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**LISTENING LIBRARY AND PENGUIN YOUNG READERS**

**ANNOUNCE “READ PROUD LISTEN PROUD”**

*Resource for educators, librarians and parents recommends LGBTQ-focused titles for teens, offers discussion guides, and more*

NEW YORK, NY (June 24, 2015)—Listening Library and Penguin Books for Young Readers announced today the launch of their joint campaign to highlight recommended LGBTQ books for young adults: **Read Proud Listen Proud**. The online resource is designed to spark discussion in the classroom and at home and to encourage understanding through storytelling, celebrating everyone for who they are.

The conversation started by the We Need Diverse Books movement over the last year has demonstrated the need for inclusive literature for kids and teens. The teams at Listening Library and Penguin Young Readers worked togetheron **Read Proud Listen Proud** to provide educators and librarians who work with teens, as well as their families, reading and listening recommendations featuring LGBTQ characters, thought-provoking discussion guides, inspiring author interviews, and audio clips, all hosted at [www.readproudlistenproud.com](http://www.readproudlistenproud.com).

“Stories teach empathy and help people of all backgrounds to respect themselves and others,” said Cheryl Herman, Marketing Director, Listening Library. “Whether a book or audio is centered on LGBTQ-related issues or features a character who is a positive LGBTQ role model, that story helps to teach young readers and listeners how to be tolerant and loving towards others.”

The campaign kicks off at the American Library Association’s annual meeting, held this year in San Francisco, where the two publishers will be giving away thousands of pairs of rainbow sunglasses during the conference as well as at the San Francisco Pride Parade on June 28, the anniversary of the raid and riot at the Stonewall Inn in New York City that catalyzed the modern gay rights movement.

The history of the riot and the movement that followed is vividly brought to life in award-winning author Ann Bausum’s *STONEWALL*, one of the first nonfiction chronicles of the movement written for young adults and one of the key inspirations for **Read Proud Listen Proud**. The site includes interviews with Bausum and Tim Federle, narrator of the audio edition of STONEWALL and author of *BETTER NATE THAN EVER*; *FIVE, SIX, SEVEN, NATE!*, about its personal resonance to them and importance to young LGBTQ readers today.

For additional listening suggestions, clips and author interviews about celebrating diversity of all kinds and promoting tolerance visit [www.heardiversity.com](http://www.heardiversity.com) and [www.thebullyconversation.com](http://www.thebullyconversation.com).

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**About Listening Library**

Since publishing its first audiobook in 1955, Jules Verne's *Around the World in 80 Days*, Listening Library has grown into one of the biggest names in the youth audio industry. Listening Library titles have earned more than 300 ALSC and YALSA Audiobook Awards, 14 Odyssey Awards, 17 Audie® Awards, and two Grammy® Awards with bestselling series like J.K. Rowling's Harry Potter, Rick Riordan's Percy Jackson and the Olympians and Christopher Paolini's Inheritance Cycle. Our backlist also includes audio recordings of dozens of Newbery and Printz award-winning authors, including Kate DiCamillo and Christopher Paul Curtis. Listening Library is an imprint of Random House LLC, a Penguin Random House Company.

**About Penguin Young Readers**

Penguin Young Readers unite the best authors, illustrators, and brands from the Penguin Young Readers Group under one umbrella. Including a comprehensive mix of esteemed authors, favorite characters, nonfiction, and licensed properties, Penguin Young Readers feature a traditional numbered leveling system, as well as the Guided Reading leveling system, to ensure quick recognition for educators, parents, and kids.