



## Lucky

By Eddie De Oliveira

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**Lucky** By Eddie De Oliveira

A clever debut about love, sex, and everything in between, for anyone who's ever fallen for a friend (come on, admit it)

Sam is a teen boy who's attracted to both boys and girls. He doesn't know what to call himself or where he fits in. Then he meets Toby, another boy who likes both boys and girls. Are they destined to be just friends, more than friends, or less than friends? And what would happen if they were attracted to the same girl?

Love comes in many shapes and sizes. Sometimes all at once. In his brilliant, funny, and heartfelt debut, Eddie de Oliveira shows us there's more to life than being a wallflower or being knocked out by nunga-nungas.

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## Lucky By Eddie De Oliveira Bibliography

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### Editorial Review

#### From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up—This is de Oliveira's first novel, and he's a writer to watch. Sam Smith is a young, sexually confused teen living in Surrey, England. He enjoys hanging out with his friends, Brenda and Pod, and is passionate about playing on the local football team. Then he meets self-confident Toby, another gifted player, who happens to be gay. Toby introduces Sam to the contemporary gay scene in London, which includes Soho nightlife. Sam is intrigued and wonders if he might be gay, as well, especially after he notices mysterious and attractive "Him," a young stranger who occasionally shows up at football games. Eventually Sam comes to the realization that "These are the facts. I'm attracted to boys and girls.... I'm just Sam. I was born like this." De Oliveira has a mature, concise writing style and an excellent command of narrative pacing and dialogue. Sam and his friends are believable characters, flawed but likable, and the author's examination of contemporary British youth will probably intrigue American readers. Raw language and British slang (snogging, shagging, poof, cheeky git, etc.) are used liberally throughout, which requires some adjustment at first. Overall, this is a well-written and insightful novel that should appeal to relatively sophisticated young adult readers.—*Robert Gray, East Central Regional Library, Cambridge, MN*

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#### From *Booklist*

Gr. 8-12. Nineteen-year-old Sam, a university student and soccer player, wrestles with his sexual identity. In a flashback narrative, the British teen recounts events that occur during the summer after his first year of college. Sam realizes that he is attracted to both boys and girls, and he worries about how his old friends and teammates will respond. Sam's self-analysis can become tiresome at times, but he often approaches his situation with a sense of humor that lightens things up. His favorite place for self-reflection, for example, is the toilet, where he can sit for hours contemplating his feelings. A few random, undeveloped plot points mar an otherwise engaging story: Sam's hookup with a girlfriend of a boy with whom Sam had sexual encounters; Sam's mother's sudden, unconditional acceptance of his sexual orientation. But Sam is an appealing character, and his painful struggles with his sexual identity should resonate with many readers. *Ed Sullivan*

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#### Review

#### School Library Journal

(June 1, 2004; 0-439-54655-9)

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**Publishers Weekly**  
(February 23, 2004; 0-439-54655-9)

Nineteen-year-old Sam examines his sexual identity in De Oliveira's often clever but sometimes sluggish debut. Told as a flashback, the British teen recounts events occurring between the end of his first year of college and his team's annual August soccer match with its rivals. At the start of summer, Sam finally admits to himself, "I might possibly in effect maybe potentially have the capability to fancy boys" as well as girls, but he's concerned about how teammates and old friends will respond. A new friendship with Toby, who is also "gentle," pushes him to open up, but not until Toby hooks up with Lucy does Sam realize that he "really, really liked the guy." While Sam's self-study is often overly cerebral, it does occasion some silliness ("Or how about sexuality as a Venn diagram?" Sam asks Toby). Readers will appreciate the author's creation of a funny, flawed-if not always likable-protagonist with a realistically complicated sexuality, and the storytelling includes memorable incidents. In one humiliating scene, Sam vomits after being overwhelmed by his first trip to London's gay quarter, and in another more triumphant moment his teammates stand up to their coach for him just before the big game. Unfortunately, other plot points, such as Sam's one-time hook-up with Lucy, or the sudden appearance of his crush-from afar at his soccer practice, seem random or underdeveloped and ultimately zap the momentum from Sam's story. Ages 12-up. (Feb.) Copyright 2004 Reed Business Information.

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