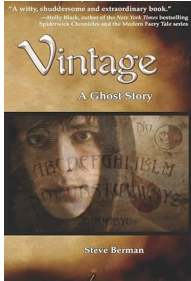




# Lambda Sci-Fi

## DC Area Gaylaxians



*Vintage*  
By Steve Berman  
Discussed October 2008

### Discussion Questions

1. Did you like the book? What did you like? What didn't you like?
2. What's the name of Our Hero? Is this a trick question, or an authorial trick? Who is Ashby and why is he named?
3. Is this a ghost story? A coming out story? A gothic gay romance? Is it all of the above? Is it trying to be too much? Is this a laundry list of issues Berman is tackling? Where is the kitchen sink?
4. Would this novel have worked if the kids had been preppy? Jocks? Was Goth the only choice?
5. Why can Our Hero see ghosts? And why can his friends see them when he is around? Does this make sense? Does it make as much sense as Ravens getting more aggressive around Halloween? Did you know that one-fifth of the royalties are donated to the Trevor project and other gay youth projects?
6. What about the use of drugs in this YA novel? Bidi cigarettes, ecstasy, alcohol. Any others? How are the drugs treated, and is this appropriate for a YA novel?
7. In some regards, this book is about dysfunctional families. There's Our Hero's parents, Trace's family, Liz's family. And there's bad relationships: Josh/Roddy/Hero, Maggie & Liz. Do these backdrops make a more believable story? What about good relationships? Are there any and, if so, how are they presented?
8. What is the role of Aunt Jan? Is she "cool" as Our Hero thinks? What do we know about her? How has Our Hero come to live with her? Is it okay for her to allow him to leave school?
9. What's worse, being gay or being a medium? Is Our Hero still a medium after Josh's exorcism?
10. Our Hero says, "...we start out with people that aren't right for us. We're so busy wanting love that we never even think what the hell love needs back." Is this the theme of the book? What are the differences between Josh and Mike?
11. Over the course of the story, Our Hero puts to rest several ghosts for different reasons. What were the motivations for each? How did you feel about the revelation about Samantha, and was it appropriate?

12. Was the 1950s popular jock crowd more gay closeting than the current climate? What about Liz and Ashby? What about Colin Malvern? What about Bobby in the popcorn stand when Kim outed Our Hero?
13. What is the take-away for gay youth?
14. Was the end satisfying? Were all the loose ends neatly tied up?