LGBTQIA+ YA Readers’ Advisory – Inclusion for an Elusive Patron Population

Jenny Fry, Amanda Wilk, Robert Bittner
OLA Super Conference
January 29, 2016
LGBTQ+ Folks & Public Libraries
Libraries
Change
Lives
Equality of Service
Where are we coming from?
The research (so far)
Libraries

WERE: #1 source of information

Internet is NOW #1

NOW: #1 for free anonymous internet access to find information
The Basics

• First words
• Body language
• Approachability
• Knowing good search terms
• Age appropriateness
• That crucial concluding statement
• Objectivity
The Basics

• Know the issues
• Language
• Reaction
• Policies
GLAAD Media Reference Guide - Terms To Avoid

Offensive: "homosexual" (n. or adj.)
Preferred: "gay" (adj.); "gay man" or "lesbian" (n.); "gay person/people"
Please use gay or lesbian to describe people attracted to members of the same sex. Because of the clinical history of the word "homosexual," it is aggressively used by anti-gay extremists to suggest that gay people are somehow diseased or psychologically/emotionally disordered - notions discredited by the American Psychological Association and the American Psychiatric Association in the 1970s. Please avoid using "homosexual" except in direct quotes. Please also avoid using "homosexual" as a style variation simply to avoid repeated use of the word "gay." The Associated Press, The New York Times and The Washington Post restrict use of the term "homosexual" (see AP & New York Times Style).

Offensive: "homosexual relations/relationship," "homosexual couple," "homosexual sex," etc.
Preferred: "relationship," "couple" (or, if necessary, "gay couple"), "sex," etc.
Identifying a same-sex couple as "a homosexual couple," characterizing their relationship as "a homosexual relationship," or identifying their intimacy as "homosexual sex" is extremely offensive and should be avoided. These constructions are frequently used by anti-gay extremists to denigrate gay people, couples and relationships.

As a rule, try to avoid labeling an activity, emotion or relationship gay, lesbian, or bisexual unless you would call the same activity, emotion or relationship "straight" if engaged in by someone of another orientation. In most cases, your readers, viewers or listeners will be able to discern people's sexes and/or orientations through the names of the parties involved, your depictions of their relationships, and your use of pronouns.
The Basics

- Biases
- Mirror self-descriptors & self-chosen pronouns
- Cisgender
The Basics

• Read widely
• Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, intellectual freedom, and censorship
• Displays
• Bookslists
• Staff training
### COMPLETE LIST OF AWARD RECIPIENTS

**Lambda Literary Award (Lammy) Finalists and Winners**

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2012 – 24th LLA</td>
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<td>1990 – 2nd LLA</td>
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<td>2011 – 23rd LLA</td>
<td>1998 – 10th LLA</td>
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<td>2010 – 22nd LLA</td>
<td>1997 – 9th LLA</td>
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<td>2005 – 17th LLA</td>
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<td>2004 – 16th LLA</td>
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**Pioneer Award Recipients**

- 2015 - Rita Mae Brown
- 2014 – Kate Bornstein
- 2013 – Cherrie Moraga
- 2012 – Armistead Maupin and Kate Millett
For Extra Credit

• Visibility

• Pride display

• Connect
For Extra Credit

• Participate

• Programming

• Resource lists
For Extra Credit

• Outreach

• Events

• RA tools

• Gay/Straight Alliances (GSAs)
For Your Consideration: RA Tools

- Bibliocommons booklists
- Printed booklists
- Bookmarks
- Engaging staff
  - Staff SRC
  - Staff blog
  - Regular branded intranet posts
For Your Consideration: Library Policies

- Board policies
- Collection access
- Web access
- Community development
- Library access
For Your Consideration: Library Policies

- Community advocacy
- Selection criteria
- Promotion and marketing
- Professional development
- Reconsideration of materials
To-Do List: Cataloguing & Collections

306.76 – Sexual orientation
306.762 – Asexuality
306.764 – Heterosexuality
306.765 – Bisexuality
306.766 – Homosexuality
306.7662 – Male homosexuality (gay men)
306.7663 – Lesbianism
306.768 – Transgenderism
306.7681 – Transsexualism
To-Do List:

• Access
• Ask
• Appoint an in-house LGBTQ+ Champion!
Libraries Change Lives

Thank you.
LGBTQ+ Teen Reader’s Survey
Data Collection

• Collected April 8\textsuperscript{th} to Dec 14\textsuperscript{th} 2015
• Librarians
• GSA.ca
• Youth group outreach
• 35 respondents
I am slowly informing others about my chosen gender, on social media I go by my male name but at home (since my family doesn't really react positively) I go by my female and given name.

"I am slowly informing others about my chosen gender, on social media I go by my male name but at home (since my family doesn't really react positively) I go by my female and given name."
Do you present your gender to the world in the same way that you personally identify?

- Sometimes
- No
- Yes
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identity</th>
<th>Count</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pansexual</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transgender</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asexual</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lesbian</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>Agender</td>
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<tr>
<td>Bisexual</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demisexual</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Genderqueer</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panromantic</td>
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</tbody>
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Do you define yourself the same way in public?

- Yes: 41%
- Yes to some extent: 24%
- Yes only to friends: 29%
- No: 6%
Favourite Books and Genres

- Science Fiction
- Action
- Mystery
- Harry Potter
- Fantasy
- Paper Towns
- Horror
- Dystopian Series
- LGBT
- Historical
- Romance
- Twilight
- Adventure
- Comedy
- Novels
- Novellas
- Graphic novels
- The Maze Runner
- Princess Diaries
- Maximum Ride Series
- Maximum Ride
- Looking for Alaska
- The Giver
- Minnesota in Canada
- The Ocean at the End of the Lane
- The Hunger Games
- Percy Jackson series
- The Giver
- The Eye of the Dragon
- One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest
- To Kill a Mockingbird
- The Half of It
- The Final Business
- Black Butler Series
- The Mortal Instruments
Favourite Genres

- Other: 52%
- Fantasy: 21%
- Mystery: 11%
- Science Fiction: 8%
- Action: 8%
“#Relatable”

What made the book special to you?

- Relatable characters: 31%
- Writing: 8%
- Plot: 8%
- Other: 19%
- Nostalgia factors: 5%
- Characters overcame challenges: 5%
- Feelings of Escapism: 5%
- Well written characters: 19%
MARK HADDON

THE CURIOUS INCIDENT OF THE DOG IN THE NIGHT-TIME

WINNER
WHITBREAD BOOK OF THE YEAR
GUARDIAN CHILDREN'S FICTION PRIZE

SCOTT WESTERFELD

LEVIATHAN
ILLUSTRATED BY KEITH THOMPSON

INTERNATIONAL BESTSELLING AUTHOR

John Green & David Levithan

WILL GRAYSON

"When a book pursues you into your dreams, you can’t ignore it."
The Sunday Telegraph
What do you like about how you find books?

- Easy
- Intimate
- Customized
- Social
- Private
- Serendipitous
- Wide Selection
Best Case Scenarios for Finding Books

Person

- Kind
- Open minded
- Knowledgeable
- Experienced writer
- Myself
- Very descriptive
- Outgoing
- Who has read the book

- Someone who has read a lot and many genres
- Have similar life experiences to me
- Someone who likes to look through others eyes and think about things in a different light
- Intuitive
- Intersectional feminists
Place

• Alone
• Massive library/ Library with all the books in the world
• Old bookstore or library
Thing

• Online tool
• Online (it is easier)
• Computer program that has read the books
• Talking computer with emotions
• Blogs tailored to my tastes
• A Pokedex
• A Brain Scan
• A Psychological test
• Immediately Accessible in Brain
• Lists by genre
What would you ask?

• Are the characters relatable?
• Give me something that will make me think
• For fantasy books with main LGBT characters which don't just focus on coming out
• What are good books for me?
• For a synopsis, the type of story and the type of ending it has
• Does this book have cissexism, gender roles, nb-erasure, homophobia, racism, ableism, sex-worker support, non-monogamous characters, people dealing with internalized misogyny/homophobia... etc.
LGBTQ Reading Lists and Recommended Resources
Book Lists
[www.leewind.org]

I'M HERE. I'M QUEER. WHAT THE HELL DO I READ?
Contains Six Master Lists:

- Gay
- Lesbian
- Bisexual (Pansexual/Polysexual)
- Transgender (Nonbinary)
- Intersex
- Asexual/Aromantic (demisexual/romantic)
Rainbow List Top Ten (2016)

- Gracefully Grayson (Ami Polonsky)
- The Marvels (Brian Selznick)
- Sex is a Funny Word: A Book About Bodies, Feelings, and YOU (Cory Silverberg and Fiona Smyth)
- Simon vs the Homo Sapiens Agenda (Becky Albertalli)
- Cut Both Ways (Carrie Mesrobian)
- When Everything Feels Like the Movies (Raziel Reid)
- Fans of the Impossible Life (Kate Scelsa)
- Forgive Me If I’ve Told You This Before (Karelia Stetz-Waters)
- Breakthrough (Jack Andraka and Matthew Lysiak)
- SuperMutant Magic Academy (Jillian Tamaki)
The first and most enduring award for GLBT books is the Stonewall Book Awards, sponsored by the American Library Association's Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual, and Transgender Round Table.

[Honoring books displaying] exceptional merit relating to the gay/lesbian/bisexual/transgender experience.
Winner (Children’s): 
• George (Alex Gino)

Winner (Young Adult): 
• The Porcupine of Truth (Bill Konigsburg)

Honors: 
• Wonders of the Invisible World (Christopher Barzak) 
• Sex is a Funny Word: A Book about Bodies, Feelings, and YOU (Cory Silverberg and Fiona Smyth)
Diversity in YA
Puttin' a little diversity in ya since 2011.

[www.diversityinya.com/tag/lgbtq]
This book examines these issues and critically evaluates the body of literature published for young adults that offers homosexual themes and characters.
Identifying titles that address the sensitive and important topics of coming out, being out, and the search for community, this catalog spotlights the best gay, lesbian, bi, transgender, and questioning books written for teens.
## Sample of Curated Booklist(s)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cover Image</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Author</th>
<th>Themes/Keywords</th>
<th>Date of Publication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| ![Some Assembly Required](image1.jpg) | *Some Assembly Required: The Not-So-Secret Life of a Transgender Teen* | Andrews, Arin | Non-fiction/Memoir  
Protagonist: Transgender/male-identified  
Key Topics: Transitioning; family; acceptance; dating; gender reassignment; school; coming out; growing up  
Awards: 2015 Rainbow List | 2014 |
| ![I Am J](image2.jpg) | *I Am J*                                        | Beam, Cris | Fiction: GA  
Protagonist: Transgender/male-identified  
Key Topics: Self-discovery; gender transition; coming out; betrayal; growing up; medical intervention; sexual awakening  
Awards: *Kirkus* Reviews Best Books List 2011; James Cook Award Honor | 2011 |
2015 Faves

- George
- More Happy Than Not
- Because You'll Never Meet Me
- None of the Above
- Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda
- Anything Could Happen
Looking to 2016
And Because I Just Can’t Help Myself…