



**Gravity by Leanne Lieberman**

Orca Book Publishers, 2008

9781554690497 (paperback)

\*Age Range: 12+

Grade Range: Gr. 8 to 12

## BOOK SYNOPSIS

---

Ellie Gold is an orthodox Jewish teenager living in Toronto in the late eighties.

Ellie has no doubts about her strict religious upbringing until she falls in love with another girl at her grandmother's cottage. Aware that homosexuality clashes with Jewish observance, Ellie feels forced to either alter her sexuality or leave her community. Meanwhile, Ellie's mother, Chana, becomes convinced she has a messianic role to play, and her sister, Neshama, chafes against the restrictions of her faith. Ellie is afraid there is no way to be both gay and Jewish, but her mother and sister offer alternative concepts of God that help Ellie find a place for herself as a queer Jew.

## REVIEWS AND PRAISE

---

"Heartfelt - a must for Jewish and GLBT collections."— *Kirkus*

"A remarkably sensitive and credible portrait of a girl whose faith collides with her sexuality, and who refuses to compromise either." — *The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

"Lieberman's confidence is impressive. She is in complete command of her material. Her work is like origami, in which meanings gently unfold. She treats Ellie's emerging eroticism with taste and delicacy." — *The Globe and Mail*

"This novel explores the world of Orthodox Judaism...[a] powerful book."— *Resource Links*

**Updated 8/15/2024**

Orca Book Publishers

orca@orcabook.com

## AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

---

- Association of Jewish Libraries (AJL) Sydney Taylor Book Award - Notable Books, **Commended, 2008**
- American Library Association (ALA) Rainbow Book List, **Commended, 2009**
- CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens, starred selection, **Commended, 2010**

## RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

---

One of the four challenges this book has received was from an administrator in Texas, in the Granbury Independent School District. See the full chart [here](#).

The Granbury Independent School District was investigated in 2022 for banning school library books dealing with sexuality and gender, following a complaint made by the American Civil Liberties Union of Texas (ACLU) accusing the district of discriminating based on sexual orientation and gender, which is prohibited under federal law.

“The district’s...decision to remove dozens of library books pending a review, fostered a ‘pervasively hostile’ environment for LGBTQ students,” noted an article in the *Texas Tribune*. “Chloe Kempf, an ACLU attorney, said the Education Department’s decision to open the investigation into Granbury ISD signals that the agency is concerned about what she described as ‘a wave’ of anti-LGBTQ policies and book removals nationally.”

Full article: <https://www.texastribune.org/2022/12/20/granbury-books-investigation-civil-rights/#:~:text=The%20ACLU%20complaint%20was%20based,and%20people%20who%20are%20transgender>.

## \*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.