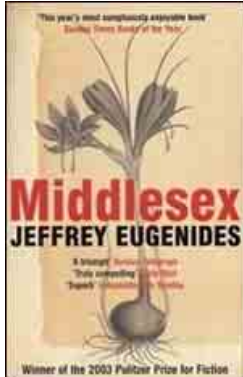




# LGBT Reading Group



## July/August 2007



### The Read... Middlesex

*'I was born twice: first, as a baby girl, on a remarkably smogless Detroit day of January 1960; and then again, as a teenage boy, in an emergency room near Petoskey, Michigan, in August of 1974.'*

So begins the breathtaking story of Calliope and three generations of the Greek-American Stephanides family, who travel from a tiny village in Asia Minor to Prohibition-era Detroit, before they move out to the tree-lined streets of suburban Michigan. To understand why she is not like other girls, Calliope has to uncover a family secret and the astonishing genetic history that turns her into Cal, one of the most audacious and wondrous narrators in contemporary fiction. Lyrical and thrilling, this book is an exhilarating reinvention of the American epic. ISBN 978-0-7475-9008-8

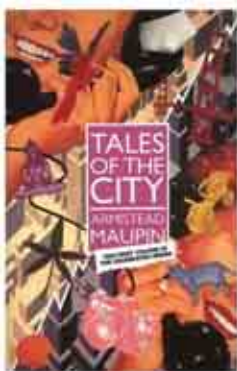


### The Author... Jeffrey Eugenides

Born in 1960, Eugenides is of Greek and Irish descent. He earned a M.A. in Creative Writing from Stanford University and in 1986 received the Nicholl Fellowship Award for his story *Here Comes Winston, Full of the Holy Spirit*. His 1993 novel, *The Virgin Suicides*, gained mainstream interest with the 1999 film adaptation by Sofia Coppola.

Although he is reluctant to appear in public or disclose many details about his private life, we know that he lives in Chicago with his wife and daughter. This 2002 novel won the prestigious Pulitzer Prize.

**Our Opinion...** At over 500 pages, this wasn't a quick read! But from the beginning readers were drawn into this family saga by the style of writing and the intrigue of the narrator's eventful tale, where every character has a dramatically emotional journey to take. Peppered with Greek Mythology and facts from modern social history, Eugenides also takes the liberty of weaving some of his own theories into the book (i.e. WF Fard and the Nation of Islam). Although a deceptively breezy tone is used to describe some awful parts of the story, *Middlesex* has many humorous moments and several lengthy Sterne-style diversions. By the end of the book, some readers were left feeling that they wanted more and that it was wound up a little too quickly but, without exception, everyone enjoyed it.



### What Next? Tales of the City by Armistead Maupin

Set in 1970s San Francisco, Mary-Ann Singleton is a naive young secretary, fresh out of Cleveland. She moves into 28 Barbary Lane, where she soon finds there is more than meets the eye to landlady Anna Madrigal. Meet her neighbours - Michael 'Mouse' Tolliver, is gay and proud but not yet out; Mona Ramsay isn't quite sure who she is; the charming Brian, a straight man in a gay world; and what is the guy upstairs really up to? The saga that ensues is manic, romantic, tawdry, touching and outrageous. If you thought San Francisco in the 70s was all about sex, drugs and having fun... you're absolutely right!

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