

# **Absolutely, Positively, NOT!**

*by David LaRochelle*

*Arthur A Levine Books/Scholastic; June 2005*

This book adds humor to the story of a serious young student discovering his sexual orientation against a backdrop of his high school years in Minnesota.

Steven is introduced as his mother's partner in a square dance club – which he hides from his classmates. While other boys in his classes are talking about girls, Steven is more likely to notice some of the guys. When he also feels attracted to a new substitute teacher and assistant hockey coach, he fights these attractions and refuses to admit that he might be gay.

In an effort to reinforce his maleness, Steven goes out for hockey seeks out photos of sexy women. Next, a computer search turns up a book, “ Sex, Your Son, and His Future, that purports to instruct in “correcting effeminate mannerisms.” Following the book's advice, Steven tries to self-treat with aversion therapy. He hangs out with the hockey jocks and starts dating girls – only to find he is attracted to one of the hockey jocks and not to the girls.

Between trying to hide his orientation and trying (and failing) to pass his driving test, Steven finds himself in one stressful situation after another. Coupled with the normal teenage angst, these situations vary from funny to hilarious to the reader. Imagine - he fails his second driving test for driving too slow!

David LaRochelle's first novel is rated for age 12 and up, but readers who have already survived their teenage years are more likely to enjoy the humor.

*Reviewed by Dave Parker*