



# GLBT RT Newsletter

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

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

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Reviews  
(Pages 7 -13):

**GLBT Social Held at PLA Conference**

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## Out of the Silence: An Interview with Dean Hamer

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member of the ACLU or planned parenthood—but it's hard to find each other.

**Q:** Have you had a positive reactions from libraries? And if not, what can we do to help?

**Hamer:** We've had a very mixed reaction from public libraries. Roughly half of them are absolutely delighted to have an opportunity to have some new programs. The fact that we can bring a screening to any public library in Pennsylvania for free—including the filmmakers showing up, including a discussion guide—is a benefit to them. A lot of librarians have said, "We've been looking for something like this," and when we've gone to public libraries, there's been a tremendous amount of community and positive reaction. This is a topic that fascinates people. They want to talk about

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

When most kids were playing house or school, I let my friends borrow my books, but they had to apply for a library card and I wrote due dates in the back. I knew then I wanted to be a librarian when I grew up, but I first knew I could work in the library field when I worked as a graduate assistant in the main branch of the University of Iowa libraries while working on a PhD in Philosophy. As I began to figure academic philosophy was not my bag, I decided I already had the skills required to help others in their research needs.

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

My first library job was in Arlington, Virginia at the Mills Corporation headquarters. My sister was their librarian and she hired me to work as a filing clerk. I did a lot of loose leaf filing and processed employee information requests. The library was very small and I remember being afraid of getting crushed in the electronic compact shelving.

**Tell us about your current job.**

I am currently a Youth Services Librarian in Prince William County, Virginia at Potomac Community Library. My duties include collection maintenance, reference services to adults and children, community outreach and programming. I visit local elementary schools for career day, bug acquisitions personnel to buy more titles from the Rainbow List, book performers, train and manage teenage volunteers, while creating useful bibliographies for parents, updating reader's advisory information for staff who are less versed in young adult fiction and making cotton candy for Children's Book Week. My job is enjoyable because childhood literacy should be fun.

**Did/do you have a mentor?**

I think I might be looking for a mentor in ALA! I do have mentors in other areas of my life. Anne Pomeroy and Rodger Jackson at Richard Stockton College are strong influences in my life. Janette Muir is a dear friend and mentor spiritually



## GLBTRT Congratulates ALA Election Winners

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### Anne L. Moore—GLBTRT Co-Chair

Anne has been a member of the GLB Task Force / GLBT Round Table since 1998. She has served as both a committee member and Steering Committee member in a variety of positions including representative, OLOS Advisory Committee, 2008-10, External Affairs Committee, 2008-10 and representative, Diversity Council, 2006-10.



### Jason D. Phillips—GLBTRT Secretary

Jason has worked with both the Stonewall Book Awards Committee and External Relations Committee and brings with him the sense of humor required to communicate with and between both the Steering Committee and the general membership.



### Peter Hepburn - GLBTRT Councilor

Participation in GLBTRT activities like the Bylaws Committee has prepared Peter to represent the GLBTRT to Council. His experiences have given him insight to issues facing ALA and the mechanisms for working within the Association.



### Larry Romans—ALA Councilor at Large

Larry is a member of GODORT and ACRL in addition to SRRT and GLBTRT. He is in support of reinventing our services to meet user needs during continuous technological changes and adding electronic members and meetings to promote member participation.



### Tom Wilding— ALA Councilor at Large

Tom (not pictured) has served ALA Council previously as an at large member. He has served in administrative capacities at large academic libraries as well as instructed library science courses.



## Mr. Right.

Dirs: David Morris and Jacqui Morris. Wolfe Video, 2009. DVD. \$19.95. 95min.

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Mr. Right has a very attractive cast and great title credits, but nothing else in this film is worth mentioning. After the first 10 minutes, I began to lose hope of enjoying this film; I was right.

The plot of



## Were the World Mine.

Dir. Tom Gustafson. San Jose, CA: Wolfe Video, 2008. DVD. 95 min. \$24.95.



Taking its title from a line in the original play, *Were the World Mine* is a creative re-imagining of *A Midsummer Night's Dream* that asks, "If you could make someone love you, would you?"

The film presents a few complicated love affairs, from the main character, Timothy's, crush on a seemingly straight rugby player at his all-boys prep school, to his mother's longing for a husband who is out of the picture. The film also tells the all too familiar story of homophobic bullying in

school. But things take a turn when Timothy, while preparing to play Puck in the school production of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, creates an elixir that causes people to fall in love with the first person they see. After instigating gay love affairs throughout town, Timothy, along with the help of a kooky drama teacher, resolves everything and performs in a stunning production of the play.

*Were the World Mine* features several fanciful musical numbers, with lyrics adapted from Shakespeare's words. Comparisons to *High School Musical* are hard to avoid, particularly after a dodge ball dance number, but the outcome distinguishes this film from a run-of-the-

mill teen flick. A few plot points are left unresolved (we never learn why Timothy's father left, for instance), but the whimsy of the film distracts the viewer from them.

This film, though unrated, is an innocent love story appropriate for teen viewers. Winner of a number of honors, including a Critics' Pick from the *New York Times*, this film is recommended.

Reviewed by:  
Instructional Design and Technology Librarian  
University of Tennessee at Chattanooga,  
Lupton Library

## Book Reviews: Young Adult

### Lurie, April. *The Less-Dead*.

New York, NY: Delacorte Press, 2010. hardcover. 304p. \$16.99. ISBN: 978-0-3857-3675-6.



Covering foster care, murder, anti-gay feelings, religion, acting out at school, mystery, unrequited love—both gay and straight—

undercover cops, rebelling against parents, homelessness, and more, this novel follows Noah Nordstrom, a high school junior and son of the Bible Answer Guy, through his self-realization.

While *The Less-Dead* does not focus specifically on a gay character, it is the

death of a gay, homeless foster child, Will Reed, who brings about self-realization for both Noah and his best friend Carson, son of an atheist. Noah investigates Will's death, the third in a series of gay killings, while Carson turns religious and becomes baptized for a girl. Noah and his father overcome their adversity, and the killer is caught. The book ends with much happiness, although there are plot twists and eccentric characters sufficient to keep the reader interested and unaware of the killer's true identity.

This book will appeal to LGBT teens, as it shows how, sometimes, those who are against gays can be changed, with time and care, but also how some others will never change. An interesting and useful inclusion at the end of the work is an author's note about her experiences growing up in a strict evangelical home, and the future for the

LGBT community. Lurie also includes "The six 'clobber' passages that so many evangelical teachers quote to support their hard stance against homosexuality," and her interpretations of these to show what is truly being said in the Bible. Lurie also includes a bibliography for further readings on the Web and in print.

*The Less-Dead* is a valuable book for young adults who are around gay teens, and those who are gay, as well as for parents of gay adolescents, or whose children's friends might be gay.

Reviewed by: **Sara Rofofsky Marcus**  
Assistant Professor  
Electronic Resource / Web Librarian  
Queensborough Community College

### Langford, Jonathan. *No Going Back*.

Provo, Utah: Zarahemla Books, 2009, 304 pages. \$16.95. ISBN: 9780978797195



Mormon YA literature has come a long way with the publication of *No Going Back*. Many novels written for the Mormon audience are designed to be, first, faith-promoting. In

*No Going Back*, we have a more realistic novel.

Paul, 15, comes out to his best friend, his bishop, and finally his mother. His life is complicated by the members of the Gay Straight Alliance at his school (who expect him to be true to himself as a gay teen), navigating the expectations of his church that he remain celibate, and dealing with a political campaign to limit gay rights, in which members of his congregation are actively participating.

There is much to admire in *No Going Back*, given its intended audience. There is frank discussion of teen sexual issues, a great portrayal of friendship when Paul's friend Chad sticks by him after he comes out (despite pressure from some church members and peer pressure at school), and an honest examination of the pressures on family life that church members often go through. These types of issues are rarely seen in what is intended as popular fiction for

(continued on page 9)

of the Mormon world. Church jargon, organization, and theology are presented in a way that will be clear to the intended reader, but will not be clear to others, since the author assumes reader familiarity. If not for the unexplained Mormon terminology, this book might have had a broader market for other conservative faiths.

So, what should librarians do with *No Going Back*? Just as we fight for LGBT YA books to be in our libraries, so that LGBT youth can find themselves and their lives on the shelves, we should consider material that

suggests to youth another choice, so that those who decide to choose faith will also find themselves there. Libraries located in communities or states where there is a sizable Mormon population should consider this book.

Reviewed by:  
EP Foster Library



## Graves, Karen L. *And They Were Wonderful Teachers: Florida's Purge of Gay and Lesbian Teachers.*

Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2009. Cloth: 978-0-252-03438-1; \$65.00. Paper: 978-0-252-07639-8; \$20.00. 186p.



Karen Graves' study of the Florida persecution of gay and lesbian schoolteachers illuminates a civil rights crisis for GLBT educators in late 20th-century American education. The work examines an investigative committee created by the Florida legislature in 1956 by representatives from northern, rural, and

conservative communities with a desire to slow school integration. In a fever of Cold

War paranoia, the committee also attempted to link the NAACP with the Communist Party, to identify "homosexual influence" and Communist activities in the newly-established University of South Florida (USF), and most of all, to purge Florida schools of gay and lesbian teachers. Gay and lesbian teachers had no organizational support, such as the NAACP and the university faculty. The Florida Education Association and the state board of education shared the Investigation Committee's agenda against homosexual teachers, and made only token efforts to uphold due process. And though the NAACP and USF were able to force the Investigation

Committee to make hearings public, thus curbing some civil injustices, schoolteachers were coerced into private interviews without legal counsel—after which they lost their jobs and teaching certificates. This is a compelling analysis of a pivotal moment in American history, reminding us that education is central to the evolution of society, and the acceptance (or at least civil rights) of gay and lesbian teachers is a critical aspect of GLBT liberation.

Reviewed by:  
Special Collections Cataloger  
Michigan State University Libraries

## Book Reviews: Fiction

### Plakcy, Neil. *GayLife.com* .

Albion, N.Y.: MLR Press, 2009. paperback. 248p. \$14.99. ISBN: 978-1608200368.

Brian Cohen wants a new challenge in his life. Unemployed and recently single, he's



looking for love and a new job in South Beach during the "dot com" boom of the early 2000s. Through the connections of his best friend Stella, he lands a job running the office at GayLife.com, a new Internet start-up offering a taste of the good life online to its

GLBT clientele. Brian holds out little hope in finding love or contentment at GayLife.com, until he meets his new boss, the handsome and affable Nick Petrangelis.

Brian falls head over heels for Nick, but Nick is happily partnered with a supermodel and the two of them are the "gay supercouple" at the center of GayLife.com. Nick is everything Brian has ever looked for in a man, and he senses that there is real chemistry between them, but does not want to jeopardize everything by pursuing it further. The novel takes a few twists and turns, and it looks like Brian may never find true love, but the reader is given a happy ending that is both sweet and steamy.

*GayLife.com* is Neil Plakcy's first venture into male-male romantic fiction, and the story has the right blend of traditional romantic themes and sultry sexuality, with a good

dose of humor thrown in for good measure. His previous works have been gay-themed mysteries, and Plakcy brings some elements of surprise and suspense into the novel as well. The characters are well-developed and I found myself wanting the story to continue on after its end. It's a good first attempt at writing in a genre that has started to really come into its own in the last few years.

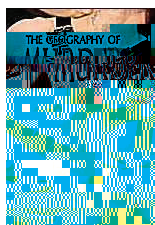
Recommended for all libraries, especially those with GLBT collections or romance collections.

Reviewed by:  
Lartz Memorial Library

### Brown, P. A. *The Geography of Murder* .

Albion, NY: MLR Press, 2009. Softcover. 258 p. \$14.99. ISBN: 978-1-6082-0054-2.

In this mystery cum erotica novel, Pat Brown brings the reader into the minds of sub Jason, the suspect in a murder, and master Alex Spider, a detective. It is when Jason is arrested



for the murder of a well-known pedophile that Spider becomes aware of, and then falls in love with, Jason. Detailed scenes of sex and bondage fill the volume, as do police procedures, mental anguish at new relationship roles, drug

abuse and attempts to stop, and prejudice on the job at the police department. Several grammar errors and missing words in sentences can be found, but in general, the writing is done well, and the author successfully evokes emotions in the reader.

Detailed scenic descriptions place one in the setting, although the alternating viewpoints between Jason and Spider can be confusing at times; however this technique does show both sides of the budding and strained relationship well.

This book, because of its graphic language and depictions of sexual acts and bondage is not appropriate for most collections, although adult-only collections would benefit from this police-crime book that's filled with romance and the issues facing many gays today.

Reviewed by:  
Electronic Resources/ Web Librarian  
Queensborough Community College.

## Buchanan, James. *Inland Empire*.

Taking the Odds Series [#2]. Albion, NY: MLR Press, 2009. 280 p. ISBN: 978-1-60820-016-0

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*Inland Empire* is the second book in MLR Press's Taking the Odds series. Nevada Gaming Control Agent Nick O'Malley and Riverside,

Wilde Stories 2009: The Best of the Year's Gay Speculative Fiction .