Jewish LGBTQ Books

Fiction

Samuel Klayman first meets Josef Kavalier when his mother tells him to make room for their cousin, a refugee from Nazi-occupied Prague. It’s the beginning of a beautiful friendship.

Dancing on Tisha B’av – Lev Raphael (1991)
This is a book of short stories dealing with issues of being gay and Judaism, anti-semitism, homophobia and other issues.

Good Enough To Eat – Leslea Newman (1986)
The story of a protagonist who is a Jewish bulimic who comes to recovery through exploration of her previously hidden lesbianism.

Non-Fiction

Keep Your Wives Away From Them – An Anthology Edited by Miryam Kabakov- (2010)
Reconciling queerness with religion has always been an enormous challenge. When the religion is Orthodox Judaism, the task is even more daunting. This anthology takes on that challenge by giving voice to genderqueer Jewish women who were once silenced.

Balancing on the Mechitza – Edited by Noach Dzmura (2010)
While the Jewish mainstream argues about homosexuality, transgender and gender-variant people have emerged as a distinct Jewish. Inspired and nurtured by the successes of the feminist and LGBT movements in the Jewish world, Jews who identify with the “T” now sit in the congregation, marry under the chuppah, and create Jewish families.

In the Jewish tradition, reading of the Torah follows a calendar cycle, with a specific portion assigned each week. These weekly portions, read aloud in synagogues around the world, have been subject to interpretation and commentary for centuries. Following on this ancient tradition, Torah Queeries brings together some of the world’s leading rabbis, scholars, and writers to interpret the Torah through a "bent lens".

Listening for the Oboe – Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum (2005)
This collection of sermons given by Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum over the course of her career at Congregation Beth Simchat Torah in New York gives insight into the inner life of the world’s largest LGBT synagogue as it went through AIDS, September 11th, crisis in Israel and other milestone moments.
Rabbi Greenberg gives his take on homosexuality within the orthodox tradition in this book, offering spiritual and practical advice for traditional Jews and a thorough discussion of several of the biblical passages that have been the most troubling for LGBT people.

This book is a compilation of around 30 people’s personal stories of being Jewish and Queer in their individual ways.

Rabbi Rapoport offers a halachic discussion of homosexuality, advocating for inclusion of gay and lesbian Jews within the orthodox community. Much of his argument is based on the notion of tinok shenishbah (the kidnapped child).

Queer Jews – Edited by David Shneer and Caryn Aviv (2002)
This important compilation includes articles on queer Jewish identity, spirituality, culture, institutional live and lived experience.

Found Tribe: Jewish Coming Out Stories – Edited by Lawrence Schimel (2002)
This compilation of Jewish men’s coming out stories presents a number of personal testimonies about coming out to family, friends and the Jewish community including a variety of societal and denominational environments.

Moshe Shokeid spent a little over a year studying Congregation Beth Simchat Torah in New York and this book is the result of that lengthy anthropological study.

Lesbian Rabbis: The First Generation – Edited by Rebecca Alpert, Sue Elwell, and Shirley Idelson (2001)
This book has biographies of some of the first lesbian rabbis to be ordained. They talk about textual issues, societal problems, their own stories and evaluate how the world has changed since they were first ordained.

This is the revised edition of the original 1982 book. This was the very first published book to describe the lesbian Jewish experience. It includes both essays directed at creating change in the Jewish community and essayed directed at the general feminist community, identifying the anti-Semitism in some feminist circles.