



***Honestly Ben* by Bill Konigsberg**

Scholastic Press, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., 2017

ISBN: 9780545858267 (Hardcover)

*Age Range: 14 and Up (Suggested by Publisher)

Grade Range: 9 Up (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

BOOK SYNOPSIS

In the companion to the award-winning *Openly Straight*, Ben confronts pressure at school, repression at home, and his passion for two very different people in figuring out what it takes to be *Honestly Ben*.

Perfect for fans of David Levithan, Andrew Smith, and John Green! Ben Carver is back to normal. He's working steadily in his classes at the Natick School. He just got elected captain of the baseball team. He's even won a full scholarship to college, if he can keep up his grades. All that foolishness with Rafe Goldberg the past semester is in the past.

Except...There's Hannah, the gorgeous girl from the neighboring school, who attracts him and distracts him. There's his mother, whose quiet unhappiness Ben is noticing for the first time. School is harder, the pressure higher, the scholarship almost slipping away. And there's Rafe, funny, kind, dating someone else . . . and maybe the real normal that Ben needs.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★ "Konigsberg has again done a remarkable job developing characters and inviting readers to consider the meaning of friendship with all its rewards and challenges. Extremely well written, this novel of ideas is deeply satisfying and as honest as its appealing protagonist." —*Booklist*, **starred review**

★ "Well-rounded characters take readers from serious, thoughtful discussions to typical teen pranks with ease . . . Equal parts serious and funny as it addresses homophobia, hazing rituals, and cheating while also delighting readers with a slice-of-life tale set at a private academy." —*School Library Journal*, **starred review**

★ "Konigsberg again realistically explores what happens when one's self butts up against . . . the world's expectations and assumptions . . . The result is a refreshingly honest exploration of modern relationships and an understanding that love can take many shapes and forms." —*Publishers Weekly*, **starred review**

"*Honestly Ben* is funny, complex, joyful, heartbreaking, and exceedingly wise all at once. A teenager with any question about the right way to live couldn't ask for a better read." —Geoff Herbach, author of *Anything You Want* and *Stupid Fast*

Updated 4/01/2024

Scholastic Inc.

SchoolLibraryTeam@Scholastic.com

“It’s hard to write a good sequel, keeping what people loved about the first book, but adding something fresh and new. Not surprisingly, Bill Konigsberg pulls it off wonderfully in *Honestly Ben*.” —Brent Hartinger, author of *Geography Club* and *Three Truths and a Lie*

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- [The Children’s Book Review](#), “Best New Young Adult Books March 2017”
- [Bustle](#), “The 16 Best Young Adult Books Coming in March 2017”
- [Entertainment Weekly](#), “35 Most Anticipated YA Novels of 2017”

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Read with Pride Resource Guide](#)
- [Scholastic Reads](#) (podcast), author interview
- [Entertainment Weekly](#), exclusive excerpt
- [Entertainment Weekly](#), author interview
- [Phoenix Magazine](#), author interview
- [Adventures in YA Publishing](#) (blog), review
- [AudioFile Magazine](#), author interview
- [Baltimore Out Loud](#), Pride Reading List 2017
- [The Bay Area Reporter](#), “LGBTQ Pride 2017: A Reading List”
- [Butler’s Pantry](#) (blog), review
- [LGBTQ Reads](#) (blog), “TBRainbow Alert” blog post
- [Jeff & Will Blog](#) (blog), review
- [Mugglenet](#), review
- [Society of Children’s Book Writers and Illustrators](#) (blog), author interview
- [Unquestionably Palatable](#) (blog), review
- [Walking Brain Cells](#) (blog), review
- [Wonder Reads](#) (blog), review
- [OutClique Magazine](#), “LGBTQ Pride Reading List 2017”
- [OOM Scholastic Blog](#), author interview

RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

[PEN America Statement of Support](#): In May 2023, PEN America, Penguin Random House, and a diverse group of authors joined with parents and students in Escambia County, Florida, to file a federal lawsuit challenging removals and restrictions of books from school libraries that violate their rights to free speech and equal protection under the law.

This lawsuit brings together authors whose books have been removed or restricted and parents and students in the district who cannot access the books, in a groundbreaking challenge to unlawful censorship.

Ensuring that students have access to books on a wide range of topics and that express a diversity of viewpoints is a core function of public education — preparing students to be thoughtful and engaged citizens.

Updated 4/01/2024

Scholastic Inc.

SchoolLibraryTeam@Scholastic.com

The lawsuit says the Escambia County School District and School Board violated the First Amendment rights of the students, authors, and publishers by removing books “based on ideological objections to their contents or disagreement with their messages or themes.” The books targeted for removal disproportionately addressed themes and messages related to race and LGBTQ+ identity. Florida has one of the highest rates of book removals and restrictions in the country, as researched by PEN America and documented in its [Index of School Book Bans](#).

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

Updated 4/01/2024

Scholastic Inc.

SchoolLibraryTeam@Scholastic.com