



***Openly Straight* by Bill Konigsberg**

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

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

BOOK SYNOPSIS

A funny, honest novel about being out, being proud... and being ready for something else.

The award-winning novel about being out, being proud, and being ready for something else.

Rafe is a normal teenager from Boulder, Colorado. He plays soccer. He's won skiing prizes. He likes to write.

And, oh yeah, he's gay. He's been out since 8th grade, and he isn't teased, and he goes to other high schools and talks about tolerance and stuff. And while that's important, all Rafe really wants is to just be a regular guy. Not that GAY guy. To have it be a part of who he is, but not the headline, every single time.

So when he transfers to an all-boys' boarding school in New England, he decides to keep his sexuality a secret -- not so much going back in the closet as starting over with a clean slate. But then he sees a classmate breaking down. He meets a teacher who challenges him to write his story. And most of all, he falls in love with Ben... who doesn't even know that love is possible.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★ "Lambda Literary Award-winner Konigsberg has written an exceptionally intelligent, thought-provoking, coming-of-age novel about the labels people apply to us and that we, perversely, apply to ourselves... *Openly Straight* is altogether one of the best gay-themed novels of the last ten years." —*Booklist*, **starred review**

★ "Readers and discussion groups looking for new and deeper ways to think about what it means to live honestly in a world that sorts by labels will find this fresh and evocative." —*The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*, **starred review**

"Konigsberg's lovely novel invites us to walk with Rafe through his season of assumed identity and his costly emergence into honesty. It's beautiful. It's a story of salvation." —*The New York Times Book Review*

"For a thought-provoking, creative, twenty-first-century take on the coming-out story, look no further." —*The Horn Book Magazine*

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"Konigsberg's latest might sound like fluff, but it actually works as a complicated, poignant story of a teenage boy trying on a new skin...An eye-opening story of wish fulfillment." —*Kirkus Reviews*

"This is a fascinating take on the LGBTQ genre in that it explores the desire to express multiple identities. The main and supporting characters are multidimensional and fascinating, the plot riveting, and the dialogue witty. You'll laugh. You'll cry. You'll think." —*School Library Connection*

"Konigsberg raises compelling questions about stereotyping and self-actualization through the story of openly gay high school junior Rafe Goldberg." —*Publishers Weekly*

"Funny, unexpected, peppered with terrific dialogue -- and best of all, achingly honest." —Ned Vizzini, author of *It's Kind of a Funny Story* and *House of Secrets*

"For anybody who ever wished they could be someone else (and who hasn't?), *Openly Straight* provides a fun and intriguing, twisting-and-turning romp through sexuality, identity, friendship, and love." —Alex Sanchez, author of *Rainbow Boys* and *Boyfriends with Girlfriends*

"Bill Konigsberg hands a great high concept to a really compelling narrator and presents us with a terrific read. *Openly Straight* is smart, funny, and unflinching. Read this book." —Chris Crutcher, author of *Deadline*, *Whale Talk*, and *Period 8*

"An original, thought-provoking, hilarious story about the importance of embracing your true identity, and the cost to yourself and others when you don't." —Julie Ann Peters, author of *Luna* and *Keeping You a Secret*

"*Openly Straight* sports a sharp plot with a twist, sympathetic (and totally hot) characters, and universal appeal. It's a must-read for openly everyone!" —Lisa McMann, bestselling author of the *Wake* Trilogy

"Rafe Goldberg, the fiercely likeable narrator of Bill Konigsberg's refreshing, highly original young adult novel, *Openly Straight*, has what any out high school teen can only wish for: a loyal and incorrigibly sassy female best friend, an accepting student body and rainbow flag-waving parents who don't just love their son unconditionally but believe his sexual orientation is cause for celebration." —*Edge Boston*

"I highly recommend *Openly Straight*. It is an entertaining and insightful read that will make you laugh and make you cry – and that's really the magic combination of our favorite books, isn't it?" —*Hutchinson News*

"A delightful story with clever, honest, whimsical characters, this book encourages readers to explore the idea of what constructs identity right along with the characters." —*Register Guard*

"Bill Konigsberg uses a keen sense of humor along with his knowledge of the LGBT community to display the fact labels aren't everything." —*Saturday Gazette-Mail*

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Association of Children's Librarians of Northern California Reading List
- Summer 2013 Kid's Indie Next List, "Inspired Recommendations for Kids from Indie Booksellers"
- ALA Best Fiction for Young Adults

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- ALA Rainbow Project List
- Amelia Elizabeth Walden Award Finalist
- Capitol Choices Noteworthy Titles for Children and Teens
- CBC/NCSS Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People
- Children's Book Committee, Bank Street College of Education Best Children's Books of the Year
- Cooperative Children's Book Center Choices
- IRA Notable Books for a Global Society
- Lambda Literary Award - Finalist
- SCBWI Sid Fleischman Award for Humor
- Texas Tayshas High School Reading List (*Top Ten)
- Georgia Peach Book Award for Teen Readers
- North Carolina Young Adult Award Nomination

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Read with Pride Resource Guide](#)
- [The Atlantic](#), "Summer YA Reading Guide"
- [Hypable](#), "Ten Realistic YA Novels that Would Make Great Movies"
- [New York Times Book Review](#), Editor's Choice
- [Charleston City Paper](#), author interview
- [A Book and a Hug](#), review
- [The Atlantic Wire](#), "A New Way for Gay Characters in Y.A."
- [USAToday.com](#), "Top 10 young adult books for summer"
- [CBC Diversity](#), author interview
- [Children's Literature Crossroads](#), review
- [Coastline Books](#) (blog), review
- [In Bed with Books](#) (blog), review
- [JeffandWill.com](#), review
- [ThePirateTree.com](#), review
- [Pass the Chiclets](#) (blog), review
- [The Polished Pageturner](#) (blog), review
- [Reading Between Classes](#) (blog), review
- [The Reading Date](#) (blog), review
- [Waking Brain Cells](#) (blog), review

***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.

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