

**Rick**  
Alex Gino  
Scholastic Press, 2020

## Reviews

- [School Library Journal](#) (Feb. 1, 2020): “An enlightening and important novel about a young person’s experience with asexuality. A required purchase for middle grade collections.” Starred review.
- [Booklist](#) (Feb. 1, 2020): “Gino handles the answers deftly and manages their material about children’s identities beautifully. Like [*Melissa*] (2015), this is an important, innovative, well-plotted book that invites a large readership.” Starred review.
- [Kirkus](#) (Dec. 8, 2019): “Gino seamlessly introduces language to describe a variety of sexualities and gender identities through the perspective of Rick, who is learning many of the words for the first time. ... A game-changing ace.” Starred review.
- [Publishers Weekly](#) (Feb. 20, 2020): “In this standalone companion to Gino’s [*Melissa*], 11-year-old Rick grapples with his identity while navigating shifting relationships and learning about allyship. ... readers are introduced to a wide range of identities and pronouns.” Starred review.
- [AudioFile](#) (Apr. 2020): “... a much-needed story that will speak to a wide variety of young listeners.”

## Awards

N/A

## Lists

- [Kirkus Best Middle Grade Books of the Year, 2020](#)
- [University of Pennsylvania Graduate School of Education Best Books for Young Readers, 2020](#)

## Response to Challenges

- Lincoln Parish Library (Ruston, LA) removed Alex Gino’s *Rick* and *Melissa* (then titled *George*), followed by a longer list of LGBTQ titles, from shelves in response to a series of patron complaints. The titles were made available only by adult request. The complaints, which were identically worded, stated that LGBTQ materials “are unacceptable for viewing by children without their parents’ consent and input” and that displaying them “does not reflect the values of our community,” and referenced an upcoming election which included a measure to renew

the property tax that provides most of the library's budget. Board of Control members stated that they didn't "want censorship," but they felt that moving the books to restricted shelving was an appropriate compromise. Library Director Vivian McCain said, "We're here to serve everybody equally, no matter who they are... This goes against every grain in my body as a public librarian" ([Ruston Daily Leader](#)). The property tax renewal measure failed ([Lincoln Parish News Online](#)), the books were returned to their original shelves at the Board's next meeting ([Adventures in Censorship](#)), and the Board accepted McCain's retirement ([Lincoln Parish News Online](#)).