

## LGBTQIA+ Books for Teens

Compiled by Leah Bowyer, 2024

### Selected LGBTQIA Books for Teens

#### Fiction

- F/Alb Albertalli, Becky. *LEAH ON THE OFFBEAT*. Baltzer & Bray/HarperCollins. Leah Burke is an anomaly in her friend group: the only child of a young, single mom; her life is decidedly less privileged. She loves to draw but is too self-conscious to show it. And even though her mom knows she's bisexual, she hasn't mustered the courage to tell her friends-- not even her openly gay BFF, Simon. When her rock-solid friend group starts to fracture in unexpected ways, it's hard for Leah to strike the right note. And with prom and college on the horizon, tensions are running high. If only real life was as rhythmic as her drumming...
- F/Col Coles, Jay. *THINGS WE COULDN'T SAY*. Scholastic Press, 2021. There's always been a hole in Gio's life. Not because he's into both guys and girls. Not because his father has some drinking issues. Not because his friends are always bringing him their drama. No, the hole in Gio's life takes the shape of his birth mom, who left Gio, his brother, and his father when Gio was nine years old. For eight years, he never heard a word from her . . . and now, just as he's started to get his life together, she's back.
- F/Cre Crespo, Alex. *SAINT JUNIPER'S FOLLY*. Peachtree Teen/Peachtree, 2023. The woods of Saint Juniper's Folly and its ghosts draw three teenagers together. But can they each face their demons to forge a bond strong enough to escape the Folly's shadows?
- F/Dan Danforth, Emily M. *THE MISEDUCATION OF CAMERON POST*. Balzer & Bray/HarperCollins, 2012. In the early 1990s, when gay teenager Cameron Post rebels against her conservative Montana ranch town and her family decides she needs to change her ways, she is sent to a gay conversion therapy center.
- F/Der Derrick, Alyson. *FORGET ME NOT*. Simon & Schuster, 2023. Eighteen-year-old Stevie and Nora's plan to abandon their conservative small town for California so they can be together is shattered when a terrible fall steals every trace of Stevie's relationship with Nora from her memory.
- F/Eme Emezi, Akwaeke. *PET*. Make Me a World, 2019. In a near-future society that claims to have gotten rid of all monstrous people, a creature emerges from a painting seventeen-year-old Jam's mother created, a hunter from another world seeking a real-life monster.
- F/Gin Gino, Alex. *MELISSA*. Scholastic Press, 2022. When people look at George, they think they see a boy. But she knows she's not a boy. She knows she's a girl. George thinks she'll have to keep this a secret forever. Then her teacher announces that their class play is going to be Charlotte's Web. George really, really, REALLY wants

to play Charlotte. But the teacher says she can't even try out for the part ... because she's a boy. With the help of her best friend, Kelly, George comes up with a plan. Not just so she can be Charlotte -- but so everyone can know who she is, once and for all.

- F/Har Hartinger, Brent. GEOGRAPHY CLUB. HarperCollins, 2003. A group of gay and lesbian teenagers finds mutual support when they form the "Geography Club" at their high school.
- F/Kon Konigsburg, Bill. OPENLY STRAIGHT. Arthur A. Levine Books, c2013. Tired of being known as "the gay kid", Rafe Goldberg decides to assume a new persona when he comes east and enters an elite Massachusetts prep school--but trying to deny his identity has both complications and unexpected consequences.
- F/Lee Lee, Emery. MEET CUTE DIARY. Quill Tree Books/HarperCollins, 2021. Noah Ramirez thinks he's an expert on romance. He has to be for his popular blog, the Meet Cute Diary, a collection of trans happily ever afters. There's just one problem; all the stories are fake. When a troll exposes the blog as fiction, Noah's world unravels. The only way to save the Diary is to convince everyone that the stories are true, but he doesn't have any proof. Then Drew walks into Noah's life, and the pieces fall into place.
- F/Lev Levithan, David. TWO BOYS KISSING. Alfred A. Knopf, 2013. A chorus of men who died of AIDS observes and yearns to help a cross-section of today's gay teens who navigate new love, long-term relationships, coming out, self-acceptance, and more in a society that has changed in many ways.
- F/ Lie Lieberman, Leanne. GRAVITY. Orca, 2008. Afraid that there is no way to be both gay and Jewish, Ellie Gold, an orthodox Jewish teenager feels forced to either alter her sexuality or leave her Jewish community until her mother and sister offer alternative concepts of God that help Ellie find a place for herself.
- F/Lo Lo, Malinda. LAST NIGHT AT THE TELEGRAPH CLUB. Dutton Books, 2021. With the threat of deportation looming over her father--in spite of his hard-won citizenship and disavowal of Communism--seventeen-year-old American-born Chinese Lily Hu pursues a relationship with her Caucasian classmate Kath.
- F/New Newman, Lesléa. OCTOBER MOURNING: A SONG FOR MATTHEW SHEPARD. Candlewick, 2012. A poetic work which relates, from various points of view, events from the night of October 6, 1998, when twenty-one-year-old Matthew Shepard, a gay college student, was lured out of a Wyoming bar, savagely beaten, tied to a fence, and left to die.
- F/Sae Saenz, Benjamin Alire. ARISTOTLE AND DANTE DISCOVER THE SECRETS OF THE UNIVERSE. Simon & Schuster, 2012. Fifteen-year-old Ari Mendoza is an angry loner with a brother in prison, but when he meets Dante and they become friends, Ari starts to ask questions about himself, his parents, and his family that he has never asked before.

- F/San Sanchez, Alex. THE GOD BOX. Simon and Schuster, 2007. When openly gay Manuel transfers to Paul's high school, Paul, a born-again Christian, begins to question his own sexuality.
- F/Tho Thomas, Aiden. CEMETERY BOYS. Swoon Reads, 2020. Yadriel has summoned a ghost, and now he can't get rid of him. When his traditional Latinx family has problems accepting his gender, Yadriel becomes determined to prove himself a real brujo.
- F/Woo Woodson, Jacqueline. FROM THE NOTEBOOKS OF MELANIN SUN. Blue Sky, 1995. Fourteen-year-old Melanin Sun's comfortable, quiet life is shattered when his mother reveals she has fallen in love with a woman.
- 741.5/Mer Merey, Ilike. A + E 4EVER: A GRAPHIC NOVEL. Lethe Press, 2011. Asher Machnik is a teenage boy cursed with a beautiful androgynous face. Eulalie Mason is the lonely, tough-talking dyke from school who befriends Ash. The only one to see and accept all of his sides as a loner, a fellow artist and a best friend, she's starting to wonder if Ash is ever going to see all of her ... a + e 4EVER is a graphic novel set in that ambiguous crossroads where love and friendship, boy and girl, straight and gay meet
- 741.59/Cur Curato, Mike. FLAMER. Henry Holt and co, 2020. It's the summer between middle school and high school, and Aiden Navarro is away at camp. Everyone's going through changes--but for Aiden, the stakes feel higher. As he navigates friendships, deals with bullies, and spends time with Elias (a boy he can't stop thinking about), he finds himself on a path of self-discovery and acceptance.
- 741.59/Tam Tamaki, Mariko. LAURA DEAN KEEPS BREAKING UP WITH ME. First Second, 2019. Laura Dean, the most popular girl in high school, was Frederica Riley's dream girl, but Freddy is learning she is not the best girlfriend, so she seeks help from a mysterious medium and advice columnists to help her through being a teenager in love.
- 741.59/Wal Walden, Tillie. ON A SUNBEAM. First Second, 2018. In two interwoven timelines, a ragtag crew travels to the deepest reaches of space, rebuilding beautiful, broken structures to piece the past together; and two girls meet in boarding school and fall deeply in love, only to learn the pain of loss.

### Collected Essays/Interviews

- 306.76/Kuk Kuklin, Susan. BEYOND MAGENTA: TRANSGENDER TEENS SPEAK OUT. Candlewick, 2014. A work of LGBT literature takes a look at the life, love, and struggles of 6 transgender teens, who share their voices, photographs and experiences.
- 306.76/Let Moon, Sarah, Ed. with James Lescene. THE LETTER Q: QUEER WRITERS' NOTES TO THEIR YOUNGER SELVES. Arthur A. Levine, 2012. Collects letters from 64 famous contributors, including Brian Selznick, David Levithan, Michael Cunningham,

Jacqueline Woodson, and Amy Bloom to offer hope and support in the face of prejudice.

## Information

- 306.76/Als Alsenas, Linas. GAY AMERICA: STRUGGLE FOR EQUALITY. Abrams. 2008. Milestones of gay and lesbian life in the United States are brought together in the first-ever nonfiction book on the topic published specifically for teens. Illustrated with period photographs, first-person accounts offer insight as each chapter identifies an important era. From the Gay '20s to the Kinsey study, from the McCarthy witch hunts to the Beat generation, from Stonewall to disco, and from AIDS to gay marriage and families, this overview gives a look at how queer men and women have lived, worked, played--and fought to overcome prejudice and discrimination for the past 125 years.
- 306.76/Bel Belge, Kathy. QUEER: THE ULTIMATE LGBTQ GUIDE FOR TEENS. Zest Books, 2019. A guide that helps LGBT teens come out to friends and family, navigate their new LGBT social life, figure out if a crush is also queer, and rise up against bigotry and homophobia.
- 306.76/Pit Pitman, Gayle E. THE STONEWALL RIOTS: COMING OUT IN THE STREETS. Abrams Books for Young Readers, 2019. This book is about the Stonewall Riots, a series of spontaneous, often violent demonstrations attributed as the spark that ignited the LGBTQ+ Movement. The author describes American gay history leading up to the Riots, the Riots themselves, and the aftermath, and includes her interviews of people involved or witnesses, including a woman who was ten at the time. Profusely illustrated, the book includes contemporary photos, newspaper clippings among other period objects.

## Biography/Memoir

- 306.76/And Andrews, Arin with Joshua Lyon. SOME ASSEMBLY REQUIRED: THE NOT-SO-SECRET LIFE OF A TRANSGENDER TEEN. Simon and Schuster, 2014. Seventeen-year-old Arin Andrews shares all the hilarious, painful, and poignant details of undergoing gender reassignment as a high school student in this winning teen memoir (Arin shares his experience meeting and dating Katie Hill, author of RETHINKING NORMAL)
- 306.76/Hil Hill, Katie Rain. RETHINKING NORMAL: A MEMOIR IN TRANSITION. Simon and Schuster, 2014. In this Young Adult memoir, a transgender girl shares her personal journey of growing up as a boy and then undergoing gender reassignment during her teens. Katie reflects on her pain-filled childhood and the events leading up to the life-changing decision to undergo gender reassignment as a teenager. She reveals the unique challenges she faced while unlearning how to be a boy and shares what it was like to navigate the dating world and experience heartbreak for the first time in a body that matched her gender identity.

- 306.76/Joh Johnson, George. ALL BOYS AREN'T BLUE. Farrar Straus Giroux, 2020. In a series of personal essays, prominent journalist and LGBTQIA+ activist George M. Johnson explores his childhood, adolescence, and college years in New Jersey and Virginia. From the memories of getting his teeth kicked out by bullies at age five, to flea marketing with his loving grandmother, to his first sexual relationships, this young-adult memoir weaves together the trials and triumphs faced by Black queer boys.
- 306.76/Kob Kobabe, Maia. GENDER QUEER: A MEMOIR. Oni Press, 2020. Maia's intensely cathartic autobiography charts her journey of self-identity, which includes the mortification and confusion of adolescent crushes, grappling with how to come out to family and society, bonding with friends over erotic gay fanfiction, and facing the trauma and fundamental violation of pap smears. Started as a way to explain to her family what it means to be nonbinary and asexual, Gender Queer is more than a personal story: it is a useful and touching guide on gender identity--what it means and how to think about it--for advocates, friends, and humans everywhere.
- 306.76/Pra Prager, Sarah. RAINBOW REVOLUTIONARIES: 50 LGBTQ+ PEOPLE WHO MADE HISTORY. Harper/HarperCollins, 2020. Rainbow Revolutionaries brings to life the vibrant histories of fifty pioneering LGBTQ+ people from around the world. Through Sarah Prager's (Queer, There, and Everywhere) short, engaging bios, and Sarah Papworth's bold, dynamic art, readers can delve into the lives of Wen of Han, a Chinese emperor who loved his boyfriend as much as his people, Martine Rothblatt, a trans woman who's helping engineer the robots of tomorrow, and so many more.
- 364.15/Sla Slater, Dashka. THE 57 BUS. Farrar Straus Giroux, 2017. If it weren't for the 57 bus, Sasha and Richard never would have met. Both were high school students from Oakland, California, one of the most diverse cities in the country, but they inhabited different worlds. Sasha, a white teen, lived in the middle-class foothills and attended a small private school. Richard, a black teen, lived in the crime-plagued flatlands and attended a large public one. Each day, their paths overlapped for a mere eight minutes. But one afternoon on the bus ride home from school, a single reckless act left Sasha severely burned, and Richard charged with two hate crimes and facing life imprisonment.

For more titles:

Stonewall Book Award - The first and most enduring award for LGBTQIA+ books is the Stonewall Book Awards, sponsored by the American Library Association's Rainbow Round Table. Since Isabel Miller's *Patience and Sarah* received the first award in 1971, many other books have been honored for exceptional merit relating to LGBT experiences.