

Gay Lives

Robert Aldrich
Thames & Hudson

READING sometimes like a collection of fascinating biographies and other times like an encyclopedia, this book offers portraits of gays throughout history and from around the world. Some are famous (Oscar Wilde, Harvey Milk, Yves Saint Laurent), while others take your high school studies to a new level (Frederick the Great, Michelangelo, Walt Whitman). The author has included biblical characters (David, giant-killer and quintessential underdog), Africans, Asians, lesbians and other famous and influential homosexuals of the past. Of the almost 80 entries, you're sure to find plenty that interest you. An insane, lesbian nun, maybe? Yet with all the people featured, the author neglected to include anyone from the *Instinct* staff! For that, we deduct one-and-a-half stars (because we love power), but still recommend it as the gay history book that needs to be read. —MS

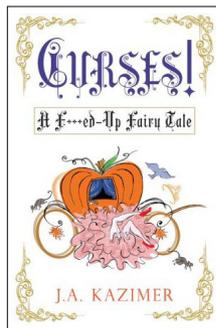
★★★★☆

Curses! A F**ked-Up Fairy Tale

J.A. Kazimer

Kensington

AS ADULTS we know that you can't always tell the hero from the villain and that Prince



Charming is as elusive as our goal weight. So why go back to the world of make-believe? Because this is not your typical children's story! Served up with just the right amount of snark, *Curses!* makes good on its promise to be a "F**ked-Up Fairy Tale." With some favorites sprinkled about for good measure (Cinderella, Glinda et al), *Curses!* delivers exciting wit in a soap opera of tabloid tales that the Brothers Grimm never saw coming! —TJ

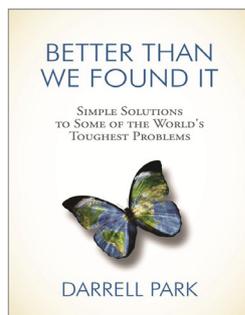
★★★★☆

Better Than We Found It

Darrell Park

Self-published

IN THIS month of Earth Day, how can we not welcome ideas for trying to solve some of our planet's biggest problems? No science degree needed; *Better Than We Found It* takes an activist's approach to both global and economic issues



(sometimes too broadly to a fault). While the notion that change starts on the individual level may not be new, Darrell Park does an impressive job of simplifying how your changes—take inventory of how you spend your money, utilize solar water heaters, even recycle to end poverty!—can amount to marked improvements. —OE

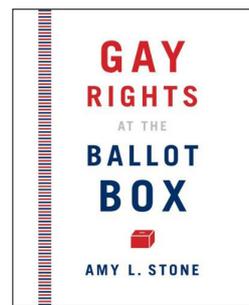
★★★★☆

Gay Rights At The Ballot Box

Amy L. Stone

University Of Minnesota Press

LIKE the relationships we are often fighting for, when it comes to gay rights and voter initiatives...it's complicated. Amy Stone has essentially created a case study looking at the relationship between ballot measure campaigns and social movements—specifically the move for LGBT equality. Have the Prop. 8 votes of recent U.S. history hurt or helped our push for equality in the long run? The short answer seems to be a bit of both. But how



we apply this knowledge (and how we become more inclusive of our entire community) in the future is what could mean the difference between rights and constitutional oppression. Be warned: At times the text is dense and may bring back nightmares of political theory classes gone by. But when so many have thrown their hands up in frustration after failed campaigns, *Gay Rights At The Ballot Box* at least offers smart, well-researched insight into how we may be able to make changes moving forward. —OE

★★★★☆