vaguely familiar.

Another Life Altogether is a character-driven coming-of-age tale that utilizes the turbulent natural world of the English seaside to echo the atmosphere of physical and psychological violence in which the characters live. The grey drizzle, crumbling cliffs, and raging sea mirror Jesse's unspoken fears and powerful desires. It is recommended for young adult and adult fiction collections.

Reviewed by, **S. Annelise Adams**
Librarian II
Chicago Public Library

Alley, Henry. *Precincts of Light: a Novel*.

Portland, OR: Inkwater Press, c2010. 303 p. \$22.95. ISBN: 978-1-59299-464-9.



Henry Alley's *Precincts of Light* is a confusing and confused novel. I volunteered to review it because I grew up in Portland, Oregon, and its background story is about the battles against the anti-gay Measures 8 and 9 at the end of the 1980s and the beginning of the 1990s.

The best part of the novel is the foreground story about an extended family torn apart by homosexuality, homophobia, and the political battles.

Unfortunately, confusion sets in at the outset because Alley chose to rename two key Oregon cities, as well as key sites within them. Salem, Oregon's capital,

becomes "Capital City." The other fictional city is "Arden," and I could never figure out for sure if it represents Portland, the largest city in the state, or Eugene, home of the University of Oregon where the author taught. At the beginning of the novel in Arden, there is an "annual Rose parade." Portland is famous for its annual Rose Festival, but the author has placed "Arden" south of "Capital City," while Portland is north.

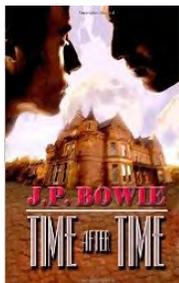
There are great novels written about many cities around the world. Why introduce this confusion by disguising Oregon's cities? The confusion is compounded by incorrect political terminology. Measure 8 sought to overturn the governor's executive order to protect gay and lesbian state employees, but the author repeatedly calls it a "referendum." Additionally, proof-reading was inadequate and some vocabulary obscure.

I can't recommend this novel for anyone except perhaps Oregon libraries interested in the portrayal of the tumultuous battles over Measure 8, which passed, and Measure 9, which sought to deny basic rights to lesbian and gay Oregonians, but lost. I did enjoy reading it, however, as a detective novel, constantly trying to decipher which city "Arden" might be.

Reviewed by, **James D. Anderson,**
Professor Emeritus
Rutgers University

Bowie, J. P. *Time After Time*.

Albion, NY: MLR Press, 2009. paperback. 275p. \$14.99. ISBN: 978-1-60820-056-6.



Time After Time, by veteran gay novelist J. P. Bowie, is a delightful paranormal romance that is also a bit of a mystery novel.

American graphic artist Michael Ballantyne is in an unsatisfying relationship with his boyfriend Steve Miller. At the same time, he is enjoying wonderfully erotic dreams involving

a mysterious man. An unexpected phone call informs Michael that he has inherited an estate in England, a country he has never visited, from a man he has never heard of. As a condition of the will Michael

has to live on the estate continuously for one year. Happy to leave behind his humdrum life in America, Michael settles into the opulent estate, which comes with its own butler, cook, maid, two gardeners, and a ghost.

While investigating his unexpected good fortune, Michael discovers that he had an uncle who was buried in England. Visiting the grave, Michael meets Jonathan Robertson, who resembles the man from his dreams. With help from a local librarian they investigate the mystery of the ghost and how Michael and Jonathan are connected to events from the past.

Time After Time is a light read, perfect for a rainy Sunday. It is similar to Dan Stone's

The Rest of Our Lives in its combination of romance, the paranormal, and the connection between the present and the past. The love between Michael and Jonathan is tender and passionate, although expressed somewhat explicitly. This novel is recommended for large urban libraries and public libraries serving a GLBT constituency.

Time After Time is also available in a Kindle edition.

Reviewed by, **Paul Hubbard**
Retired Public Reference Librarian

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