

APPENDIX I

SYNOPSIS OF *GEOGRAPHY CLUB*

Brent Hartinger's young adult novel *Geography Club* was published in 2003. The Russel Middlebrook Series begins with this book. The story revolves around a group of high school kids that feel like outcasts, some due to their sexual orientations. Russel Middlebrook, the narrator, soon finds himself assisting his friend Min in forming an after-school club for the students so that they can socialize and encourage one another. The story begins with Russell Middlebrook having a secret from his two best friends, Min, a smart Chinese-American girl, and Gunnar, a smart but socially awkward teenager. Neither of them realizes that he is gay or that he has been chatting with other gay teens on internet chat rooms. Russel is eager to meet up with another student from his high school when he notices him in the chat room. He is both astonished and delighted to learn that his internet acquaintance is the well-known Kevin Land. Russel informs Min, who reveals that she is bisexual and has a partner, Terese, a soccer player. Min suggests forming a Gay/Bi/Straight Alliance group after school for support. To keep it confidential, the club meets and settles on the moniker "Geography Club."

APPENDIX II

BIOGRAPHY OF THE AUTHOR

Brent Hartinger, an American author, playwright, and screenwriter, is best known for his novels about LGBT youth. Hartinger was born in the state of Washington in 1971 and raised in Tacoma. He graduated from Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington, with a bachelor's degree and went on to Western Washington University to get his master's degree in psychology. Hartinger has fourteen books to his credit. The young adult novel *Geography Club* was his first published work (HarperCollins, 2003). *The Thing I Didn't Know I Didn't Know* (2014), *Barefoot in the City of Broken Dreams* (2015), *The Road to Amazing* (2016), and *The Otto Digmore Difference* (2017) are among the seven companion volumes to that novel. The protagonists from his earlier young adult novels are now adults in their twenties in these four books, which were written for adults. In his hometown of Tacoma, Washington, Hartinger co-founded one of the world's first LGBT youth support groups in 1990. Currently, Hartinger has no fixed address and instead spends his time around the world with his husband, writer Michael Jensen. Their "digital nomad" experience is detailed on their website, which has been featured on CBS Sunday Morning and in Forbes.