

The Lesbian Edition

Print It Out

Volume 4 Number 4

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Dear Friends and Subscribers,

First, my apology for the unacceptably long gap between issues.

It's been a long summer of mis-believing that I'd have time to draft the next issue "next week" between one thing and another.

In This Issue...

News

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BTWOF Context, or The Publisher's Life In a Nutshell:

(Please feel free to skip down to the [About BTWOF](#) section.)

Other than guilt about *BTWOF*, I have to say I had a wonderful summer: I left the *Msllexia* job in May. (I loved the job except for the level of politicking required by the new board. I loved most of the staff, but didn't love living in Newcastle or its long, dark winter - sunrise at 9:30, sunset at 4. And, ultimately, I just wasn't willing to spend that many of my working hours politicking instead of doing the real and useful work of running a magazine.)

Five days after I left *Msllexia* I accepted a position with [Bywater Books](#) and its imprint [Bloody Brits Press](#) working for my neighbors thirty miles to the north, Kelly Smith and [Val McDermid](#), and their business partner [Marianne K. Martin](#). Kelly, many of you know from her past lives at A Woman's Prerogative Bookstore and/or as the founder of Bella Books. Val, of course, is the mystery writer (and, according to the *Guardian*, the 16th most powerful person in British publishing), and Marianne is the author of a half-dozen or more lesbian romances. She holds down the USA side of the business.

Books

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My responsibilities include managing book production for their 18-24 books per year, basic promotion, and some financial management. They call me the CEO. I call it a riot. It's just the kind of job I was looking for when I moved to England for the *Msllexia* directorship. And, I have to remind you all, it all started at [Saints & Sinners](#), so if you've ever had the urge attend the USA's finest GLBTQ literary festival and resisted it, take my advice and just go. (The 2008 festival will be May 8-11. See www.sasfest.org for details.)

Two of the incredible features of this job are that I can work part-time when I wish and I can do the job from anyplace with a telephone line and an internet connection. To me, already being in England, that lead immediately to travel. When I was young I wanted that summer in Europe that other kids seemed to be able to afford. And now, years, later, I finally got to do it. And it was wonderful.

I spent a month doing a grand Celtic tour with [Ladyslipper's](#) Laurie Fuchs and Lynnette Hartsell (imagine a week on Scotland's Fife coast, a week in the Loch country, a week in Wales - including a visit to the wonderfully preserved home of the [Ladies of Llangollen](#) - and two weeks in Ireland. Then some time "back at the ranch" in Northern England, actually working on a daily basis, then a hiking trip to the Bulgarian Alps with [Walking Women](#), some time in the Netherlands and Spain, and, finally, to try to get warm after England's cold, rainy, summer, a week in the Canary Islands where I worked all day on a balcony overlooking the sea.

I finally came home to San Francisco in September where I've continued the adventure by camping around with friends and sometimes in my flat as its being cleaned up and painted, et al. I think that by the time it's done, and I get to live and work in the same place for more than a week or two at a time, I'll be happy to settle in one place - well, at least until the summer traveling season and my laptop and I start considering how we could next mix this job and traveling. It's been a long, wonderful, renewing journey, but not one that included any time for *BTWOF*.

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

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 Suzanne Corson.
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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.

About BTWOF:

As you may know, when I left the *Msllexia* position I had to lay off Suzanne, who had done such a wonderful job of keeping *BTWOF* going in my absence. I no longer had an income that could contribute to her salary and *BTWOF*, as much as it is loved

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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.

Ad Rates

Check out our ad rates at btwof.com/misc/ARC.pdf or contact Leigh for additional information and reservations.

Housekeeping

If you want to change your BTWOF email address or other contact information, [click here](#) to update:

- » your subscriber profile
- » whatever has changed.

Finding BTWOF

BTWOF is published by Carol Seajay and Books To Watch Out For. www.BooksToWatchOutFor.com
Email: Editor@BTWOF.com
PO Box 882554
San Francisco, CA 94188.

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/BTWOF at PO Box HP 24 Bowen Island, BC V0N 1G0 Canada (post) or Richard Labonte/BTWOF 1806 Howe Road Bowen Island, BC V0N 1G0 Canada. (courier)

by a small and passionate circle of lesbian, gay, and feminist bibliophiles, doesn't begin to generate enough income to pay for the time it takes to publish and maintain itself. Advertising has all but disappeared and subscriptions generate about 10% of a livable salary. And, as Suzanne has confirmed, keeping BTWOF publishing, in all three of its editions, is more than a full time job.

And so I have spent much of the summer thinking about and researching other structures to keep BTWOF publishing and circulating without the financial drain. I don't have answers yet, but friends, colleagues, and fellow-travelers have offered some exciting ideas:

-- Let go of the subscription model. Paid subscriptions for online publications were predicted to be The Next Big Thing when BTWOF launched. An idea that evaporated into the ozone with blogging.

-- Go for the blog format - It's much less labor-intensive than the current production model, plus it allows for much easier response and interaction with subscribers and other bibliophiles. That's been my dream from the start, and this possibility really excites me.

-- Make room for Goggle ads. Ah, revenue. (This model was argued, most convincingly, by my Aussie seatmate on a flight to Dublin, who is making a living off flea-product ads on her pet-care websites.) But are there enough ads targeted to lesbian book readers to support a lesbian book blog if one screens out the diet ads, etc.? And even if there are, would our readers click on the ads? (Still, there's something intriguing about a flea-based advertising model.)

-- Make room where readers/subscribers can make (voluntary) contributions toward supporting BTWOF's time and expenses, a la the *Lesbian Connection* model (which is now also being pioneered by rock bands making their music available online while asking downloaders to pay what ever amount seems right to them. The last one I saw was averaging about \$8 per CD).

So this is my update to you, *BTWOF's* faithful and patient readers: I don't know for sure what the future - or the future format - will be. But I'm back, and have a stack of books that I'm itching to write about. And that combination - being stable in one place for more than two weeks and a stack of excellent books, is exactly what will propel the next issue into existence and into your hands.

If you have suggestions for a new format (or financing) for BTWOF, please email me at SeajayBTW@gmail.com.

Thank you all for your incredible patience and support.

I remain, if erratically, yours in spreading the words,
Carol

A Note from Suzanne:

While I am thrilled that Carol is now back on this side of the pond, and I can give and receive hugs in person rather than calculating time zone differences when making phone calls to her in England (!), I am sad that this is my last issue as editor of *BTWOF: The Lesbian Edition*. I loved the opportunity to spread the word about some great books (thanks so much, Carol!), and I appreciate all of the support and feedback I've received from friends and subscribers.

Books To Watch Out For is an important vehicle for the visibility of LGBT and women's literature in a time when many media outlets are drastically reducing the space devoted to book reviews and when several publishers are discontinuing their LGBT imprints. BTWOF was created to help you find good books to read; Carol and Gay Men's Edition editor Richard Labonte are the perfect people to continue that work.

I'm off to edit and write for the website newsletters on the FriendFinder.com family of sites and will continue to do freelance writing for AfterEllen.com and, hopefully, BTWOF. In the meantime, I hope you enjoy these last reviews of mine and find some titles that you'll want to read.

Yours in community,
Suzanne Corson

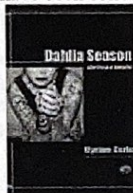


Fiction

Generally I've enjoyed Emma Donoghue's historical fiction (especially *Slammerkin*) more than her contemporary novels (like *Hood*), but her latest book, **Landing**, is breaking that trend. In *Landing*, Jude is a twenty-five-year old who lives with her mother in a small town in Ontario. During her first ever plane flight, one which takes her across the pond to England, she connects with fortyish flight attendant Sile, a mixed race woman who lives in Ireland. They begin an email correspondence that grows into a relationship in which they deal with not only the physical distance between them but also their age and cultural differences. I liked both of these characters very much and was moved by the various journeys, both internal and external, that both took to reach their personal landings. Harcourt, \$25, 9780151012978.



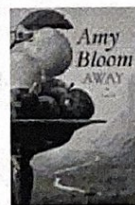
Myriam Gurba is definitely a writer to watch out for. Several of her short stories have been collected in a new volume from Manic D Press along with the book's eponymous novella. In **Dahlia Season: Stories and a Novella**, Gurba explores the genderqueer couplings on a beach where, it was rumored, the Black Dahlia used to hang out; a Chicana goth girl with "crazy brain chemistry" whose parents ship her to relatives in Mexico; and in "Just Drift," Cassidy, an urban ("ghetto") high-school junior boy with a pregnant girlfriend who is writing his junior thesis on Yossarian's homosexuality in *Catch-22*. Gurba expertly captures the many levels of awareness Cassidy possesses about his fellow students and the adults around them:



"I've figured out that the way things work around here is that as long as a teacher can control us and there aren't total race riots happening everyday, administrators look the other way when it comes to eccentricity. (English teacher) Ms. Valdez might wear tight black dresses with flaming skulls on them and fishnet stockings and necklaces with rhinestone spiders, but everyone's down with it cause she's got us in check. Now, if she were to go teach in, say, Orange County, she'd have to chew with her mouth closed, buy a whole new wardrobe, and quit with the longshoreman talk."

I think this cover blurb from author Marc Acito captures the flavor of this volume nicely: "Scrupulously honest and suffused with suspense, Myriam Gurba's tales are like Russian nesting dolls, each revealing a subculture within a subculture." Manic D Press, \$14.95, 9781933149165.

Just for fun, check out Monica Nolan's homage to lesbian pulps, **Lois Lenz, Lesbian Secretary**. Nolan, co-author of the similarly campy *The Big Book of Lesbian Horse Stories*, begins in 1959 with high-school senior Lois practicing kissing with her best friend, Faye. "The funny thing was, the more they practiced, the more practice Lois felt she needed." While her head is filled with thoughts of the upcoming prom, Lois meets with the school's career counselor who encourages her to become a "career girl." Lois, who excelled in typing and filing, gets excited by the thought, and much to Faye's disappointment, Lois moves to the Big City, gets a room at a boarding house with other career girls, and gets a job in a secretarial pool at an ad agency. She's quickly promoted to become the private secretary of account executive Mrs. Pierson. Soon, Lois finds herself embroiled in mystery! scandal! and romance! Very fun, quirky, campy, and even a bit sexy. Kensington, \$14, 9780758214225.



And just a quick note about Amy (*Come to Me*) Bloom's wonderful new historical novel, **Away**. Lillian Leyb lost her family in a pogrom in Russia, comes to New York to live with her cousin, hears a rumor that her daughter might still be alive, and then works her way westward to Seattle, and then up to Alaska, on her way back to Russia. It's an engrossing story of determination and survival. Random House, \$23.95, 9781400063567.

Now in paper:

Touchy Subjects: Stories, Emma Donoghue, Harcourt, \$12, 9780156032612.

Lesbian Lives

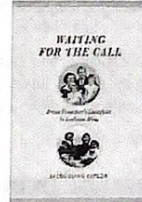
I really enjoyed **Hack: How I Stopped Worrying About What to do With My Life and Started Driving a Yellow Cab** by Melissa Plaut. I had seen catalog copy about it last year and thought it seemed interesting, but nothing in the copy made any reference to lesbian content. Then I started seeing reviews of the book on lesbian blogs and discovered that yes, the author is, in fact, a lesbian, which she writes about with candor along with the stories of her adventures on the road. She became a hack at 29, after several years of working at post-college office jobs. Women cab drivers are rare in New York City, comprising less than 1 percent of the forty thousand licensed cabbies. In an entertaining, matter-of-fact, self-revelatory, occasionally snarky manner, she discusses the details of working as a hack (getting a license, finding a garage to work with, the hierarchy among drivers) as well as providing many interesting stories about the passengers she encountered. Most poignant are the stories of an accident she was in and an accident she saw after-the-fact, an incident that was a catalyst for her:



"It seemed so easy for my spirit to break just by the sight of one bloody accident, leading me to do something sort of sleazy and out of character, crashing and ultimately destroying what could've been a perfectly good relationship with Sally. The whole year, all the stress and the fights, the tickets and the close calls, the fender benders and the bad dreams, they all came to a sharp point and were distilled into that one stupid Tuesday night. ... I wanted to be someone else for the night, to play a pretend game and act out an alternate version of myself for a few hours with someone who didn't know me, but it was no help. The city was eating away at me like rats chewing on my flesh. It became a part of me that I couldn't shake loose, and it wasn't prepared to let me go without inflicting some small injury."

This is definitely one of the best memoirs-about-a-career I've read. Random House/Villard, \$21.95, 9781400066049.

There are many LGBT folks who write memoirs about coming out in religious families, but the experiences Jacqueline Taylor relates in her book go a bit further: not only was she the daughter of a Southern Baptist preacher, but she herself wanted to be called to serve God in a special way. In **Waiting for the Call: From Preacher's Daughter to Lesbian Mom**, Taylor writes in an engaging way about growing up under a religious spotlight, her journey with her own faith, conflicts with her parents and their faith, her two marriages to men, coming out as a lesbian, and adopting two daughters from Peru with her partner, Carol. A good read for anyone wanting a story about family dynamics, international adoption, and/or the ways lesbians blend their faith, politics, and sexuality. University of Michigan



Press, \$18.95 paper, 9780472032389.

Now in paper:

Fun Home: A Family Tragicomic, Alison Bechdel, Houghton Mifflin, \$13.95, 9780618871711 (reviewed in [TLE22](#)).

James Tiptree, Jr.: The Double Life of Alice B. Sheldon, Julie Phillips, St. Martin's, \$18, 9780312426941 (reviewed in [TLE24](#)).

Kate: The Woman Who Was Hepburn, William J. Mann, St. Martin's, \$18, 9780312427405 (reviewed in [TLE26](#)).

Mockingbird: A Portrait of Harper Lee, Charles J. Shields, Henry Holt and Company, \$15, 9780805083194 (reviewed in [TLE24](#)).

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More Nonfiction

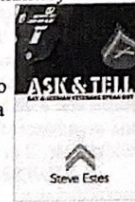
Other Countries began twenty years ago as an organization for black gay male writers. They published two important anthologies: *Other Countries: Black Gay Voices* and *Soujourner: Black Gay Voices in the Age of AIDS*. Their third volume is their first co-gender project, **Voices Rising: Celebrating 20 Years of Black Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, and Transgender Writing**. And what a celebration it is. Edited by G. Winston James and Other Countries, this collection contains more than 500 pages of poetry, novel



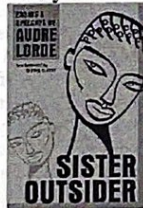
excerpts, oral histories, plays, and memoir. Contributors include Samiya Bashir, Cheryl Boyce-Taylor, Staceyann Chin, Cheryl Clarke, Jewelle Gomez, and Letta Neely. Standouts are Lisa C. Moore's piece on searching for black lesbian elders, Thomas Glave's tribute to Essex Hemphill, and Antonia Randolph's poem "No, I Haven't Heard," with the oh, so telling final line, "But I managed to find my voice in other places." Redbone Press, \$25 paper, 9780978625139.

The First Man-Made Man: The Story of Two Sex Changes, One Love Affair, and a Twentieth-Century Revolution by Pagan Kennedy tells the story of Michael Dillon, the first person to undergo a surgical sex change from female to male. Born Laura in 1915, Dillon found plastic surgeons skilled in reconstructing genitals of soldiers injured during WWII to help him realize his goal of having a body that matched his gender identity. During his quest, Dillon met and fell in love with MTF Roberta Cowell. The story of their relationship, the familial, medical, and social issues both faced, and the tortured life of Dillon, both before and after his groundbreaking surgeries, make for compelling and thought-provoking reading. Bloomsbury USA, \$23.95, 9781596910157.

Steve Estes asked, and more than fifty lesbians and gay men in the military told in **Ask and Tell: Gay and Lesbian Veterans Speak Out**. The interviews span the time from World War II to the current war in Iraq. Estes also includes a history of the U.S. military's policies on gays in the military as well as a chapter on the gender-based fight to include women in roles beyond the already accepted nurses. I was a bit surprised that there was only a one-sentence mention of Margarethe Cammermeyer, but other than that, there were an impressive variety of stories in this book. University of North Carolina Press, \$29.95, 9780807831151.

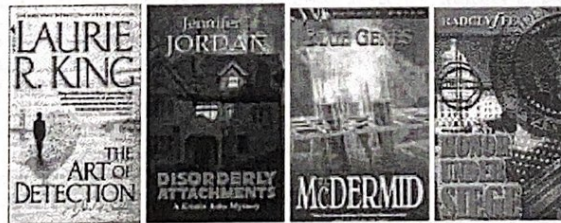


Briefly Noted



Sister Outsider, the collection of essays and speeches by Audre Lorde is back in print with a new foreword by Cheryl Clarke. This collection includes "Poetry Is Not a Luxury," "Uses of the Erotic: The Erotic as Power," and "The Master's Tools Will Never Dismantle the Master's House," among its fifteen powerful and classic pieces. Crossing Press/Ten Speed Press, \$16.95, 9781580911863.

The Crime Scene
By Nan Cinnater



Why save the best for last? Let's start with the Lambda Award winner, Best Lesbian Mystery of 2006, now in paperback. **The Art of Detection** by Laurie R. King revisits her series character, San Francisco police detective Kate Martinelli, who is investigating the murder of a Sherlock Holmes fanatic. The investigation reveals a "lost" Holmes manuscript, providing a book within a book as well as many artistic and thematic connections. Fans of the Martinelli series may well get hooked on King's Holmes series and vice versa. In any case, King's intelligence shines. Bantam, \$6.99, 9780553588330.

There are many intriguing elements to **Blind Curves** by Diane and Jacob Anderson-Minshall, not least of all the gossip factor. The murder victim is a lesbian publishing magnate involved in a competition between two fictional lesbian magazines, *Womyn* and its upstart rival *Bend*. (Considering that in real life the authors were co-founders of *Girlfriends* magazine, and one is now editor of *Curve*, we suspect a *roman a clef*.) Yoshi Yakamota is the legally blind private eye whose deteriorating eyesight is the inspiration for



the name of her business, Blind Eye Detective Agency. High femme Velvet Erickson is Yoshi's best friend, a journalist suspected of murdering the lesbian publisher. There's also a bashful butch office assistant, a straight ex-cop in a wheelchair (who puts the p.i. in PI), and a butch African-American cop transplanted from New Orleans. There's almost too much going on in *Blind Curves*, but the writing is smooth, the characters are nicely drawn, and the details of daily life with disabilities are fascinating. Bold Strokes, \$15.95, 9781933110721.

The Skin Beneath by Nairne Holtz is not a traditional mystery, but it *is* a literary and psychological mystery, and it involves a mysterious death. Sam, a baby butcher living in Toronto, receives a postcard claiming her sister Chloe's death was not the drug overdose she thought. "Your sister died while investigating a political conspiracy. Coincidence?" Sam learns from her distant, academic father that Chloe actually died of a gunshot wound, presumably self-inflicted. Sam takes up the trail of Chloe's life, traveling to Montreal, Detroit, and New York City, becoming involved with Chloe's lovers and friends, and trying to decode a Gulf War conspiracy. Holtz's compelling style includes some arresting metaphors. In the suburbs, "Yuppie parents drag their kids up and down the street in wagons, as if they are crippled emperors." She is also right on the money about the difference between activists and conspiracy theorists. "...[B]elieving the universe to be at the mercy of inscrutable, corrupt, and all-powerful forces means you are a victim with all the hopelessness that implies. Taking action for social change requires an optimism absent from the ramblings she has found on the conspiracy theory websites...." Even though I prefer traditional whodunits, I was hooked on *The Skin Beneath* from start to finish. Insomniac Press, \$16.95, 9781897178393.



I'm a big fan of Jennifer L. Jordan's Kristin Ashe mysteries, but the latest, **Disorderly Attachments**, is my least favorite. In spite of great characters (most notably the aging ex-nun Fran, who's almost a force of nature), wonderfully readable writing, and situations that go from finely observed social comedy to clear-eyed tragedy, I just couldn't accept the premise. Denver private investigator Kristin Ashe is hired by powerful school superintendent Carolyn O'Keefe to vet a potential affair (ostensibly to prevent blackmail, outing, etc.). But the object of Carolyn's affection is Kristin's own lover, Destiny! Call them crazy-makers, borderline psychotics, or just malicious manipulators, Carolyn is one of a recognizable type. But Kristin's reaction - jealous, secretive, and paranoid to the point of obsession - seems bizarre. The sub-plot, a paranormal investigation of a haunted house for a real estate developer, seems normal by comparison (and ingeniously plotted). I have a very low tolerance for stories about obsessive love - okay, I hate them - so other readers may not share my reaction. I'd advise anyone who likes thoughtful, funny, non-violent lesbian mysteries to read Jordan, but I would start with one of her previous four: *A Safe Place to Sleep*, *Existing Solutions*, *Commitment to Die*, and *Unbearable Losses*. *Disorderly Attachments*: Spinsters Ink, \$14.95, 9781883523749.

In **The Target** by Gerri Hill, Denver homicide detective Jaime Hutchinson is loaned to the FBI to protect Sara Michaels, the daughter of a presidential candidate whose family has been threatened. The trick is that Sara refuses protection, so Jaime will go undercover on a self-help, self-esteem building wilderness outing led by Sara. Once I got past the slightly odd set-up, I had a great time on this trip! Jaime is a likeable, very out lesbian, and her bonding with this group of mostly straight women is fun to watch, as is the predictable but enjoyable budding romance. I really liked Hill's *The Killing Room*, so I was glad to see that it shared some plot elements with *The Target*, including a cameo by *The Killing Room*'s lesbian hero Jake McCoy. Bella, \$13.95, 9781594930829.



It's been hard for an American audience to keep track of Kate Brannigan, Val McDermid's rock-n-roll private eye, because the series has such a checkered publishing history. Happily, installments five and six are now in print in the U.S. - for the first time in paperback. For those who don't know, Kate Brannigan is like a more feminist, lesbian-friendly Kinsey Millhone, and **Blue Genes** (9781932859232) may well be the most feminist, lesbian-friendly book in the series. Here Kate is working for a Scottish punk band bedeviled by violence, when her best friend, a lesbian whose partner is pregnant, asks Kate to help them recover their file from a murdered gynecologist. As it turns out, only the future of human reproduction is at stake! In the nicely titled **Star Struck** (9781932859249) Kate reluctantly takes a job as bodyguard to a soap opera actress, and murder of a celebrity astrologer ensues. Bloody Brits Press has also published a collection of McDermid's



short stories, **Stranded** (9781932859119), including one Kate Brannigan story and even some non-crime stories. McDermid is an out lesbian and a master of the genre, such a good writer that I would read her grocery lists. All \$13.95, Bloody Brits Press.

In my role as a bookseller, I met the wonderful and prolific Claire McNab some years ago and was blown away by her zany sense of humor, which was not at all evident in her writing at that time. Now she has the perfect outlet for her penchant for comedy. McNab currently has three separate series with two different gay/lesbian publishers: the venerable Carol Ashton series, about a Detective Superintendent in Sydney, Australia (*Fall Guy*, published by Bella); an espionage series about Australian intelligence agent Denise Cleever (*Murder at Random*, published by Bella); and a wildly comic series about an Aussie in Los Angeles named Kylie Kendall (*The Dingo Dilemma* published by Alyson). This is the fourth in a series that includes *The Wombat Strategy*, *The Kookaburra Gambit*, and *The Quokka Question*. I just read **The Dingo Dilemma**, and once again Kylie and the denizens of Kendall & Creeling detective agency completely cracked me up. Accidental private eye Kylie is constantly amazed by Hollywood mores, and continually visited by inconvenient relatives from Down Under. Now her cousin is working in Hollywood on a new TV series, a remake of *Lassie* set in Australia and starring, of course, a dingo. The dingo has been threatened by kidnappers, while at the same time Kylie's own agency is threatened by a real estate developer. Although she makes wicked fun of Hollywood with all its trendiness and pretensions, McNab is neither mean nor condescending and neither is Kylie –which is probably why I love them both so much. Alyson, \$13.95, 9781555839833.



Briefly Noted



Whether they're labeled thrillers, romance, or adventure, Kim Baldwin writes books that are suspenseful and action-packed. In **Flight Risk**, travel agent Blayne Keller is witness to a Mafia murder. Alexi Nikolos, an inspector with the Witness Protection Program, is trying to keep Blayne alive long enough to stop a leak among the feds. Bold Strokes, \$15.95, 9781933110684.

Radclyffe returns to the world of the President's daughter, Blair Powell, and her lover and protector, Secret Service Agent Cameron Roberts in **Honor Under Siege**. In the wake of an assassination attempt on Blair, Cameron is assigned to find the mole who conspired to kill the First Daughter. Bold Strokes, \$15.95, 9781933110806.

Provincetown PI Alex Peres is back in her fourth adventure, **Murder Came Second** by Jessica Thomas, in which Shakespeare is murdered by an avant-garde director - "Hamlet is a musical, set in the rural South, about discount stores" - and someone returns the favor. Bella, \$13.95, 9781594930812.



Our Literature Online

Bookslut.com interviews Felicia Luna Lemus about *Like Son*:
www.bookslut.com/features/2007_06_011231.php.

AfterEllen.com reports on the 2007 Golden Crown Literary Society conference:
www.afterellen.com/Print/2007/6/lesbianfiction.
 A pre-convention article about GCLS from *Southern Voice*:
www.southernvoice.com/2007/6-1/arts/books/7021.cfm.

Minnesota Women's Press featured lesbian writers in Minnesota, including Lori Lake and Ellen Hart:
www.womenspress.com/main.asp?Search=1&ArticleID=2724&SectionID=1&SubSectionID=&S=1.

PoetryFoundation.org looks at this year's Lambda award winners in poetry and explores the question "Is it Lesbian Enough?":
<http://poetryfoundation.org/archive/feature.html?id=179743>.

Audio interview with Lisa Alther, who discusses her new book *Kinfolks*:
www.lisaalther.com/interviews.html.

LeeAnn Krieh profiled twelve lesbian-themed international novels for
AfterEllen.com:
www.afterellen.com/books/2007/10/internationalbooks.

An interview with Linda S. Chapman and Late Moira Ryan, the playwrights who
created the play *The Beebo Brinker Chronicles* based on the books by Ann Bannon:
www.brooklynrail.org/2007/9/theater/lesbian-pulp.
The New York Times reviews *The Beebo Brinker Chronicles*:
[www.nytimes.com/2007/09/30/theater/30blank.html?
ex=1191816000&en=e906d7d7f674688c&ci=5070&cmc=eta1](http://www.nytimes.com/2007/09/30/theater/30blank.html?ex=1191816000&en=e906d7d7f674688c&ci=5070&cmc=eta1).

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InsightOut Book Club Closing

Several specialty clubs associated with Book-of-the-Month Club, including LGBT-themed InsightOut Book Club, are being disbanded by new owner Bertelsmann. Though the existence of InsightOut has been contentious for some in the queer book community who feel that it was a straight-owned, corporate entity that took sales away from feminist and queer bookstores and websites, there is little question that the club increased the visibility of LGBT literature since its start in 2000. InsightOut also provided sponsorship for queer literary events such as the Saints and Sinners Literary Festival and the Lambda Literary Awards.

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Literary Gift Idea - For Yourself or For Another

The Lambda Literary Foundation is publishing its first *LGBT Literary Pioneer Calendar* this year, and it will be available in November 2007. Featured are Ann Bannon, Betty Berzon, Samuel R. Delany, Martin Duberman, Leslie Feinberg, Barbara Gittings, Andrew Holleran, Audre Lorde, Paul Monette, Joan Nestle, John Rechy, and Edmund White. Check out www.lambdaliterary.org/calendar or call 212.239.6575 for more information.

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Book Rental? A Reality...

Booksfree.com is an online paperback and audiobook rental service that operates in a similar way as Netflix: you select a list of books, pay a monthly fee, receive a pre-determined number of books, read them at your leisure, return them in a postage-prepaid envelope, and then receive the next books on your list. They currently offer 332 titles under the heading "lesbian," with everything from lesbian romances and mysteries from Bella Books and lesbian pulps by Ann Bannon and Paula Christian to fiction from Rebecca Brown, Carol Anshaw, and Jewelle Gomez. There are some holes (they don't seem to have any Bold Strokes titles, for instance), some mistakes (there's a Christian born-again memoir by a man listed as "lesbian"), and some lesbian-themed books that aren't in the lesbian section, (Lucy Jane Bledsoe's latest, *Biting the Apple*, is under "gay"), but for folks in areas without libraries that offer these titles, this might be a good option. Prices range from \$9.99/month for 2 books at a time to \$37.99/month for 12 books at a time. Learn more at www.booksfree.com.

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Awards

Here are the winners of the 2007 Golden Crown Literary Society Literary Awards:
Lesbian Mystery/Thriller/Adventure
First Instinct, JLee Meyer, Bold Strokes Books
Idaho Code, Joan Opyr, Bywater Books
The Killing Room, Gerri Hill, Bella Books

Lesbian Speculative Fiction

Sister Lost, Sister Found, Jeanne G'Fellers, Bella Books
Sword of the Guardian, Merry Shannon, Bold Strokes Books
The Empress and the Acolyte, Jane Fletcher, Bold Strokes Books

Lesbian Romance

Behind the Pine Curtain, Gerri Hill, Bella Books
Fresh Tracks, Georgia Beers, Bold Strokes Books
Promising Hearts, Radclyffe, Bold Strokes Books

Lesbian Erotica

18th & Castro, Karin Kallmaker, Bella Books
Erotic Interludes 4: Extreme Passions, Radclyffe and Stacia Seaman, editors, Bold Strokes Books
Wild Abandon, Ronica Black, Bold Strokes Books

Lesbian Dramatic General Fiction

Gold Mountain, Anne Azel, P. D. Publishing
Snow Moon Rising, Lori L. Lake, Regal Crest Enterprises
The Night Watch, Sarah Waters, Riverhead Books

Lesbian Anthology/Short Story/Essay Collections

Hit by a Farm, Catherine Friend, Marlowe & Co.

Lesbian Debut Author

Andrews & Austin, *Combust the Sun*, Bold Strokes Books
Kate Sweeney, *She Waits*, Intaglio Publications
Merry Shannon, *Sword of the Guardian*, Bold Strokes Books

The Ann Bannon GCLS Popular Choice Award

Snow Moon Rising, Lori L. Lake, Regal Crest Enterprises

The GCLS Trailblazer Award

Jane Rule

The GCLS Director's Award

Cathy LeNoir
The 2008 GCLS Literary Conference will be held July 31 – August 3 in Phoenix, Arizona. For more information, see www.gelscon.com.

Passings

Terry Ryan

The author of *The Prize Winner of Defiance, Ohio: How My Mother Raised 10 Kids on 25 Words or Less* died at age 61 of cancer. Ryan was also part of the team who developed the cartoon T.O. Sylvester, and she worked as a technical writer, editor, reviewer, and poet. She is survived by her long-time partner, Patricia Holt, and her nine siblings and their children.

Publishers Weekly tribute:

www.publishersweekly.com/article/CA6444760.html&:

San Francisco Chronicle:

www.sfgate.com/cgi-bin/article.cgi?file=/c/a/2007/05/18/DDG2CPSRD61.DTL.

Ruth Frankenberg

The author of *The Social Construction of Whiteness: White Women, Race Matters* and *Living Spirit, Living Practice: Poetics, Politics, Epistemology* died earlier this year of lung cancer. She was 49. Her work was among the first to look at "whiteness," how white women benefited from their race even if they weren't aware of it, and how others became cognizant of race and power structures via life experiences. She taught at both the University of Washington in Seattle and the University of California at Davis before moving to Bangalore, India, with her partner Lata Mani, to do work in a non-academic setting.

The Guardian obituary:

www.guardian.co.uk/obituaries/story/0,,2121712,00.html.

Yolanda Retter

Los Angeles-based scholar, activist, and archivist Retter died this summer at 59 from cancer. Her work was largely about bringing visibility to both Latinas and LGBT people. Her books include *Queers in Space* and *Gay and Lesbian Rights in the United States: A Documentary History*. She was active in the helping to build archives for lesbian history at UCLA and USC and created the Lesbian History Project website, which friends will be bringing back online. Most recently, she was head Librarian/Archivist at the Chicano Studies Resource Center at UCLA.

Tribute:

http://mazerlesbianarchives.org/in_memory.html.

Common Dreams obituary:

www.commondreams.org/archive/2007/08/29/3493.

Calls for Submissions

Poems published in 2007 are being sought for consideration in *Best Lesbian Poetry* edited by Linda Alvarez, to be published by A Midsummer Night's Press. Deadline is December 1, 2007. Poems can have appeared in print or online magazines, journals, or anthologies. They are open to all styles of poetry, from formal to free verse and are likewise open-minded in terms of content, so long as it somehow fits (even if pushing the boundaries of) what might be considered "lesbian poetry." Submissions from individual poets or queries should be sent by email in .doc format to BestLesbianPoetry@gmail.com. Please title documents with the poet's surname. Please include contact information (both street and email address), bio, and previous publication history within the document, as documents will be read separately from the emails.

Lesbian Crime Fiction issue *CLUES: A Journal of Detection* with guest editor Jacky Collins. *CLUES* features scholarly articles on all aspects of mystery and detective material in print, television, and film. Submissions addressing any aspect of lesbian crime fiction are welcome, but the guest editor would be particularly interested in manuscripts that examine lesbian crime fiction from cultures outside of the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia. Submission Deadline: February 1, 2008. Submit online at <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/heldref/clues>. Visit *CLUES* online at www.heldref.org/clues.php. Address questions to Elizabeth Foxwell, Managing Editor: clu@heldref.org.

Sinister Wisdom: A Multicultural Journal by and For Lesbians is seeking submissions for issue #75, Visual Art, to be edited by Fran Day. Deadline January 1, 2008. Details at www.sinisterwisdom.org or email fran@sonic.net.

Sinister Wisdom is also seeking submissions for Issue #76, Lesbian Theories/Lesbian Controversies, to be edited by Julie Enszer. Deadline June 1, 2008. Check out www.sinisterwisdom.org/journal.html#upcoming for more details or email JREnszer@aol.com.

We hope you enjoyed this (tardy) issue of *Books To Watch Out For: The Lesbian Edition*. I've enjoyed my tenure here and look forward to what Carol has in store for the future.

With gratitude,

Suzanne Corson
for *Books To Watch Out For*

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