



# The Lavender Salon Reader

The Newsletter & Literary Review for  
Gay & Lesbian Reading Clubs

Volume 2 Number 1  
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## Club News

### AfterWords Book Club, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

AfterWords Book Club will meet at AfterWords Monday, June 13 at 7:30p.m. to discuss Martin Duberman's *Stonewall* in honor of the Stonewall 25 celebrations this month.

May's meeting was a discussion of Bruce Bawer's book, *A Place at the Table*, and Robert Baker's romp, *Tim and Pete*.

Anyone interested in discussing *Stonewall*, or anyone just interested in joining the Book Club is welcome to attend.

For more information contact AfterWords at 2710 N. Murray Avenue, Milwaukee, WI 53211.

(414) 963-9089.

### Brown Bag Book Club Madison, Wisconsin

The Brown Bag Book Club meets the 2nd Wednesday of each month.

Our last meeting was a discussion of Armistead Maupin's most recent book *Maybe the Moon*. We had a difficult time identifying with the 30 inch female midget and her problems. Even though there were gay characters in the story, we couldn't help but wonder why Maupin had chosen such a character as the focus of the book.

Our next meeting will be held on June 8. The book to be discussed will be David Leavitt's *While England Sleeps*.

For more information concerning the Brown Bag Book Club call (414) 738-0497.

### Hardy Boys Book Club Ann Arbor, Michigan

The Hardy Boys Book Club met June 2. In observance of the 25th anniversary of the

Stonewall riots, we discussed Martin Duberman's book *Stonewall*. Opinions varied on the quality of the book, but everyone seemed to agree that the history of the events was interesting. One person said that the book was good, but suffered in comparison to our last book, Randy Shilts' *The Mayor of Castro Street*.

One of our regular members, Stewart Watson, lived in New York in 1970. He recalled the excitement he felt when he marched in the first Stonewall parade, one year after the riot. He remembers seeing several of the people portrayed in the book at the parade.

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## The Lavender Salon Reader

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Michael L. Nitz

### Editorial Policy

The Lavender Salon Reader seeks to represent the broad interests of gay & lesbian book clubs; to present a place to share our activities; to provide a forum for the discussion of gay, lesbian and bisexual literature and their related industries. Opinions expressed in reviews of books, videos, and recordings represent those of the authors alone. The Lavender Salon Reader does not discriminate on the basis of sexual orientation. The Lavender Salon Reader is not responsible for unsolicited materials.

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## Editor's Notes

Happy Anniversary and welcome to the first issue of our second season! This June, gay communities from around the world are celebrating the 25th anniversary of the Stonewall riots. In celebration of that fact, many gay & lesbian reading clubs are reading and discussing the event through Martin Duberman's fascinating study. *Stonewall*.

I am very happy to be publishing another article by Dr. Margaret Colucciello. Many of you commented on your interest in her series on nursing and the gay community. Dr. Colucciello is writing this time about care providers and their need for support; issues she feels that have been overlooked during our concern for the patient.

I am also pleased to have our second review by Wendy Betts. Wendy reviews children's books for two other publications, one of which is available online via the Internet. Wendy has offered to share with us her comments on children's titles which deal with gay, lesbian and bisexual issues. I feel this is an area of real importance, and I hope you do too.

There will not be a July issue published. I will be attending the American Library Association Annual Conference in Miami and this will conflict with the regular publication schedule of The Lavender Salon Reader. Those folks who have paid for a subscription will have their subscriptions extended by one issue.

This brings me to the next issue: For many readers of The Lavender Salon Reader, this is the last copy you will receive. If you have enjoyed reading this newsletter, and I hope that you have, you need to pay for its continued receipt. If you publish a periodical yourself, I will accept a trade of publications.

I really enjoy hearing from you. Tell me what you like about The Lavender Salon Reader, what you'd like to see in future issues, and recommendations for change. Share your thoughts with other readers of The Lavender Salon Reader. Enjoy!

## Recent Arrivals!

(The following books, recently received from publishers, are available for reviews. If you are interested in writing a review of any of the following, contact the editor.)

- 📖 Lewin, Ellen. *Lesbian Mothers: accounts of gender in American culture*. Cornell University Press.
- 📖 Broughton, James. *Coming Unbuttoned: a memoir*. City Lights Press.
- 📖 Ratti, Rakesh. *A Lotus of Another Color: an unfolding of the South Asian gay and lesbian experience*. Alyson Publications.
- 📖 Pastore, Judith Laurence. *Confronting AIDS through literature: the responsibilities of representation*. University of Illinois Press.

(Continued from page 1) Club News

Our next meeting will be July 7, when we will discuss *What the Dead Remember* by Harlan Greene.

For more information about The Hardy Boys Book Club contact Paul McCullough at (313) 925-1080

### Lavender Reading Salon, Appleton, Wisconsin

The Lavender Reading Salon met May 19 to discuss *Ryan White: my own story*. This is the well publicized story of a young hemophiliac who through factor-H transfusions develops AIDS. It's also the story of his hometown in Indiana and how the community responded with care and love (in a few cases), but mostly with open hostility and fear. This book pushed a lot of buttons for people. It was frustrating that so much

attention was given Ryan White, when so many were (are still) stricken with AIDS. What was it about Ryan that made him so attractive to the media? He wasn't the first child hemophiliac to have developed AIDS at the time, nor was he the first child picked up by the media. One member related her experiences having just come back from a conference in Texas where she met Mrs. White. The experience left our salon member with emotionally mixed feelings towards Ryan's mother.

At June's meeting, Sunday the 19th, we will watch the film *Parting Glances*, which Vito Russo described as "the most realistic re-creation of the world in which New York gays actually live that has ever been put on the screen.

Our July selection is the

mystery novel *The Man Who Understood Cats* by Michael Allen Dymmoch. This novel won the 1993 Malice Domestic Award for the Best First Traditional Mystery.

In August we will discuss the delightfully informative *Are You Two... Together?: a gay and lesbian travel guide to Europe* by Lindsay Van Gelder and Pamela Robin Brandt.

For more information regarding the Lavender Reading Salon contact Michael Nitz at (414) 738-0497.

### Rainbow Literary SalonPhoenix, Arizona

Last month we watched the Marlon Riggs "Tongues Untied" video and had a lively discussion on censorship. We also discussed Preston's *Hometowns* and decided to read another book about families. This



## Salon Cooking! The best of the Potlucks



### Nutted Wild Rice

1 cup (1/2 pound) raw wild rice  
1 cup cooked white rice  
5 1/2 cups defatted chicken stock  
1 cup shelled pecan halves  
1 cup yellow raisins  
grated rind of 1 large orange  
1/4 cup chopped fresh mint

4 scallions (green onions) thinly sliced  
1/4 cup olive oil  
1/3 cup fresh orange juice  
1 1/2 teaspoon salt  
freshly ground black pepper, to taste

Put wild rice in a strainer and run under cold water; rinse thoroughly.

Place rice in a medium-size saucepan. Add stock or water and bring to a boil. Reduce heat to simmer and cook uncovered for 45 minutes. After 30 minutes check for doneness; rice should not be too soft. Place a thin towel inside a colander and turn rice into the colander and drain. Transfer drained rice to a bowl.

Add remaining ingredients to rice and toss gently. Adjust seasonings to taste. Let mixture stand for 2 hours to allow flavors to develop. Serve at room temperature. Dick Winslow

## The Children's Corner:

Reviews of children's books concerning gay and lesbian issues

### Tiger Flowers

by Patricia Quinlan, illustrated by Janet Wilson. Dial Press, 1994.

Reviewed by Wendy E. Betts

As AIDS begins to affect more and more lives, all parents, gay and straight, face a dilemma: how do we find the words to explain such a sad, frightening disease to our children? *Tiger Flowers*, a picture book for children ages five and up, is a tender, compassionate introduction to the tragedy of AIDS, showing it as it is most likely to touch a child's life—through the death of a loved one. By taking this approach, Quinlan goes straight to the heart of the matter: AIDS takes people away from those who love them.

Narrated by a boy named Joel, *Tiger Flowers* described his memories of his uncle, Michael, and the good times they had together before Michael's death from AIDS. Michael helped

Joel build a tree house, took him to baseball games, and tended the garden with him; his favorite flowers were the tiger lilies that Tara, Joel's little sister, called tiger flowers. Missing Michael makes Joel feel like "I'm in a cold, lonely place inside me." But in his tree house, watching the sun come up on the tiger flowers below, the cold place grows warmer. The book ends with Joel picking a tiger flower for his sister and telling her they will always be his favorite, too.

Told in a simple style, with a delicate symbolism that doesn't overpower the painful facts, *Tiger Flowers* is a very touching story. The realistically painted illustrations tenderly convey the caring relationships between all of the family members. Particularly moving is a scene of a gaunt Michael in the hospital, gazing at a drawing of a tiger Joel made for him. Although the use of flashbacks and metaphor may not be developmentally appropriate for younger children, the concreteness of the language and action should keep the book understandable. Both the text and the pictures of the affectionate family offer reassurance to children that they can be close to people with AIDS without fear of catching it.

*Tiger Flowers* is a universal story about love and loss, which should not be reserved for children whose lives have been touched by AIDS or other fatal illnesses. Parents who give or read *Tiger Flowers* to their children should be prepared to answer their questions about AIDS, however, as it is not designed to cover many facts. It is also not entirely forthright about how AIDS is transmitted; while Joel's memories of Michael's grief over the death from AIDS of his best friend, Peter, clearly indicate to the adult reader that Michael and Peter were lovers, the exact nature of their relationship is never made explicit. Quinlan must have had some difficult decisions to make about how to create a gay character with AIDS without perpetuating the stereotype of AIDS as a gay disease; her oblique approach is a reasonable compromise for young children, but could leave them hanging, wondering why both Peter and Michael had AIDS if it isn't contagious. By including Michael and Peter's relationship in the story, Quinlan gives parents the opportunity to be as honest or as silent as they wish about the connection between AIDS and sex; hopefully it will encourage more honesty than silence.

Reprinted with permission from The WEB Online Review. Wendy E. Betts also edits The WEB: celebrating children's literature. Sample copies may be requested by writing to The WEB, Box 401, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.



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# Notes and Quotes

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## New Leadership at Alyson Publications

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Alistair Williamson joined Alyson Publications as its director on May 16, replacing publisher Sasha Alyson. Alyson had previously announced his intention to cut back on day-to-day involvement at the press that he founded in 1979.

Williamson had previously been an editor at the Harvard Business School Press. He is also a contributing editor to the *Harvard Gay and Lesbian Review*, a new literary quarterly, and he wrote, "Is This the Right Time to Come Out?," the first article published by the *Harvard Business Review* on the subject of coming out in the workplace.

Williamson lives in Boston, where he was named Big Brother of the Year in 1993. Born and raised in Canada, he graduated from the University of Ottawa in 1984 and received his MBA from the Harvard Business School in 1987.

In his new position as director, Williamson will have responsibility for all areas of the company. Alyson will remain involved in long-range planning, particularly in editorial planning and decisions.

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## Aging of Gays/Lesbians Study

The Lesbian and Gay Aging Network of the American Society on Aging is looking for students who are conducting research in the area of gay, lesbian, or bisexual aging. If this applies to you and you would like to have your work highlighted in their quarterly newsletter, please send a brief biography and a summary (500 words) of your research both completed, as well as in process, to Marcia Freedman at Jacobson@uga. The first issue will be released in August of this year and then quarterly thereafter. If you are interested in learning more about the network, call 415-974-9600.

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## No Rewind,

reviewed by Robert H. Malinowsky of the  
AIDS Book Review Journal

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Produced, directed, and edited by Paula Mozen with cinematography by Diana Muirhead. 1992. No Excuses Productions, 1124 Hampel, Oakland, CA 94602. 23 minute color video with study guide. Rental: \$70.00; purchase: \$150.00; public performance fee: \$250.00.

It is extremely important that today's teenagers receive sex education on a continuous basis and not just a "one shot." This excellent video is just the video that schools should be showing on a regular basis along with frank discussions about AIDS and safer sex. It is a short video of 23 minutes packed full of information that is quickly absorbed by those who watch it. The cinematography is well done using situations that include interviews with persons who are HIV positive and straight-forward discussions that talk about sex in teenage terms so that safer sex is not looked at as a clinical topic, discussed only in the classroom. The video does a good job in depicting the crisis in terms that the teenager can understand and the peer educators and HIV-infected individuals really lay it on the line by stressing that "in life there's no rewind."

By using real classroom locations, real students, and real life situations, Paula Mozen has captured the urgency of talking about AIDS, HIV positive, safer sex, drugs, discrimination, and other topics related to AIDS. While watching the video, one feels good about the message that is being put forth. It does not scare the viewer, but rather makes him or her very conscious of talking about AIDS and safer sex. The use of students of all ethnic backgrounds, straights, and gays, makes this a highly recommended video for all schools, public libraries, counseling centers, and youth service organizations. More positive videos such as this one should be produced and distributed throughout the school systems in the United States. As an example of how well this video has been accepted, it received the Silver Apple award at the 1993 National Educational Film and Video Festival; the Juror's Choice Award at the Charlotte Film Festival; and the Blue Ribbon award at the 1993 American Film and Video Association.

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## Finding Meaning in Life's Struggles

By Margaret L. Colucciello, Ph.d., RN

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It is necessary to recognize the multifaceted dimensions of the life of a person with AIDS. The severity of the disease has not lessened in the intervening years between 1981 and the present. It is still a terrible disease. The suffering it poses on persons with AIDS, on their families and support systems who care for them, is immeasurable. Indeed, caring for a person with AIDS is difficult for the care provider. Individuals who care for a person with AIDS, especially their significant other, are particularly vulnerable to stress and to suffering. Their voices may go unheard. Who hears their pleas for support? Who responds to their fears?

The literature suggests that individuals who provide care to a person with AIDS, especially care of a continuous nature, have the potential to experience an emotional upheaval similar to "battle fatigue" syndrome. This may be caused by dealing and coping with the suffering and pain of their loved one, or dealing with the fact that there is no cure, or dealing with the threat of death. The little hope that is present becomes threatened and then a sense of powerlessness overcomes the care provider.

Viktor Frankl in his book, *Man's Search for Meaning*, explains his dreadful

experiences as a prisoner in a Jewish concentration camp during World War II. Removed of all his dignity, family, level of security and comforts, he existed in a moment-to-moment dread of his own extinction. Yet, in the midst of loss and suffering, he found life worthy of preservation. How could he — how could he continue to value life with every possession stripped of him, including being shaved completely of all hairs from his body, every bit of dignity destroyed, existing in a world of uncertainty? How could he — in a world of hunger, cold, brutality, along with an hourly expectation of death?

Frankl's experiences in this frightful existence spawned the development of logotherapy. Logotherapy was the first acknowledgment that spirituality is essential to psychological health. Actually, logos is a Greek word which signifies "meaning" and "spirit." In logotherapy, a person is confronted with and re-

oriented toward the meaning of his/her life. Logotherapy defocuses all the vicious circle formations and mental tapes which play a great role in developing unhealthy behaviors. One of the basic premises of logotherapy is that a person's main concern is not to gain pleasure or to avoid pain, but rather to see a meaning in life. When a person arrives at viewing and knowing that there is a meaning to his or her suffering, then paradoxically, the suffering ceases to be suffering. Such a shift requires care providers to transform their way of thinking and use self existential support to find meaning and purpose in the struggle. A quote from the book exemplifies his position:

...to live is to suffer, to survive is to find meaning in the suffering. If there is a purpose in life at all, there must be a purpose in suffering and in dying. But no man can tell another what this purpose is. Each must find out for himself, and must accept the responsibility that his answer prescribes. If he succeeds he will continue to grow in spite of all indignities. (page xi)

Frankl believed that spiritual

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### The Lavender Puzzler Answer Box

Last month's Lavender Puzzler was a quote from *The Queen's Throat* by Wayne Koestenbaum. The quote follows: "Forbidden sexualities stay vague because they fear detection and punishment. Historically, music has been defined as mystery and miasma, as implicitness rather than explicitness, and so we have hid inside music; in music we can come out without coming out, we can reveal without saying a word, Queers identify with shadow because no one can prosecute a shadow." (The Queen's Throat, page 190)

(Continued from page 6) *Finding Meaning...*

health led to psychological hardiness. Hardiness can be defined as a character trait or personality characteristic in which one has developed, through "searching for meaning," the internal resources, strengths and capabilities to resist negative effects of stress, thereby decreasing the incidence and severity of stress-related life situations. Certain core themes seem to permeate the presence of hardiness: taking control over one's life and health, reprioritizing life patterns, establishing and maintaining mutually satisfying relationships, and a willingness to make changes in lifestyles as perceived necessary. It follows then from Frankl's position that the more spiritually-well care providers are, the greater their capacity to derive meaning out of the stresses of life. Furthermore, when the ability to believe and act on the belief that life is meaningful is present, then it follows that hardiness is also present.

Affirming the value of life allows care providers to accept the challenge inherent in their suffering. Making choices, taking control where control is possible, and letting go where holding on would be futile fosters the capacity to expand care providers' consciousness and to transcend their self-boundaries.

If care providers desire more information concerning this topic, you can direct your inquiries to the author in care of The Lavender Salon Reader.

## Smokey O

by Celia Cohen

Naiad Press, 1994. \$9.95 1-56280-057-4

Smokey O'Neill plays first base in the Women's Baseball League. She's got a great glove, great speed on the base paths, and a pretty fair left-handed bat. She's also a queen of the wisecrack, and she likes to show off her talent to reporters. Shortly after she's insulted world-famous Jill "Mac" MacDonnell, former Olympic hero, in the national press, Smokey's antagonistic boss takes the opportunity to trade her from her present second-place Boston Colonials, to Mac's team, the first-place Delaware Blue Diamonds.

Now Smokey, with her uncontrollable mouth, must learn to coexist with the aging, temperamental Mac. It's not easy, and the press is all set to record the fireworks — especially Clare Belle, Mac's former lover. Clare is all set to play Smokey and Mac off each other, and get her byline on the printed results.

If it seems that the world of *Smokey O* is curiously deficient in men, you only have to remember how many books you've read with no women, except for bit parts played by secretaries or wives. Also the world seems to be definitely canted toward the lesbian, but then that can be taken as a needed correction of emphasis as well.

While *Smokey O* is subtitled "A Romance" (of the lesbian variety, the very best part of the story is the baseball. Celia Cohen (a newspaper writer) can make you hear the crack of the bat and the noise of the crowd. If the story is a bit predictable, there are still a few surprises, and the baseball season is certainly exciting. *Smokey O* is a wonderful baseball story for the female fan, and I've got a feeling there are a lot of us out there.

[courtesy of *Reading For Pleasure*]



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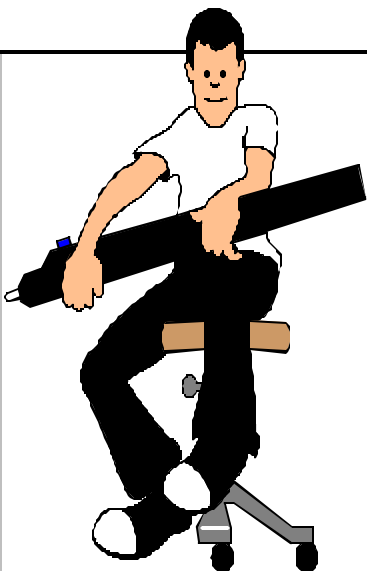
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## The Lavender Puzzler



Directions: The text below is an excerpt from a timely book. Each letter has been replaced by another. To solve the puzzle, determine which letter is represented by another and replace all instances of its use. For example in the quote below the letter “n” represents the letter “s”. (The answer will be in next month’s issue.)

“Fly FEH qxn x laslov fixacyr, gixgz iamf-gmcfimo pcaf flxf lxr dyyc nyf pe fm iynemcr fm fly eimoahyixfamc mh eimfynt xsxacnf fly Tayfxb Qxi. Qyxias lyobyfn qafn tanmin, gxiivacs xnmifyr qyxemcn, acgopracs daoov gopdn xcr fyxi sxn, afn fqm rmuyc bybdyin xoo nyybyr bxnnatyov eimemifamecyr. Flyv qyiy x hmibarxboy naslf xn, oacyr xib ac xib, flyv gxby pe Glianfmelyi Nfiyyf ac x qyrsy hmimxfamc flxf iynybdoyr (dv rynacyr) x Imbxc oysamc. Ac flyai exfl, fly iamfyin nomqov iyfiyxfyr, dpf — gmcfixiv fm emoagy yzeygxfamcn — rar cmf diyxz xcr ipc. Gixas, hmi mcy, zcyxof rmqc ac fly barroy mh fly nfiyyf qafn fly gxbyix ly’r iyfiaytyr himb lan xexifbycf xcr, ryfyibacyr fm gxefpiy fly bmbycf, ncxeeyr elmfm xhfyi elmfm mh fly mcgmbacs FEH bacamcn.” (Nfmcyqxoo, exsy 200)



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