It is very apparent that the gay, lesbian, bisexual, transgender, and queer (GLBTQ) community has been denied a right to access information—to some degree—in the past. Although there are organizations that have been fighting for GLBTQ rights for decades, it has only been in recent years that most libraries are playing catch-up to fill the voids in collections left by discrimination and indifference. Here are 19 articles which help to explain the history of the GLBTQ person’s struggles, and the quest to find and create information about themselves and each other. It is a look at public and private libraries’ new dawning of promotion to and acceptance of these formerly unacknowledged patrons, and the Internet’s role in helping them attain access to information. This bibliography contains historical topics and recent events.

Note: If the author used the acronym “GLBTQ” in his or her writings, the annotation followed suit. Where the acronym differed, the author had cause and again, the annotation followed suit.


This is a book review by Barry D. Adam, an author in his own right having written several books on LGBT related issues and many journal articles within the broad subject matter. He is a faculty member at the University of Windsor, Department of Sociology and Anthropology. 1 This review discusses the author’s intent to examine factors contributing to San Francisco’s current “open” society. He recommends this book to anyone interested in the historical, geographical, and political atmosphere of San Francisco since 1965 and how it has turned out to be liberal hub for LGBT individuals. Originally conceived as a PhD thesis paper, the book is starting to reach a status of “classic” in LGBT library collections. This review would be resourceful for many seeking abbreviated information on the elements of San Francisco’s open community.


Alexander is an LIS faculty member at the University of South Florida and is also a law librarian. This article attempts to explain why GLBTQ teens are still an underserved population in regards to library holdings. It discloses data from two different surveys on the subject, and allows for the examination of causes for lacking collections. This article is useful for anyone needing data to support the argument for increasing their GLBTQ collection and is also a resource for what the rest of the country is doing—or is not doing—about GLBTQ service. One keen point the authors make is that it is not only GLBTQ persons that have information needs, but it may well be a family member, a teacher, a friend, or others that seek to find answers.

This is a study of nine Canadian public libraries on an attempt to reveal any evidence of bias in selecting LGBT youth fictional books between the years of 1998-2002. Using two search engines, while referencing Amazon.com, the authors sought out 35 titles and subjected them to specific criteria. Although further investigation could be conducted, the authors conclude from this study that (a) there are less LGBT titles being purchased than in previous years; (b) the public library in one part of Canada may hold more LGBT fiction than another; (c) while reviews of this genre are positive, they are not as often reviewed as mainstream youth fiction; and (d) the data show more bias in less collection of lesbian literature. This study may be best used as a starting point for further study of bias regarding youth fiction and other subjects. And it could initiate a library system to review and subsequently change how it is collecting its books by begging the question: Is bias happening? And if so, is it random or is there intent.


Written by two assistant professors at the University of Tennessee who work in the library science field, this paper reflects the Internet habits of 21 GLBTQ individuals. The main premise of the study is to disclose facts that help to explain how almost all marginalized minorities could use the Internet to seek information and form new camaraderie. The difference for GLBTQ individuals, however, is that they need to use it in ways other minorities do not. They use it because they cannot rely on a family member to understand what it is like to be gay, transgendered or bisexual. Therefore, GLBTQ individuals tend to use the Web as a coping and learning skill initially, then as a resource throughout their lives in several phases such as: (1) searching for answers to their questions and anxieties about being sexually different; (2) seeking out companions to share thoughts and feelings; and (3) once at terms with the identity, getting involved politically to fight for equal rights.


Dr. Bryson is the associate professor and director, Center for Cross-Faculty Inquiry, Faculty of Education, University of British Columbia. Gray is a well-known author of the book, In Your Face and has written numerous articles on lesbian issues. In this paper they disclose the lack of online content geared specifically towards lesbians. Although lesbian resources can be found through “queer” portals, the majority are full of content for male users (she explains that it is probably because they are a better consumer market). The authors list many URLs for lesbian resources, and emphasize the educational significance of having a place in cyber-world for female QLBT users. This is a good resource for female QLBT individuals who might be interested in joining online clubs, associations, and communities, and those who do not wish to weed through html pages that do not pertain to them.

Dr. Curry is a professor and graduate advisor at the School of Library, Archival & Info Studies, University of British Columbia. In this study she claims that in prior decades the library was the first place a GLBT youth would go to seek information on “coming out” or to research the questions on his or her new, strange feelings. Today that demographic usually explores the Web first, but the library can still be a valuable resource for a youth who is monitored at home. Because this is an “at-risk” age group for suicide and abuse, her LIS department got approval from UBC’s Behavioral Research Ethics Board to conduct an experiment in which a young woman masquerades as a GLBT youth and asks 20 different librarians (in 20 different libraries) a question about starting a high school Gay-Straight Alliance club. The resulting reactions from the assumed librarians are observed and the results are not entirely favorable, therefore leading to suggestions on how librarians can better meet the needs of this fragile segment of the population.


Barbara Gittings passed away this year. She was mostly known for starting the east coast chapter of Daughters of Bilitis circa 1958 which provided a place for lesbians to meet outside the bars, document their lives, and promote civil rights. In 1963 she became editor for The Ladder—a magazine in which she poured her knowledge of science and psychology towards the workings of gay and lesbian rights. She worked with the American Library Association (ALA) for many years and in 1973 her conjoined efforts with American Psychiatric Association helped to remove “homosexuality” from its label as a mental disorder. This memoriam and reflection of Gittings’ many achievements was written by Marcia M. Gallo a lesbian social justice activist who teaches the history of sexuality and American history at Lehman College and is the author of *Different Daughters: A History of the Daughters of Bilitis and the Rise of the Lesbian Rights Movement*.4


Gardner is a member of Virginia Libraries and holds a Masters in Library Science and in English. She contributes this straight-forward article on some of the weaknesses and faults of Virginia libraries when it comes to serving the GLBT community. She starts by pointing out that even though the 2000 U.S. census allotted for some GLBT statistics, due to lack of some pertinent data queries, these numbers hardly portray real numbers. She notes that in some Virginia middle school libraries, GLBT books have been reviewed by administrative staff only to be sent to the high schools, thereby leaving very little for the pre-adolescent age group. The author also discloses an example of a significant hole in the GLBT collection in Virginia libraries. This article could be used a good example for addressing issues such as staff training and collection development policies.

Hammond is an artist and writer of lesbian and feminist materials as well as a curator of artwork that represents a cultural “difference.” After a destructive hate crime involving books at the James C. Hormel Gay and Lesbian Center at the San Francisco Library, the author was one of the many artists asked to make artwork out of the tattered remains. She describes the three art pieces in detail and explains how the titles of the books were incorporated into the respective works. In all three pieces, the recurring theme was meant to draw attention to homophobic discrimination. This article could be used in many areas as a lesson in morality—that is, making something positive out of a negative situation.


In an effort to study the information needs and possible barriers of people living with HIV/AIDS (PLWHA) and the places they seek for health information, a focus group was formed in two U.S. states, and a wide distribution of surveys were dispersed by clinics, medical and health companies, and drug treatment centers so as to be sure to reach every demographic. The findings concluded that the most PLWHA sought information from doctors and did not trust the Internet as a primary health source. Since this group can often avoid seeking information altogether and some have less than adequate means to access information, this is an article for the promotion of different methods of information (such as brochures or advertisements) aimed at this segment of the population.


Levithan is widely known for his book Boy Meets Boy, it is on almost every list of teen LGBT library collections. Yet, he lets us know how he found the opportunity to read a LGBT book in his youth and why librarians need to be extraordinarily responsive in helping today’s teens with their inquires. Adolescent identity is a very delicate issue which can often turn tragic if a teen is not catered to in a reassuring way. By having LGBT-themed books on shelves, the library can boost that person’s self-worth. This article contains some emotionally poignant citations from Levinthan’s readers.


Lukenbill is a professor at the LIS School at the University of Texas. He starts by giving a proper historical account of the gay rights movement, which he says was solidified by the 1969 Stonewall riots in New York City. From there he moves back and forth through time describing the genesis of gay and lesbian libraries throughout the world. Lukenbill stresses
the social power that comes with having these establishments in society that are seen and recognized by all. But there is still a long way to go. In general, these libraries are not fully staffed, have limited funding, and have meager cataloging and communications capabilities. Still, the libraries yield vast amounts of self-esteem to a previously underrepresented group. Almost nothing can beat a library to preserve the past and solidify a place in society now and in the future. This article is very resourceful and should be used as a brief synopsis for the gay rights movement as well as for other cultural identity developments.


Mehra is the assistant professor in the School of Information Sciences at the University of Tennessee, Dr. Merkel has a PhD in library science from University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign (UIUC), and Bishop is a faculty member in the Graduate School of LIS at UIUC. This article used the results of three different studies to make a case for the positive social results that accessibility to the Internet can achieve for groups that lack the privilege and power of the majority. Low-income families, LGBT communities, and African-American women were supplied with access to computers or a computer resource. In all three situations, the studies showed that the Internet as an online and technical resource led to real-life social practices that were positive not just for specific individual needs, but more importantly, as use as a tool in developing social support, interaction, and networks in the community. This article is a good resource for proving the positive outcomes that will surface upon closing the gap in the digital divide.


This news story from the Library Journal reports that one of the U.S.’s largest gay and lesbian libraries has moved to a new location within the Fort Lauderdale’s Public Library building despite disapproval from the Mayor. Conservatives complained that the library facility contains pornography and protested the move. The City Commission voted in favor of the move and the chief librarian disagrees about the “pornographic content” but does acknowledge the sensitivity of the materials contained in the collection. The Stonewall Library is only open to 18-year-olds or older, and researchers are required to sign off on acknowledgement that the materials may contain sexually-explicit content. The library is a member of the ALA’s GLBT Round Table and is hoping to become more respected in the Fort Lauderdale community.


At the time of this article’s writing, Tim Retzloff was a prize-winning undergraduate for his contributions to LGBT history. This exhibit of Michigan’s queer history was firstly physical and lived in a graduate library. It is now online at www.lgbtheritage.org and at least four different libraries—and several librarians—can be credited to its existence. Inspired by the NY Public Library’s “Becoming Visible: The Legacy of Stonewall” exhibit, Michigan
volunteers sought out artifacts and the results lie in abundance. This article is useful for actively seeking and promoting historical LGBT materials for assembly into a physical exhibition. It could also be useful for transitioning any physical exhibit to a digital one. By being accessible on the Web, this content could educate the globe on past discrimination and the fight for civil rights. This is also a good resource for Michigan and Midwest cultural history.


Dr. Rothbauer holds a PhD in LIS and is a faculty member at the University of Toronto. Her essay focuses on the library as a gathering and research space for the LGBQ patrons and reveals the way in which U.S. and Canadian libraries have been negatively perceived by this gender group. She uses direct quotes and survey information to expand upon the point of the essay which is; if public libraries want to fulfill their mission as a community center for everyone, they need to include this segment of the population by keeping literature of their interests current, providing areas of privacy, and making them feel as though the library has more to offer them than just a warehouse full of outdated information.


The Committee on Institutional Cooperation is a consortium comprised of 12 research universities. This evaluation was used to study the outright accessibility of diverse material available to students on the libraries’ Web sites without going into the online catalog. The committee also tracked whether or not these institutions had a “diversity committee” of some kind and if so, was that information available on the sites’ home pages. The results showed that while most sites did have disability accessibility links on the home page, the same could not be said for diversity resources. The committee then makes recommendations on how an organization can provide better access to diverse collections and resources on the main page of a Web site.


Thomas is a library journal fiction reviewer with experience as an adult services librarian. He uses this piece to make recommendations on helping the GLBT user find his or her book and securing a better overall connection between this segment of the community and the library. In particular he focuses on gay and lesbian fiction and why, historically, it has been hard to acquire a variety of books of this genre. Two-thirds of this article is comprised of recommendations on classic fiction books that should—at the very least—be in a core collection, and also provides a comprehensive list of novels in other genres for the library that can afford a larger amount of materials.

Whelan is News and Features Senior Editor for *School Library Journal*. In this issue’s contribution she begins by reporting the frustrations of a middle-school girl who decided to “come out” at the early age of 13. The main emphasis of the article builds from this girl’s viewpoint and actions; she claims that the procurement of LGBT materials is needed at the middle-school level because teens are starting to feel comfortable enough in society to seek out information about their sexuality at younger ages. She feels it is the responsibility of school libraries to assemble (by whatever means possible) a decent LGBT collection. With so many challenged books being gay titles, this article contributes tips, resources, booklists, and examples of opposition one might encounter while trying to acquire and maintain this kind of collection.
Notes

1 <http://www.uwindsor.ca/adam>

2 <https://web.utk.edu/~bmehra/>

3 Personal communication, October 16, 2007: Dr. Curry maintains this title until December 31, 2007 when she moves to the University of Alberta to accept the position of Professor and Director of SLIS.

4 <http://www.lehman.cuny.edu/deanhum/history/fac_gallo.html>

5 <http://www.gardnercastle.com/CAGardnerBio.htm>

6 <http://www.harmonyhammond.com>

7 <https://web.utk.edu/~bmehra/> <http://www.personal.psu.edu/cbm12/>

<http://www.press.umich.edu/jep/04-02/bios.html>

8 University of Chicago, University of Illinois, Indiana University, University of Iowa, University of Michigan, Michigan State University, University of Minnesota, Northwestern University, Ohio State University, Pennsylvania State University, Purdue University and the University of Wisconsin-Madison. Available at <http://www.cic.uiuc.edu>.