



The Lesbian Edition

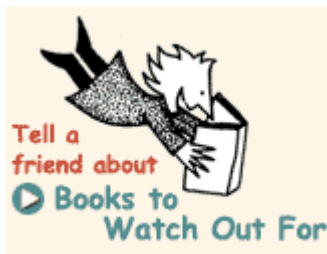
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About BTWOF

Books To Watch Out For publishes monthly e-letters celebrating books on various topics. Each issue includes new book announcements, brief reviews, commentary, news and, yes, good book gossip.

The Lesbian Edition

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Volume 3 Number 5

Welcome to **The Lesbian Edition** #23. I took some necessary time off to do some traveling between issues and so owe many thanks to Suzanne Corson who stepped up and volunteered to co-write this issue thus making sure it would come out. Blame me for the reviews of *Slipstream*, *That Summer in Paris*, *Touchy Subjects*, *The Burning Time*, *2 Girls*, and *The Meadowlark Sings*, and for the non-review of *Now It's My Turn*, but credit Suzanne for all the rest of the reviews and for writing up the news items. It's a long, rich issue, and it wouldn't have made it to press without Suzanne's support and vision! Thanks, too, as always, to Nan for the Crime Scene.

If you're feeling discouraged about the state of the world, take a moment to improve life in one small corner of it and box up some lesbian books for the queer library patrons of [New Orleans](#).

Yours in spreading the words,
Carol

She Devil: New Feminist Imprint

Suspect Thoughts, publisher of the recent Lambda Literary Award-winning *The Beautifully Worthless* by Ali Liebegott among many others, recently announced the creation of two new imprints. She Devil Press will publish "furiously feminist fiction - and not" while Three Roads Press will offer "an alternative to the conventional."

The new imprints will allow press founders Greg Wharton and Ian Phillips to publish and promote books that are not "conventionally queer" in a way that will increase their visibility in the literary marketplace. Publishers of predominantly queer titles who try to step outside of the box often find that their non-queer titles can get lost in a world of bookstore buyers making quick decisions based on a publisher's past books. This happened with Suspect Thoughts' *Burn* by Jennifer Natalya Fink, which publisher Wharton says is one of the best books he's read.

BTWOF applauds Greg and Ian for not only making a commitment to publish literature by women but for flying the feminist flag high. In a society where even publishers that publish decidedly feminist books shy away from the "F word," these two gay men embrace the mantle for both themselves and their new imprint. Let's see the world accuse *them* of being man-hating lesbians!

She Devil will release two books in the fall/winter season: *V*, the second novel by Jennifer Natalya Fink and *Girl on a Stick* by Kathleen Bryson,

covers both lesbian books and the whole range of books lesbians like to read. It covers news of both the women in print movement and mainstream publishing. Written and compiled by Carol Seajay.

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The Gay Men's Edition

announces and reviews new books by and about gay men as well as other books of interest and gay publishing news. Written and compiled by Richard Labonte.

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More Books for Women

covers the finest in thinking women's reading, plus mysteries, non-sexist children's books, and news from women's publishing. Written by the owners and staff at Women & Children First, and friends.

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Q. How does BTWOF define "a lesbian book?"

A. We think that any book that belongs to a lesbian is a lesbian book, just as any bike that belongs to a girl is "a girl's bike."

BTWOF: The Lesbian Edition

covers a wide range of books likely to be of interest to our readers as well as books with lesbian content and books by lesbian writers.

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author of *Mush* (Diva Books). Three Roads' first release will be *Some Phantom - No Time Flat: Two Novellas* by Steven Beachy.

Transitions

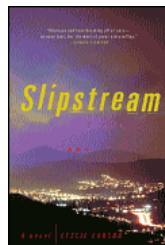
Quarterly magazine *VelvetPark* recently announced that it has purchased the active subscriptions from *Girlfriends* and *On Our Backs* magazines from publisher H.A.F. Publishing. Both these publications ceased print publication this spring and the titles and websites were sold to an as yet unnamed web company. In addition to the subscribers, *VelvetPark* has expanded its staff, with the naming of Diana Cage (former editor of *On Our Backs*) as Managing Editor and photojournalist Angela Jimenez as Senior Editor. Founder Grace Moon remains Editor in Chief. *VelvetPark* is "a thought provoking, sexy, trail-blazing magazine of arts, culture, and social activism for lesbians." Learn more at www.velvetparkmagazine.com.

MTV Networks affiliate Logo has purchased several LGBT websites including AfterEllen.com. Founder Sarah Warn will remain onboard as editor of AfterEllen, novelist Michael Jensen will continue as editor of brother site AfterElton.com, and Karman Kregloe has been named Associate Editor of both sites. Both sites feature news, reviews, interviews, and commentary about queer people and themes in entertainment. With the ownership change, the number of articles published on the sites will double. Though AfterEllen.com recently published an [article](#) on the lesbian book publishing industry and a [profile](#) of mystery writer Sandra Scoppettone, it remains to be seen if the site will provide more coverage of books in the future.

Find(s) of the Issue

Mainstream reviewers aren't likely to give lesbians literature credit for either of **TLE's** two Finds of the Issue. They (and some lesbians as well) like to define "lesbian literature" very narrowly - limited to simplistic "small-story" tales where the only thing that matters is that a girl gets a girl by the end - and the book is badly typeset. Then they say that anything with any literary depth "isn't really a lesbian book." Obviously BTWOF disagrees with that kind of simplistic lesbophobia. (And we continue to be amazed by the vast range of people, gay and straight, who think, simultaneously, that queers should be able to marry and that lesbians can't write books - but that's a rant for another day.)

Like other literary communities, we claim the entire breadth of our literature: books by, about, or inclusive of lesbians, and we're more than happy to include our various literary cousins and relatives as well. If it's simplistic you want, skip this section. If you want excellent, expansive fiction, keep reading:



Slipstream, Leslie Larson's ambitious and successful first novel is firmly set in literary America's missing underclass as she traces the stories of five characters who have the misfortune of all landing, eventually, in the same place at the wrong time. There's Rudy, who was bypassed for flight training in his Navy days; his Filipina wife, Inez, an Avon lady like no other who is saving for her escape from their difficult marriage; Wylie, the functioning but still shell-shocked Vietnam vet; Wylie's half-brother Logan, just out of jail (again) and clinging to his newfound sobriety; and Jewell, the daughter Logan looks up every five or ten years, whose girlfriend is as (un)faithful as her father.... There's no "small story" here - every one of these characters' lives is complex and richly drawn; they live in communities that support (or not) their hopes and dreams. Jewell's girlfriend's daughter Rachel, the girlfriend's evil ex, Inez's daughter, Vanessa, and the many missing parents are as complex and essential as the main characters. I found the dramas of their daily lives, the struggle to get by, to get a little of the dream, or to just find a place to rest to be as rewarding as the main plot. It's a gently paced thriller (so gentle that even I could enjoy it) that lingers over the human side, then builds toward the inevitable climax, but not until

Finding BTWOF

BTWOF is published by Carol Seajay and Books To Watch Out For.

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PO Box 882554

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Send books for review consideration for the **Lesbian Edition** to the San Francisco address above.

Send books for review consideration for the **Gay Men's Edition** directly to Richard Labonte at
7-A Drummond St W
Perth, ON K7H 2J3
Canada.



every sub-strand is tucked in. It's a rich and wonderful novel, and I can't wait to see what Leslie Larson does next.

"Slipstream is a genuinely startling novel that caught me up in the lives of people being looked past, over, or beyond. Larson's people are alive on the page, and they pulled me along with them as things got scarier and scarier until.... Well, you have to read the book to learn that - and trust me, it will be worth it." -- Dorothy Allison

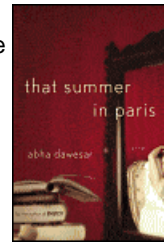
A Shaye Areheart Book (Crown/Random House), \$23.95, 0307337995. Also available as a Books on Tape Audiobook and an e-book.

Find #2: A Writer To Watch Out For

Abha Dawesar is a writer to watch out for: each of her novels appears to tackle something entirely different - although it would be fair to say that the tensions between desire and morality are a recurring theme. *Miniplanner* (Cleis, 1573441155, \$12.95) explores the moral (and scheduling) complexities of a gay man's mad affairs with his (straight?) boss, and his boss' wife. *Babiji* (Anchor, \$13, 1400034566), which won a Lammy for Lesbian Fiction last year, is a brilliant coming-of-age story about a very bright (and quite butch) Indian teenager as she finds herself, her place in the world, and her passion for (three) women in her life.

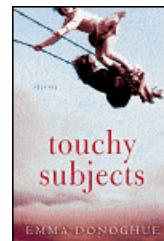
And now in **That Summer in Paris**, her most ambitious novel to date, Dawesar tackles some fascinating themes: the love between young and old - sexual and otherwise, the demands and passions of writing, friendships between writers, the ways writers' love relationships - both past and current - affect their writing, and how the writing informs (or limits) their relationships. And how what - and who - a writer reads shapes the writing. Dawesar gives us Prem, a senior statesman of a writer, Indian by birth, now living in the U.S. and Paris, who is facing his loss of stamina and thus the end of his career; Maya, a young writer shaping her first novel; and Prem's friend and fellow writer, Pascal. At the start of the novel, Maya has already discovered and read Prem's entire body of work while doing research for her own first novel. Prem, who has already won every important literary prize, has always put his writing first, pushing his relationships aside as needed to serve the muse. Pascal, a little younger than Prem, lives and writes differently but is still hoping to win the big one. Dawesar uses this structure to consider the rich lives of writers, the possibilities of passion(s), and to explore several other rarely addressed topics including chosen intimacy and love between siblings and the active sexuality of teenage girls, as well as to indulge in her obvious love for the city of Paris.

I read most of *That Summer in Paris* on a long flight. It was a rewarding traveling companion, engaging me constantly in the various themes, pushing me to think deeply, challenging long held assumptions, and *almost* making me wish the flight were a couple hours longer so I could read through to the end. If you're looking for a quick light read, this isn't it. Specifically lesbian content? Minimal, but not entirely absent. But if you want something to mull over, chew on, and debate with your friends, or if watching the development of writers fascinates you - or if you're headed to Paris for a holiday - this one is for you. Nan A. Talese/Doublday, \$23.95, 0385517491.



Also of Note

A new Emma Donoghue (*Slammerkin*, *Life Mask*) is always cause for celebration. In this case it's **Touchy Subjects**, a collection of short stories. Pitch perfect right down to the cover image: two young girls - with skates on - sharing a swing. And it seems to me that the lesbian experience is well-mined: starting with the opening story of a single (straight) woman turning to her best friend (well, her best friend's husband) for the sperm she needs to become a single mom, through the agonies of choosing the color to paint the house, and the agonies (and rewards) of collective living. Or maybe it's just all human experience? Whatever, Donoghue does it well, offering a mix of characters from various national backgrounds, gay, straight, old, young, undecided, and confused, all brushed with her unique genius and dry, wry perspective. Harcourt, \$24, 0151013861.





Robin Morgan (*Sisterhood Is Powerful*, et al.) researched the life and times of one Lady Alyce Kyteler - the first Irish woman to be charged with sorcery when the Catholic Church brought the Inquisition to Ireland in the early fourteenth century - and then recreated this little-known woman's brilliant and brave resistance in novel form in **The Burning Time**. It's a fascinating story, full of bravery, strategy, treachery, guile.... And the endnote clarifies the historical facts. It's an easy way to access this part of women's history and women's struggle to exist in the face of the increasingly patriarchal and power-hungry Church. Melville House Publishing, \$15, 193363300X.

Perihan Magden's **2 Girls**, one of the few (only?) lesbian novels set in Istanbul. Lesbian? Well, Behiye is madly in love with Handan, whether Handan ever realizes it or not, and it's a passion that moves Behiye from teen angst and despair into a state of hope and a future she could never have imagined. Drama, conflict, misunderstandings, and the rapid cycling of hope and despair so common to adolescence set in an uncommon geography. It's very much Behiye's book - even the narration is in her voice. And the end (and prologue) offer an uncommon 'resolution.' Magden, also the author of *Messenger Boy Murders* and *The Companion*, lives in Istanbul and is a columnist for the daily paper, *Radikal*. *2 Girls* was made into a feature film, directed by Kutlug Atman, in 2005. Serpent's Tale, \$15, 1852428996.



It's Her Turn - But She Didn't Take It



Perhaps, after Threshold/Simon & Schuster consistently ignored BTWOF's requests for a review copy of **Now It's My Turn: A Daughter's Chronicle of Political Life**, I should have taken the hint. But I didn't: I wanted to know what Mary Cheney was thinking while running her Dad's campaign for Vice President in what is probably the most dangerous and repressive administration this country has ever seen. How could any self-respecting lesbian do that, I wanted to know. How did she justify it or explain it to herself? What was her response to Bush's actively homophobic DOMA campaign gimmick to bring out the right-wing vote, et al. I really wanted to know.

But we don't find out.

What Mary says, in essence, is that her dad is a really nice guy, that he's always loved her and solidly accepted her, and that she really likes him. We get funny (but rarely insightful) stories about riding in airplanes (the campaign flights didn't exactly follow safety regulations), about switched cell phones, and about bed bugs. We also find out that Bush called Mary and offered her a chance to make a statement in response to his DOMA initiative during the campaign, and that she declined. (Ergh!) We find out that neither she (who worked for Coors Brewing Company to repair their relationship with the gay community after the great gay boycotts of the 70s), nor her father can make the connection between Halliburton's segregated toilet policy (one kind of toilet for Americans, another kind for "the locals,") and Jim Crow laws (segregated toilets based on race). And we learn that Mary can't make a connection between what she saw as the invasion of her privacy during the campaign (when the media pointed out the hypocrisy of Bush brutally anti-gay campaign and the VP's support for his daughter) and the everyday kinds of oppression and harassment that gays who don't come from rich or powerful families experience. We learn that, while her Daddy was willing to stick up for a member of Bush's campaign staff who was outed by the media, that neither she nor her Daddy can make the connection between this nice guy that they know and like and how he shouldn't lose his job *just because he's gay*, and the 11,000 lesbians and gay men who have been driven out of the military (and lost their jobs) *just because they're gay* under Don't Ask/Don't Tell.

I have to say, I really didn't want to know this.

I really wanted Mary Cheney, as a mature adult, to have developed a little perspective on her family, her father, and politics in America. I wanted her to be able to both like her dad as a person, and also to be able to hold a critical thought about him, the Bush Administration, homophobia-based politics, or *something*. (*Anything*, by the end of the book!) Instead, she still believes that

Bush tells the truth and is an honest man, and that his Middle East policies (not to mention wars) are just what's best for America.

I found myself almost wishing that her parents had been less sweet to her when she came out - if it takes a little rejection to foster independent thought and a little perspective, it just might be worth it.

I guess this book could be a good case study for the damage done to children (especially children of well-to-do Republicans) who fail to separate from their families and develop a critical perspective regarding their own rights and needs as gay Americans. No wonder it's been a bust at the sales table. It's a sad and disappointing read. And it doesn't bode well for Threshold that this was their big, first book. But then, I guess that's the good news. Threshold Editions/Simon & Schuster, \$25, 9781416520498.

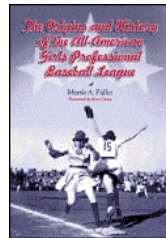


The Play's the Thing

Cast Out: Queer Lives in Theater, edited by Robin Bernstein, collects memoirs and interviews with performers, playwrights, and others behind the stage. Cherry Jones speaks about her decision to come out publicly while accepting her first Tony Award. Peggy Shaw (one of the founders of Split Britches) and playwright Lisa Kron discuss their beginnings in theatre. Cherrie Moraga muses on "Latina/o Queer Heroics," the difficulty in getting plays produced, and the conflicts of working in multiple genres.



Terry Galloway in "The Language of Disregard" reminisces about seeing folks she worked with in their early days after they've become well-known. Also included are Bree Coven, on the parallels between being a closeted lesbian actor and playing Maria in *West Side Story*, and Karleen Pendleton Jiménez on founding and directing San Diego's Queer Players. University of Michigan Press, \$22.95, 0472069330.

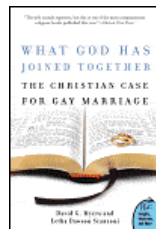
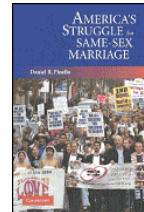


With a look at a different kind of play, **The Origins and History of the All-American Girls Professional Baseball League** begins with the history of softball as a sport for women, examines the development of this league in 1943, and discusses the working of the players' association today. Author Merrie A. Fidler, a retired coach, provides a fun, comprehensive, and wonderfully photographed history that goes far beyond what was shown in the 1992 film *A League of Their Own*. McFarland, \$39.95, 0786422432.



Wedding Belles

America's Struggle for Same-Sex Marriage by Daniel R. Pinello looks at the social movement for same-sex marriage with special focus on political campaigns, legislation, and actions by brave politicians in New Mexico, Massachusetts, California, New York, and Oregon. Cambridge University Press, \$19.99 paper, 0521613035.



What God Has Joined Together: The Christian Case for Gay Marriage by David G. Myers and Letha Dawson Scanzoni (co-author of *Is the Homosexual My Neighbor?*) is written by and for heterosexuals to "bridge the divide" between people who seek to "protect the sanctity" of marriage and those who believe that every couple, regardless of gender, should have the right to marry if they choose. The authors "offer a case for how gay marriage could help elevate the institution of marriage" and how they believe not in a

special kind of "gay marriage" but in extending marriage as an option to those for whom it is currently disallowed by law. They precede their marriage discussion with a "faith-informed and behavioral-science-informed" discussion about sexual orientation itself. HarperSanFrancisco, \$12.95, 0060834544.

In **Same-Sex Marriage: The Legal and Psychological Evolution in America** by Donald J. Cantor, Elizabeth Cantor, James C. Black, and Campbell D. Barrett, more heterosexuals chime in to support same-sex marriage, this time looking at the psychological, philosophical, and legal issues of the subject. Presented with the complexity and thoroughness of a court case, this book comes to the conclusion that "same-sex marriage is mandated by social justice, is consistent with the best interests of America's children, and is constitutionally consistent with antecedent rulings." So there. Wesleyan University Press, \$24.95 cloth, 0819568120.



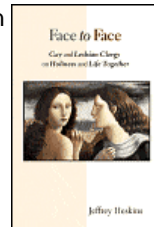
Faith, Spirituality, and Religion



"The black church muffles our queer spirituality by applauding us in its choir pews on the one hand, yet excoriating us from its pulpits on the other," Rev. Irene Monroe succinctly summarizes in her introduction to **Spirited: Affirming the Soul and Black Gay/Lesbian Identity** edited by G. Winston James and Lisa C. Moore. With more than forty contributors, *Spirited* provides heartfelt, sometimes heart wrenching, and soul-full personal accounts of what it is like to be religious/spiritual, black, and gay or lesbian. Conflicts, racism, homophobia, and confusion abound when one has one foot in the black church and another in the LGBT community, and the spiritual narratives from writers, clergy, and worshippers beautifully navigate these waters while celebrating God's love. Dorothy Harris demonstrates the complexities when she says "I am a saved African-American Pentecostal lesbian mother butch daddy who knows that my spiritual calling is sure, who knows that God's love is bigger than any of my insecurities, bigger than any doctrine." Several contributors, including Tonda S. Clarke, include feminism in the mix, associating with some women "who wanted nothing to do with a patriarchal God." Some now practice Buddhism, Wicca, or Yoruba-based religions, while others have found alternative Christian congregations. This collection, like Moore's first book *Does Your Mama Know? An Anthology of Black Lesbian Coming Out Stories* is a rich tapestry of analysis, poetry, love, and spirit. Redbone Press, \$16.95, 0965665933. (Bookstores may order Redbone Press titles through Small Press Distribution, www.spdbooks.org.)

Going to Heaven: The Life and Election of Bishop Gene Robinson by Elizabeth Adams, a biography of the first openly gay man elected as Bishop, is based on interviews with Robinson, his family, and colleagues. Included are in-depth discussions of the impact of his election and how he currently serves both the church and the gay rights movement. Soft Skull Press, \$14.95, 1933368225.

For reflections and analysis of both male and female Anglican priests in England on what it is like to be both an ordained in the church and part of a same-sex couple, look to Jeffrey Heskins' **Face to Face: Gay and Lesbian Clergy on Holiness and Life Together**. These personal stories are interwoven with events affecting the church, such as the election of Gene Robinson as Bishop in New Hampshire. Wm. B. Eerdmans Publishing Co., \$18 paper, 0802863035.



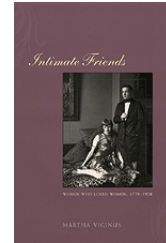
Relationships



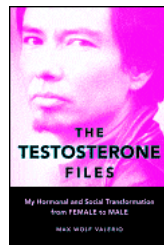
The anthology **Lesbian Academic Couples**, edited by Michelle Gibson and Deborah T. Meem, looks at the issues faced by couples working in academia: spousal hiring (or not), collaboration between partners, long-distance relationships, and the difficult choices forced upon them: closeted or not; active in LGBT issues or not; the career or the relationship as the priority. Haworth/Harrington Park Press, \$19.95 paper, 1560236191.

Lesbian Widows: Invisible Grief by Vicki Whipple includes personal stories of lesbians whose partners died, resources for friends, family and professionals who work with lesbian widows, and discussions of terminal illness, caregiving, funerals and memorial services, grief work, and complications that can arrive due to legal and other matters. Haworth/Harrington Park Press, \$14.95, 1560233311.

Recently released in paperback, **Intimate Friends: Women Who Love Women 1778-1928** by Martha Vicinus, presents 150 years of erotic friendships between women. She begins with the Ladies of Llangollen in 1778 and ends with the publication of Radclyffe Hall's *The Well of Loneliness* in 1928. In between are stories of communities of women, alternative family structures, open couplings, and other arrangements women (in the eighteenth to early-twentieth century) developed to be with each other. The author discusses the careful language she uses (and doesn't), the limitations of her research (source materials are primarily about white, upper-class, educated women), the gender expressions of her subjects (including inverts, mannish women, cross-dressers, and androgynes), and the complexities of love and friendship. She includes lesser known women such as Geraldine Jewsbury and Jane Welsh Carlyle alongside players one would expect to find, e.g. Colette, Natalie Barney, and Romaine Brooks. Extensive notes, a fine bibliography, and wonderful photographs enhance the reading experience. This volume will make a welcome gift for aficionados of lesbian history, identity politics, and the history of women in this time period. University of Chicago Press, \$27 paper, 0226855643.



The Personal is Hormonal



Anita Valerio was a lesbian feminist, punk rock, butch dyke poet whose essay "It's in My Blood, My Face - My Mother's Voice, the Way I Sweat" was included in the classic anthology *This Bridge Called My Back*. After much soul searching, personal exploration, research, and weariness of feeling incongruent in her body, Anita consciously began a journey she had, often unconsciously, been on since girlhood: becoming a man. This journey is thoroughly and thoughtfully explored in **The Testosterone Files: My Hormonal and Social Transformation from Female to Male** by Max Wolf Valerio. Unlike some trans memoirs, this book delves deeply into the emotional, sexual, and intimate changes brought on by testosterone as well as the physical ones. Now Max, the author also reviews his life as Anita: what parts worked, what parts didn't, what meshed with a lesbian feminist identity, and what always felt more male.

The discovery of transsexuals and an in-person meeting with Lou Sullivan, author of the ground-breaking *Information for the Female to Male Cross Dresser and Transsexual*, propel (then) Anita to seriously contemplate making this change. From the first shot of testosterone, Max details both the physical and psychological changes that occur in him while comparing and contrasting them to those of other transmen - and transwomen - he knows. He also re-examines his feminist thinking after discovering that hormones are the cause of huge behavioral and emotional changes, attributes he then quizzes nontranssexual men about for comparison. While his individual journey is incredibly well told and intensely examined, it's his tendency to plant these behavioral and emotional attributes upon male humans as a whole that I found problematic. He mentions at one point that feminism is "narrow minded," but one tenet of feminism that is missing from his analysis is the bringing together of class, race, ethnicity, ability, and location when examining lives. His conclusions about men seem largely focused on hormones alone; while he mentions class, race, ethnicity, and location in terms of his own life, we don't know much about the men - both trans and nontrans - he compares and contrasts himself to during his transition.

Still, there is much rich food for thought here, and as a personal story, it shines brightly. The poetry in Max comes through his prose in lines such as "I bathe in the delightful and sensuous machinery of sexual differentiation. I look good in the rude perfume of decaying boundaries." His comparisons of himself as a partner in relationships with women both before and after his transition are especially interesting, and his explanations of the changes

wrought by testosterone are clear, thorough, and moving. This book makes for both compelling reading and intriguing discussions. Max says it best near the end of the book: "I understand why transpeople were associated with tricksters in tribal cultures. We reflect back at people their hopes, fears, and beliefs without even trying." Seal Press, \$15.95, 1580051731.

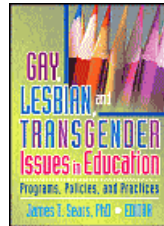


More Nonfiction

In **Gay and Lesbian Rights, Second Edition: A Guide for GLBT Singles, Couples, and Families** by Brette McWhorter Sember, chapters on domestic partnerships, finances, workplace issues, insurance, parenting, health and medical issues, estate planning, activism, home ownership and rental, and name changes have all been updated while a brand-new section discusses municipal domestic partnerships and the eight places that currently legally recognize same-sex partnerships "statewide" (California, Connecticut, District of Columbia, Hawaii, Maine, Massachusetts, New Jersey, and Vermont). Sourcebooks/Sphinx Publishing, \$21.95 paper, 1572485507.



Queer Gothic by George Haggerty provides a scholarly discussion of gothic fiction and sexuality, including work by Mary Shelley, Shirley Jackson, Anne Rice, and Patricia Highsmith among others. Can you say *The Talented Mr. Ripley*? University of Illinois Press, \$20, 0252073533.



Gay, Lesbian, and Transgender Issues in Education: Programs, Policies, and Practices edited by James T. Sears, Ph.D. focuses on what it's like for gay, lesbian, and trans students - the challenges they face and what can be done to support them. Included are stories from students in New Zealand, Australia, Japan, and China, in addition to the U.S. Special sections address GLBT youth of color, children of GLBT parents, combating homophobia in Canadian schools, teaching about sexuality in Appalachia, and working

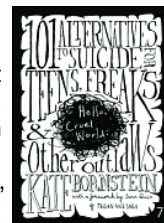
with multicultural trans youth in Hawaii. Haworth/Harrington Park Press, \$24.95 paper, 1560235241.

If you're interested in what the latest research on management styles reveals (gay managers are successful because they are creative, inclusive, adaptable, intuitive, collaborative, communicate well, and know how to network), **The G Quotient: Why Gay Executives are Excelling as Leaders...and What Every Manager Needs to Know** by Kirk Snyder, will fit the bill. But if you're looking for the "G" to include gay women, well, I guess someone will need to write *The L Quotient* as a follow up. Goddess knows lesbians have been demonstrating those traits on softball fields, in collectives, at potlucks, and in boardrooms for decades! Wiley/Jossey-Bass, \$24.95 cloth, 0787982466.



(Not Just) For the Kids

Hello, Cruel World: 101 Alternatives to Suicide for Teens, Freaks, and Other Outlaws is the new title by Kate Bornstein (*Gender Outlaw* and *My Gender Workbook*). What a treasure this book is: the title and cover are reminiscent of Lemony Snicket; the intro is by Sara Quin of rock duo Tegan and Sara; Bornstein's banter is humorous, alternative, shocking, and *dope* (as the kids say); and the graphic layout, is, well, groovy (yes, groovy is back *in*). But more than just good looks and clever delivery, this book is serious in its intent to save lives. Transgender author and performance artist Kate Bornstein tells readers she wants them to stay alive because the world needs more kind people in it. Her only rule: Don't be mean. And she's not sappy or maudlin, in fact, she stresses that the goal is not to feel happy but to feel *better*. And in order to do so, she lists 101 alternatives to suicide,



rated by how easy, safe, effective, and legal (more or less) they are to do. Everything from "Keep Moving" to the seemingly contradictory "Stay in Bed," from "Trash Your Preference Files and Reboot" to "Use the Wrong Tool for the Job" will keep readers of all ages entertained, engaged, and hopefully, inspired. Seven Stories Press, \$14.95, 1583227202.



Julie Anne Peters' latest continues her streak of excellent novels with teen protagonists, following the success of *Luna*, *Keeping You a Secret*, and *Define "Normal."* In **Between Mom and Jo**, fourteen-year-old Nick lives with his moms, Erin and Jo. Their story is told in smoothly flowing non-chronological bits, drawing a portrait of an adolescent boy dealing with the homophobia of teachers, his first love, and the growing problems in the relationship between his two mothers - where he once had great allies in both moms, he begins to feel he has no one.

Nick uses his scrapbook as he explores his memories to figure out why and how things change. "All these years, all these reminders. Some things you carry with you forever; you don't need reminders. Some things leave permanent scars." The love in this family is palpable, though it's challenged by circumstance, tradition, change, and assumptions. In the end of this excellent book, everyone rises to the occasion (in non-maudlin ways) to do what's best for Nick, and Nick again feels he has moms to turn to for support, fun, guidance, and love.

We need more fiction for young teens about families headed by same-sex parents - most of what's out there seems to be geared toward preschoolers or older teens. In *Between Mom and Jo*, Julie Anne Peters has again written an intelligent, realistic, non-preachy, fun, and poignant book that will be enjoyed by readers of all ages. Little, Brown, \$16.99 hardcover, 0316739065.



Books To Watch Out For From Alyson

Alyson Publications has gone through a great deal of change in the last year: a move to New York, the company's acquisition by queer-media-giant-wannabe Planet Out, and an entirely new editorial staff. Some things don't seem to have changed - their list of forthcoming books contains plenty of erotica and, of the total titles, about three-quarters of them are primarily of interest to men.

Not that Alyson completely ignores lesbian literature; they published the paperback edition of *Hood* by Emma Donoghue and also publish mystery series by Elizabeth Sims, Lauren Maddison, and Claire McNab, among others. And Alyson *has* stepped up to the plate to bring new life to classics like Leslie Feinberg's *Stone Butch Blues*, *S/he* by Minnie Bruce Pratt, and the early Kate Delafield mysteries by Katherine V. Forrest, which is fantastic. We hope that lesbian literature will be increasingly visible during this new era for Alyson and that they will send us the forthcoming titles to review on a regular basis.

Below are the spring, summer, and fall titles from Alyson which are of interest to women. Descriptions are based on Alyson's promotional materials.

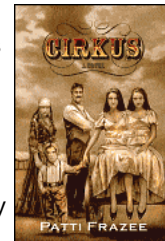
ALREADY AVAILABLE

Cirkus by Patti Frazee. A complex novel set in a circus at the turn-of-the-last-century featuring conjoined female twins and plenty of secrets and drama. \$24.95 cloth, 1555839355.

Favas Can Be Fatal by Priscilla Royal. Alice McDoughall investigates the murder of a food critic in her best friend's eatery. \$13.95, 1555839460.

The New Essential Guide to Lesbian Conception, Pregnancy, and Birth by Stephanie Brill. Updated with information on the latest fertility drugs and protocols, how to time self-insemination based on age, and special information for butches and FTM's. \$21.95 paper, 1555839401.

Wanted: A Bird Blacker Bounty Hunter Novel by T.I. Alvarado. Will this become the lesbian equivalent to Janet Evanovich's humorous Stephanie



Plum series? If it fulfills its promise of “wry charm, suspense, unforgettable characters, and rich comedy,” it may be so! \$14.95, 1555839452.

Blood Sisters: Lesbian Vampire Tales edited by Bianca de Moss. Erotic stories for fans of *The Hunger* and *Daughters of Darkness*. \$14.95, 1555838839.

First-Timers: True Stories of Lesbian Awakening edited by Rachel Kramer Bussel. This anthology collects “first times” of many kinds: strap-ons, spankings, outdoor sex, and of course, first love. \$15.95, 1555839479.

Alyson also has a new poly-gendered series called the Fetish Chest. The first three titles, each \$14.95 and edited by Rachel Kramer Bussel and Christopher Pierce, are **Sexiest Soles: Erotic Stories About Feet and Shoes** (1555839606), **Secret Slaves: Erotic Stories of Bondage** (1555839622), and **Ultimate Undies: Erotic Stories About Underwear and Lingerie** (1555839614). We haven't yet seen these books, so we can't tell you how much of the content is lesbian.

Threeways: Fulfill Your Ultimate Fantasy by Diana Cage. In spite of the male-fantasy indulgent cover picturing two women and a man, this book by the former editor of *On Our Backs* includes plenty of information about threeways of all possible configurations. \$15.95, 1555839398.

AUGUST

The Advocate College Guide for LGBT Students by Shane L. Windmeyer. A reference guide detailing LGBT-friendly sororities and fraternities, queer-affirmative policy, housing for LGBT students, queer studies classes, out professors, and support resources. \$16.95, 1555838561.

Tales of Travelotica for Lesbians: Erotic Travel Adventures edited by Simone Thorne. The subtitle about covers it... \$14.95, 1555839584.

OCTOBER

The Bisexual's Guide to the Universe: Quips, Tips, and Lists for Those Who Go Both Ways by Nicole Kristal and Mike Szymanski. Another illuminating subtitle. \$15.95, 155583650X.

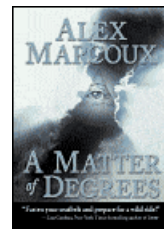
NOVEMBER

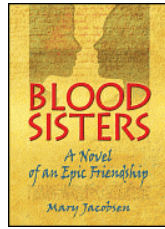
Best Lesbian Love Stories: New York City edited by Simone Thorne. Romance, love, and sometimes heartbreak in “the greatest city in the world.” \$14.95, 155583972X.



Fiction with an Eye to the Ancient

If you're looking for a lavender-tinted *DaVinci Code*, check out **A Matter of Degrees** by Alex Marcoux. Fans of Marcoux's other books will welcome the return of Jessie Mercer and her lover, Taylor Andrews, from *Back to Salem* and mentions of Sidney and Anastasia from *Façades*. In addition, the Freemasons, the Sumerians, the Catholic Church, the Trilateral Commission, and other secret societies are all players in this well-researched thriller. In *A Matter of Degrees*, novelist Jessie Mercer joins forces with TV reporter Rachel Addison to investigate the death of Jessie's brother Steve. Neither woman believes he committed suicide as the police do. Rachel, a recent acquaintance of Steve's, knows that he was infiltrating the Freemasons, so Jessie decides to follow in his footsteps - as a man. Gender bending, conspiracy theories, ancient traditions, and impending world war blend to make this a suspense-filled, if slightly over-the-top read. Haworth/Harrington Park Press, \$19.95 paper, 1560236116. For more about Alex Marcoux and her novels, check out her website: www.alexmarcoux.com.





Intense friendships between lesbians and straight women have long been fruitful fodder for literature. A twist that distinguishes Mary Jacobsen's first novel **Blood Sisters: A Novel of an Epic Friendship** is her characters' continued references to another epic friendship, that of Sumarian king Gilgamesh and his half-human, half-animal friend Enkidu. Val Summers and Emily Ashmont, who meet in college, study this tale in a humanities class. Val views it as a tale of passionate, loving friends, while Emily, known as Ashmont, remembers most the misogyny and cruelty of Gilgamesh. This difference underscores their lives as well, with Val as idealistic, creative, and more of a free spirit, while Ashmont is cynical, suspicious, and guarded. Their story is told via letters, the ones Val writes and mails and those Ashmont writes, but never sends. The role and purpose of family, sex, love, and friendship are explored, as are the effects of abuse on both children and adults. The discussion of these topics was excellent (author Jacobsen is a psychotherapist specializing in family systems who has written in these areas), but we're never really shown what drew these women together so strongly; instead, we must simply take their word for it. That failing aside, I did enjoy *Blood Sisters*. A clever device is the inclusion, as an appendix, of the papers Ashmont and Val wrote about Gilgamesh at the dawn of their friendship. Haworth/Harrington Park Press, \$16.95 paper, 1560233222.

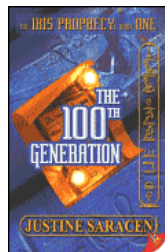


Science Fiction and Fantasy Snippets

Sister Lost, Sister Found by Jeanne G'Fellers is the second in a series of lesbian science fiction novels set in a world where humans are but a genetic trace. First in the series was **No Sister of Mine**. In *Sister Lost, Sister Found*, young Rankil is a Taelach child, destined for abuse from the Autlachs - unless her sister Taelachs can find her. Bella Books, \$13.95, 1594930562.



Nearly four hundred pages of fantasy, swashbuckling adventure, and secrets comprise **Sword of the Guardian** by Merry Shannon, the first book in the Legends of Ithyria series. Bold Strokes Books, \$15.95, 1933110368.



Fans of Egyptology will enjoy **The 100th Generation: The Ibis Prophecy Book One** by Justine Saracen. Valerie Foret, an archaeologist who has spent a year in an Egyptian desert, makes the find of a lifetime and learns more than she bargains for about both ancient Egypt and the hereafter. Kudos to the author for the authenticity lent to the book from her own travels and studies, but the book could benefit from a glossary for those of us not up to speed with the Egyptian language. Bold Strokes Books, \$15.95, 1933110481, late July.

What if there was an earthquake and California really did fall into the ocean? What if the religious right won and all the queers were exiled from America? Helen Ruth Schwartz starts with these old saws in **The Meadowlark Sings** and molds them into a pleasant and relaxing science-fiction/romance set in an almost-familiar near future. It opens with the first diplomatic mission from Cali back to the United States - which seems not to have fared so well after exiling so many of its best and brightest.... Alice Street Editions/Harrington Park, \$19.95 paper, 9781560235750.



Back in Print:

The Traitor and the Chalice: Lyremouth Chronicles Book Two by Jane Fletcher was previously published as Parts Three and Four of *Lorimal's Chalice* by Fortitude Press in 2002. It was a Gaylactic Spectrum Award finalist in 2003. Bold Strokes Books, \$15.95, 1933110430.

The Clinic: Tristaine: Book One by Cate Culpepper, Bold Strokes Books, \$15.95, 1933110422. Originally published by Justice House in 2001. Its sequel, **Battle for Tristaine: Book Two**, is also available, Bold Strokes, \$15.95, 193311049X (originally Justice House, 2003), and a brand-new third book is due from Bold Strokes in late August: **Tristane Rises**, \$15.95, 1933110503.



Friday Night Reads



It's a positive trend that our literature explores numerous aspects of our lives besides seeking and finding love. In **Carly's Sound** by Ali Vali (author of *The Devil Inside*), Poppy Valente is still learning to live without her longtime lover after Carly's death from breast cancer nearly three years earlier. A vacation resort owner, Poppy has surrounded herself with people who are not only outstanding employees but loyal, loving, and supportive friends as well. While preparing for the opening of the crown jewel of her properties, named after her lover and located on an island near Aruba, Poppy opens her heart to a mother and her baby daughter who live in the employee quarters next to Poppy's home on Carly's Sound. Their relationship deepens and grows in spite of both real and perceived obstacles. More than just a love story, *Carly's Sound* is suffused with growth, grief, and questions about loyalty, honor, and integrity, making it a lovely read. Bold Strokes, \$15.95, 1933110457.

Passionate Kisses by Megan Carter is simply delightful. The story of two women and a man who have known each other since preschool is a bit predictable, but the ways tensions between Sara, Taylor, and James play out are well drawn, and the characters are likable. There's also an amusing side story about a modern day treasure hunt which features an entertaining, loveable, and clever older lesbian couple. Overall, *Passionate Kisses* is a fun story about enduring friendship, love, taking risks, and not settling for less than what you desire. Bella Books, \$13.95, 1594930511.



Four very different women find new meaning in their lives in Gun Brooke's **Coffee Sonata**. In a small, coastside Rhode Island town, a reporter, a philanthropist, a world-renowned opera singer, and the owner of a local café help each other explore new opportunities, weather difficulties, and heal from old wounds while they share their love of music and coffee. This book provides insightful looks at class and age differences, the challenges of a progressive disability, the suffocation of the closet, and the wisdom of listening to one's heart. Bold Strokes Books, \$15.95, 1933110414.

Also Received:

Hesed by Maytee Aspuro y Gonzalez. The story of a young Anglican priest and a club owner who become unlikely friends and together explore the tensions that arise between - and among - the queer community and conservative communities of faith. Cavalier Press, \$19.95, 0976566451.

Diving Into the Turn by Carrie Carr. A seasoned bull-riding lesbian hooks up with a barrel racer entering her first rodeo. Regal Crest, \$15.95, 1932300543.

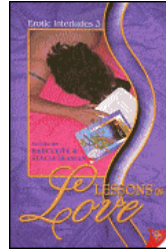
Forever Bound by Jlee Meyer. Two friends, soulmates since preschool but prematurely separated at an early age, reunite under tragic circumstances as adults. Bold Strokes Books, \$15.95, 1933110376.

Punk Like Me by JD Glass. Coming-of-age story about a Catholic-school-student-turned-rock-'n'-roller. Bold Strokes Books, \$15.95, 1933110406.



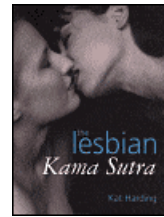
Clit Lit

Karin Kallmaker has long been known as the Mistress of Lesbian Romance, with her entertaining, sweet, and poignant books from Naiad Press and Bella Books, but now she is in contention for an erotica crown as well. With Bella's recent - and naughtier - Bella After Dark (B.A.D.) imprint, the shackles of censorship are off, and Karin is writing about dildos, female ejaculation, and fisting to her, um, heart's content. And she's good at it. Her latest B.A.D. book is **18th and Castro**, about the goings on in a San Francisco apartment building filled to the brim with lesbians one Halloween evening. A collection of inter-connected short stories, these women are old and young, in long-term relationships and first-time pairings, fulfilling fantasies (costumes abound with the Halloween theme), and revisiting old loves. Bella Books, \$13.95, 159493066X.



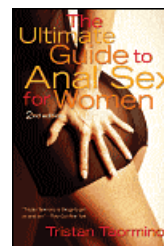
"Teach me." This first line of the first story in the latest erotica anthology from Bold Strokes Books clearly sets the stage for what is to follow in the next three hundred pages. "Talking Dirty" by Meghan O'Brien begins **Lessons in Love**, the third volume in the Erotic Interludes series, edited by Radclyffe and Stacia Seaman. Bold Strokes and Bella Books authors such as Radclyffe, Ronica Black, and Lynne Jamneck are well-represented within, as well as prolific erotica writers like Rachel Kramer Bussel and Amie M. Evans. For others, their appearance in this book is their first time in print. Exploring fantasies with long-time partners, encounters with new women, and indulging newfound proclivities are just some of the scenarios in this steamy collection. I was very moved by the story of a butch recovering from a horrible motorcycle accident ("Transforming Stone" by Karen Perry) and loved the heat and playfulness in the inter-connected stories by Therese Szymanski and Karin Kallmaker. Bold Strokes Books, \$15.95, 1933110392.

In **The Lesbian Kama Sutra**, Kat Harding "reinterprets" the ancient manual of love and sex for women-loving-women. She expands upon it to address modern concerns, like sex and pregnancy for lesbian couples, coming out, safer sex, and piercings. The combination of the ancient with the modern is well done. The artwork in this book is fabulous, consisting of reproductions of paintings throughout the ages that feature women with women, as well as line drawings of a diverse group of dykes. Thomas Dunne Books/St. Martin's Press, \$24.95 cloth, 0312335857.



Another advantage we dykes have over our straight sisters is that we don't have to risk muscle strain or become contortionists in order to try the "101 lesbian lovemaking positions" in **Lesbian Sex 101**. (Have you ever *looked* at the straight equivalents of these books? Chiropractors who need work must write them!) This pillow-book-sized hardbound volume from Jude Schell (*The Guide to Lesbian Sex*) is beautiful to look at and fun to read, especially for the names of the positions. With nods to lesbian culture and history, couples can try "Lilith and Eve" (position #1), "Amelia and Eleanor" (#31), "High Art" (#36), "Riveting Rosie" (#74), and of course, "Tipping the Velvet" (#30). The color photos are beautiful, but I wish there were (closer to) 101 different kinds of women depicted rather than the same three or four white, thin women throughout. Regardless, *Lesbian Sex 101* will indeed attain its stated goal of inspiring and enticing lovers to broaden their sexual repertoire. Hylas Publishing, \$14.95, 1592581714.

Find more "how to" in the second edition of Tristan Taormino's **The Ultimate Guide to Anal Sex for Women**. This is not merely a reprint with a new intro and resources like some second editions - nearly every page has been revised and new chapters added. In the ten years since the original was published, Tristan has taught workshops and listened to women speak about their experiences, and she's included everything she's learned in this informative second

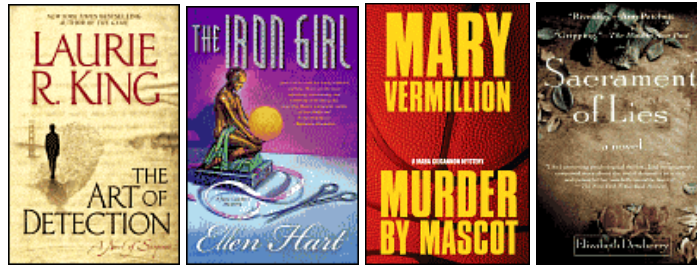


volume. Cleis, \$16.95, 1573442216.



The Crime Scene

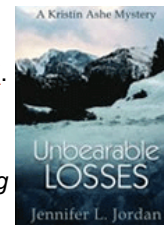
By Nan Cinnater



A new book by Laurie R. King is a big event for mystery readers, let alone a new book that promises to tie together her series about Kate Martinelli, a modern-day lesbian police detective in San Francisco, with her series about Sherlock Holmes. There's a lot to like about **The Art of Detection**, especially for fans of King's previous work. It's great to catch up with Kate Martinelli, her partner, and their pre-school-age daughter. (And I didn't even know they were pregnant!) And it's wonderful to hear about a case set in San Francisco in 1924 from Sherlock Holmes himself. (The premise here is that Kate's investigation involves a previously undiscovered story written in Holmes' voice by Arthur Conan Doyle. The middle section of the book reproduces that manuscript.) But it's sheer joy to see how King connects the two cases chronologically, geographically - and did I mention thematically? The kicker is that both cases revolve around the importance of gay marriage. Laurie R. King is my hero. Bantam, \$24, 0553804537.

Ellen Hart is a legend among lesbian mystery writers, and **The Iron Girl** may be her best novel yet. This is the lucky thirteenth in Hart's series about lesbian restaurateur Jane Lawless and her sidekick Cordelia Thorn. *The Iron Girl* combines personal revelations about Jane's past with a particularly Gothic family murder plot, along with better-than-usual comic interludes by Cordelia, whose Auntie Mame schtick rivals Roz Russell. When we met Jane in the first book (*Hallowed Murder*, St. Martin's/Minotaur, \$13.95, 0312319312), she was a lesbian widow who had recently lost the love of her life to cancer. Now Jane seems ready for a real relationship again, and she's finally sorting through a lot of the boxes left behind when Christine died. When Jane finds a gun among peaceable Christine's stuff, she wonders what was going on in Christine's last months. If you've never read Hart, or if, like me, you haven't picked up the series in a while, this is a great place to jump in. St. Martin's/Minotaur, \$13.95, 0312317506.

Jennifer L. Jordan instantly became one of my favorite lesbian mystery writers with the publication of *Commitment to Die* (Spinsters, \$11.95, 0966735900), reviewed in [TLE #7](#). It turns out that *Commitment to Die* was the third in a series about part-time Denver private investigator Kristin Ashe. Now Spinsters Ink has reissued that title and the first two in the series, *A Safe Place to Sleep* (1883523702) and *Existing Solutions* (1883523699) along with a fourth, **Unbearable Losses** (1883523680, all \$14.95). Jordan's website, www.JenniferLJordan.com, says that a fifth Kristen Ashe mystery, *Disorderly Attachments*, will be forthcoming from Spinsters in the fall.



In **Unbearable Losses**, Kristin Ashe has two cases, one much lighter weight than the other. Elderly sisters Clarice and Eunice Crumpler hire Kristin to find out who's been filching items from their enormous, lavish Christmas display. Meanwhile, closeted lesbian Lori Parks, director of a competitive, upscale daycare center, wants Kristin to find out who's been sending ominous threatening messages to the center. Kristin becomes increasingly convinced that the threats have to do with a buried tragedy in Lori's past. Kristin's excellent Watson, ex-nun Fran Green - think a younger Mary Wickes liberated from the habit after *Sister Act* - isn't much help because she's dealing with a relationship crisis. This is a near-perfect mix of lesbian social comedy and strongly plotted mystery, with believable characters, real issues, and mounting suspense. Although this is perhaps

Jordan's most traditional mystery, it's worth noting that none of her books are actually about murders. Jordan employs some unique premises (in *A Safe Place to Sleep*, a client wants Kristin to "find her childhood") in order to deal with the more interesting questions of "why" and "how" instead of "whodunit."

In *Death By Discount*, reviewed in [TLE #11](#), author Mary Vermillion took on WalMart and the controversy over its impact on a small Midwestern town. Now in the sequel, **Murder by Mascot**, she deals with sexism and homophobia in the world of college women's basketball. Lesbian reporter and radio DJ Mara Gilgannon is a big fan of women's basketball at the University of Iowa. When the star player on the men's basketball team is murdered after being accused of rape, Mara is asked to investigate. The assistant coach of the women's team is worried that her players are suspects, since one of the women players was the rape victim. Mara is worried that her ex, Anne, is a suspect, because she heads up the Women's Center and is a known anti-rape activist. As in the first book, Mara's gay roommate and best friend Vince provides backup, emotional support, and amusing banter. This is an extremely well done traditional mystery, with lots of alibi-checking and questioning of suspects, but I just couldn't get excited about it. This doubtless reflects my lack of enthusiasm about sports in general and basketball in particular - which I'm guessing isn't true for the average lesbian reader. Alyson, \$13.95. 1555839169.

In **Sacrament of Lies** by Elizabeth Dewberry, something is rotten in the state of Louisiana. Grayson Guillory suspects that her manic-depressive mother was murdered by her father, the charismatic governor of Louisiana and presidential wannabe. The death appeared to be suicide via pills and alcohol, and Grayson even helped to cover it up. But Grayson's mother left behind a videotape claiming there was a plot to kill her. Since everyone in Grayson's life - including her husband, a speechwriter - is under the sway of her powerful father, she has no one to turn to. The result is Hamlet's dilemma played out by a contemporary female hero. Can Grayson trust her paranoid, possibly delusional mother? Can she trust herself? This is powerful stuff (hey, it worked for Will), elegantly written and mesmerizing to read. BlueHen Books/Berkley, \$13, 0425188612.



Sam Falconer is another woman with father issues. In Victoria Blake's first mystery, *Bloodless Shadow*, Sam, an Oxford-based private investigator and former judo champion, received a letter from the father she believed died when she was four. Now, in **Cutting Blades** it seems her father is stalking her, even as she goes about her business on a case involving a missing Oxford rower and missing antique jewelry. Blake writes *noir* with a contemporary feminist twist; if Dashiell Hammett's Sam Spade were a 21st century woman, wouldn't she be dealing with her dysfunctional childhood, however reluctantly, in therapy? Sam is not a lesbian, but she's a very independent woman whose closest relationships are with her gay brother and gay business partner. The plot of *Cutting Blades* is not as neatly tied up as in *Bloodless Shadow*, but perhaps that's only fitting, since Sam is a character with some ragged edges too. Berkley/Prime Crime, \$14, 0425209997.

Briefly Noted

This Dame for Hire, Sandra Scoppettone's tribute to the tough dames of the forties, is now available in paperback (Ballantine, \$6.99, 0345478118, reviewed in [TLE #19](#)). The sequel, **Too Darn Hot**, is newly out in hardcover. Ballantine, \$24.95, 0345478126.

Linda Barnes' Boston-based private eye and sometime cab driver Carlotta Carlisle, although not a lesbian herself, has long been a favorite with lesbian readers. In **Heart of the World**, Carlotta is searching for her adopted little sister, Paolina, who has disappeared. The search takes her to Colombia, home of Paolina's estranged father, a drug lord. St. Martin's/Minotaur, \$24.95, 0312332874.

In **Murder at Random: A Denise Cleever Thriller** by Claire McNab, Denise goes undercover to infiltrate a terrorist group who pays amateur contract killers for random, brutal, attention-getting murders. Bella Books, \$13.95, 1594930473.

Feminist Bookstore News

Mystery writer Claire McNab, who hails from Australia originally, sent us the exciting news that Gail Hewison and Libby Silva, who have run the Feminist Bookshop in Sydney for the last twenty-five years, were each honored recently with an OAM (Order of Australia Medal) in the Queen's Birthday Honours List. The citation reads "For service to the community through the provision of information and resources on issues affecting women and to Australian literature through the support and promotion of the work of female writers." Learn more about Libby, Gail, and the Feminist Bookshop on their website: www.feministbookshop.com.



Awards

Project QueerLit

The first Project QueerLit contest resulted in a tie. The winning books are both lesbian and transgender-themed and have just been published by contest originator Suspect Thoughts Press:

Origami Striptease by Peggy Munson, \$16.95, 0976341190
Supervillainz by Alicia Goranson, \$16.95, 0976341182

Look for reviews of these titles in the next *Lesbian Edition*.

The Project: QueerLit contest is open to any unpublished author of an English-language novel with queer and/or bent content. For more information, check out www.projectqueerlit.com.

Saints and Sinners Hall of Fame

Lee Lynch, Steven Saylor, J.M. Redmann, and Harrington Park Press were inaugurated into the annual Saints and Sinners Hall of Fame at this year's conference. The Hall of Fame recognizes LGBT Literary Saints who have made significant contributions to LGBT literature. Past inductees include Ann Bannon, Katherine V. Forrest, Jewelle Gomez, Val McDermid, Patricia Nell Warren, and our very own BTWOF/FBN publisher Carol Seajay.

The Goldie Awards

The Golden Crown Literary Society (GCLS) Awards are presented to "lesbian novels of popular and literary merit written in the English language" in the categories below. Winners receive \$150 and recognition at a ceremony that takes place in conjunction with the GCLS Convention each year. This year's winners, for novels published during the year 2005, are as follows:

Sci-Fi/Fantasy/Speculative/Horror

Dark Dreamer, Jennifer Fulton, Regal Crest Enterprises
No Sister of Mine, Jeanne G'Fellers, Bella Books
Protector of The Realm, Gun Brooke, Bold Strokes Books

Romance/Erotic Love Stories

A Guarded Heart, Jennifer Fulton, Regal Crest Enterprises
Just Like That, Karin Kallmaker, Bella Books
Unbreakable, Blayne Cooper, BookEnds Press

Mystery/Thriller/Adventure/Action

Grave Silence, Rose Beecham, Bold Strokes Books
Justice Served, Radclyffe, Bold Strokes Books
The Iron Girl, Ellen Hart, St. Martin's Press

Debut Author

Course of Action, Gun Brooke, Bold Strokes Books
In Too Deep, Ronica Black, Bold Strokes Books
Misplaced People, C. G. Devize, Intaglio Publications

2006 Trailblazer Award

Sarah Aldridge (Anyda Marchant) was recognized as a pioneering

feminist writer and publisher, who wrote fourteen novels about strong women and same sex relationships.

Books in Canada First Novel Award 2005 Shortlist

The Books in Canada First Novel Award (now sponsored by amazon.ca) is given annually to the best first novel in English published the previous year by a citizen or resident of Canada. Awarded since 1977, the prize has helped to launch the careers of such internationally known novelists as Dionne Brand, Joy Kogawa, and Anne Michaels. Three titles by women are on the shortlist for this year's award (comments are from the judges):

Gotta Find Me an Angel by Brenda Brooks, Raincoast Books, \$21.95, 1551927179. "Sadness is often dispelled with humor and character descriptions are sometimes laugh-out-loud funny."

The Nettle Spinner by Kathryn Kuitenbrouwer, Goose Lane Editions, CDN\$21.95, 0864924224 (not currently available in the U.S.). "A beautifully conceived novel."

Sad Truth About Happiness by Anne Giardini, Harper, \$13.95, 0060741775, August. "The cast of characters is fabulous, the writing brilliant, the story quirky with just the perfect number of twists."

This award has had a tumultuous history, from its genesis in 1977 by the literary magazine Books in Canada. The magazine has had several funding partners since then including Smithbooks and Chapters Books, and has been affiliated with Amazon's Canadian site since 1999.



Festivals and Conventions

The Fifth Saints and Sinners Literary Festival will be held May 11 - 13, 2007. For more information check out www.sasfest.org. Put it on your calendar now.

Next year's Golden Crown Literary Society Convention, the third, will be June 14 - 17, 2007, in Atlanta. Learn more at www.gclscon.com.



Passings

Earlier this year we reported the death of [Anyda Marchant](#), and now we have news that her partner of 57 years, **Muriel Inez Crawford**, passed away on June 7 at her home in South Rehoboth, Delaware.

Muriel Inez Crawford was born in 1914 in Washington, DC. She worked as an executive secretary for both a law firm and the Southern Railroad (now Amtrak) before cofounding Naiad Press with Anyda, Barbara Grier, and Donna McBride in 1972. Muriel and Anyda left Naiad in the mid-nineties and founded A&M Books, which continued to publish Anyda's books under the pen name Sarah Aldridge. At the time of her death, Crawford was Publisher Emeritus with A&M Books. Muriel is survived by a niece and nephew and a family of dear friends.

[A&M Books](#) will continue under the direction of Fay Jacobs, who has been managing the press for the last few years.



Writing Wanted

Lee Lynch is collecting recipes and cooking stories for *The Butch Cook Book*. From the call for submissions: "We want to hear where the recipe came from and how it was a success or a fiasco; if it's one of a gazillion or the only one the cook knows; if it was improvised for food allergies or is requested at every function." Femmes can also submit recipes on behalf of

shy butches, the ones who “blush clear down into our white gym socks and up into the roots of our cool haircuts at the slightest provocation.” Send brief stories and recipes to greenhat66@gmail.com.

Amie M. Evans and Trebor Healey are collecting work for a “Queer and Catholic” anthology to be published by Harrington Park Press. From the call for submissions: “This anthology seeks to explore positively or negatively how being raised Catholic informs our queerness and how our queerness affects our Catholicism....We are really more interested in the culture of Catholicism rather than the dogma or letter of it.” They’re looking for previously unpublished personal essays, narrative prose, and creative nonfiction between 1,500-5,000 words. Deadline: November 1, 2006. Email pussywhippedproductions@hotmail.com or write them at 33 Campbell St., Woburn, MA 01801.

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Books for New Orleans

The New Orleans Public Library is seeking donations of any and all hardcover and paperback books to help restock their shelves after last year's devastating hurricanes. Books that the library doesn't keep for their collection will be distributed to destitute families or sold for library fundraising. Send books to: Rica A. Trigs, Public Relations, New Orleans Public Library, 219 Loyola Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70112. The post office is helping out, too - tell them the books are for the library in New Orleans, and they will charge you the library rate which is slightly less than the book rate. For more information, contact Rinah Hamburger at NormRinah@comcast.net.

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Yours in spreading the words,

Carol Seajay
for *Books To Watch Out For*



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