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# The Bermudez Triangle

*By Maureen Johnson*

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## The Bermudez Triangle By Maureen Johnson

Grade 9 Up—Johnson begins this exceptional novel in a lightweight fashion but quickly segues into more serious issues that affect the three young women who make up the Bermudez Triangle. It is the summer before their senior year in Saratoga Springs, NY. At first, organized, serious Nina has trouble adjusting to her leadership workshop at Stanford University. Although she desperately misses Avery and Mel, who are waitresses at a restaurant back home, she quickly falls head over heels for eco-warrior Steve, who has grown up in a commune on the West Coast—so different from Nina's secure middle-class experience. When she returns to New York, she immediately senses that Mel and Avery are keeping secrets and soon discovers that they have become lovers. Rocked to the core, Nina wishes them happiness, but feels excluded and lonely, especially as her long-distance relationship begins to deteriorate. As is typical for teens, the girls obsess ad nauseam over their romantic relationships. Yet this narrow focus lends authenticity to the narrative, and readers become drawn into the characters' lives as they stumble toward adulthood, fall in and out of love, enlarge their circle of friends, and rethink their values.

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## Editorial Review

From School Library Journal

Grade 9 Up—Johnson begins this exceptional novel in a lightweight fashion but quickly segues into more serious issues that affect the three young women who make up the Bermudez Triangle. It is the summer before their senior year in Saratoga Springs, NY. At first, organized, serious Nina has trouble adjusting to her leadership workshop at Stanford University. Although she desperately misses Avery and Mel, who are waitresses at a restaurant back home, she quickly falls head over heels for eco-warrior Steve, who has grown up in a commune on the West Coast—so different from Nina's secure middle-class experience. When she returns to New York, she immediately senses that Mel and Avery are keeping secrets and soon discovers that they have become lovers. Rocked to the core, Nina wishes them happiness, but feels excluded and lonely, especially as her long-distance relationship begins to deteriorate. As is typical for teens, the girls obsess and nauseate over their romantic relationships. Yet this narrow focus lends authenticity to the narrative, and readers become drawn into the characters' lives as they stumble toward adulthood, fall in and out of love, enlarge their circle of friends, and rethink their values. As the story deepens, Johnson does a superb job of subtly developing individual personalities for each one. Although all ends well, it's a long, hard struggle, one that perceptively reflects the real-life ambiguities and shades of gray faced by contemporary adolescents.—*Susan Riley, Mount Kisco Public Library, NY*

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From [Booklist](#)

Gr. 9-12. In her latest novel, the author of *The Key to the Golden Firebird* [BKL Se 1 2004] explores how friendships grow and change, particularly as two friends escalate their relationship to the exclusion of a third. Mel, Avery, and Nina--the Bermudez Triangle--have been inseparable girlfriends since childhood. Then, the summer before senior year, while Nina is at Stanford for a leadership institute, Mel and Avery realize that their feelings for each other may be more than friendship. Johnson deftly portrays Mel's struggle to come to grips with her homosexuality, Avery's confusion and uncertainty about hers, and Nina's hurt and frustration at being left out and losing the comfort of old routines. Once again, Johnson creates believable, likable characters in very real, contemporary high-school situations, ensuring a place for herself among teen readers. She understands, articulates, and validates their lives. *Frances Bradburn*  
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About the Author

Maureen Johnson lives in New York City.

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