

LIS 600 Fall 2015
Dr. Julie Hersberger
Assignment 2: Advocacy/Ethics Project
Wilson Mericle

Analysis of a Case Study and Advocacy Project Proposal

The DC College Library has endowed book funds bestowed by alumni, faculty, staff, donors, etc. Many have restrictions in place requiring certain materials to be purchased using these funds. One such is for LGBTQ materials. During my time as a collections assistant, I was in charge of assigning electronic bookplates to materials purchased during the fiscal year using the endowed funds. When appointing bookplates for FY14, my boss was contacted by the dean of academic affairs—the library director’s boss. Apparently, the fund for LGBTQ materials had no such books under its name. The family for whom the fund was established had contacted her to complain. If the problem was not rectified, they would ask the fund to be applied to other LGBTQ programs and endeavors on campus. Unfortunately, somewhere along the way, the restriction had been lost. Those dealing with the funds thought it was to be used for library materials on any subject. The dean, the donating family, and the LGBTQ community on campus felt this to be a large oversight on the library’s part. I went back ten years in our catalog and assigned as many items fitting the criteria as possible to the fund. A formal apology was sent to the family, with a promise to henceforth amend the issue. The family was satisfied, and happy to see that the library had actually been acquiring LGBTQ materials at the behest of the students and faculty, even if it was mistakenly done under the materials budget... This particular instance does not show prejudice or intentional exclusion, but rather a set of errors that led to a fixable oversight.

Many such issues, however, are not so benign. Although the world’s views are changing in regard to the LGBTQ community, at least in the Western World, inclusion of such materials is still lacking in many libraries. Academic (university) libraries show the most inclusion; however, school libraries and public libraries seem to be lacking. In the article, *Selection, Inclusion, Evaluation and Defense of Transgender-Inclusive Fiction for Young Adults: A Resource Guide*, Elsworth I. Rockefeller provides a guide for public and school libraries’ inclusion of transgender materials for both identifying youth and their “caregivers (Rockefeller, 2009).” In his study he found most of the libraries queried were lacking in proper inclusion often for religious or political views among staff. He cites ALA’s Library Bill of Rights as part of his defense for the inclusion of said materials.

Article I states that “Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background or views of those contributing to their creation.” The Association affirms that books and other materials coming from gay, lesbian, bisexual, and/or transgendered presses, gay, lesbian, bisexual and/or transgendered authors or other creators, and materials regardless of format or services dealing with gay, lesbian, bisexual and/or transgendered life are protected by the *Library Bill of Rights*. Librarians are obligated by the *Library Bill of Rights* to endeavor to select materials without regard to sex, gender identity, or sexual orientation of their creators by using the criteria identified in their written, approved selection policies. (ALA policy 53.1.5, 1993).

Unfortunately, even with the provisions provided by ALA's *Library Bill of Rights*, these discriminatory acts may continue until being an LGBTQ individual becomes perceived as a "norm" in everyday life.

My proposed advocacy project is a small one. I would create a physical display of LGBTQ materials in a range of genres. Descriptions would accompany the items along with their usual locations in the stacks, or proposed locations if not owned by the library. I would also include a "further reading" list for those interested in pursuing the subject matter further. The hope would be that the library and its patron base would gain an understanding for why such materials should be included in the collection. Along with the Further Reading List below, a PowerPoint of the proposed book display is included with this report.

Further Reading List

Nonfiction

Angels in America: A Gay Fantasia on National Themes

By Tony Kushner

Chicago Whispers: A History of LGBT Chicago Before Stonewall

By St. Sukie de la Croix

The Gay revolution: The Story of the Struggle

By Lillian Faderman

Gender Outlaws: The Next Generation

By Kate Bornstein

The Invisible Orientation: An Introduction to Asexuality

By Julie Sondra Decker

The Laramie Project and The Laramie Project: Ten Years Later

By Moises Kaufman, Leigh Fondakowski, Andy Paris, Greg Pierotti, and Tectonic Theater Project

LGBT Youth in America's Schools

By Jason Cianciotto and Sean Cahill

Queer (in)justice: the Criminalization of LGBT People in the United States

By Joey L. Mogul, Andrea J. Ritchie, and Kay Whitlock

The Right to Be Parents: LGBT Families and the Transformation of Parenthood

By Carlos A. Ball

Trans Bodies, Trans Selves: A Resource for the Transgender Community

By Laura Erickson-Schroth

Fiction

A Boy's Own Story

By Edmund White

The Normal Heart

By Larry Kramer

Edinburgh

By Alexander Chee

In Search of Lost Time

By Marcel Proust

Middlesex

By Jeffrey Eugenides

Oranges Are Not the Only Fruit

By Jeanette Winterson

Orlando

By Virginia Woolf

The Price of Salt

By Patricia Highsmith

Rubyfruit Jungle

By Rita Mae Brown

Stone Butch Blues

By Leslie Feinberg

Works Cited

- “Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Sex, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, or Sexual Orientation.” *ALA: American Library Association*. ALA, 30 June 1993; amended 12 July 2000, 30 June 2004, 2 July 2008. Web. 23 Oct. 2015.
- Amazon.com*. Amazon.com, Inc., n.p. 1996. Web. 15-29 Oct. 2015.
- Goodreads*. Goodreads Inc., n.p. 2007. Web. 15-29 Oct. 2015.
- Rockefeller, Elsworth I. “Selection, Inclusion, Evaluation and Defense of Transgender-Inclusive Fiction for Young Adults: A Resource Guide.” *Journal of LGBT Youth*, 6:2-3, 288-309, 14 Aug. 2009, DOI: [10.1080/19361650902962641](https://doi.org/10.1080/19361650902962641). Web. 23 Oct. 2015.
- WorldCat and UNCG University Libraries*. OCLC Online Computer Library Center, Inc., 2001. Web. 15-29 Oct. 2015.