

CHLA Paper Abstract: "A Library is a Place Where You Can Lose Your Innocence Without Losing Your Virginity.": Young Adult Literature, LGBTQAI+ Teens, and Sexual Health Information

Abstract:

Although sexual education programs are staples in the middle and high school curricula, many of these courses are abstinence-based which do not serve the needs of the teen demographic, let alone those who are LGBTQAI+ (Orenstein, 2016). "LGBT teens are often left out of discussions in sex education classrooms in the United States because of discriminatory curricula, ignorance on the part of some teachers and students, or fear of retribution from conservative political and religious activists" (Bittner, 2012, p. 357). LGBTQAI+-focuses literature can help fill the gaps in sexuality/sexual health information not addressed in public school curricula.

Content analysis, both quantitative and qualitative can divulge sexuality and sexual health issues examined in LGBTQAI+ marketed young adult literature. A focus group comprised of LGBTQAI+ young adults can add insight into whether the positive and negative aspects of the young adult literature discovered through content analysis affect them in their enjoyment of or willingness to read the book, whether the issues in the book are authentic and pertinent to their everyday life, and if the books fulfill an information need they have about sexuality or sexual health. The mixed methods will complement each other as the content analysis will explore what is contained in the texts while the focus groups with LGBTQAI+ teens will determine the significance of those results.

References

- Bittner, R. (2012). Queering sex education: Young adult literature with LGBT content as complementary sources of sex and sexuality education. *Journal of LGBT Youth, 9*(4), 357-372.
- Orenstein, P. (2016). *Girls & sex: Navigating the complicated new landscape*. Oneworld Publications.