



# Dishes

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Ogunquit, Maine. That's not where you'd expect to find a guy like Danny. He's not a tourist. He's not a local. And he's definitely not gay. As far as he can tell, only he and the bartender at Dishes, where he works as a dishwasher, are straight. But that's not what bothers Danny. What bothers him is that he's got straight-guy problems in a very gay town. While he's hitting on a cute waitress, the cute waiters are hitting on him. And could the cute waitress have a thing for his thirty-six-year-old dad? It's one crazy summer in a crazy Maine town.

## Dishes Details

Date : Published October 2nd 2008 by Viking Juvenile

ISBN : 9780670011391

Author : Rich Wallace

Format : Hardcover 160 pages

Genre : Young Adult, Fiction, Realistic Fiction, Lgbt, Romance, Teen

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## From Reader Review Dishes for online ebook

### Nicole says

It was VERY short. Almost TOO short. It felt like the storyline was rushed and the emotions just weren't there...

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### Elisa Rolle says

Already from the blurb I knew that this wasn't a gay romance, but you never know. Danny is a 20 years old in search of security; not a good time for the search, at that age nothing is sure. Starting from his family: it's not that Danny had a bad family experience, it's only that he hadn't a normal family; his mother got pregnant at 17 years old, his grandparents took her and the love-child in, and the father was somewhere in the picture, but always on the edge of it, and finally, when Danny was still a teenager, he went to work on the North, at Ogunquit, Maine. Now, years later, Danny dropped out from college, basically since he wasn't even sure why he was there, and decided to spend the summer with his father, washing dishes in the same place where his father bartend, Dishes, a gay club for the slightly older gay summer crowd.

Ogunquit is strange, it's not like Provincetown where 99% of the population is gay, but it's quite near; the difference is that Ogunquit is in the middle of a place where being gay is not so simple, and so it's like a natural reserve, a place where you can be liberal while everyone else around you judge but don't touch. Danny has no problem with his sexuality, he is quite sure to like girls, but he has not yet found the right one; even if he doesn't like so much his father's behaviour, I think that Danny is not so much different from him, he has not a strong core. Danny is drawn by authoritative figure since he has never had one in his life, and so even now, he prefers a partner that can be the leader in the relationship. And he hasn't found one in women, so maybe, even if it's a small maybe, he is wondering if a man, maybe...

And then there is his father, working for year in a gay club. Is he or is he not? And if he is, why not Danny? Right when all these questions are brainstorming inside him, Danny is faced with two different chance at love: Mercy, a very hot girl, to whom Danny is really attracted, but who is not exactly nice; she is quite the judgemental type, and Danny is not sure to like this attitude. On the other side there is Hector, the gay waiter of Dishes; he is handsome and kind, he even helps Danny on his first date with Mercy... now Danny likes a lot Hector's attitude, but he is not physically attracted by him.

I think that Danny is in the middle and any decision he will take will be the right for him; he can choose to be with Mercy, following the physical lead, and being happy since, in the end, both he and Mercy will balance their characters. Or he can choose to be with Hector, following his brain, arriving to like, and maybe love him, a love that can be as satisfying as a physical inducted one. This is possible since Danny is open to the world, to life and to all type of love.

Dishes is not a long story, and in the end, I don't even think it's the final story for Danny; it's only a moment in his life, a delicate and life-changing moment, but the only one he will face in the future.

<http://www.amazon.com/dp/0670011398/?...>

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## **Terry says**

Rich Wallace does an excellent job of writing short novels about athletes who are more than their sport. Like *One Good Punch*, "Dishes" centers on a runner who has some job issues, girl issues, and family issues. I liked "One Good Punch" for the realism, the honesty about drug use and its consequences, the realism of the relationships between major and minor characters. There's more of the same here: this time the hero's a year past high school and washing dishes for the summer at a gay bar. Hi-jinx ensue, as Danny sorts out his feelings for his Dad who was never around growing up and his VERY friendly co-workers.

Set in Ogunquit, a beach town near Kennebunkport but worlds away, Wallace captures the confusion and energy of the first steps of adulthood. Not enough books for teens take on this important transition from school-aged to whatever-comes-next. The uneasy father-son detente reads well, if a bit simplistically. I especially enjoy that all of the characters have jobs and must work, another rare breed among YA titles.

"Dishes" handles the static and friction that occurs when different types of people must learn to co-exist, in this case gay and straight waiters and dishwashers. Well worth reading for the right audience.

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## **Ozimandias says**

This story is about a young man who goes to a vacation town to spend the summer with his father. He's looking for answers, acceptance and love. The problem is that he works in a gay bar, and his father remains distant. Every character, including the main character, is more a sketch than a real person, and what you do know about them is negative. Danny, the young kid, is rather homophobic in his thoughts, if not his actions, and so is the girl that he ends up with. The gay characters are decidedly of the FAIRY-tale variety, including a whorish jock, and an effeminate older man with his dog. Everything works out well for all involved, but by the end, you don't really care. I'm glad it's short, but more glad that you don't have to read it if you don't want to.

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## **Tif says**

This book has left my mind feeling blank. It held my interest early on, but nothing in the story led to anything. It was essentially a book about nothing in which the protagonist dated a girl, worked, ran, and half-heartedly fended off homosexual interests and advances. There was no real conflict (a brief bar fight involving secondary characters does not count) and with plenty of issues that could have been addressed it felt strange that there was nothing they even attempted to resolve. The book didn't even amount to a disappointment because it was so empty of content that there was no time or place to become attached.

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## **Jennifer Wardrip says**

Reviewed by Jaglvr for TeensReadToo.com

Danny is in a sort of void.

He knows he's not going back to his college in the fall. He lives for running, and due to equality in sports issues, his college decided to drop track rather than add more female sport alternatives. When his father invites him to spend the summer in Ogunquit, after much consideration, he takes him up on the offer.

Danny's father was never around much. His parents had him when they were both still in high school. His maternal grandparents didn't want to see the two kids tied to a marriage of convenience, so with the understanding that Jack needs to be around for the big moments, they agree to help Danny's mother raise him. Needless to say, Jack and Danny have little connection. So the summer in Ogunquit is a chance to bring the two together.

But the summer doesn't start out the way Danny expects. Living with Jack is like having an older brother or roommate rather than a father. Jack gets Danny a job at the bar he works at, Dishes. They are the only straight men in the place. It doesn't bother Danny, but he's not even allowed to let the other staff know Jack is his father.

As Danny tries to find his place in life and form a relationship with his father, he meets Mercy, a waitress at another local establishment. The two tentatively dance around each other, trying to learn to trust. Mercy is unsure of Danny's sexual orientation due to where he works, and then wonders even more about him when she finds out that Jack is his father. Jack had tried to hit on Mercy a while back.

As the summer wears on, Danny and Jack start to form proper bonds. Mercy and Jack work out the kinks of their crazy work schedules to spend time together. And the guys at the bar accept Danny for who he is.

A quick read, DISHES is a glimpse into the uncertainty of a boy turning into a man. Due to its short length, there is little time for serious character exploration. But Danny is a likable lead character who finds himself in some quirky situations.

There is a heavy emphasis on the homosexual atmosphere of Ogunquit, so those offended by the topic best avoid DISHES. But the story is not vulgar or explicit in content and should have much appeal to teen boys looking for something to read.

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## **Bryce A says**

Month- February

Title- Dishes

Author- Rich Wallace

Date started/date completed- See Info

Total Pages-145

Rating of book (1-10): Type here- 8

Briefly summarize the book- Dishes is about a 19 year old college kid named Danny who comes and lives with his dad in Ogunquit, Maine for the summer. He is a sophomore in college and is coming to build a non-existing relationship with his Dad. Danny works in a gay bar as a dishwasher with his dad: a bartender (neither of them are gay). Danny's co-worker Hector is gay, and coming on to him but eventually Danny lets him down easily on the beach. Then Danny meets a girl named Mercy on one of his daily runs who works at a local restaurant. They like each other and go on a date. She thinks he's confused about his sexuality

because he works at a gay bar and they hit a wall temporarily. In the mean time Danny is upset because hes not building a connection with his father, but eventually they have a deeply engaging conversation about his father's absence and everything is much better. Then Danny and Mercy make up after the gay bar team wins the staff baseball game. They go on a romantic date and get caught in the rain! [lol:] After that Danny decides to not go straight back to college in stay in Maine with Mercy for the fall. The End.

Author's purpose- To create a funny mushy teenage book about sports and the importance of relationships.

Intended audience(s)- Mostly teens, but anyone with a sense of humor!

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### **Jenny says**

Danny is trying to get to know his father a little better by staying with him in Ogunquit, Maine for the summer. His dad Jack works as the bartender at the gay bar Dishes, and Danny is working as a dishwasher there, and they are the only two straight men there. Danny is trying to meet someone for the summer, and there is a cute waitress he's interested in, but the cute waiters at Dishes are interested in him. What's a boy to do?

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### **AM says**

The part of me that races though books to find out what happens because I like the characters and wants to know their story really liked this book. The part of me that tries to write meaningful reviews thinks, this was a novella, at best; it touched on and glossed over a lot of issues (though I'd have probably hated this book if it had been just an issue novel.); and third, not much really happen except everyone ended up with someone. It was sweet and funny and all the characters were cute, and that was pretty much it.

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### **Cathryn says**

I enjoyed the reading, the characters, and the setting. The themes: a young man finding his identity, reconnecting with his estranged father, finding new friends in a totally new environment. Very controversial for the exploration of gay identities the main character was not gay, nor was his father. For all that, it was handled very tastefully, even though I doubt most conservative parents would agree with me that it was well done. I will be able to recommend it to any of my students requesting books exploring this "identity" topic.

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### **Emilie says**

This isn't a comment on the plot or characters, but more on the others descriptive skills...which I would actually give many more stars than this book overall...and here's why...While on vacation walking a seaside path in Maine over 2 years after reading this book, I recalled the authors description of this path describing what I was walking so vividly, that, not even having thought of this book in at least a year, I could recall this book being set here and all of a sudden, everything that I had pictured while reading the book was very very real in front of me...if that's not good writing, I'm not sure what is!

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### **Robbie says**

Dishes is a fairly short novel wherein nothing really happens but it not-happens in a very interesting and dramatic way.

The basic not-plot is that the main character, Danny, is spending the summer in Ogunquit, Maine, with his father. His dad, Jack, was only eighteen when Danny was born and has been fairly absent. That doesn't really change. Danny takes a job at a local bar, Dishes, which is frequented by the many gay tourists that populate Ogunquit in the summer. Will (straight) Danny find love and true companionship?

As I said, nothing really happens. Maybe that's not a good way to put it. The novel has little to no climax, although there is a sort-of conflict. The entire thing is a character-driven slice-of-life story about nothing in particular.

Danny is a pretty good main character. He's not that interesting, but the circumstances he is surrounded by are, so he turns out as a sort of everyman. The supporting cast are all much more colorful and are fleshed out well, having more than one dimension. All of the characters have feelings and things they want, making for some nice interaction with each other.

There is a section on softball that felt out of place and strained, but it will certainly help the book appeal to boys. Overall, not great, not bad, mostly mediocre.

3/5 Popularity, 3/5 Quality

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### **Highsider57 says**

In the story Dishes by Rich wallace a boy named Danny goes with his father Jack because his dad has never been apart of his life. Danny learns that his dad is alot like a child himself, and he realizes ho much his parents gave yp for him since they had him at such a yound age. While Danny bonds with his father, they become very close and Danny realizes how much his dad loves him and how his dad left him because he had no where else to go when he was so young. This is kept me very interested, and i never wanted to put the book down because each chapter kept getting better and better.This book takes you on a father/on adventure that shows you how strong there bond is after reuniting.

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### **Kim says**

3.5 stars. I know the area where it takes place well, so that attracted me to the story. Fun, light read.

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### **Travis. D says**

If nothing else Dishes, by Rich Wallace, makes me very grateful that I don't have the life of an average teenager.

This Young adult fiction book takes place in a gay town known as Ogunquit, Maine. This would be the last place i would want to be. But that is just the situation Danny, the main character of the novel, is in while he works the summer away as a dishwasher in a very gay bar called Dishes.

Danny is your average teenager at 19. someone I could never stand to be around. he is so laid back that he hardly cares about anything. all he does is sleep, work, hit on his soon to-be-girlfriend, and have a few beers with his dad.

his dad, Jack, also works at Dishes. He does almost the exact same thing except he stays out almost all night and almost never see his son except for work. i am glad I have a good relationship with my dad and i feel sorry that Danny's dad isn't around that much.

I didn't enjoy this book All. I thought of it as a pill of mind numbing garbage and I hope to read nothing like it ever again. I thought the plot was boring and there was almost no conflict. It was nothing more than a guy telling about how he met his girl friend and how his relationship with his dad slowly gets better.

The only exciting part was around the end of the book when to employees at Dishes started fist fighting Over Danny (Remember this is a gay town) and that took up all of 2 ½ pages. The rest of the book is Danny talking to his girl friend or his dad about his life and how his happened. This shows that even in real life people are more exciting and have more interesting times then the the guy in this book.

I don't have anything to compare this book with because I don't, and will hopefully never again, read books like this. I hardly read fiction anyway, and certainly never a book like this.

The only big picture I could find is that you should be nice to people you like. And the only reason I got that is because of him trying to make-up lost time with his dad.

All and all this book deserves a one star rating. If I had Three words to describe this book they would be as follows: BORING, POINTLESS, and a WASTE OF PAPER.

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