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Erin Duran, LGBTQA Advisor and Residential Life Coordinator

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Abstract

In this new *Next Page* column, Erin Duran, LGBTQA Advisor and Residential Life Coordinator, shares with us the name of the author he appreciates even more now that he knows said author is from his home state of Texas, which title caught his attention as a sixth grader (and the hit song played on repeat while reading!), and which authors he frequently recommends to students for their challenging (in a good way) discussion of LGBTQA topics.

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Next Page

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In this new Next Page column, Erin Duran, LGBTQA Advisor and Residential Life Coordinator, shares with us the name of the author he appreciates even more now that he knows said author is from his home state of Texas, which title caught his attention as a sixth grader (and the hit song played on repeat while reading!), and which authors he frequently recommends to students for their challenging (in a good way) discussion of LGBTQA topics.



Erin Duran, LGBTQA Advisor and Residential Life Coordinator, shares his favorite reads, including the title that caught his attention as a sixth grader, and which authors he frequently recommends to his students.

What are you reading now, or have you read recently, that you would recommend to a friend or colleague?

I'm currently reading too many things. I'm in book four of a post-apocalyptic/survivalist fiction series by Joe Nobody called *Holding Their Own*. It's independently published and occasionally dotted with errors, but the story is great and I've been going through a post-apocalyptic/survivalist fiction phase lately. I'm in the middle of *A Storm of Swords*, the third book in George R.R. Martin's *A Song of Ice and Fire* series that I started reading back in undergrad (recently popularized by the TV show *Game of Thrones*). I've also been working on *Slouching Towards Bethlehem* by Joan Didion. I'd recommend all of them, though I know survivalist fiction and fantasy aren't everyone's cup of literary tea.

I did recently read Stephen King's *The Stand*, and William Forstchen's *One Second After*. I recommended both to a few friends. *The Stand* follows multiple characters, good and evil, trying to survive after a plague ravages the country, and though the ending wasn't super satisfying, the story was incredible. *One Second After* is a page-turner that follows a group of residents in a small college town following an EMP that wipes out the electricity and cuts them off from the rest of the world. Like I said, I've been going through a post-apocalyptic phase, haha.

You have a lot of contact with students as Residential Life Coordinator and LGBTQA advisor. What book/article/blog have you recently recommended to a student?

I have frequently recommended Leslie Feinberg, Judith Butler, and Kate Bornstein to students who I work with around LGBTQ issues. You can't go wrong with any of those authors! They can all be challenging, but in the best possible ways.

I often recommend [Teaching to Transgress](#) by bell hooks and [Pedagogy of the Oppressed](#) by Paulo Freire to students who are interested in education. These are great reads that push you to reimagine the way you understand education and the relationship between teacher and student as it relates to creating/sharing/valuing knowledge.

How do you keep track of what you have already read, are reading currently, or want to read in the future?

I try to keep a mental list of everything I want to read, and more often than not I give in and buy the books so I'll have them around when I get some free time. This results in an overstuffed bookshelf and some general clutter, but it's worth it to know that I've got lots of book options available when I get some free time.

What book or article has inspired you to take action?

Oh man, so many! Works by Paulo Freire, bell hooks, Gloria Anzaldúa, Eli Clare, Judith Butler, Shane Claiborne, Adrienne Rich...I could keep going. I love books that make you walk away with your mind racing, books that bring out your passion, books that change the way you see the world around you! All of these authors have done that for me, and I hope they can do the same for others.

You are enthusiastic about your home state of Texas. Is there a book about Texas, that takes place in Texas, or by a Texan author that you would recommend?

Oddly enough, the survivalist fiction series I'm reading is set in Texas. I didn't know this when I first started reading, but it did make the story more enjoyable being able to picture the landscape and know some of the town names. Also, I recently discovered that Cormac McCarthy is a Texas resident. I was already a fan, but this does make him a little bit cooler.

Who is your favorite writer of all time?

I honestly don't know that I can answer this question. I don't think I've read enough to know yet!

Is there a book that you have re-read multiple times?

Yes, though there definitely isn't any particular trend. [Shame](#) by Salman Rushdie is one of my all-time favorite books and I've read it a few times. [Bright Shiny Morning](#) by James Frey hasn't gotten old. *The Gift of Fear* by Gavin de Becker is a practical read that's always a good reminder to trust your instincts. *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton is one of my favorite books of all time.

Do you have a favorite book or literary character from your childhood?

Guess I jumped the gun! *The Outsiders* by S.E. Hinton is my favorite book from my childhood! I can remember vividly reading it as a sixth grader, sitting in my bedroom with Christina Aguilera's "What A Girl Wants" on repeat... for hours! It's also my favorite movie (Directed by Francis Ford Coppola, released in 1983). I absolutely love the story and all of the characters! Plus the movie has an outstanding cast of actors who went on to become wildly famous and super successful!

What are the guilty pleasures in your media diet?

There are so many! I love terrible TV and I read celebrity gossip blogs now and again. I also got a subscription to [Mental Floss](#) magazine for Christmas from a family member. It's a great magazine that I highly recommend to anyone who loves learning fun facts. It's full of random, occasionally useful, and always interesting information!

What are you planning to read next?

One of my best friends recommended Gabriel García Márquez's *One Hundred Years of Solitude* back in undergrad and I bought a copy years ago. It's her favorite book and I've started it multiple times but never made significant progress. I'd like to finally finish that this summer, along with Mark Z. Danielewski's *House of Leaves*, and Susan Cain's *Quiet: The Power of Introverts in a World That Can't Stop Talking*. Those have been sitting on my bookshelf for far too long!

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