SCHOOL LIBRARIES AS A RESOURCE FOR THE
LGBTQ STUDENT COMMUNITY

by

Leah Reid Rhea

An Abstract
of a research paper submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Science in Library Science and Information Services
in the Department of Educational Leadership and Human Development
University of Central Missouri

August, 2015
ABSTRACT

by

Leah Reid Rhea

The lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQ) student community is exponentially becoming more visible within schools. The school library can be a welcoming and helpful place for LGBTQ students. This review of research focuses on the common beliefs and library core values for having equitable access and intellectual freedom for all students and explores ways the school library can advocate for and protect the resources for the LGBTQ student community. The literature reviewed discusses ideas and suggestions for meeting the LGBTQ student user group needs through collection development, promotion of resources, and leadership opportunities for school librarians through multicultural education. The research concluded that the LGBTQ student community is in need of resources from the library that show a reflection of the community and educate on LGBTQ lives and issues.
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CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

This literature review explores the topic of libraries being a resource for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning/queer (LGBTQ) student community. The literature reviewed covers aspects of the topic such as beliefs and standards supporting the inclusion of LGBTQ resources, development of a collection for the LGBTQ student community, and advocating and protecting the LGBTQ library resources. The lack of resources for this community is detrimental to self-identities and acceptance of young learners (Alexander and Miselis 3). The number of students identifying as a member of the LGBTQ community publicly continues to grow, increasing the need for resources, information and literature within the library (Alexander and Miselis 1). Building a collection, advocating, and protecting it can be challenging. However, this study focuses on the importance of inclusion of LGBTQ resources and ways to develop, promote, and protect resources that support the LGBTQ student community.

Statement of the Problem

The LGBTQ student community is not given adequate attention in many school libraries. The LGBTQ student user group has struggled to have strong representation within the characters of books in the library collection. The lack of representation may be due to several reasons: such as prejudice; lack of realization of library needs; lack of acceptance; the sensitive nature of the topic. In addition, the building leadership’s personal, religious, or moral beliefs might negate the use and inclusion of LGBTQ resources (Alexander and Miselis 1).
LGBTQ resources can sometimes be categorized as controversial in nature and have a tendency to be refuted by school and community members. Librarians can create a welcoming environment that supports the LGBTQ student community by developing collections and protecting resources supporting their needs.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to review the literature to identify the challenges and needs of the library supporting the LGBTQ student community through its resources. In order to do so the first step is to identify the current level of inclusion of LGBTQ resources for the school library. Then, an examination of standards and professional beliefs on inclusion of diverse resources are identified along with the needs of the LGBTQ student community. Once an understanding of this information is gained, librarians will be better suited to develop a collection, promote and protect the resources, and support the LGBTQ student community.

**Research Questions**

The library as a resource for the LGBTQ student community can be a challenging topic to navigate through. Many questions were developed throughout the research process. In order to narrow the research for this particular study, the following questions were used as a guide:

1. What standards and ideas support the inclusion of LGBTQ resources?
2. How does a librarian go about building a strong collection for the LGBTQ student community?
3. How can the librarian advocate for the use of the LGBTQ resources in the collection?
4. What controversies may come by including LGBTQ resources, and how can the librarian protect the LGBTQ collection when these controversies arise?

**Limitations of the Study**

The research process completed through this study included some limitations and challenges. Due to the specificity of the library user group identified, a limited amount of existing detailed research was available. Current data about LGBTQ resource inclusion was limited.

Another limitation of the study also fell within the lines of specificity. When identifying standards and ideas for specific support of inclusion for the LGBTQ community, the need to branch to a broader idea of diversity was necessary. Broadening the scope for this particular section of research still met the needs of the research process.

**Definitions of Terms**

Bisexual: A person who is attracted to both genders; male and female.

Coming out: The process of acknowledging publicly one’s sexual orientation or gender identity.

Gay: A person who is attracted to members of the same gender. The term can be used for any sex; male or female ("LGBT Terms and Definitions").

Heterosexism: The fear and hatred of people with alternative sexual orientations and forms of gender expression (Ritter 59).

Homophobia: A term that is used to describe negative attitudes, prejudice, or hatred towards members of the LGBTQ community.
Homosexual: A term identifying people who are attracted to the same gender.

Lesbian: A woman who is attracted to other women.

Queer: A term that can be used to refer to the entire LGBTQ community.

Questioning: A person in the process of learning and discovering their own sexual orientation or gender identity.

Transgender: A person who does not identify with their assigned gender at birth ("LGBT Terms and Definitions").

**Design of Study**

The information used for this study was compiled using only pre-existing information found in professional journals and peer-reviewed journals pertaining to the library being a resource for the LGBTQ student community, inclusion of diverse resources, promoting LGBTQ resources, and controversies over the inclusion of LGBTQ resources. Information was also found within library professional organization websites. Articles were studied and selected based on the guiding questions. No original research was conducted for this review.

Articles were retrieved from the following databases, ProQuest and ERIC. Professional documents were retrieved from the following professional organizations, American Association of School Librarians, American Library Association, and Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE). Search terms included “LGBTQ library resources,” “LGBTQ literature,” “LGBTQ school controversy,” “LGBTQ resource inclusion,” “school library diverse literature,” along with other terms specific to the guiding questions.
Conclusion

The LGBTQ student community is growing and their needs for library resources are high. The next chapter is a review of the literature exploring the topic of the school library being a resource for the LGBTQ student community and why it is a high need in school libraries. It will look at encompassing ideas and standards that support the inclusion of diverse literature, including LGBTQ resources, in school libraries. Chapter two will also look at suggestions for collection development and how to advocate and protect the resources against controversy.

In order to meet the needs of the LGBTQ community many authors are exploring the diverse territory of including LGBTQ characters within their works. The higher quality of resources and a broader collection of books to choose from make the task of building a strong collection easier than in prior years. A look into some of the authors and resource options will be explored in chapter two. Chapter three contains the responses to the questions guiding the study on the school library being a resource for the LGBTQ student community.
CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning (LGBTQ) student community is a library user group that is not given adequate attention, because attention to their needs might be viewed as inappropriate due to the sexual implications their titles indicate to others. The LGBTQ user group, through the years, continues to lack strong representation within the characters of books in the library collection. This lack of representation is due to many reasons: such as prejudice; downplay of library needs; lack of awareness or community acceptance; the sensitive nature of the topic; and building leadership’s personal, religious, or moral beliefs (Alexander and Miselis 1). School libraries have an opportunity to be places to find and utilize multiple resources for the LGBTQ student community. The school library can be a place of refuge for LGBTQ students who find a welcoming environment, books and online resources about their community, and a reflection of themselves in the resources available in the library collection (Jennings 22).

While being a resource for the LGBTQ student community may not have often been advocated for in the past, changes in federal and state laws and school collection development polices embrace inclusiveness for resources supporting diverse user groups such as this community (Bush and Jones 48). This paper will first discuss the common beliefs and library core values for having equitable access and intellectual freedom for all students, diversities, and user groups. The second section of this paper will discuss ideas and suggestions for meeting the LGBTQ student user group needs through collection development. The third section will explore ways the school library
can advocate and protect the resources for the LGBTQ student community, following with leadership ideas on the development of a diverse learning community in the school.

**Equitable Access and Intellectual Freedom**

The LGBTQ user group has become more visible within the public eye throughout the past few decades. A group that once was kept as invisible as possible is surfacing in schools everywhere. The school library can be a resource for the LGBTQ student community. The LGBTQ user group falls under protection by the American Association of School Librarians (AASL) whose Common Beliefs specify the understanding that learners have equal access to resources of all diversities (Bush and Jones 48). Following these common beliefs leads to the inclusion of resources for all subgroups, including the LGBTQ student population. Unfortunately, in most schools, the current status of resource inclusion for the LGBTQ user group would be considered minimal or invisible on the shelves of school libraries (Clyde 17).

At the very core of the issue for school librarians are the beliefs that guided the creation of the *AASL Standards for the 21st-Century Learner*. These beliefs support a learning environment for the school library that provides equitable access for knowledge, resources, learning opportunities, and diverse perspectives (AASL 6). School librarians have an obligation to the students and other users of their libraries to provide resources and learning opportunities for all students. This includes student user groups that are different from the cultural norm of the building and learning community (Bush and Jones 49). The *AASL Standards for the 21st-Century Learner* set goals that prepare students for the future and for diverse situations and experiences in life. The AASL Standards empower students and encourage them to look at different
perspectives through a variety of resources to gain empathy, understanding, and respect for others whose experiences may be different from their own (Bush and Jones 53). According to these standards the school library is to be a resource for the LGBTQ student community.

Providing equitable access for all students comes the idea of intellectual freedom.

The American Library Association defines intellectual freedom in the following way: [It is the] right of every individual to both seek and receive information from all points of view without restriction. It provides for free access to all expressions of ideas through which any and all sides of a question, cause or movement may be explored. Intellectual freedom encompasses the freedom to hold, receive and disseminate ideas. (Bush and Jones 56)

This definition of intellectual freedom and the idea of equitable access allow for the library to be an advocate and place of support for the LGBTQ student community. The school library serves as a place where students can practice and find support for the first amendment right of freedom of speech and the right to receive information (Bush and Jones 57). Though grade level appropriateness must be taken into consideration in school libraries, within those lines of appropriateness it is recommended that students be able to have access to resources that meet their needs in all formats. These formats could include books, articles, databases, and podcasts (Cooper 218).

Intellectual Freedom embraces inclusion of resources for all students, including resources that are not geared towards the majority of the student population, populations such as the LGBTQ student community. The LGBTQ user group is in
critical need of resources, information, and literature within the walls and online world of the school library (Alexander and Miselis 1). The inclusion of LGBTQ information is required under the professional standards of the American Library Association (ALA). Not including titles and materials that support the LGBTQ student community is neglect of an entire user group.

The availability of positive, realistic, and high quality materials for the LGBTQ student community has seen a rapid escalation since the 1990s. This community requires inclusion of high-quality resources ranging from young adult fiction, nonfiction, informational texts, memoirs, and web-based materials. Inclusion of LGBTQ resources is vital to the development of positive and healthy identities for young library users (Alexander and Miselis 3).

Not only does inclusion of LGBTQ resources help the LGBTQ user group, but also other student user groups. “Librarians open a world of understanding and tolerance to all their patrons, regardless of sexual orientation. Further, through these efforts, librarians may even offer a lifeline to some of the teenagers who need affirmation and support in their lives the most. The advocating and integrating by librarians can create an atmosphere in which LGBTQ teenagers and their potential allies can find information and resources at the library and use them to make their lives, and perhaps even the world, a little bit better” (Manfredi 28).

The LGBTQ user group has serious needs and is currently an underserved population (Alexander and Miselis 1). In a study completed by Hughes-Hassell, Overberg, and Harris, the team examined 125 high schools in one southern state. The library collection in each of the 125 high schools was examined for the inclusion of
LGBTQ resources. Even award winning and notable high-quality LGBTQ texts were missing from the shelves of many of the high schools in the study. The highest recommended LGBTQ book on their list, *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* by Stephen Chbosky, was only found on 74 out of 125 school library shelves. Multiple award winning book, *Hard Love*, by Ellen Wittlinger, was only found in 61 out of 125 libraries. When these notable, award-winning books, that are highly recommended for their age level, are left off of the shelves of schools, it sends a loud message to library patrons. This lack of resources for a user group is detrimental to all students. If students cannot find a reflection of themselves on the shelves of a library, then the message is sent that the library is not a place for them and that they are not valued as individuals in their community (Hughes-Hassell, Overberg, and Harris 10).

Libraries have a unique opportunity to support and be a resource for the LGBTQ student community. Through practicing equitable access and promoting intellectual freedom for all user groups serviced by the library, the door opens for a welcoming environment that serves as a refuge for diverse groups, such as the LGBTQ student community (Shrader 108).

**Collection Development**

Building a strong library collection for all user groups, with multiple diversities, can be a challenging feat for librarians. Collection development for the LGBTQ users, as well as any other minority groups, requires the librarian to use a variety of resources that focus on more than just definitions and nonfiction related texts. Young adult literature and online resources will need to be curated to truly meet the needs of the student user group. Providing a variety of resources not only meets the needs of the
diversity standards, but also the unique, individual needs of LGBTQ students, allowing
the school library to be a resource for the LGBTQ student community.

Diversity is essential for the library collection. Diversity is outlined in many
authoritative documents for librarians. For example, to obtain a degree in Library
Science and Information Services, in the state of Missouri, seven Missouri Standards for
Professional Educators (MoSPE Standards) must be practiced and sufficiently met. In
order to comply with four of the MoSPE Standards, a librarian will include diverse
materials in a library collection, along with the promotion of students' intellectual
freedom. MoSPE Standard 2. Reading and Literacy, encourages reading for students
that showcase diversity and inclusiveness. Standard 3. Information and Knowledge,
focuses on access to information and equitable access for resources. Standard 5
includes an indicator that focuses specifically on collection management including
diversity within the collection. Standard 6 promotes equitable access to technology and
resources needed from web-based platforms for student use ("The Missouri Standards
for School Librarians"). The MoSPE standards are taught and practiced among current
librarians in the state of Missouri. The standards establish guidelines for school libraries
across the state to develop, promote, and continue to update and evaluate the diverse
library collection to meet the needs of all students. The MoSPE standards specify
diverse populations like the LGBTQ student user group be adequately represented on
the shelves of school libraries.

In order to fully represent the LGBTQ student user group in the library collection,
it is recommended that the librarian research the needs for this group. Though this user
group may be silent and invisible within the school and not vocalizing their needs,
research shows that the demand and need for materials is extremely high for these students (Rauch 13). The LGBTQ student user group has a range of needs. The first being novels or young adult literature selected for the collection that represents a variety of LGBTQ characters (Barack). There have been many books written about the white homosexual boy. This is a type of book that is needed on the school shelves. However, books that include bisexual characters, transgender characters, lesbian characters, questioning characters, and all of the above with multiple types of ethnicities are all also needed (Crisp and Knezek 77). Along with the type of characters found in the books, the LGBTQ student population also needs a variety of roles for those characters, including protagonist, supporting roles, and leading characters. Having the different roles will give readers different perspectives and thoughts (Crisp and Knezek 77). The books found on the shelves ideally will reflect a range of LGBTQ identities, including leading characters and supporting characters, and should include more than just “coming out” stories.

Several authors have ventured into writing young adult books that deal with or include LGBTQ characters, experiences, and issues. A few of the award-winning authors include; Chris Crutcher, Michael Cart, Francesca Lia Block, John Green, Brent Hartinger, David Levithan, Julie Ann Peters, and Alex Sanchez. These authors touch on a variety and different depths of LGBTQ issues (Rauch 15). They have created characters that are gay, lesbian, transgender, bisexual, and questioning. The young adult novels found on library shelves will ideally include a variety of genres that have a reflection of LGBTQ characters in them, from fantasy, mystery, realistic fiction, memoirs, sports themed, to thrillers. Some recommended titles include, *The Bermudez Triangle*
by Maureen Johnson, *Boy Meets Boy* by Levithan, *Keeping You a Secret* by Peters, *Luna* by Peters, *Geography Club* by Hartinger, and *So Hard to Say* by Sanchez (Wickens 162). These are all well-known books and highly awarded authors that can help in the building of the LGBTQ collection for secondary school libraries.

Along with excellent resources on the shelves, the LGBTQ student needs continue with sex-related education materials, nonfiction informational texts, and online support resources for the LGBTQ student community (Rauch 14). The sex related educational materials and nonfiction informational texts are vital to a high school library collection. Many sex education classes held in the health departments in high schools are geared solely towards heterosexual students. This leaves out an entire section of students who also need sex-related educational materials that fit with their life and sexual orientation. Online resources on this subject can regularly be blocked by school filters due to the sexual content of the site (Maycock 2). Having available resources on the shelves can help balance the filtering issues. Although some may be blocked, there are many online resources that libraries can make available for the LGBTQ student community.

Checking out LGBTQ books to students who have not yet publicly declared their identity to their friends and family can be extremely difficult. This difficulty lies within their fear of their friends and family assuming or judging them prior to their readiness to tell them of their sexual orientation. Having resources that are available, without making it known that the individual is using them, is a high need for the LGBTQ student user group.
Online resources and eBooks can be circulated to students without others seeing titles. Though some resources that could be useful may be blocked by the school district’s filtering system, by making an effort to put requests in to the technology department, the websites could be cleared for use. Some helpful websites to make available could include YouthResource found at www.amplifyyourvoice.org/youthresource, TransYouth Family Allies found at http://www.imatyfa.org, Gay-Straight Alliance Network found at www.gsanetwork.org, and LGBTQ Nation found at www.lgbtqnation.com (Parks 24-25).

The variety of resources is a necessity for the student LGBTQ user group. The inclusion of young adult literature that contains characters and issues for the LGBTQ community addresses a need for students. Along with print resources, online resources should be available for student use as well. With these needs met, the library is an environment where students feel safe and secure to find information on topics and issues involving their life (Hayn and Hazlett 66). The school library can be a strong resource for the LGBTQ student community.

**Advocating and Protecting LGBTQ Resources**

While having the resources in the library and available for the LGBTQ user group and all other library patrons is necessary, advocating and protecting the resources is also a role that librarians participate in regularly. The library can be a place where education takes place on the diversity of cultures in the learning community. This section will start by looking at ways the library can celebrate multiple cultures and focus on the battle against discrimination of groups and heterosexism through education, knowledge, and the understanding of others. It will also look at the leadership role that
librarians can play in their schools. Leading the school in multicultural and heterosexism education serves as a type of promotion for the resources available to students. It also advocates the safe environment that the school library has to offer its patrons (Chuang 26). The value and importance of these resources and welcoming environment, though, will most undoubtedly come with some controversy. The protection of these resources will be vital for the library to be an available resource for the LGBTQ student community.

One hurdle school libraries face when building resources for the LGBTQ student community is heterosexism. Heterosexism is “the fear and hatred of people with alternative sexual orientations and forms of gender expression” (Ritter 59). This fear lives within many of the student body and within the staff and administration of the learning community. Heterosexism and homophobia have allowed for bullying and harassment to occur towards the LGBTQ students (Ritter 59-60). This fear and lack of knowledge and understanding of an unfamiliar group can be remedied through education that celebrates multiple cultures and diversities in the learning community of the school. This type of education can be fostered and led through library leadership. Libraries can be a visible advocate for the LGBTQ youth community and can be an inclusive and welcoming space for all students no matter their diversity (Shelton and Winkelstein 23). Another way the library can lead a learning community out of the heterosexism barrier is to promote literature that involves LGBTQ characters for all students. Reading about issues characters have can help bridge the gap and open discussions about misunderstandings that occur towards the LGBTQ community. This type of advocacy is a promotion for multicultural education (Smith 3).
Along with providing multicultural education and leading other teachers to do the same, the library can continue to promote the resources for the LGBTQ community in other ways. Book talks are still a positive and powerful way to showcase new books to students. This was difficult to do at the secondary level; however, technology has made book talks accessible online. Many librarians have found the creation of book trailers and book blogs create the same results as book talks (Parks 23). Another method used to promote books is through a book pass. A book pass can be done in collaboration with the classroom teacher. The librarian goes to the classroom with a collection of books to pass around. The students are provided with a sheet of paper that is divided into four columns labeled: author, title, topic and rating. Each student quickly collects information on a book after only having it in hand for a few minutes to read the synopsis and skim. When it is time to pass on the book and receive a new one, the student rates the book from zero to five. A zero rating indicates the student does not have any interest in reading the book, and a fives would indicate the student has a high interest in the book. This book pass promotion method allows the students to get a feel for books they may not have typically selected (Meixner 92). Also through teacher and student collaboration, discussions, library displays, and one-on-one conversations, the librarian can promote the LGBTQ resources so the user group is aware of their existence and other library patrons know and can utilize them, as well.

Unfortunately, heterosexism, homophobia, and prejudices will play a large role when promoting the LGBTQ resources that the library has to offer. Libraries might have controversies develop when knowledge of these resources arises from those against the LGBTQ community. However, if the district has a strong collection policy and
reconsideration policy in place, proper procedures may be taken to avoid censorship in the library. The first amendment is on the side of the library to house these resources for students (Alexander and Miselis 44). Librarians will have to advocate and protect these resources in order to have them for their students to use. Some libraries have labeled the spines of LGBTQ books with a rainbow or a pink triangle to notate the content includes LGBTQ related materials. This type of labeling of books goes against the privacy of the patrons of the library and allows others the opportunity to recognize users that may read LGBTQ related material (Naidoo 35). Librarians protect the privacy of patrons and protect the need for those resources to remain on the shelves of the library.

Dealing with the challenges of heterosexism, promoting and protecting LGBTQ resources, and the LGBTQ student’s privacy is not an easy task for librarians. With strong policies in place and an advocating spirit for all diversities, a welcoming safe-haven environment will unfold within the library walls. Including multicultural and diverse materials can attain the welcoming environment desired and promote a community that embraces acceptance. The school librarian and staff members can collaborate and work together when building this accepting climate and creating a community that supports the rights of all students. Then the school library is a resource for the LGBTQ student community.

**Conclusion**

School libraries can be a resource for the LGBTQ student community. The library can house an environment that welcomes all kinds of diversities and celebrates difference. Equitable access to diverse literature and materials and the practice of
intellectual freedom will compliment the library learning environment and branch out to other parts of the learning community.

Though the current collection of LGBTQ resources in a majority of school libraries is minimal and does not meet the needs of students, the opportunity for growth is available for librarians to embrace. Building upon the LGBTQ collection, both print and online, will foster a learning environment that celebrates diversity and educates students on multiculturalism. Controversy that may arise from the inclusion of LGBTQ resources can be conquered through strong collection and reconsideration policies maintained by the district, teachers, and individual librarians.

With appropriate practices in place in the school library, the leadership role of the librarian will be apparent to other school members and students. The welcoming environment will not only bring in the LGBTQ community to the library to utilize the resources and services so carefully chosen and provided for them, but other patrons will gain new knowledge of the LGBTQ community and form an understanding of this group.
CHAPTER 3
CONCLUSION

In the last few decades the LGBTQ population has become more visible to the public eye in our country, communities and even in our schools. The student LGBTQ community requires a good representation of resources, for individual use, on the shelves of the school library. In order for the school library to be a positive resource for the LGBTQ students, the librarian may consider the following questions: What standards and ideas support the inclusion of LGBTQ resources? How does a librarian go about building a strong collection for the LGBTQ student community? How can the librarian advocate for the use of the LGBTQ resources in the collection? What controversies may come by including LGBTQ resources and how can the librarian protect the LGBTQ collection when these controversies arise?

Beliefs and Freedoms

There is an array of professional documents supporting the beliefs and freedoms of the library collection being a resource for the LGBTQ community. The American Association of School Libraries believes in supporting and protecting the provision of resources for the LGBTQ student community. Included in the AASL’s Common Beliefs is the understanding that all learners have equal access to resources (Bush and Jones 48). Standards for the 21st-Century Learner sets the expectation that the school library is a place that provides equitable access for knowledge, resources, learning opportunities, and diverse perspectives (Standards for the 21st-Century “Learner in Action” 6).

Along with the AASL Common Beliefs, intellectual freedom and equitable access plays a large role in supporting the library being a resource for the LGBTQ student
community. The school library is a place where students can practice their freedoms of speech and receiving information (Bush and Jones 57). Intellectual freedom and equitable access embrace the idea of inclusion of resources for all students, not just resources for the majority of the student population. This concept can also be supported through the ALA’s professional standards, focusing on the inclusion of diverse texts and resources.

Following in line with the ALA’s professional standards, the state of Missouri’s MoSPE Standards also support the inclusion of diverse materials in a library collection. MoSPE standards are taught and practiced by those obtaining a degree in Library Science and Information Services. Librarians in Missouri are encouraged to promote equitable access to technology and resources, provide diverse material, encourage inclusiveness, and promote materials for all student use ("The Missouri Standards for School Librarians"). The MoSPE standards allow for the LGBTQ student community to be represented throughout the library collection.

**LGBTQ Collection Development**

Developing a library collection that supports the LGBTQ student community requires the librarian to use a variety of resources in order to meet the needs of the particular user group. Research may need to be completed by the librarian to know the exact needs of the particular school’s LGBTQ student community. Variety will be necessary in the development of the collection.

When building the collection that incorporates the school’s LGBTQ community, a wide variety of materials will need to be considered. A good, starting point for collection development is adding titles for the young adult literature section (Barack). These
books should include characters that represent an array of LGBTQ students: bisexual, lesbian, gay, transgender and questioning characters. Along with characters, diversification of ethnicities should also be considered during the book selection process (Crisp and Knezek 77). The books found on the shelves of a school library should ideally reflect a variety of LGBTQ identities found within the school community.

Not only will young adult literature be needed when developing the LGBTQ collection, but also nonfiction informational texts and online support resources (Rauch 14). Due to filtering blocks, collaboration and communication between the librarian and technology department may be needed in order to access some of the online resources available for students. By providing both print resources and online resources students will be able to access information should any filtering issues occur. Online resources also provide students privacy of materials selected. Confidentiality and privacy is important for many students, including those that have not identified themselves as a member of the LGBTQ community publicly yet.

**Advocating of Resources**

Techniques used to promote new materials in the library vary from building to building in school districts. Developing resources for the LGBTQ student community may lead to advocating and educating about the importance of the resources. Advocating can be small, one-on-one conversations with staff and students about possible resources that meet their needs, or it could also include larger teaching moments. Multicultural education can be provided through the library to promote resources for the LGBTQ community (Smith 3). This can be done within the library or through co-teaching opportunities.
Having a collection and resources that represent the LGBTQ community is only useful if the library users know of its existence. There are many methods to showcase resources with library patrons. Technology can play a large role in promoting and advocating. Book trailers and book blogs can be used to promote books to students and staff (Parks 23). Promoting the resources available for student use allows for the LGBTQ student community along with all other library patrons to become aware of the resources and more likely to utilize the resources.

**Controversies and Protection of LGBTQ Resources**

Diverse resources are vital to the library; however, with the selection of many materials relating to diversity, controversies may rise. LGBTQ issues can be viewed as inappropriate, of a sensitive nature, or too sexually forward (Alexander and Miselis 1). Prejudices, heterosexism and homophobia will play a role within the controversies (Ritter 59). Because of these issues, challenges may surface with the inclusion of LGBTQ resources.

When community members who are against the LGBTQ community learn of the resources they may choose to have those resources reconsidered and removed from the library collection. By having strong collection policies and reconsideration policies in place for the library this will help to protect the resources if controversy were to come. Along with these policies, the AASL Common Beliefs, ALA professional standards, MoSPE standards and the first amendment rights are on the side of inclusion of these resources. The librarian plays a vital role in the protection of all resources, including those for the LGBTQ student community.
WORKS CITED


