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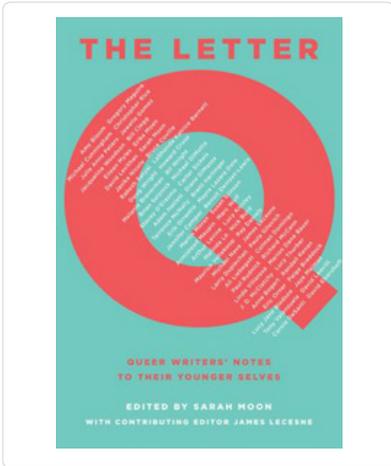
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## Entertainment :: Books

### The Letter Q: Queer Writers' Notes to their Younger Selves

by Daniel Scheffler  
EDGE Contributor  
Tuesday Jun 5, 2012

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"The Letter Q: Queer Writers' Notes To Their Younger Selves" represents a plea that so many of us think about - I wish I knew then what I know now. The familiar phrase resounds with thickly laden complexities and this airing out collection of letters rumbles with some fruitful insight.

As the writer points out so touchingly is that she "lived in the middle of nowhere and was an enormous homosexual." It's a rough yet typical creed of so many homosexuals that then venture off to a bigger city in the hopes of discovering some acceptance, not just finding it from others but more harrowingly within themselves.

The collection offers an appreciation for this process and allows for some deep-seated issues and ideas to surface in the writers and then as a standing by reader. The nifty book trailer <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pCsx9d7Ki2Y> gives the collection a squeeze of digital and feels fresh and interesting to watch.

Whether queer, lesbian, gay, homosexual, straight, bisexual, transgendered or transsexual there is a letter in here that will penetrate and impale even the most unsentimental.

Some of the writers included in this collection are David Levithan, Lucy Thurber, Michael Cunningham and Paul Rudnick. And some highlights in the sixty-three letters include David Levithan's letter to his Eighth Grade self where he encourages an apology to his teacher Mr. Jones, who was a "deeply uninspiring teacher," but didn't deserve to be ragged for being gay. Lucy Thurber who writes to her thirteen almost fourteen year-old self about the change in her body as her breasts and hips come along feels clement and throbbing in its sincerity. She reminds herself that she won't be alone and the promise reveals hopefulness, for all of mankind.

Michael Cunningham opens his letter with a simple "Worry less" and continues his letter with an appeal for less conformity. Cunningham's advice of "having faith in your sexual identity...is one of your greatest gifts" is just what gives the masterful writer his incredible acumen into human nature, and ultimately his success as a writer. Paul Rudnick simply writes to his young self and adds humorously that "You've known you were gay since approximately three seconds after you were born" and maintains this light and

unaffected tone throughout his letter from "Old Paul."

The collection of letters offers deeply intimate moments, some relatable and some rather trifling but the essence of the work is a prevalent "you are going to be ok" that feels rational and rather lucid. Some of the letters are in the form of pictures and whether queer, lesbian, gay, homosexual, straight, bisexual, transgendered or transsexual there is a letter in here that will penetrate and impale even the most unsentimental.

"The Letter Q: Queer Writers' Notes to their Younger Selves"  
Edited by Sarah Moon  
Arthur A. Levine Books  
\$11.24

by Sarah Moon

Daniel Scheffler is a writer who spends his time in New York, Cape Town and India. Follow him on Twitter @danielscheffler

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