

Girls and Lesbian, Bisexual, and Questioning Identities

Bauer, Marion Dane, Ed. (1994). *Am I blue? Coming out from the silence*. New York: HarperCollins. ISBN 0-06-024253-1. \$5.95.

Positive critical reviews from professional journals put this collection on the American Library Association recommended book list for young adult readers. The contributors to this anthology of short stories with gay or lesbian themes are well known writers for tweens and teens. The portrayals of the characters are sensitively drawn. A helpful resource for struggling teens and their parents. A carefully crafted story for teens is a good story to be enjoyed by adults as well.

Garden, Nancy. (1982). *Annie on my mind*. New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux. ISBN 0-374-40414-3. \$4.95.

A fictional account of the high school experiences of 17 year-old Liza Winthrop, who was a freshman majoring in architecture at Massachusetts Institute of Technology at the time of publication. Her vivid memories of meeting her friend Annie at the Metropolitan Museum of Art and their mutual attraction for one another comes back to her as she writes a letter to her special friend several years later. The subtle sexual awakening in Liza is sensitively portrayed as the two girls become friends with two of their teachers who are lesbians. The reading level is appropriate for older middle school or junior high girls. The story is well written and can be enjoyed by adults as well as teens.

Heron, Ann, Ed. (1995). *Two teenagers in 20: Writings by gay and lesbian youth*. Los Angeles: Alyson. ISBN 1-55583-282-2. \$10.95.

Young people of both sexes across the country, from Maine to California, contributed their thoughts to this collection. They range in age from 12 to 20. The editor published an earlier book in the 1980's with the title, *One Teenager in Ten*. The statistic was based on the work of the well-known researcher Alfred C. Kinsey. The editor, who felt that the statistic needed updating, and the publisher established a pen pal network following the earlier book's publication. Many of the essays in this edition were drawn from those letters. Nineteen new stories were added and some were dropped.

Marcus, Eric. (1999). *Is it a choice? Answers to 300 of the most frequently asked questions about gay and lesbian people*. New York: HarperCollins. ISBN 0-06-251623-X. \$13.00.

A completely revised and updated version of an earlier edition published in 1993. The author found that even his personal friends were as ignorant as the general public about the lives of gays and lesbians. He has made an attempt to answer at least 300 questions, but provides his contact information for those whose questions were not answered in the book. Marcus uses anecdotes from actual people with whom he has spoken and composites of individuals who have attended his lectures or communicated with him via email. A practical resource for all ages.

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Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Questioning (2)

Marcus, Eric. (2000). *What if someone I know is gay? Answers to questions about gay and lesbian people*. New York: Price Stern Sloan. ISBN 0-8431-7611-3. \$4.99.

Written in an even more reader-friendly style than his previous book (see above), this handy paperback resource uses a question and answer format as well, but the page layout makes this book more accessible to young people who might not have great reading skills or are younger than teenagers. Once again, the questions are real and are supplied to the author from many contributors, including those directly from kids who emailed him after his last book. The Resources section at the end includes recommended books, videos, organizations, hotlines, and web sites with advice about using Internet chat rooms.

Mastoon, Adam. (1997). *The shared heart: Portraits and stories celebrating lesbian, gay and bisexual young people*. New York: William Morrow. ISBN 0-688-14931-6. \$22.50.

Superb black and white portraits illustrate the lives of forty older teens and twenty-somethings. Some of the stories are positive and some relay the sad tales of young people who have negative encounters with intolerant people. A one-page biography accompanies each photograph, along with a short handwritten note from the young person who is profiled. The photographs are stunning! Don't let the fact that there is a picture of a boy on the cover stop you. There are plenty and girls and young women inside.

Pollack, Rachel & Schwartz, Cheryl. (1995). *The journey out: A book for and about gay, lesbian, and bisexual teens*. New York: Viking. ISBN 0-670-85845-5. \$14.99.

Suggestions for gay, lesbian, and bisexual teenagers to help them discover their sexual orientation, find self-acceptance, come out, cope with prejudices, and deal with religious and political issues. The book is small and thin enough (148 pages) to be inviting to young teens. There's plenty of white space too.

Ponton, Lynn. (2000). *The Sex lives of teenagers: Revealing the secret world of adolescent boys and girls*. New York: Dutton. ISBN 0-525-94561-X. \$24.95.

One chapter (#6) in this book about broad issues of sexuality contains "food for thought" that enlightens both adolescents who are dealing with their emerging sexual feelings and parents who are trying to handle their own feelings about what is happening in the lives of their child. Both a young man and young woman are patients of Dr. Ponton, who is a psychoanalyst. Her skills as a facilitator of conversations between the teenagers and their parents is beneficial to all the participants and provides valuable insights to the reader.

Reed, Rita. (1997). *Growing up gay: The sorrows and joys of gay and lesbian adolescence*. New York: W.W. Norton. ISBN 0-393-31659-9. \$19.95.

This photographic biography of two young people is a sensitive portrayal of the struggles of adolescence amplified by the awakening realization that these teens are following a different path than most of the kids in their age group. The author/photographer is a member of the *Star Tribune* staff in Minneapolis. Her photographs illustrate the text, which is made up of the words spoken by Amy and Jamie themselves. This technique makes a real connection between the reader and the girls.



Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Questioning (3)

Romesburg, Don, Ed. (1995). *Young, gay & proud*. 4th edition. Los Angeles: Alyson. ISBN 1-55583-279-2. \$5.95.

The first edition of this small paperback appeared in 1980. Much has changed in our society since then, but many of the same questions remain: Am I really gay? What will my friends think? Should I tell my parents? Bisexuality and lesbianism are included, even though the terms do not appear in the title. The appendix contains supportive resources available through organizations and suggested readings. Small profiles of famous people appear, along with relevant films.

