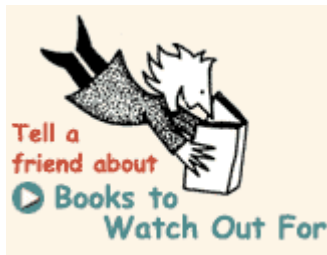




Print it out

## The Lesbian Edition

- [Books reviewed in this issue](#) (printable list)
- [PDF of this issue](#)
- [Printer-Friendly version](#)



### 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

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

will launch in 2005.

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the proud publishers of  
**The Eleventh Hour:**  
**A Connor Hawthorne Mystery**  
 by Lauren Maddison

In the latest entry in the bestselling series, an amateur dabbler in spiritual phenomena could bring about the end of the world if Connor Hawthorne can't stop her.

Volume 1 Number 10

### These are a few of our favorite things...

It's not just the kids who want books under the tree – the rest of us like books for just about every occasion, so we offer you this round-up of some of the most interesting – and giftable – books that we haven't reviewed in earlier issues. We hope you enjoy them – whether you give them as gifts, hint not-too-subtly that you'd like them yourself, or select a few for that most important and constant woman in your life – yourself.

### Photography

Contrary to popular myth, women have always worn pants – and 150 gorgeously reproduced photos in **Women in Pants: Manly Maidens, Cowgirls, and Other Renegades** capture Chinese, North African, Middle Eastern, European, Eskimo, Pueblo, Latino, and frontier women wearing the garb from the 1850s to the 1920s.

And the text is even richer: Chinese women invented the split skirt; black women passed as men to escape slavery; Mexican women routinely owned their own ranches and drove their own cattle to market. Women wore pants for sport (think professional boxing in the 1870s), for freedom of movement, to make a living, to travel safely, to woo other women – and sometimes just for fun.

It's an exquisite book that would do any coffee table proud. But be sure to put it some place where you'll be able to dip into it frequently. Compiled and juried by Catherine Smith and Cynthia Greig. \$35 cloth, Abrams.



### Film

What a gorgeous book: Jenni Olson's **The Queer Movie Poster Book** offers film history, mini-critiques of many of the films, illuminating commentary about the films' context, a wealth of trivia and, of course, full-color

**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.

### Advertising & Sponsorships

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reproductions of promo posters from 1915 to the present. Olson looks at the posters decade by decade, with special sections highlighting posters from dykesploitation films, early gay porn, bi and transgender films, and queers of color films. She has been programming, researching, collecting, creating and writing about LGBT film since the mid '80s, and founded PopcornQ, a massive LGBT file Web site based on her earlier book, *The Ultimate Guide to Lesbian & Gay Film and Video*. \$19 paper, full-color throughout, Chronicle Books.



[www.queermovieposters.com](http://www.queermovieposters.com)  
[www.popcornQ.com](http://www.popcornQ.com)

Find even more posters and information on Jenni's sites:

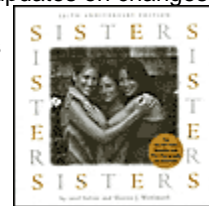
### And More Art

I've been fascinated by Faith Ringgold's work since I first encountered her art and storytelling in her children's books (*Tar Beach*, \$6.99, Dragonfly/BDD; *Aunt Harriet's Underground Railroad in the Sky*, \$6.99, Dragonfly Books; *Dinner at Aunt Connie's House*, \$4.95, Hyperion; among others). They're all wonderful, fiercely empowering tales of black girls and women.

In *Faith Ringgold* (\$35, Pomegranate), Lisa Farrington documents both the art and struggles of this fiercely feminist, fiercely womanist muralist, quilter, activist visionary. It's a beautiful book: the 50 full-color plates will leave you hungering for more of Ringgold's art so you might want to match it up with the *Faith Ringgold Wall Calendar* (\$12.99, Ronnie Sellers Productions).



Originally published in 1994, *Sisters: Tenth Anniversary Edition* stayed on the *New York Times* bestseller list for 63 weeks and made publishing history in the process. This Tenth Anniversary Edition includes updates on changes in many of the sister-pairs and adds some contemporary photographs, as well as previously unpublished outtakes from some of the original photography sessions. While most of the original essays revolve around love and gratitude, this edition also portrays expectations, reconciliation, dependence, separation, illness, loss and other complex issues of ongoing intimate sister-friendships. Carol Saline is a National Magazine Award-winning journalist. Sharon J. Wohlmuth is a Pulitzer Prize-winning photojournalist. \$29.95 cloth, Running Press.



### Make-It-Yourself Art – Or Just For Fun



Why should adding color to pages be only the prerogative of children? Big kids like to play with colored pencils, magic markers, and craypas, too. Especially when tempted by the likes of Studie Rakusin's *The Coloring Book for Big Girls* and *The Second Coloring Book for Big Girls: Spirits and Goddesses* which feature pen-and-ink drawings that beg for the addition of color. Staying inside the lines not required – but adding amulets and iguanas – or whatever strikes your fancy, is. Rakusin has been enhancing our world for years with her

artwork celebrating the interconnections between women, goddesses, animals and our world – think *Wickedary* and Rakusin's illustrated journal *Dreams and Shadows*. The coloring books are \$9.95 and \$11.95, respectively. Winged Willow Press.

Check out more of her artwork at:

<http://www.sudierakusin.com>

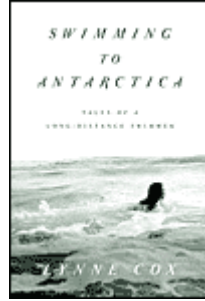
You might also consider her kids books, *Dear Calla Roo...Love, Savanna Blue: A letter about a pen pal* and *Dear Calla Roo...A Letter about getting sick and feeling better*, tales of great love between a Great Dane and an eight-year-old. The first is about keeping friendships vital despite distance, the second is about healing from an accident. Wonderful color illustrations. \$16.95 each, 32 pages, Winged Willow Press.



### Sports

Sports fiends of any gender and armchair travelers, too, will enjoy *Swimming to Antarctica: Tales of a Long-Distance Swimmer*. Turns out that swimming in Antarctica might not be such a good idea: Lynne Cox wrote

this book while regrowing nerves in her fingers, toes, and skin that were damaged during her twenty-five minute swim in the 32 degree waters on Antarctica's shores. But she did it – and clearly has no regrets. It's a



wonderfully told tale of a girl who liked to swim – especially in cold, turbulent waters – and of the dreams she built – setting a record for the English Channel at 15— and of the teams who made each swim possible. It's an engrossing tale of gritty determination, persistence in details (it took years of effort to get permission from the Russians to swim the Bering Strait), as well as training, and of a certain, unexpected grace that made it all possible. Like the best of books, I left *Swimming* with more questions: In a world with such limited definitions of beauty I wanted to see what such a powerful woman swimmer looks like. That was solvable.

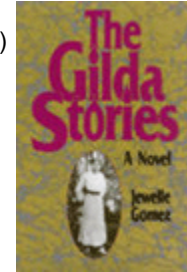
I just entered “Lynne Cox” in Google, then clicked “images” on the top of the page, and found a wonderful photo of a strong woman swimming. (Now I want a poster!) I wanted to know if I could claim her as an honorary member of AquaDykes, my Sunday morning swim group. But neither Google nor the book told me that. Ah, well. And I also wanted to know how the dolphins who escorted (and guided her) across the Cook Strait explained the crazy humanoid who wanted to swim against the current to their grandchildren. Maybe someday we'll find out. \$24.95 cloth, Knopf.

In the meantime, read an excerpt at:

<http://www.randomhouse.com/knopf/catalog/display.pperl?isbn=0375415076&view=excerpt>

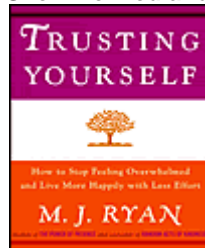
### Need a Little Perspective?

Too much Christmas energy coming at you? You need Gilda, as in Jewelle Gomez' classic (and recently reissued) novel, **The Gilda Stories**. Even amid the recent resurgence of all things vampire it's hard to find black, lesbian vampires – never mind vampires with a strong streak of social justice. But some days, that's exactly who you need. This new edition includes an afterward about writing and conceptualizing a righteous lesbian vampire, and a new Gilda story. As Dorothy Allison says, “This is a book to give to those you want most to find their own strength.” Or, if you've never read it, to yourself. \$14.95, Firebrand Books.



### (More) Random Acts of Kindness for Yourself

A great pick-me-up: Founder and former publisher of Conari Press, M. J. Ryan offers a quick infusion of self-esteem and self-confidence – and a perfect stocking stuffer– in **Trusting Yourself: How to Stop Feeling Overwhelmed and Live More Happily with Less Effort**. Bite-sized essays



remind women that we're the experts in our lives, that it's OK to say “no” to toxic media, how to tap into self-trust (and dump the self-doubt) when confronted with the info-overload of modern life, and how to make room for contentment and happiness even amid the chaos. Large tasks for a small book, but it works. Ryan was one of the co-creators of the *Random Acts of Kindness* series. And *Trusting Yourself* is a great reminder – to friends or yourself – to practice random acts of kindness toward yourself, an especially good idea during the holiday

season. It's a great bathroom book. \$14.95 cloth, Broadway/Random House.

### Laughter Helps

For anyone who needs a break from all the somber discussions, referendums, and court battles, turn to Kate Clinton's CD, **The Marrying Kind**, on which our lesbian national humorist takes on “The Mad Vow Disease” as well as “Homeland Insecurity,” “The Axis of Medievals,” and dreams of “Bush-Free Days.” As always, Kate is The Great Restorative, giving us all a good laugh break, a bit of perspective, and the healing we need to continue to continue fighting the good fight. \$14.95, WHYScrack Records.



For Kate's update on the recent elections:

<http://www.kateclinton.com/articles/advocate-12-2004.htm>



### Who Said That?!

In **Queer Quotes**, Teresa Theophano collects quips on coming out and culture, love and lust, politics and pride, love and marriage, and most anything else queer. Look for insight, amusement, and even politics – and a great set of bios at the end. \$15 cloth, Beacon Press.

*"If God dislikes gays so much, how come he picked Michelangelo, a known homosexual, to paint the Sistine Chapel while assigning Anita [Bryant] to go on television and push orange juice?"* –Mike Royko

*"I don't think of them as lesbian supervisors, I think of them as county supervisors who happen to be lesbians.*

*A lesbian supervisor would have a very different job: 'Hey you, cut those nails before you hurt somebody!'"* –Marga Gomez

*"Homophobia: The irrational fear that three fags will break into your house and redecorate it against your will."* –Tom Ammiano

*"The average American is less homophobic than he thinks he's supposed to be and more racist than he's willing to admit."* –Barney Frank

*"I still question the mainstream's ability to consistently find the cutting edge of gay and lesbian literature."* –Felice Picano



### The Quotable Jewish Woman: Wisdom, Inspiration & Humor from the Mind & Heart

collects insights from 317 Jewish women "who have helped heal the world with their ideas, their activism, their service, their talent and their labor" – from Marilyn Monroe to Robin Morgan, from Dorothy Parker and Bella Abzug to Frida Kahlo, Naomi Wolf, and Rita Rudner. Great bios, sources list, and an index that lets readers find all the quotes from their favorite heroines. Edited and compiled by Elaine Bernstein Partnow (*The Quotable Women: The First 5,000 Years*) \$29.99 cloth, 450 pages, Jewish Lights Publishing.

*"Until we are all free, we are none of us free."* -Emma Lazarus

*"The political arena leaves one no alternative, one must either be a dunce or a rogue."* -Emma Goldman

*"One does not get better but different and older and that is always a pleasure."* –Gertrude Stein



### And All That Jazz

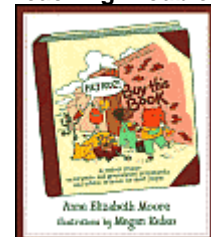
#### Jazzwomen: Conversations with Twenty-One Musicians

is a good gift for anyone into jazz. It was originally conceived as a companion to *Jazz Spoken Here*, when editor Wayne Enstice realized that he'd compiled a book with no women in it. *Jazzwomen* is his apology and he makes up for the oversight by including questions about sexism and the musician's experience as women in the music world in each interview. There are some excellent and informative riffs on racism, too, but a lot less discussion about how homophobia affects both straight and lesbian musicians than I'd like to have seen. Still, it's an insightful and very readable collection with some great stories. I especially appreciated the info about the all-girl black bands of yesteryear. The book also includes a CD sampler and interviews with Abbey Lincoln, Marian McPartland, Regina Carter, Diana Krall, Cassandra Wilson, Clora Bryant, Virginia Mayhew, Teri Thornton, and others. Co-edited by Janis Stockhouse. \$39.95, Indiana University Press.



### Teaching Trouble-Making

The title and the cover are a little too cute, but Anne Moore's **Hey Kidz! Buy this Book: A radical primer on corporate and governmental propaganda and artistic activism for short people** has some great information in it. It instructs YA's in the essential arts of deconstructing advertising's attempts to mess with their minds, of sorting out the difference between what the media says and what politicians do, and of looking at global problems and figuring out what they can do about them – skills that all of the kids in our lives need. \$11.95 Red Rattle / Soft Skull Press.



### For the Activist Who Has Everything

**Speaking for Our Lives: Historic Speeches and Rhetoric for Gay and Lesbian Rights (1892-2000)**, edited by Robert B. Ridinger, is a 900-page omnibus that starts with Robert Ingersoll's "Address at the Funeral of Walt Whitman" and Anna Rueling's 1904 "What Interest Does the Women's Movement Have in Solving the Homosexual Problem?" then skips to the 50s where the only women's contribution is Del Martin's 1956 "President's Message" from the first issue of *The Ladder*. Yes, this volume suffers from a shortage of women's contributions, but where else would you find Shirley Willer's 1966 "What Concrete Steps Can Be Taken to Further the Homophile Movement?," "Frieda Smith Tells It Like It Is" (1971), Sally Gearhart's 1972 "The Lesbian and God-the-Father," Valerie Taylor's 1974 speech at the First Annual Lesbian Writers' Conference, "For My Granddaughters....," and speeches by Bella Abzug, Barbara Grier, Barbara Gittings, Kay Whitlock, Virginia Apuzzo, Joan Nestle, Michelle Parkinson, Merle Woo, Barbara Smith, Sue Hyde, Urvashi Vaid, Robin Tyler and more.... \$49.95 paperback for 900 pages of history. Harrington Park Press.



### Holiday Reads

The guys have center stage in this year's holiday tales: Barbara Hindley's **Grace** explores the families we make for ourselves in this heartwarming tale of a long-term (gay-male) couple grieving the seemingly endless losses of friends to AIDS, a frighteningly pregnant Guatemalan refugee, a misplaced and fatherless foster girl-child who bonds like crazy-glue to the black member of the couple, a few women-friends (one a lesbian, the other not), and the Christmas they make for themselves out of goodwill, commitment to friends, and, well, sometimes good intentions gone awry. A perfect read for a cold, snowy December night. Excellent cover. \$20 cloth, Ebb Tide Editions.



[www.ebbtideeditions.com](http://www.ebbtideeditions.com) or 978-342-9676.

**Upon a Midnight Clear**, edited by Greg Herren, collects an eclectic mix of Christmas tales that reflect the traditions gays (in this case, men) have created to survive the stresses of holidays with more-and-less supportive families, to celebrate the season with lovers and families of choice, to remember lovers past, or just to find some immediate gratification to make it through the day. Clearly there's no "right" way to celebrate the holidays – only what's right for each of us at this particular time. Even this Christmas curmudgeon found it a surprisingly cheering read. Contributors include Felice Picano, Jameson Currier, Jim Grimsley, Trebor Healey, Jay Quinn, and M. Christian. \$14.95, Southern Tier Editions/Harrington Park/Haworth.



### Poetry

You can't go wrong with Mary Oliver's ruminations on the mystery and miracle of nature. Like her recent *Long Life*, **Blue Iris** mixes up poetry and prose, considers flowers, vegetables, weeds, trees that make "us love and want to honor the world" as well as advise us on the mysteries of life and death, loss and renewal. This collection, published in October, includes ten new poems and two previously unpublished essays, as well as work from the last two decades. \$22 cloth, Beacon Press.

Or with **The School Among the Ruins: Poems 2000-2004**, in which Adrienne Rich addresses the contradictions and complexities of living in post 9/11 America and in a time of (another) new war. Rich, as always, is fierce and musical and uncompromising as she looks at the intersections of public crisis and private lives – and celebrates the human capacity for love. \$22.95 cloth, Norton.





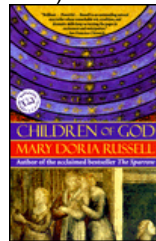
And for the poet who has it all: **Masquerade: Queer Poetry in America to the End of WW II** collects the work of a hundred writers from pre-colonial times. Far more men than women, but worth the price of admission to find (amid the usual suspects), work by the likes of Margaret Fuller, Gale Wilhelm, Mercedes de Acosta, Mina Loy, H.D., Djuna Barnes.... \$24.95 paper, Indiana University Press.

### A Correction and a Recommendation

Way back in the very first issue of *Books To Watch Out For*, when I reviewed Mary Doria Russell's excellent **The Sparrow** and its sequel, **Children of God**, I cheerfully concluded the review with "There's no visible lesbian content, but it's such a novel of social justice that any activist or idealist will read herself right into these worlds."

No lesbian content? Whatever was I thinking? Granted I was writing the review based on having read the books several months earlier, but how did I let Tiyat and Kaipin's relationship, there amid the struggle for Runa independence, slip my mind? All I can say is that their story is so well integrated that I just incorporated it and went on. What a luxury! Would that our lives were always like that. Maybe in a couple more generations, eh?

But in the meantime, I have to recommend both books (as a set) as holiday giving for anyone on your list who reads (or can be challenged to read) science fiction. Progressives will devour Russell's political insight. But the storytelling and characters are so engrossing that even conservatives might have a hard time resisting this tale of a Jesuit exploration of a planet of singers and the changes their presence engenders. It's a compelling mix of vision, adventure, power struggle, and the pursuit of knowledge – coupled with a serious look at the complexity of good intentions gone awry, the torments of broken faith, and misplaced hope. I appreciate its profound insights into the complex impact of missionary religions (and governments such as our own?) on the cultures who did not initiate the contact. I'm thinking it would be a good conversation starter, but I haven't tried it out. \$13.95 each, Ballantine/RH.



### More Political Fun



Consider **Humor's Edge**, a collection of political cartoons by Ann Telnaes. Telnaes won a Pulitzer for her series of cartoons on the Bush/Gore election. Exposing hypocrisy and registering dissent are her specialties as she tackles issues from U.S. foreign policy to women's rights. You've probably seen her work in the *New York Times*, *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe*, *Chicago Tribune*, *LA Times*, or via *Women's eNews*. This collection features sixty cartoons, Telnaes' comments about the events and conditions that inspired them, and a long interview. One of my favorite images features two women in pilgrim garb with scarlet A's on their chests. "Adulterer?" asks one. "Anti-American. I questioned the Administration's policies," is the reply. Another features a woman asking, at the wedding of two gay men, "So which one of you gets to endure centuries of 2nd class status and being legally considered the property of your husband?" With Telnaes, no one gets off easy. \$24.95 cloth, Pomegranate.



That's it for this issue. We'll be back in a few weeks with our next regular issue. In the meantime, stay warm and dry, and remember to kind to be yourself first.

Yours in spreading the words,

Carol Seajay  
for *Books To Watch Out For*