

our lives



A YEAR IN REVIEW

# 2017 LOVE & MARRIAGE

Madison's LGBT&XYZ Magazine

The Love List: Celebrating Wisconsin's LGBTQ Relationships

Jan/Feb 2018



**YOUR DAY**  
ADVICE FROM LGBTQ NEWLYWEDS  
**YOUR WAY**







## Madison's LGBT&XYZ Magazine

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Jan. / Feb. 2018, Volume 11, Issue 4  
Life in the Middle Publishing, LLC  
Patrick Farabaugh, Publisher.  
PO Box 1202, Madison, WI 53703

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**LAURIE ANDERSON**  
*The Language of the Future*  
Feb. 9, 2018

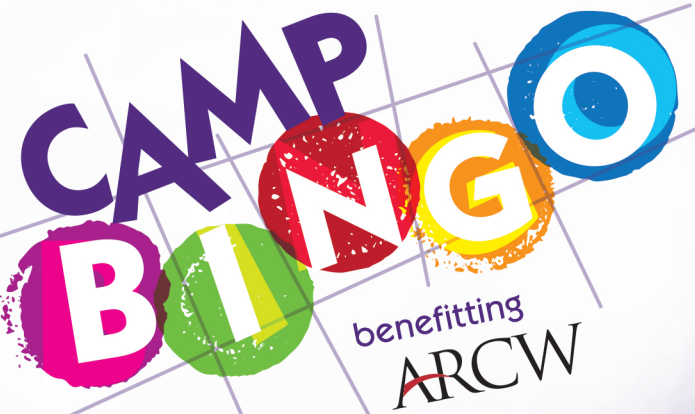


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## Self-Made Woman: A Memoir

by Denise Chanterelle DuBois  
Reviewd by **Terri Schlichenmeyer**.

### YOUR OWN TWO HANDS.

That's what it took – plus a bit of paint, pencil, or pen, rouge and ribbon and rickrack—to make that of which you are proud. You did that. You made it with your own two hands. As in the new book *Self-Made Woman* by Denise Chanterelle DuBois, it takes a lot to craft a new life.

It began near a lakeside cabin in Wisconsin.

DuBois says she was four years old then, a curious little boy who loved the water—until he fell in and nearly drowned. Once fished out, he was dressed in girl's clothing while his dried, and he was enchanted. He fought his mother's demands that he return the clothing. That was the beginning of DuBois' lifetime journey toward womanhood.

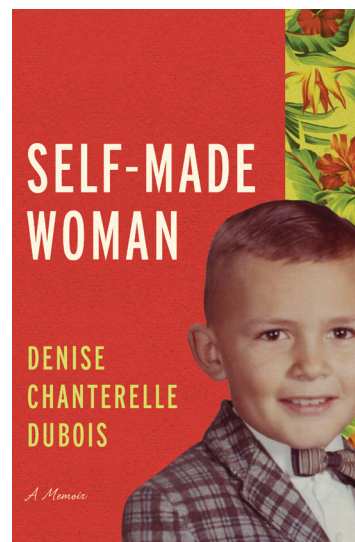
Though his parents were both alcoholics, and abusive, Catholic school nuns were the ones who showed DuBois that sexual stimulation could come from humiliation. In grade school, he preferred playing with girls because he was a girl himself, but teachers and nuns forbade it. When embarrassed in class, he felt stirrings; he asked playmates to spank him, and he learned to welcome negative attention.

This led to petty theft and a secret life: DuBois began sneaking into his sister's closet to wear her clothing. He broke into random buildings to steal panties from strangers, and he lost a babysitting job when his client's child caught him wearing his client's lingerie; the ensuing embarrassment enhanced the experience. He dabbled in domination by being a slave to women who wanted his money. He experimented with drugs and alcohol; there were run-ins with the law. He became suicidal.

And yet—there were bright moments in his life. DuBois fell in love with a woman who went along with fetishes that had grown into full-blown obsessions. He made friends—albeit, friends who were into drugs. He got married. And he started learning what it would take to be the woman he always knew he really was...

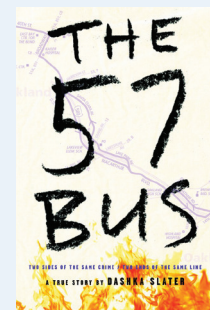
*Self-Made Woman* is a lot of things. It's sad. Poignant. Scary. It's also TMI sometimes and, at just over 200 pages, it's a bit too long.

From Wisconsin childhood to womanhood in Bangkok, author Denise Chanterelle DuBois tells readers of a multi-city, lifetime self-search, in an account that feels overly detailed and overstuffed. Reading it is akin to being held captive by someone who really needs to tell all, including unabashed details about the world of submission and female domination. Those details are titillating for those who share DuBois' fetishes, but



## LGBTQ Reading List

A current LGBTQ reading list at the Madison Public Library, compiled by Madison librarians **Tyler Furo** and **Beth McIntyre**.



***The 57 Bus: The True Story of Two Teenagers and the Crime that Changed Their Lives* by Dashka Slater. Farrar, Straus and Giroux, 2017.**

In 2013 a gender-queer teenager was set on fire by another teenager while they were sleeping on an Oakland city bus. In telling their stories, Slater examines hate crimes, racism in the penal system, and the complex ways that vulnerable communities intersect.

***Goldie Vance (Series)* by Hope Larson. Boom Box, 2017.**

Move over, girl detectives, Goldie Vance is on the case. This (truly) all-ages comic is full of bright colors, hotel-based crime solving, slick 60's fashion, and queer romance.

***The Lauras*, by Sarah Taylor. Hogarth, 2017.**

A fierce mom and her non-binary child have cross-country shenanigans. Fun, thoughtful, and needed.

***Less: A Novel*, by Andrew Sean Greer. Little, Brown and Company, 2017.**

Arthur Less, a writer and guileless romantic flop, turns 50 in this lighthearted, globetrotting comedy.

***Mean*, by Myriam Gurba. Coffee House, 2017.**

Artistic and uncompromising, Gurba's memoir explores being queer, biracial, and the spiritual and communal impact of sexual violence.

***Since I Laid My Burden Down*, by Brontez Purnell. Feminist Press, 2017.**

Long after fleeing rural Alabama for San Francisco, grunge-loving DeShawn goes home again in this tough and sexy novel. Endorsed by icon Kathleen Hanna—what more do you need to know?

***Surpassing Certainty: What My Twenties Taught Me*, by Janet Mock. Simon & Schuster, 2017.**

The activist hero dishes on the ups and downs of being young and finding her voice as a black trans woman.

***That Inevitable Victorian Thing* by E. K. Johnston. Dutton, 2017.**

Johnston builds an ambitious alternate history to tell the subtle, intimate story of three young people at a crossroads. A terrific meditation on figuring out what you want and creating a space for it.

***Wild Beauty* by Ann-Marie McLemore. Feiwel & Friends, 2017.**

A garden, a curse, a family of girls in love with the same woman. A dark, lush fairytale of a novel by a rising voice in magical realism.

cruelty and graphicness make them wince-worthy. Add in memories of drug and alcohol abuse and an account of imprisonment that seemed rushed. You could have a mess of unreadability were it not for the overall uniqueness, vulnerability, and the truthfulness in this tale.

When the story itself lags, those are the things that redeem it. They're what make this matter-of-factly-told memoir one that sets itself apart by its brutal honesty. It's what will make you want to put *Self-Made Woman* in your hands. ■

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