



***Alice Austen Lived Here* by Alex Gino**

Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., 2022

ISBN: 9781338733891 (Hardcover), 9781338733846 (Paperback)

*Age Range: 9 to 12 (Suggested by Publisher)

Grade Range: N/A (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

BOOK SYNOPSIS

From the award-winning author of *Melissa*, a phenomenal novel about queerness past, present, and future.

Sam is very in touch with their own queer identity. They're nonbinary, and their best friend, TJ, is nonbinary as well. Sam's family is very cool with it... as long as Sam remembers that nonbinary kids are also required to clean their rooms, do their homework, and try not to antagonize their teachers too much.

The teacher-respect thing is hard when it comes to Sam's history class, because their teacher seems to believe that only Dead Straight Cis White Men are responsible for history. When Sam's home borough of Staten Island opens up a contest for a new statue, Sam finds the perfect non-DSCWM subject: photographer Alice Austen, whose house has been turned into a museum, and who lived with a female partner for decades.

Soon, Sam's project isn't just about winning the contest. It's about discovering a rich queer history that Sam's a part of -- a queer history that no longer needs to be quiet, as long as there are kids like Sam and TJ to stand up for it.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★ "Gino, author of 2015's award-winning *Melissa*, crafts another tour-de-force about the ways in which modern LGBTQIA+ kids are connected to our community's history...An essential story to non-LGBTQIA+ and LGBTQIA+ kids alike, offering a timeless reminder to readers of all ages: like Alice Austen, we lived—and continue to live—here and everywhere." —*Booklist*, **starred review**

★ "[T]he solid representation in this novel offers a testament to the power of intergenerational queer community." —*Publishers Weekly*, **starred review**

"[A] solid portrayal of LGBTQ+ youth taking their first steps into queer adulthood, and it's heartening to see Sam and TJ both teach and learn from a multi-generational queer family." —*The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

"The heart of this book is found in its intergenerational relationships—Sam's friendships with LGBTQIA+ elders help them learn about fat liberation, queer history, and the value of chosen family." —*Horn Book*

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“Between the body positivity, queer representation/visibility, and celebration of queer history, this is a wonderful book for all students to read.” —*Youth Services Book Review*

“*Alice Austen Lived Here* is a funny, charming, earnest story about two young people finding a connection to history that they never imagined. It’s a love letter to Staten Island, and to the LGBTQ+ community of the past. It’s a short and simple story, but it’s genuine, heartwarming, and important.” —*Righter of Words*

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- ALA Rainbow Book List: Upper Elementary
- ALA RISE: A Feminist Book List: Middle Grade Fiction
- CBC Librarian Favorites Award – Book List: Grades 6-8
- CBC Teacher Favorites Award – Book List: Grades 6-8
- Jane Addams Children’s Book Award – Finalist: Older Children

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Read with Pride Resource Guide](#)
- [MG Book Village](#), author interview
- [Yahoo Life](#), author interview
- [LGBTQ Reads](#), “Most Anticipated LGBTQ+ Middle Grade Fiction”
- [Reads Rainbow](#), “2022 Middle Grade & Picture Books”
- [Gayming Mag](#), “LGBTQ Books Coming Out in 2022”
- [PEN America](#), author interview

RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

[PEN America Statement of Support](#): In compiling such a vast number of titles – sourced from other districts where these books have been banned from student access – your district is choosing to restrict access to an expansive body of acclaimed literature and books. And, with what appears to have been little review process, this list targets books by Black and LGBTQ authors and books that deal with racism, gender, and sexuality, seemingly just because these have been the books targeted elsewhere. In removing such an astonishing collection of books you are depriving your students of the freedom to read, to think, to imagine, and to grow.

It is the responsibility of the district to “support student achievement.” In protecting students’ access to a wide array of knowledge, ideas, stories, and literature, you support their academic and developmental success, sense of well-being and value, and protect their constitutional rights.

Rather than this sweeping suppression of literature, we ask that you leave these books on shelves and continue to pressure the state to provide explicit guidance on the implementation of the law starting January 1, 2024.

*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES

A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the

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appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

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