

Recommended YA Nonfiction with LGBTQ Content

selected by Christine A. Jenkins and Michael Cart

A number of criteria are used in evaluating informational (nonfiction) books for young readers. Nonfiction books should be visually inviting. The layout of text, images, graphics, sidebars, and other visual elements should be attractive, and all elements should work together for maximum clarity. The text should be accessible, the writing free of jargon. The language can be simple, but never simplistic. And of course, the information must be accurate and as up-to-date as possible, which means that accuracy and recency will trump many other concerns. Thus, a nonfiction title that is selected in 2003 as meeting every criteria for excellence in informational books may well be weeded and discarded in 2013. For some areas of nonfiction, such as books on legal or medical issues, a book that is even five years old is suspect. For other areas, such as biography or history, this may be less of a concern. For example, Russell Freedman's *Lincoln: A Photobiography* was published in 1987 and is still a valuable resource for young people seeking information about Abraham Lincoln. On the other hand, when the first edition of Margaret O. Hyde's *Know About AIDS* (Walker, 1987) appeared, it received high marks from reviewers as being "informative and useful" and having a "forthright style" and a "clear, steady tone." The revised edition (Walker, 1990) was likewise praised, as was the third and final "completely revised" edition (Walker 1994). Today, these books might be of interest to a historian of the AIDS epidemic and AIDS education, but a 20+ year old book on AIDS would no longer be considered a source of current or reliable information.

Over the past several decades, much has been written and said about "the death of the book" in a digital age. Governing boards, administrators, and consultants may declare that online information resources have rendered traditional books obsolete, but there are some clear advantages to the traditional book format. This may be especially true for books with LGBTQ content, as that format is often better suited for teens' privacy concerns. If teens do not have access to a home computer, they may be understandably reluctant to access sites with LGBTQ content in a public setting like a school or public library. On the other hand, all of the processes involved in publishing traditional books take time, so there can be a lag of a year or more between the writing/creation of the text and the public appearance of the book. In the case of nonfiction on subject areas that are changing, growing, or otherwise in flux, information in print-on-paper books may be out of date. A number of publishers understand the overriding importance of recency in the case of nonfiction with LGBTQ content for young readers. Thus, the September 2011 repeal of "don't ask, don't tell," created an immediate need for revised editions of books on gays in the military. Likewise, every nonfiction title on same-sex marriage was instantly out of date when the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the Defense of Marriage Act in June 2013. Future legal cases and decisions will no doubt spur further updates and revisions of other nonfiction YA titles with LGBTQ content.

Less dramatic social change over time has also fueled revised editions of informational books. For example, the first edition of *Is It a Choice? Answers to 300 of the Most Frequently Asked Questions about Gays and Lesbians*, by Eric Marcus, was published in 1993 and aimed at an adult audience. In 2000 Marcus published *What if Someone I Know is Gay? Answers to Questions about Gay and Lesbian People*, which covered much of the same ground as *Is It a Choice?* but was aimed at a teen/young adult audience. Since their original publication, both titles have been revised twice (*Is it a Choice?* in 1999 and 2005; *What If?* in 2007 and 2013) and libraries interested in keeping their collections current will want to acquire the revised editions in order to provide teens and adults with the most accurate and up-to-date answers to questions about this important topic. This is especially important for teens, as they may have many questions about this topic, but be unable (for whatever reason) to ask for the information and/or resources they need.

The majority of the books listed in the following pages are considered young adult books; a smaller number were originally published for a middle grade or an adult audience. All are accessible to teen readers.

- Alsenas, Linas. *Gay America: Struggle for Equality*. Abrams, 2008.
- Andryszewski, Tricia. *Same-Sex Marriage: Granting Equal Rights or Damaging the Status of Marriage?* [USA Today's Debate: Voices and Perspectives series] Twenty First Century Books, 2011.
- Anonymous. *Quicksand: HIV/AIDS in Our Lives*. Candlewick, 2009.
- Apelqvist, Eva. *LGBTQ Families: The Ultimate Teen Guide*. [It Happened to Me, no. 37] Scarecrow Press, 2013.
- Aretha, David. *No Compromise: The Story of Harvey Milk*. Morgan Reynolds Pub, 2009.
- Beam, Cris. *Transparent: Love, Family, and Living the T with Transgender Teenagers*. Mariner Books, 2008.
- Bronski, Michael. *A Queer History of the United States*. Beacon Press, 2011.
- Burlingame, Jeff. *Same Sex Marriage*. Benchmark Marshall Cavendish, 2011.
- Chastain, Zachary. *Statistical Timeline and Overview of Gay Life*. [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2011.
- Chilman-Blair, Kim & John Taddeo. *Mediakidz Explain HIV*. Rosen, 2010.
- Christensen, Bonnie. *Fabulous! A Portrait of Andy Warhol*. Holt, 2011.
- Craig, Joe. *A Guy's Guide to Sexuality and Sexual Identity in the 21st Century*. [Young Man's Guide to Contemporary Issues series] Rosen, 2012.
- Eaklor, Vicki L. *Queer America: A GLBT History of the 20th Century*. Greenwood, 2008.
- Espejo, Roman, ed. *Transgender People*. [YA at Issue series] Greenhaven, 2011.
- Fakhriddin, Tina. *Let's Get This Straight*. Seal Press, 2010.
- Fradin, Judith and Dennis Brindell. *Jane Addams: Champion of Democracy*. Clarion, 2006.
- Franco, Betsy, ed. *Falling Hard: 100 Love Poems by Teenagers*. Candlewick, 2008.
- Fricke, Aaron. *Reflections of a Rock Lobster*. 2nd ed. Create Space Independent Publishing Platform, 2013. ISBN 13: 9781484881903
- Garden, Nancy; *Hear Us Out! Lesbian and Gay Stories of Struggle, Progress, and Hope, 1950 to the Present*. Farrar, 2007.
- Garner, Abigail. *Families Like Mine: Children of Gay Parents Tell It Like It Is*. HarperCollins, 2005.
- Gay, Kathlyn. *Bigotry and Intolerance: The Ultimate Teen Guide*. [It Happened to Me series] Scarecrow Press, 2013.
- Gitlin, Marty. *Billie Jean King: Tennis Star & Social Activist*. Sportszone: Legendary Athletes series, 2011.

Gold, Mitchell. *Crisis: 40 Stories Revealing the Personal, Social, and Religious Pain and Trauma of Growing Up Gay in America*, Greenleaf Book Group, LLC, 2008.

Hadleigh, Boze. *The Lavender Screen: The Gay and Lesbian Films--Their Stars, Makers, Characters, and Critics*. Citadel, 2001.

Harris, Robie. *It's Perfectly Normal*. Candlewick, 2009.

Hartzler, Aaron. *Rapture Practice: A Memoir*. Little, Brown, 2013.

Hawley, John C. *LGBTQ America Today: An Encyclopedia*. Greenwood, 2008.

Heims, Neil. *Allen Ginsberg*. [Gay and Lesbian Writer series] Chelsea House, 2005.

Hernandez, Daniel with Susan Goldman Rubin. *They Call Me a Hero: A Memoir of My Youth*. S&S, 2013.

Huegel, Kelly. *GLBTQ: The Survival Guide for Gay, Lesbian, Bi, Transgender & Questioning Teens*. Free Spirit, 2011.

Hunt, Jaime. *Homophobia: From Social Stigma to Hate Crimes*. [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2011.

Hyde, Sue. *Come Out and Win: Organizing Yourself, Your Community, and Your World*. Beacon Press, 2007.

James, Otto. *AIDS*. Smart Apple Media: Voice series, 2009.

Jennings, Kevin. *Always My Child: A Parent's Guide to Understanding Your Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgendered, or Questioning Son or Daughter*. Touchstone, 2003.

Kafka, Tina. *Gay Rights*. Gale/Lucent, 2006

Kantrowitz, Arnie. *Walt Whitman*. [Gay and Lesbian Writer series] Chelsea House, 2005.

Keen, Lisa. *Out Law: What LGBT Youth Should Know about Their Legal Rights (Queer Action/ Queer Ideas)*. Beacon Press: Queer Action/Queer Ideas series, 2007.

Kenan, Randal and Amy Sickels. *James Baldwin*. [Gay and Lesbian Writer series] Chelsea House, 2005.

Kuhn, Betsy. *Gay Power!: The Stonewall Riots and The Gay Rights Movement, 1969*. [Civil Rights Struggles Around the World series] Twenty First Century Books, 2011.

Levithan, David and Billy Merrell, eds. *The Full Spectrum: A New Generation of Writing about Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning and Other Identities*. Knopf. 2006.

Marcus, Eric. *Is it a Choice? Answers to Questions About What It Means to Be Gay and Lesbian*. Harper San Francisco, 2005.

Marcus, Eric. *What If? Answers to Questions About What It Means to Be Gay and Lesbian*. Simon Pulse, 2013.

Markovitz, Hal. Jaime. *Teens & LGBT Issues*. [Gallup Youth Survey: Major Issues and Trends series] Mason Crest, 2013.

- Mastoon, Adam. *The Shared Heart: Portraits & Stories Celebrating Lesbian, Gay & Bisexual Young People*. Harper Teen, 2001.
- McHugh, Erin & Jennifer May. *The L Life: Extraordinary Lesbians Making a Difference*. New York: Abrams, 2011.
- Metcalf, Dawn and Megan Kelly Hall. *Dear Bully: Seventy Authors Tell Their Stories*. HarperCollins, 2011.
- Miller, Calvin Craig. *No Easy Answers: Bayard Rustin and the Civil Rights Movement*. Morgan Reynolds, 2005.
- Moon, Sarah, Editor. *The Letter Q: Queer Writers' Notes to Their Younger Selves*. Scholastic/Levine, 2012.
- Nagle, Jean. *GLBT Teens and Society*. [Teens: Being Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, or Transgender series] Rosen, 2010.
- Nelson, Emmanuel S. *Encyclopedia of Contemporary LGBTQ Literature of the United States*. Greenwood, 2009.
- Newman, Leslea. *October Mourning: A Song for Matthew Shepard*. Candlewick, 2012.
- Newton, David E. (PhD). *Gay and Lesbian Rights: A Reference Handbook*. ABC-CLIO: Contemporary World Issues series, 2009.
- Nunokawa, Jeff. *Oscar Wilde*. [Gay and Lesbian Writer series] Chelsea House, 2005.
- Orr, Tamra. *Home and Family Relationships*. [Teens: Being Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, or Transgender series] Rosen, 2010.
- Padres, Bronwen. *Doing it Right: Making Smart, Safe, & Satisfying Choices About Sex*. Simon Pulse, 2007.
- Palmer, Bill. *A New Generation of Homosexuality: Modern Trends in Gay & Lesbian Communities*. [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2011.
- Palmer, Bill. *What Causes Sexual Orientation: Genetics, Biology, Psychology*. [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2011.
- Paprocki Sherry Beth. *Ellen: DeGeneres: Entertainer*. Chelsea House, 2009.
- Pasfield, Scott. *Gay in America*. Welcome Books, 2011.
- Payment, Simone. *Friendship, Dating and Relationships*. [Teens: Being Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, or Transgender series] Rosen, 2010.
- Pepper, Rachel. *Transitions of the Heart: Stories of Love, Struggle and Acceptance by Mothers of Transgender and Gender Variant Children*. Berkeley, CA: Cleis Press, 2012.
- Planned Parenthood Toronto. *Hear Me Out*. Second Story Press, 2003.
- Prono, Luca. *Encyclopedia of Gay and Lesbian Popular Culture*. Greenwood, 2007.

- Rachel, T. Cole. *Bend, Don't Shatter: Poets on the Beginning of Desire*. Soft Skull Press/Red Rattle Books, 2004.
- Roleff, Tamara L., ed. *Homosexuality*. Greenhaven Press/Gale, 2012.
- Sanna, Emily. *Gay Believers: Homosexuality and Religion*. [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, & Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2011.
- Savage, Dan and Terry Miller, eds. *It Gets Better: Coming Out, Overcoming Bullying, and Creating a Life Worth Living*. Plume, 2012.
- Seba, Jaime. *Being Gay, Staying Healthy*. [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, & Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2011.
- Seba, Jaime. *Coming Out: Telling Family and Friends*. [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, & Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2009.
- Seba, Jaime. *Ellen Degeneres: From Comedy Club to Talk Show*. [Contemporary Biographies: Extraordinary Success with a High School Diploma or less] Mason Crest, 2013.
- Seba, Jaime. *Feeling Wrong in Your Own Body: Understanding What It Means to Be Transgender*. [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, & Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2011.
- Seba, Jaime. *Gay and Lesbian Role Models*. [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, & Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2011.
- Seba, Jaime. *Gay Characters in Theater, Movies, and Television: New Roles, New Attitudes*. [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, & Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2010.
- Seba, Jaime. *Gay Issues and Politics: Marriage, the Military, and Workplace Discrimination*. [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, & Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2009.
- Seba, Jaime. *Gay People of Color: Facing Prejudices, Forging Identities*. [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, & Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2010.
- Seba, Jaime. *Gays and Mental Health: Fighting Depression, Saying No to Suicide*. [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, & Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2011.
- Seba, Jaime. *Homosexuality Around the World: Safe Havens, Cultural Challenges*. [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, & Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2010.
- Seba, Jaime. *Smashing the Stereotypes: What Does it Mean to be Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, or Transgender?* [Gallup's Guide to Modern Gay, Lesbian, & Transgender Lifestyle series] Mason Crest, 2011.
- Serwatka, Thomas S. *Queer Questions, Clear Answers: The Contemporary Debates on Sexual Orientation*. Santa Barbara, CA: Praeger/ABC-CLIO, 2010.
- Sessums, Kevin. *Mississippi Sissy*. Picador, 2008.
- Settington, Ken. *Branded by the Pink Triangle*. Second Story Press, 2013.

Shepard, Judy with Jon Barrett. *The Meaning of Matthew: My Son's Murder in Laramie, and a World Transformed*. Hudson/Penguin, 2009.

Snow, Judith E. *How It Feels To Have a Gay or Lesbian Parent: A Book by Kids for Kids of All Ages*. Routledge, 2004.

Snyder, Jane McIntosh. *Sappho*. [Gay and Lesbian Writer series] Chelsea House, 2005.

Sonenklar, Carol. *AIDS*. Lerner, 2011.

Sterngass, Jon. *Same Sex Marriage*. [Controversy! Series] Marshall Cavendish, 2011.

Stryker, Susan. *Transgender History*. Seal Press, 2008.

Tiger, Caroline. *Margaret Cho*. [Asian Americans of Achievement] Chelsea House, 2007.

Vitagliano, Paul. *Born This Way: Real Stories of Growing Up Gay*. Quirk Books, 2013.

Wahls, Zach, with Bruce Littlefield. *My Two Moms: Lessons of Love, Strength, and What Makes a Family*. Gotham Books, 2012.

Weir, Johnny. *Welcome to My World*. Gallery, 2011.

Winfield, Cynthia. *Gender Identity*. Scarecrow Press, 2007.

Worth, Richard. *Life at School and in the Community*. [Teens: Being Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, or Transgender series] Rosen, 2010.

Youth Communication. *Out with It: Gay and Straight Teens Write About Homosexuality*. Youth Communication, 2009.

Professional Resources

Abate, Michelle Ann & Kenneth Kidd, eds. *Over the Rainbow: Queer Children's and Young Adult Literature*. University of Michigan Press, 2011.

Biegel, Stuart. *The Right to Be Out: Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity in America's Public Schools*. University of Minnesota Press, 2010.

Cart, Michael & Christine A. Jenkins. *The Heart Has Its Reasons: Young Adult Literature with Gay/Lesbian/Queer Content, 1969-2004*. Scarecrow Press: Scarecrow Studies in Young Adult Literature series, 2006.

Day, Frances Ann. *Lesbian and Gay Voices: an Annotated Bibliography and Guide to Literature for Children and Young Adults*. Greenwood, 2000.

Greenblatt, Ellen, ed. *Serving LGBTIQ Library and Archives Users: Essays on Outreach, Service, Collections and Access*. McFarland, 2011.

Hillias J. Martin Jr. and James R. Murdock. *Serving Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning Teens: A How-To-Do-It Manual for Librarians*. Neal-Schuman Publishers, 2007.

Naidoo, Jamie Campbell. *Rainbow Collections: Selecting and Using Children's Books with Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Content*. Santa Barbara, CA: ABC-CLIO and Libraries Unlimited, 2012.

Savin-Williams, Ritch. *The New Gay Teenager*. [Adolescent Lives series] Harvard University Press, 2006.

Vaccaro, Annemarie. *Safe Spaces: Making Schools and Communities Welcoming to LGBT Youth*. Prager, 2011.

Webber, Carlisle K. *Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Teen Literature: A Guide to Reading Interests*. Libraries Unlimited: Genreflecting Advisory Series, 2010.