

Good Intentions and Poor Collections: The Attitudes of School Librarians in One Southeastern State on Trans Material and Library Holdings

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Abstract

This multiple-methods two-part study included a collection analysis of the holdings of trans books in 35 randomly selected public high school libraries in one state in the southeastern United States. Also, the attitudes and practices of 37 high school librarians (in the same state but not necessarily at the same schools whose collections were analyzed) about this material were surveyed and analyzed. The conclusion drawn from the collection analysis is that libraries are under-collecting trans books compared to books without LGBTQIA+ characters and themes. Some libraries in the state do have robust collections of trans material, but access to trans books varies widely across the state, and some students have poor access. This poor access amounts to inequitable service. The results of the survey revealed that participants overwhelmingly had positive views about trans books and believe that they intentionally collect this material. The positive attitudes of the school librarians do not align with the findings of the collection analysis that libraries are under-collecting material with trans themes and characters. In a time when both trans rights and trans literature are under attack across the country, what resources are freely available to youth in their schools matters. Further research is needed to know how to improve the holdings of trans materials. Additional research could also consider the perspectives of trans youth about library service.

Introduction

Trans people are gaining more visibility in American culture with mixed outcomes. *Time Magazine* called 2014 the “trans tipping point” (Steinmetz, 2014). Popular television series such as *Orange Is the New Black*, *Pose*, and *Feel Good* offer sympathetic portrayals of trans characters played by trans actors. In 2022, MJ Rodriguez became the first openly trans actor to receive a Golden Globe award (Treisman, 2022). (In the 2020 Olympic Games, Laurel Hubbard of New Zealand was the first openly trans person to compete in an Olympic event (Ellingworth & Ho, 2021). This visibility has come with a cost. In the United States, 2021 became the worst legislative year for trans people, with 17 anti-trans laws going into effect (Ronan, 2021). Over 100 anti-trans bills were submitted to state senates (Feliciano, 2021). In February 2022, the governor of Texas ordered child welfare officials to open child abuse investigations of the parents of children receiving trans-affirming health care (Dey & Harper, 2022). Attacks on trans rights are only intensifying. In the first two months 2023, 149 anti-trans bills were introduced in state legislatures (Factora, 2023). Recent legislation has primarily targeted trans youth with laws limiting access to trans-affirming health care (Simmons-Duffin & Fung, 2024), limiting the participation of trans athletes in schools (Barnes, 2023), limiting schools’ ability to maintain confidentiality around their students’ identities (Burga, 2023), and restricting the bathroom access of trans students at school (Mulvihill, 2024). Some laws go so far as to jail doctors for providing trans-affirming care (Dowd, 2024) and to remove children from their homes if their parents are supportive of their gender identity (Otten, 2023).

Libraries across the United States have also become sites for anti-trans activism. Backlash over the memoir *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe swept across the South in the fall of 2021, including calls from governors to ban the book in libraries (Lavietes, 2021). Parents, outraged over what they felt was pornographic content, lobbied schools to remove the book from their collections. During this period of anti-trans legislation and censorship, school libraries can become crucial sites to affirm and support trans youth. Research indicates that supporting trans students in schools has a material impact on their well-being and academic performance (Kosciw et al., 2020).

This study, conducted in a southeastern state, investigated high school libraries’ collections of materials with trans themes and characters, and high school librarians’ attitudes about trans books.

Little research focuses on the experience of affirming literature for trans youth. However, research into the LGBTQIA+ community as a whole indicates that literature that includes positive portrayals of LGBTQIA+ characters and themes has a significant positive impact on LGBTQIA+ youth (Chapman, 2016; Creel & McCullen, 2018; Miller, 2022). It is important for school librarians to prioritize ways to support and affirm LGBTQIA+ youth, the oppression these young people often face in their schools, communities, and homes, they experience health and academic challenges that their cisgender heterosexual peers do not (Kosciw et al., 2013). Health and academic outcomes for trans youth are even worse than for their LGB cisgender peers (Kosciw et al., 2020). These worse outcomes arguably make including literature in school libraries to affirm trans youth and provide them with positive mirrors of their experience all the

more important.

The American Library Association's (ALA) core values affirm the need to provide equitable access to information and resources to diverse populations, including the LGBTQIA+ community, which is chronically underserved (Goldthorp, 2007; Rothbauer & McKechnie, 1999; Vincent, 2015).

No study has explored the presence of material with trans characters and themes in libraries nor surveyed library staff attitudes about literature with these themes. However, several studies have explored library collections and staff attitudes toward LGBTQIA+ literature as a whole, and these studies found that collections were inadequate and that staff attitudes were not always supportive (Creel & McCullen, 2018; Hughes-Hassell, et al., 2013; Rickman, 2015). Trans themes are generally seen as more controversial than cisgender LGB themes; a logical conclusion is that representation and staff attitudes toward trans material may be even worse. Of the studies that examine library collections of LGBTQIA+ material, there has been little focus on trans themes and characters. Because of this lack, this study offers new insight into the material with trans characters and themes available in school libraries. This paper replicates the methods of previous studies on the holdings of LGBTQIA+ material but looks specifically at trans material, which has been poorly studied up to this point. I recognized that a study was needed that specifically examined trans material in a checklist of complex, queer stories that do not perpetuate harmful stereotypes or reinforce the gender binary. This study aims to fill that gap in research by examining both the holdings of trans materials in southeastern high school libraries, and school librarians' opinions and practices around collecting these materials.

Research Questions

1. What are the attitudes of high school librarians about their schools' library material with trans characters and themes?
2. To what extent, if any, do school librarians self-censor when acquiring library material with trans characters and themes?
3. To what extent, if any, have school librarians faced community or administration challenges to library material with trans themes and characters?
4. To what extent do school librarians select young adult material with trans characters and themes compared with material that does not contain these characters and themes?
5. How, if at all, does the type of community where the school is impact how librarians collect young adult material with trans characters and themes?

Definitions

Trans (short for *transgender*) is an evolving term. For the purpose of this paper, trans will be used as an umbrella term to include anyone whose gender identity is different than the sex they were assigned at birth. I shorten transgender to trans to use the language trans people most often use to speak about themselves.

The acronym *LGBTQIA+* stands for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer/questioning, intersex, and asexual. The + includes identities not listed in the acronym, including but not limited to pansexual, two-spirit, nonbinary, and demisexual.

Privacy here refers to maintaining confidentiality about what students read and research in the school library so students do not have to disclose to librarians that they are accessing LGBTQIA+ material.

Young adult literature is distinct from children's and adult literature and is written primarily for young people aged 12 through 20.

The term *young adult* refers to young people, typically 14 through 18 years of age, who have not yet graduated from high school (ALA, n.d.).

Self-censorship is the practice of not acquiring material based on one's own personal beliefs or based on fear of challenges and negative reactions from the community (Baillie, 2017).

Literature Review

This literature review focused on research published in the fields of LIS (Library and Information Science) and education about library service to LGBTQIA+ young people and about young adult literature. The following themes emerged from the literature review: insufficient collections, barriers to access for youth, self-censorship by librarians, lack of specific research around trans materials, the impact of living in a rural community for LGBTQIA+ youth, and queer versus heteronormative texts. Overall, previous research concludes that collections of LGBTQIA+ materials are insufficient, given the overall population of LGBTQIA+ youth. Previous research has found that materials with LGBTQIA+ characters and themes make up a small percentage of collections in both public and school libraries across the country. There are also significant barriers to access that prevent LGBTQIA+ youth from using the school library. This review of the literature will show that while research claims to address the LGBTQIA+ community, the focus is primarily on gays and lesbians, with insufficient attention given to the trans community. This lack of previous research demonstrated the need for a study centering specifically on the trans community.

Insufficient Collections

Several studies evaluate the holdings of libraries' LGBTQIA+ material. Hughes-Hassell et al. (2013) found that an average of only 0.4% of the high school library collections they studied in one unnamed southern state represented LGBTQIA+ themes and characters. Those authors concluded that this percentage of holdings was drastically insufficient, considering that the population of LGBTQIA+ students is much higher.

Using similar methods as Hughes-Hassell et al., Creel and McCullen (2018) compared ten public library collections in the largest cities in the United States against the ALA 2014 Rainbow Book List and concluded that, overall, collections were lacking. Creel and McCullen found that the libraries collected an average of 96% of their control list compared with only 70% of the

Rainbow Book List. The authors therefore concluded that the LGBTQIA+ community was underserved. The average holding of trans books in the current study (38%) is substantially lower than Creel and McCullen's 2018 study in which public libraries held 70% of LGBTQIA+ material on an ALA booklist (Creel and McCullen found that trans books were acquired less often than books with lesbian and gay characters. The disparity could indicate that trans materials are not as widely accepted in libraries as gay and lesbian titles.

Barriers to Access

Across the literature, several barriers to youths' access to LGBTQIA+ materials emerge. One barrier is that a lack of desired materials puts students in a position where they need to speak to a librarian to access books. If the books cannot be located on the shelf, the student will need to ask the librarian to purchase the material or request the material through interlibrary loan. Creel and McMullen (2018) concluded that young people may not be willing or able to make themselves vulnerable to library staff by requesting LGBTQIA+ material, and, as a result, their information needs may go unfulfilled.

Concerns about privacy emerge across the literature. For example, in a 2016 study of LGBTQIA+ youth in the UK, participants indicated that privacy was a key concern and that one reason they did not use the library was fear that their confidentiality would not be protected. Students worried that librarians might tell other staff members what the young people were reading, a circumstance that made them hesitant to access LGBTQIA+ material. Teens were also hesitant to use the library's internet to access LGBTQIA+ content for fear that librarians were monitoring their internet use (Walker & Bates, 2016).

Teens may be hesitant to ask for LGBTQIA+ materials from the librarian for fear that their questions will be overheard. A study of students found that "anxiety about disclosure" led to library anxiety and created a barrier to accessing library information. In describing what would make the library an LGBTQIA+ friendly place, one participant responded, "some amount of comfortable privacy" (Schaller, 2011, p.107).

A 2007 study anonymously tracked the circulation of LGBTQIA+ material for one year to see if using self-checkout would increase the circulation of these materials. The study found a 20% increase in circulation of LGBTQIA+ resources with self-checkout, indicating that patron privacy is an essential factor in library use for LGBTQIA+ materials (Mathson & Hancks, 2007).

There are also concerns about the format in which the texts are available. Brendler et al. (2018) found that several of the libraries in their study offered few or no e-book or audiobook versions of the material, which the authors argued is a barrier for teens who do not feel comfortable accessing physical books. E-books and audiobooks have the advantage of privacy because the teen does not have to go through a librarian to access the material. This lack of multiple material formats is also a barrier for teens with disabilities who need access to those formats. Lacking material in multiple forms puts students with multiple characteristics leading to possible marginalization—learners who are both disabled and LGBTQIA+—at an additional disadvantage.

School libraries that do not offer self-checkout and material in multiple formats, or that require students to speak to librarians about their information needs could be raising barriers to access for LGBTQIA+ youth.

Self-Censorship by Librarians

Another challenge for providing access to LGBTQIA+ resources is the incidence of self-censorship among librarians. Even though all school librarians in Oltmann's study (2016) saw a need to collect LGBTQIA+ material, 12 felt uncomfortable discussing that material. One librarian specifically said that although David Levithan was an incredibly popular author at her library, she would not buy *Two Boys Kissing* because she found the cover of the novel to be objectionable. This failure to acquire popular material because it is perceived as objectionable is self-censorship. Another librarian noted that her community was "stodgy" and that she worried about challenges if she acquired LGBTQIA+ material (Oltmann, 2016, p. 9).

Another study found that 70% of those surveyed hesitated over selecting controversial material that they worried would elicit parental concern. (Whelan, 2009). LGBTQIA+ literature was considered a part of that controversial material. Thirty-four percent of those surveyed had faced a challenge to one of the books in their collection, and 56% said they had refrained from purchasing a title because of concerns about challenges (Whelan, 2009).

In another study, 46% of librarians surveyed said they "weren't sure" if principles of intellectual freedom applied to patrons under 18 years of age, and 15% said intellectual freedom should not apply to minors (Moodie & Calvert, 2018).

ALA stresses that resources must be made available to teens as well as to adult patrons. The library must provide access to a wide variety of library materials for young people, especially those teens who have challenges accessing material (ALA, 2019). Given this guidance from ALA and that research indicates that queer-affirming literature is a vitally important part of the identity formation of LGBTQIA+ youth (Blackburn et al., 2015; Chapman, 2015; Creel & McCullen, 2018), it is concerning that 61% of librarians surveyed by Moodie and Calvert did not think or not know if they think that the freedom to read should extend to adolescents. Moeller and Becnel (2020) found that a primary reason that librarians self-censor is to avoid anticipated challenges. Librarians who lived in conservative Christian communities were even more likely to self-censor to avoid challenges. One librarian wrote about their decision regarding whether or not to acquire the popular LGBTQIA+ middle-grade graphic novel *Drama*. The librarian recounted:

I was asked once if I had *Drama* by Raina Telgemeier. I do not, and I must admit that I have thought twice about purchasing it. The county in which our school is located is extremely conservative and evangelical, which, actually, is all the more reason to buy it, but I haven't yet purchased it.

The participant recognized that living in a conservative Christian community made it even more necessary to acquire books with LGBTQIA+ storylines. Still, she decided to self-censor and refrain from purchasing the book.

Rickman (2010) found that, overall, school librarians were not prone to self-censor. They were not motivated in their selection by their individual beliefs, and they did not feel external pressure about the material they acquired.

However, Rickman's study did not consider LGBTQIA+ content. Garry (2015) found that even school librarians who purchase controversial materials hesitate to acquire LGBTQIA+ resources. Tudor and Moore (2022) studied school library holdings and found that LGBTQIA+ titles were noticeably lacking across all libraries they studied. Those researchers concluded that these findings indicated that librarians were self-censoring when it comes to acquiring LGBTQIA+ texts.

Adler (2011) found that academic librarians gave excuses for why they did not acquire LGBTQIA+ texts. One of the most common reasons was that the librarians felt there was an absence of LGBTQIA+ students in their community, so it was not necessary to purchase those texts. Librarians felt the books would not have an audience, so they did not purchase them.

Tudor and Moore (2022) noted that a recent deluge of challenges across the country has primarily targeted LGBTQIA+ texts. *School Library Journal's* 2016 Controversial Book Survey found that almost half of librarians have faced a book challenge (Tudor & Moore, 2022). This number has likely grown, given the recent fervor around book challenges. Hixenbaugh (2022) noted a dramatic increase in book challenges in Texas in recent years.

Spiering (2017) found that book reviews themselves might be functioning to mark LGBTQIA+ literature as controversial, thereby discouraging librarians from acquiring these books for their collection. Spiering found instances where the reviewers included content warnings such as "this book contains..." A warning like "this book contains" primes the librarian to think that the book may be controversial and signals that they might want to pause before adding it to the collection. Librarians seem to generally believe that self-censorship is something that should be avoided (Rickman, 2010). However, the very publications that they consult for collection development seem to be encouraging self-censorship.

Lack of Research Specifically around Holdings of Trans Stories

Across all of the literature a dearth of specifically trans material in libraries emerges. Tudor and Moore (2020) noted that while all of the high school libraries in their study had paltry LGBTQIA+ holdings, trans holdings were the lowest of all of the categories they considered.

Many studies that evaluated the library holdings of LGBTQIA+ titles did not specifically look for trans stories, leading to a lack of data on trans holdings. For example, Hughes-Hassell et al.'s 2013 study was published 10 years ago and used a book list from 2010. Much has changed in the world of LGBTQIA+ literature in 13 years, including more books featuring trans characters

(Crawley, 2017). The Hughes-Hassell et al. study's findings, while relevant to the lesbian and gay community, had few books on the checklist that included trans characters.

Creel and McCullen (2018) found that trans books were held less often than gay and lesbian books. However, their collection evaluation has a limitation similar to that of Hughes-Hassell et al., in that only 13% of the titles in the list of books for which Creel and McCullen looked in public libraries were books with trans characters. While Creel and McCullen's study contributed valuable information about the state of lesbian and gay collections in general, the conclusions drawn about trans materials are limited in application, given that so few books on the 2014 Rainbow Book List they used featured trans characters.

Inadequate attention has been paid to the specific library and information needs of trans youth. Because so few trans books were used in collection analysis studies, little is known about how many books with trans characters are held by libraries. Studies that solicited librarian sentiment about LGBTQIA+ students and material did not specifically ask about trans content.

Impact of Rurality

Wienke and Hill (2013) looked at previous research on rural-urban differences in gay and lesbian well-being and concluded that living in a rural area is much more challenging and hostile for LGBTQIA+ people. The authors did state that it is not impossible for LGBTQIA+ people living in rural communities to thrive, but Betts-Green (2020) countered that young people have no agency in where they live and little ability to leave a toxic environment. The quality of life for young LGBTQIA+ people living in rural areas may be lower than that of their adult counterparts (Trevor Project, 2021). Betts-Green (2020) found public library collections of LGBTQIA+ material in rural communities to be lacking. She further argued that in rural areas, patrons may be even more concerned about their privacy and may not want to be seen with LGBTQIA+ material. Tudor and Moore (2022) found that high school libraries in larger communities were more likely to have controversial titles than libraries in smaller communities.

Queer versus Heteronormative Texts with Gay Characters

Research indicates that not all LGBTQIA+ texts are created equal. A study into trans books for children found that, although the books had a trans character, unfortunately the majority of the texts still featured white, middle-class families with two cisgender and heterosexual parents. Most picture books perpetuate "single story" narratives and reinforce the gender binary (Crawley, 2017). One study (Schey & Blackburn, 2019) differentiated between queer literature for young people and literature that simply has LGBTQIA+ themes. The researchers argued that queer literature, or literature that queers, takes a poststructuralist lens when thinking and writing about gender and sexuality. Drawing from queer theory, to queer literature means to challenge the heteronormativity of a work by examining parts of the text that replicate heterosexuality or gender binaries. Queer literature is more than just a text with a gay character. It presents gender and sexuality in a way divorced from dominant oppressive discourses and encourages students to explore and make their own meaning (Schey & Blackburn, 2019).

I believe that it is not enough for librarians to purchase books with LGBTQIA+ characters and themes. Young people need access to queer material that does not reinforce gender binaries and that presents complex portrayals of gender and sexuality. Cart and Jenkins (2006) wrote *The Heart Has Its Reasons: Young Adult Literature with Gay/Lesbian/Queer Content, 1969–2004*, in which they argue for what they call “queer consciousness” stories that resist essentialist lenses and allow for messy, complicated, and resistant stories (p.15). Within the field of education and LIS, scholars agree on the need for queer stories that resist dominant discourse, and tell complicated and diverse stories (Crawley, 2017; Thomas, 2016; Wood et al., 2016).

Methods

This multiple-methods two-part study included a collection analysis of the holdings of trans books in 35 randomly selected public high school libraries in one state in the southeastern United States. Also, the attitudes and practices of 37 high school librarians (in the same state, but not necessarily the same schools) about this material were surveyed and analyzed.

Data Analysis Framework

This study is a multiple-method study. Open-ended questions in the study were analyzed qualitatively by theme. The data for the two parts of the study were analyzed separately. Matching the collection analysis with the survey responses would have added valuable data about how attitudes directly impact practices. However, I concluded that—given the controversial nature of the topic—the anonymity of the participants was more critical than this additional data would have been. Therefore, high school collections to be analyzed were randomly selected as described below. The survey did not ask in which school the librarian worked. Asking this question might have made librarians less likely to participate in the study for fear of disclosure. It would have been necessary to know for which school each librarian worked to attach the collection analysis to the survey data. Linking the data would mean that the study would not be anonymous. If the data were not anonymous, the identities of the librarians could potentially be exposed, which could have serious consequences for them.

Locale and Participants

The study was carried out in one southeastern state. This state was selected because it is in the heart of the region and shares the conservative political and evangelical Christian climate of much of the southern United States.

The collection analysis examined the catalogs of 35 public high schools in the selected southeastern state. I identified the sample by consulting a list of all public schools in the state. The sample was limited to public schools when it became apparent that charter and private schools do not provide public access to their catalogs. Schools were selected for the content analysis by a simple random sample to remove potential bias in the creation of the list of libraries in the sample. I compiled a list of all 329 public high schools in the state and chose every ninth entry to produce a sample of 35 schools.

To select survey participants I used convenience sampling because this approach did not involve going through the school systems. I disseminated the survey on an online discussion list of school librarians in the state. The list has 763 subscribers, and 52 librarians responded to the survey (although not all qualified for inclusion; see below), a 7% response rate. (Participants were entered into a raffle, and one participant was awarded a \$100 gift card.)

Contacting individual librarians would have allowed for a random sample but also meant that permission would be needed from each school. Given the potentially controversial nature of this study, the I concluded that it was unlikely that permission would be granted and that avoiding school bureaucracy would yield more data. Participants elected to participate in the survey based on the online posting. The survey was open from February 25, 2022 through April 11, 2022. After excluding librarians who did not consent to participate in the study or were not librarians in a high school in the state, I analyzed 37 responses.

Survey Design

The survey was developed using Qualtrics software. The survey consisted of 18 open and closed questions on topics, including whether the librarian collects books with trans characters and themes; if not, why not; how important they feel these books are; and if they have received any challenges or pushback for collecting this material. The survey is in Appendix C.

I used straightforward language in questions to ascertain why librarians do not purchase trans material if they do not. Internal validity was established by ensuring that the survey questions explained the outcomes under study.

The demographic questions attempt to answer RQ 3 and RQ 4 to determine whether differences exist in collection development strategy based on the librarian's experience, type of community, and size of the school, as other studies have found. Questions 11, 15, and 16 aim to answer RQ1. Questions 12, 13, and 14 address RQ2.

Community Definitions Used

In both the survey questions and the data analysis of the content analysis, reference is made to the type of community in which the school is located. These communities have been broken into the following categories: rural, town, suburban, and urban.

Rural is an amorphous term. For the purposes of this study, I used the following definition: a Census-defined territory more than 25 miles from an urbanized center and with a population of 5,000 or less (National Center for Educational Statistics, n.d.).

Suburban refers to communities that are part of an urban area or exist within commuting distance of the city (Tennessee Department of Health, n.d.).

Urban refers to communities with populations of at least 50,000 (United States Census Bureau, 1994).

I added a fourth category of “*town*” because there are certainly communities that do not fall into any of these categories. I use “*town*” to refer to communities with between 5,000 and 25,000 residents that are not near a metropolitan area (National Center for Educational Statistics, n.d.).

Survey Response Collection and Analysis

I collected data from the weeks the survey was open and analyzed the data using descriptive statistics. Several questions allowed for open responses to allow the school librarians to express themselves more fully. These responses to open-ended questions were analyzed thematically. (Examples of themes: support for LGBTQIA+ students, external pressure from the administration, and concern that there is too much LGBTQIA+ literature)

Book Lists Used for Comparison

Queer theory helped in the selection of the books for the trans book list used in this study to evaluate library collections by guiding me specifically toward queer texts. Queer theory is a field of poststructuralism that theorizes gender and sexuality outside of cisheteronormative discourses (de Lauretis, 1991). This theory guided me to choose texts in which authors complicate normative discourses about gender rather than simply texts with trans characters and themes. Books were chosen that tell complicated stories about gender and sexuality and do not rely on heterosexist ideas about gender. All the chosen books feature trans protagonist or address trans themes. Most of the authors of the books on this list are themselves trans.

This theoretical framing drew me to Cart and Jenkins’s work, which categorized books with gay, lesbian, and queer content published between 1969 and 2004. The authors divided the books into the categories of “queer consciousness,” “homosexual visibility,” and “gay assimilation” (2006, p. 13). “Homosexual visibility” books are stories in which the mere presence of gay characters is notable. “Gay assimilation” books are those with stories that aim to prove that gays are just like everyone else. Cart and Jenkins have argued that “queer consciousness” books tell rich stories that break down traditional discourse around gender and sexuality. They operate from a poststructuralist rather than an essentialist lens. I aimed to choose titles for the book list that would fall predominantly into Cart and Jenkins’s “queer consciousness” category.

I compiled the trans booklist of 19 titles using *The New York Times* best-seller list, the ALA Rainbow Book List, starred reviews in *Kirkus*, *Booklist*, and *School Library Journal*, and book lists compiled by public libraries (including New York Public Library, Los Angeles Public Library, Pima County Library, and Springfield City Library) and the popular literature website Book Riot. The control list of 19 titles was compiled using award lists for young adult literature (including National Book Award, Coretta Scott King Award, John Newbery Medal, Los Angeles Times Book Prize, Margaret A. Edwards Award, Michael L. Printz Award, and William C. Morris Award), *The New York Times* best-seller list, starred reviews in *Kirkus*, *Booklist*, *School Library Journal*, and Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA) booklists. I chose

books that appeared on multiple lists to ascertain which are likely to be the most popular. The goal of the control list is to determine how strong the library's collection is without taking into account the more controversial element of trans books. The full book lists are in Appendices A and B.

In a 2018 study Creel and McCullen intentionally chose books from a 2014 booklist because they wanted the public librarians in their study to have had time to acquire the books. They reasoned that more recent publications might not have the chance to make it to the library shelves. For this study, I took a different approach. With the exception of some slightly older books that have already become classics, the books I chose were published within the last five years and many within the last three years. This was intentional. The publication of trans books is steadily increasing. More recent books are telling more complex stories and breaking away from harmful stereotypes and gender binaries that were present in earlier trans books. A study goal was to include stories that fell into the more complex and radical "queer consciousness" category based on Cart and Jenkins's categorizations (2006, p. 15). Based on my knowledge of young adult literature, recently published books fit better into this category.

An example of a popular classic text that falls outside of this category—and thus was not on the trans list—is *Almost Perfect* by Brian Katcher. Katcher is a cisgender man writing about a young trans woman from the point of view of a cisgender boy. The blurb for this book reads, "Sage has been homeschooled for a number of years and her parents have forbidden her to date anyone, but she won't tell Logan why. One day, Logan acts on his growing feelings for Sage. Moments later, he wishes he never had. Sage finally discloses her big secret: she was born a boy" (Delacorte Press, 2009). The author writes that Sage was "born a boy," while the trans community would call that "assigned male at birth." Reading this book would teach readers outdated and bio-essentialist language. Of the concept of the book as a whole, one reviewer wrote, "a book written by a man from the perspective of a man who has feelings for a trans woman. [M]an is transmisogynistic and 'sees the light.' I'd rather read a book about a trans woman, not how a cis male perceives her" (MJ, 2015). Many other classic trans young adult books reinforce harmful stereotypes and notably are not written by trans authors. It was my goal to include books in the study written by trans authors, which led to the selection of more recent titles. Not all of the books were written by trans authors; because authors do not always publicly out themselves it is not always clear if an author is trans. I also included some recent titles written by cis authors that I felt were not gender essentialist and did not replicate harmful stereotypes about trans people.

Process for Analyzing Collections

As previously described, I had randomly selected 35 school libraries for the holdings analysis part of the study, and had purposefully created a trans list and control list of books to look for in the libraries' collections.

I accessed the online publicly accessible catalogs (OPACs) for the selected school libraries and counted how many books on the two lists each library had. I then calculated the average ownership of the titles across the state, determined which libraries had the least and the most of both the trans list and the control list, and looked for trends across the trans list and the libraries.

Factor analysis was used to evaluate whether urban, rural, town, or suburban libraries had the strongest collections of trans books and whether there is a relationship between the number of trans books held by a library and the number of control books held by the library. Analyzing the library catalogs in this way allowed me to conclude the state of the trans collections. Because the librarians who responded to the survey do not necessarily match the libraries selected for collection analysis, direct comparisons cannot be made between the two parts of the study.

Findings

Libraries held more of the control list than the trans list. On average, the libraries had 83% of the control group books. The libraries had 38% of the books on the trans list. The school with the most books from the control group was a suburban high school in the state's center with 100% of the titles. The school with the most books from the trans list was an urban school in the southeast of the state, with 70% of the titles on the trans list.

The school with the least from the control group was a rural library in the east of the state with 50% of the titles. That same school had 5% of the trans list or nine times fewer titles. The school with the least from the trans list was a rural library in the eastern part of the state with zero titles. This same school had 14 of the control titles. Twelve of the schools had at least 90% of the control group. Ten of the schools had at least 50% of the trans books. Fifteen of the 35 schools had 25% or fewer of the trans list. On average, schools held more of the control list also held more of the trans list.

Examining how many libraries held the ten most often owned books from both lists is interesting in that it clearly shows how many more titles on the control list are held. The tenth most often owned book on the control list was held by 89% of libraries, and the rest were held in the 94% to 100% range (see Table 1). In contrast, of the ten most often owned trans books, the least collected book, was held by 34% of libraries (see Table 2). Six books on list of ten most often collected trans list were held by more than 50% of libraries studied.

Table 1*Books Most Collected from the Control List*

Title	Number of schools (n=35) that had this book
<i>One of Us Is Lying</i>	35 (100%)
<i>Red Queen</i>	35 (100%)
<i>The Hate U Give</i>	35 (100%)
<i>The Sun is Also a Star</i>	34 (97%)
<i>Long Way Down</i>	34 (97%)
<i>We Were Liars</i>	34 (97%)
<i>The Fault in Our Stars</i>	34 (97%)
<i>Stamped</i>	34 (97%)
<i>To All the Boys I've Loved Before</i>	33 (94%)
<i>Bone Gap</i>	31 (89%)

Table 2*Books Most Collected from the Trans List*

Title	Number of schools (n=35) that had this book
<i>If I Was Your Girl</i>	29 (83%)
<i>Beautiful Music for Ugly Children</i>	25 (71%)
<i>Felix Ever After</i>	21 (60%)
<i>Pet</i>	20 (57%)
<i>When The Moon Was Ours</i>	20 (57%)
<i>Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out</i>	20 (57%)
<i>I Wish You All the Best</i>	17 (49%)
<i>Cemetery Boys</i>	16 (46%)
<i>Being Jazz</i>	15 (43%)
<i>The Brilliant Death</i>	12 (34%)

Six of the trans titles were held by at least 20 libraries. The trans list book held by the most libraries (29) was *If I Was Your Girl* by Meredith Russo. The trans list book held by the fewest libraries was *Dreadnought* by April Daniels, held by only one library. All books on the trans list were held by at least one library.

All 35 libraries held three titles of the control group: *The Hate U Give*, *Red Queen*, and *One of Us is Lying* from the control list. All but one of the books on the control list (*This Is My America* by Kim Johnson) were held by at least 20 libraries. Libraries had 6.6% more fiction books than nonfiction books from the control list. Libraries had 22% more fiction books than nonfiction books from the trans list. Twenty-three schools held all of the nonfiction books on the control list. *Stamped* by Ibram X. Kendi and Jason Reynolds, the young adult adaption of *Stamped from the Beginning*, was the most popular nonfiction control title held by 33 libraries. *Beyond Magenta* by Susan Kuklin was the most popular of the nonfiction books from the trans list and was held by 20 libraries. *Being Jazz* by Jazz Jennings was held by 15 libraries. Six or fewer schools held the other three nonfiction trans books. Generally, libraries that held more of the control list also held more of the trans list.

Table 3 shows the number of books held from both the control and trans lists, broken down by community type. Urban schools fared the best with 57% more control books than trans books, and rural schools fared the worst with 429.6% more control books than trans books. There was

very little variation in the number of control books held but a dramatic difference in the number from the trans list.

Table 3

Number of Titles Held by Type of Community

Type of Community	Number of Schools in this Category	Average Number of Trans Titles Held	Average Number of Control Titles Held
Urban	9	10	18
Suburban	9	8	16
Town	8	9	16
Rural	9	3	16

Survey

Respondents represented all four categories of communities: 45.2% were suburban; 22.6% were urban; 22.6% were in a town; and 9.5% were rural. Most high school librarians who participated in the study (51.7%) had worked over 16 years as a librarian. Only 5.6% had worked for four or fewer years. Eighty-seven percent of librarians had an MLIS degree, while 5% had a doctorate, and 3% were currently pursuing their MLIS.

In the anonymous survey, 67.5% (n=25) of the 37 high school librarians who participated reported that they *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that they intentionally collect material with trans characters and themes. Of those librarians, eleven were in a suburb, seven were in an urban area, five were in a town, and two were in a rural area. Three librarians *slightly agreed* that they intentionally collect trans material. One was from a rural community, and the other two were from towns. Two rural librarians and one librarian from a town *slightly disagreed* that they intentionally collected trans books. One suburban librarian reported they *neither agree or disagree*. Of the 8% of librarians who reported that they *disagree* or *strongly disagree* that they intentionally collect material with trans characters and themes, two were from rural communities, and one was from a town.

Thirty-two percent (n=12) of librarians had faced parental concern over a book with trans characters and themes, and five cases resulted in official challenges. Three librarians experienced pushback from their administration over a book with trans characters or themes.

Twenty-one librarians (56.7%) *agreed* or *strongly agreed* that their library has a diversity policy that encourages collecting books with trans characters and themes. Four librarians *disagreed* or *strongly disagreed* that they had such a diversity policy (10.8%), and three weren't sure if their school had one.

Only one librarian felt concerned that trans books were not age appropriate for high school students. That librarian was from a suburban school. Of the librarians who completed the survey, 78% percent of librarians knew of a trans student at their school. All 29 of those librarians felt it was important for students to have access to material with trans characters and themes.

Eleven percent (n=4) of librarians had removed a book over concerns about trans characters or themes either proactively fearing a challenge or as the result of a challenge. Of these librarians, one was in a rural community, two were in a town, and one was in the suburbs.

Seventy-three percent (n=27) of librarians promoted books with trans characters and themes in their displays.

All respondents agreed that they believe in their students' right to read, and all but one *strongly agreed* that students have a right to read.

Nineteen percent (n=7) of librarians felt that it was their responsibility to protect students from material too mature for them.

Table 4 shows the reasons why librarians had refrained from purchasing books with trans characters and themes. Ten respondents gave reasons for why they did not purchase trans books. Five of the respondents who gave reasons for why they did not collect trans books also reported that they did intentionally collect trans books. Four disagreed that they intentionally collect trans books, and one neither agreed or disagreed.

Table 4*Librarians Reasons for Refraining from Purchasing Trans Books*

Reason for refraining from purchasing trans books	Number of Librarians
My community is conservative	4
Concerns about pushback from parents	3
Something else	3
My administration isn't supportive	2
I think the librarian should be neutral	1
My personal beliefs	1
I don't think the material is appropriate for teenagers	1

The respondents who selected “something else” were asked to elaborate. One librarian noted, “I feel as though the pendulum has swung to the side of VERY HEAVY on LGBTQ LIT.” Another said that they did collect this material but wanted to make sure it was age appropriate. Another librarian said they do not consider the presence of trans characters in the book but rather consider the book holistically regarding quality, age appropriateness, and positive reviews.

When asked if they had anything else to share, participants gave the following responses. Three librarians mentioned the importance of having resources to serve the needs of diverse communities. One librarian noticed a shift in the culture around trans books. That librarian noted that in previous years no one was concerned with trans books except for the students who wanted to read these books. Another librarian felt “very concerned” over the mental health of students in an environment of censorship.

Librarians mentioned different ways that they support their students. One respondent mentioned an LGBTQIA+ book club at their school and said that they add students' pronouns to Destiny, the library management software that school libraries commonly use. Another librarian responded, “I don't let the fear of pushback stop me, but I am aware that it is a possibility because I live in a very religious, conservative community.” One librarian reported that their students were pleased to find LGBTQIA+ books in the library.

Of the books commonly challenged and banned this year, two respondents mentioned *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe, and one mentioned *All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson. In the latter case, the school's principal asked the librarian if they had *All Boys Aren't Blue* and said that if the library did have the book, it would have to be removed. The library did not have a copy of that book. One librarian read *Gender Queer* and felt it was not appropriate for a high school audience:

When the controversy began over Maia Kobabe's *Gender Queer* book, I purchased a copy for myself to review it and see if it would be appropriate for my high school library. While I thought the the [sic] memoir was very touching and an important work, I did not feel that it was appropriate for a high school audience, mainly due to the depictions of adult Maia engaging in online dating sites for the purposes of sexual experiences. While I felt that this was entirely appropriate for an adult/college audience and handled in a responsible and mature way, I did not feel that it met our district's selection policies.

One librarian with a copy of *Gender Queer* received an angry call from a parent accusing the librarian of distributing pornography.

Discussion

Results from the catalog searches indicate that, overall, high school libraries collected more books from the control list than from the trans list. In general, schools that collected more of the control list also collected more of the trans list. This may indicate that librarians with the budget to acquire new books and who pay attention to awards and trends also acquire at least some trans books. Collecting more trans books if many control list books had been purchased was not uniformly the case, however. Some libraries with few or even no trans books on the list had many books from the control list. Access to trans materials as represented by the list in Appendix A varies dramatically across the state, with one library having 70% of the books on the list and one school having none. This variation among library holdings amounts to inequitable service to youth.

Urban and suburban schools tended to have more books on the trans list. Overall, schools with the fewest books on the trans list tended to be schools in rural communities. Living in a suburban area is not a guarantee of access to trans books, however, as six of the schools with the smallest collections of trans materials were from suburban areas. Urban schools overall had the most books from the trans list.

Regarding the trans list as a whole, school libraries in this study tended to have a higher percentage of control nonfiction books than trans nonfiction books. Rickman (2015) also found that librarians tend to prioritize LGBTQIA+ fiction over nonfiction. This could be a problem, as access to memoirs and nonfiction books give trans teens practical information about their identities and offer them role models. This content is especially important given that in a nationwide survey just 5% of LGBTQIA+ students felt all of their teachers were supportive of

their identities, and only 41% of students in a nationwide study learned anything positive about LGBTQIA+ people in their classrooms (Kosciw et al., 2020).

One possible reason that school librarians might collect fewer from the trans list is that these books might not fall as high on lists of best sellers. However, all of the trans books were held by at least one school library in the study. This indicates that the books on the list are not too obscure for collection in a school library and are the type of material librarians might select. Additionally, many of the books on the trans list received starred reviews or were award winners or nominees. It is interesting to note that four schools held a copy of *Gender Queer*, which raised so much controversy across the region. The finding that libraries held most of the control list compared with lower holdings of trans books suggests that a lack of trans books might not result from low budgets or librarians who are not on top of trends in YA literature, but rather the transness of the books could potentially be the problem.

In the survey data, overall, librarians felt positive about collecting books with trans characters and themes. However, according to the survey, rural librarians were least likely to do so. This finding aligns with the collection analysis, which revealed that school libraries in urban, suburban, and town locales had a higher average number of books from the trans list than did rural libraries. One possible reason for rural libraries collecting fewer trans books could be lower budgets and smaller collections. I did not compare the control and trans list with the number of library books overall. However, the fact that rural libraries did hold many of the control books could indicate that budget and collection size are not the only limiting factors to acquiring trans books.

While many of the survey respondents said they intentionally collected trans books, the survey data was not uniformly positive toward trans books. Librarians perceived that they faced significant barriers, including conservative communities, pushback from parents, and a lack of support from their administration. Parents were generally more concerned about books with trans characters and themes than the school administration.

The positive findings of the survey data do not align with the conclusions from the collection analysis that libraries are under-collecting books with trans characters and themes. This finding aligns with previous research that revealed that positive librarian attitudes do not equate to strong LGBTQIA+ collections (Creel & McCullen, 2018; Hughes Hassel et al., 2013; Rickman, 2015). A direct comparison cannot be made because, to protect participant privacy, I did not analyze the collections of the librarians in the survey. Still, interesting observations can be made. Librarians may intentionally collect books with trans characters and themes, but, in many cases, they seem to be under-collecting in these areas when compared to books that do not have any LGBTQIA+ elements. It is promising that so many librarians strongly supported their students' right to read, as this conflicts with the findings in one study that concluded that 62% of librarians did not think or were not sure if they thought that their students had the right to read (Moodie & Calvert, 2018). It is interesting to note that all 78% of librarians who knew of a trans student at their school felt it was important for students to have access to trans books. This finding could indicate that knowing trans students makes the librarian more likely to think students need access to trans material. However, only 68% of surveyed school librarians said that they intentionally collected material with trans characters and themes. The fact that some librarians felt it was

important for students to have access to books with trans characters and themes but noted in the survey that they still did not collect this material indicates the significant barriers that librarians face. This disconnect is also notable because at least some of the surveyed librarians' schools apparently have trans students who are out about their gender identity to some of the survey participants. Previous studies have cited a lack of queer students as a reason for not purchasing LGBTQIA+ material (Adler, 2011). The lack of trans students was not a reason for not collecting the books on the trans list.

Considering that the southeastern part of the United States is known to be conservative and that conservative areas tend to have fewer LGBTQIA+ books in high school libraries (Tudor & Moore, 2022), it is unsurprising that so few titles were held by the libraries in the study. It is more surprising that librarian attitudes were generally positive but that these good intentions do not seem to reflect the state of the collections across the schools studied.

Limitations

One limitation of this study is that, based on the responses, librarians who have positive attitudes about trans books seem more likely to have responded to the survey. I was concerned about this possibility and tried to use neutral language in the recruitment email and survey so that school librarians with a wide range of opinions would feel comfortable responding. Given that, in the collection analysis, there was one library with none of the books on the trans list and several with few on the list, it seems reasonable to assume that there are librarians in the state who do not collect material with trans characters and themes. I did not consider the size of the libraries' overall collections, making it more difficult to assess the strength of rural libraries' collections. This study used a convenience sample of librarians and might have been better served by a random sample. The study pulls from only one state, and the small sample size makes it difficult to generalize. My rigorous standards for what books to include in the trans list might have impacted my findings. It is possible that libraries did collect books with trans characters but not the titles I included on my trans list. While I consulted other sources in compiling my book lists, the final decision was mine. It is possible that the books I chose to include impacted my findings. Despite these limitations, the study provides valuable insight into a topic about which little is known.

Conclusion

This study into library holdings of trans material and into attitudes and self-reported practices of school librarians around this material provides valuable data about a subset of YA literature about which very little research has been done. Trans literature has been poorly studied in previous collection analyses of school and public library holdings for young people. While the majority of librarians in this study felt positive about collecting books with trans characters and themes, librarians did report facing external pressure about trans books in the library. Participants were more likely to face pushback from parents than from the school administration. Overall, libraries in the collection analysis collected a higher proportion of popular and award-winning books without LGBTQIA+ elements than they did books with trans characters and themes. A few librarians in the study did admit to self-censoring in the context of selecting books

with trans characters and themes, but many did not. However, considering the overall poor state of inclusion of trans materials in a sampling of high school libraries across the state, self-censorship is a possible cause.

There are libraries in the state that do have robust collections of books with trans characters and themes, but robust collections were not uniform across the state. This lack of access amounts to inequitable service. This inequitable access means trans students do not have books in the library that mirror their experiences. They cannot see themselves in the library. They do not have nonfiction books to consult about transitioning or living as a trans person. Inequitable access also means that cisgender students are denied the opportunity to build empathy by learning about an identity misunderstood and sometimes lambasted in public discourse.

A future study could expand this research by addressing the limitation that I did not consider the trans holdings in the context of the overall size of the collection. Future research could also follow up with interviews with the librarians surveyed to dig deeper into their experiences. Interviews could confirm whether or not knowing a trans student impacts how librarians feel about trans books. The study could also be expanded throughout the entire region or even the country. It would be interesting to explore whether the experience and attitudes of high school librarians vary by region or if it is consistent across the nation. Do schools in other parts of the country have stronger holdings of trans books? Book challenges dominate popular discourse, and it would be interesting to see if books are being removed from libraries in higher numbers than they previously were. Another study could include a broader range of trans texts that fit into all three of Cart and Jenkins' categories. This approach would show if libraries are taking initial steps in collecting books with trans characters and themes, even if they did not collect the books that met my standards. Very few studies on the LGBTQIA+ teen population consult high school students directly, and of those that did, only one (Walker & Bates, 2016) included any trans participants. A study that lifts up the voices of young trans people is essential.

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Appendix A: Trans Booklist

Act Cool 2021 by Tobly McSmith (fiction)

Beautiful Music for Ugly Children 2012 by Kirsten Cronn-Mills (fiction)

Being Jazz: My Life as a (Transgender) Teen 2016 by Jazz Jennings (nonfiction)

Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out 2014 by Susan Kuklin (nonfiction)

Beyond the Gender Binary 2020 by Alok Vaid-Menon (nonfiction)

Cemetery Boys 2020 by Aiden Thomas (fiction)

Dreadnought 2017 by April Daniels (fiction)

Even If We Break 2020 by Marieke Nijkamp (fiction)

Felix Ever After 2020 by Kacen Callender (fiction)

Gender Queer 2019 by Maia Kobabe (nonfiction)

I Wish You All the Best 2019 by Mason Deaver (fiction)

If I Was Your Girl 2016 by Meredith Russo (fiction)

Love & Other Disasters 2022 by Anita Kelly (fiction)

Once & Future 2020 by Amy Rose Capetta and Cory McCarthy (fiction)

Pet 2019 by Akwaeke Emezi (fiction)

Some Assembly Required: The Not-So-Secret Life of a Transgender Teen 2014 by Arin Andrews (nonfiction)

Stay Gold 2020 by Tobly McSmith (fiction)

The Brilliant Death 2018 by Amy Rose Capetta (fiction)

When the Moon Was Ours 2016 by Anna-Marie McLemore (fiction)

Appendix B: Control Booklist

Bone Gap 2015 by Laura Ruby (fiction)

Challenger Deep 2016 by Neal Shusterman (fiction)

Children of Blood and Bone 2018 by Tomi Adeyemi (fiction)

Claudette Colvin: Twice Toward Justice 2009 by Phillip Hoose (nonfiction)

Dig 2019 by A .S. King (fiction)

Firekeeper's Daughter 2021 by Angeline Boulley (fiction)

I Am Malala 2013 by Malala Yousafzai (nonfiction)

Long Way Down 2017 by Jason Reynolds (fiction)

Midnight Sun 2020 by Stephenie Meyer (fiction)

One of Us is Lying 2017 by Karen M. McManus (fiction)

Red Queen 2015 by Victoria Aveyard (Fiction)

Stamped: Racism, Antiracism, and You 2020 by Ibram X. Kendi and Jason Reynolds (“A Remix of the National Book Award-Winning *Stamped from the Beginning*”) (nonfiction)

The Ballad of Songbirds and Snakes 2020 by Suzanne Collins (fiction)

The Hate U Give 2017 by Angie Thomas (fiction)

The Poet X 2018 by Elizabeth Acevedo (fiction)

The Sun is Also a Star 2016 by Nicola Yoon (fiction)

This is My America 2020 by Kim Johnson (fiction)

To All the Boys I've Loved Before 2014 by Jenny Han (fiction)

We Were Liars 2014 by E. Lockhart (fiction)

Appendix C: Survey Protocol

1. **Consent:** In giving consent, I am agreeing to voluntarily enter this study. I have had a chance to read this consent form, and it was explained to me in a language that I use and understand. I understand that I can withdraw at any time.
 - I consent (1)
 - I do not consent (2)
2. Are you currently working as a librarian with grades 9–12 in South Carolina?
 - Yes (1)
 - No (2)
3. Please select the highest level of academic credentials that apply to you:
 - Master of Library and Information Science with School Library Certification (1)
 - Master of Library and Information Science, no School Library Certification (2)
 - A different Master’s degree with School Library Certification (3)
 - A different Master’s degree, no School Library Certification (4)
 - A Bachelor’s Degree (5)
 - Pursuing an MLIS (6)
 - Other (7)
4. How many years of experience do you have working as a school librarian? Do not include time working in a library in a role other than as a librarian.
 - 0–4 (1)
 - 5–9 (2)
 - 10–15 (3)
 - 16+ (4)
5. Which term best describes your school’s community?
 - Urban (50,000+ population) (1)
 - Suburban (community outside of an urban area) (2)
 - Town (5,000–25,000 population not near a metropolitan area) (3)
 - Rural (less than 5,000 population not near a metropolitan area) (4)
6. What is the estimated population size of your school?
 - Less than 300 (1)
 - 300–500 (2)
 - 500–1,000 (3)
 - 1,000–1,500 (4)
 - 1,600+ (5)

7. What type of school do you work at?
- Public (1)
 - Private (2)
 - Independent (3)
 - Charter (4)
 - Other (please explain) (5)
8. What is the racial and socioeconomic makeup of your school?
9. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statement: I intentionally collect library materials that feature transgender characters and themes. (1)
- Strongly agree (1)
 - Agree (2)
 - Somewhat agree (3)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - Somewhat disagree (5)
 - Disagree (6)
 - Strongly disagree (7)
10. I have experienced pushback from my school administration over collecting library material with transgender characters or themes.
- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - Not sure (3)
11. To what extent do you agree with the following statement: Parents or community members have expressed concern about whether or not material with transgender characters or themes should be available in my school library. (1)
- Strongly agree (1)
 - Agree (2)
 - Somewhat agree (3)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - Somewhat disagree (5)
 - Disagree (6)
 - Strongly disagree (7)
12. Have these concerns resulted in an official book challenge?
- Yes (1)
 - No (2)
 - Not sure (3)

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- My library has a diversity policy that promotes collecting library material with transgender characters and themes. (1)
 - I worry that library material with transgender characters and themes won't be appropriate for a high school audience. (2)
 - I feel that it's important for my students to have access to books with transgender themes and characters. (3)
 - There are transgender students that I know of at my school. (4)
 - I have removed a book from my collection over concerns about transgender characters or themes. (5)
 - When providing readers' advisory, I suggest books with transgender characters and themes. (6)
 - I include books with transgender characters and themes in my book displays. (7)
 - I believe in my students' right to read. (8)
 - I believe that it is my responsibility as a librarian to protect students from material that may be too mature for them. (9)
-
- Strongly agree (1)
 - Agree (2)
 - Somewhat agree (3)
 - Neither agree nor disagree (4)
 - Somewhat disagree (5)
 - Disagree (6)
 - Strongly disagree (7)

14. If you have refrained from purchasing material with transgender characters or themes, select all that apply.

- My religious beliefs (1)
- My personal beliefs (2)
- Concern about pushback from parents (3)
- Concern about the security of my job (4)
- My community is conservative (5)
- I don't think that the material is appropriate for teenagers. (6)
- I don't think that this material would circulate. (7)
- I don't have any trans students at my school. (8)
- I think that a librarian should be neutral and not cater to any group. (9)
- I don't have the money in my budget (10)
- Something else, please explain if you're comfortable (11)
- I don't have any concerns about acquiring this material. (12)

- 15.** Please include any other thoughts or experiences you've had on these themes and topics that were not covered in the survey.

- 16.** If you are interested in entering into the drawing for the \$100 gift card, please leave your email. Your survey data will be kept anonymous, and your responses won't be tied back to your email in any way. The email will only serve to enter you into the gift card drawing and to notify you if you've won.

Cite This Article

Bowman, R. (2024). Good Intentions and Poor Collections: The Attitudes of School Librarians in One Southeastern State on Trans Material and Library Holdings. *School Library Research* 27. <www.ala.org/aasl/slr/volume27/bowman>.

SLR
School Library
Research

RESEARCH JOURNAL OF THE AMERICAN
ASSOCIATION OF SCHOOL LIBRARIANS

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