

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, & Transgender Literature in the Classroom

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Adolescent/Young Adult Literature Selections



Children's Literature Selections

Can the Saturation of LGBT Themes Overcome Heteronormativity?

Heteronormativity

Heteronormativity is the normalizing of heterosexuality as the only sexual identity (Nelson, 2009). Watney (1991) better describes such a process as avoiding “any representation that might reveal the actual diversity & complexity of sexual choice” thus normalizing heterosexuality (p. 394).



Pedagogy

Pedagogy (K-12) has typically not focused on how to incorporate techniques to

help dispel prejudices & strengthen positive identities of LGBT students. Negative effects were observed in all students when classroom discussion of LGBT issues and literature was limited (GLSEN, 2009).

Such literature and classroom discussion could lead to positive identity formation of LGBT students as well as reduce prejudice within all students. NCTE passed a resolution (2007) calling for inclusion on LGBT issues in the classroom in addition to providing guidelines for training teachers on such inclusions.

Inquiry

This inquiry examined a range of children's and adolescent books that could be used in classroom discussions to develop an understanding of those themes found in LGBT literature. The analysis of these books viewed emerging themes regarding LGBT characters and experiences. The findings from the study showed whether the texts are saturated with LGBT themes & characters to the point that heteronormativity cannot be practiced when including such books in the classroom.

There is no “quintessential queer identity” because “lives are not lived as stereotypes or categories”
-Sumara & Davis (1999) p. 196

Guiding Questions for Study

1. What common themes are present in LGBT children's and adolescent literature?
2. Are the common themes indigenous to the LGBT experience or are the themes reflections of the common experience of all children and teens?

Notes: