This is the accepted manuscript. The final publisher PDF is available at DOI: 10.1177/03400352241310614.

I can't even read straight : Exploring the influences on LGBTQ+ library collections through an AI-mediated, parallel synthesis scoping review approach

Martin Morris[1*], Gregg A. Stevens[2] and John Siegel[3]

[1]Schulich Library of Physical Sciences, Life Sciences & Engineering, McGill University, QC, Canada
[2]University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School, MA, US
[3]University of South Carolina Upstate, SC, US

Abstract

A small but mature body of literature around LGBTQ+ library collections is available to researchers and practitioners. Using a novel method, the parallel synthesis scoping review, we have incorporated AI-enabled topic modelling into the traditional scoping review method to explore the underlying factors influencing the collection of LGBTQ+ materials in libraries. This review was supported by a systematic scoping search of five databases (LISTA, Scopus, Medline, Embase, CINAHL), with blinded screening and data extraction.

Parallel synthesis led to a framework charting stakeholders against an Outreach – Censorship Continuum. It includes sixteen forms of censorship and outreach, and eight underlying influences which encourage behaviours towards either censorship or outreach. We further find that the framework is a manifestation of a struggle between two competing visions of safe spaces, in which librarians have used many strategies to resist censorship and ensure that their collections provide a safe space for LGBTQ+ library patrons.

Keywords: *LGBTQ+, parallel synthesis scoping review, library collections, censorship, outreach, safe spaces*

Introduction

LGBTQ+[1] LIBRARIANSHIP is a relatively young field within library and information sciences. Much of the literature in this field focusses on the information needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer library patrons, and on library collections, services, and events aimed at meeting the needs of this community. Except for some early pioneers in the field (e.g. Ashby, 1987; Gough and Greenblatt, 1990; Creelman and Harris, 1990; Whitt, 1993 and Joyce and Schrader, 1997) almost all articles in LGBTQ+ librarianship were published after 2000, paralleling the greater acceptance of LGBTQ+ people (Figure 1).

Most articles focus on individual libraries or library systems and include case studies, program descriptions, and original research. Articles taking a broader or more theoretical look at the relationship between libraries and the LGBTQ+ community are less common.

The three factors We previously investigated the attitudes of academic librarians towards LGBTQ+ library work including LGBTQ+ collection work (Siegel, Morris, & Stevens, 2020), and identified three likely underlying factors:

1. **Duty of care/professional responsibility :** The concern that librarians might have regarding their own knowledge of the needs of LGBTQ+ patrons, the recognition of their responsibility to provide accurate and culturally competent information, and a fear that the resources they acquire or information they provide might have a significant impact on a potentially vulnerable patron.
2. **Public visibility of the librarian's work :** The fear of being publicly identifiable as the librarian who has carried out LGBTQ+ library work. We speculated that causes might include fear of (i) public backlash or book challenges, (ii) reputational harm, and (iii) being seen as LGBTQ+ .
3. **Librarian's personal values/prejudices :** A conflict between the librarian's personal values and beliefs, and their professional duty to serve LGBTQ+ library patrons.

*Corresponding author: martin.morris@mcgill.ca
This article has been accepted by *IFLA Journal* in its present form and will be published with DOI 10.1177/03400352241310614.

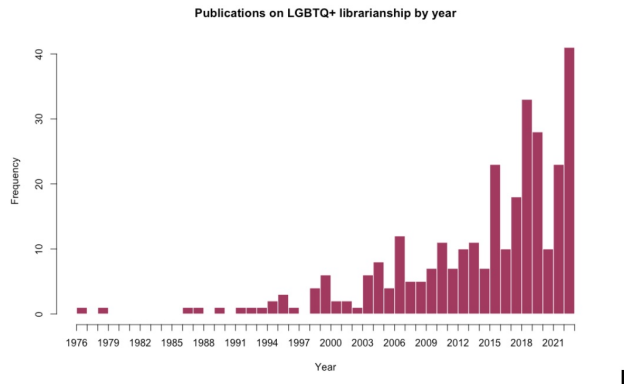

Figure 1: *Number of publications covering LGBTQ+ librarianship by year (1976-2023)*

We also noted the need for further research to map out in more detail how librarians address the needs of LGBTQ+ library patrons. This study aims to address this gap by exploring one subfield within LGBTQ+ librarianship — library collections — isolating the factors that influence LGBTQ+ library collections, and determining any underlying structure to those factors. We will also explore the relevance of the three factors identified above.

Specifically, we aim to answer the following research question: *What are the factors that influence libraries and librarians during the collection of LGBTQ+ library materials?*

Methods

We have chosen the scoping review method. Scoping reviews systematically map and summarise the literature available on a topic, and identify key concepts, theories, sources of evidence, and gaps in research (Arksey & O'Malley, 2005; Grimshaw, 2010; Levac, Colquhoun, & O'Brien, 2010), thus providing an overview of the state of published research (Peters et al., 2020). This review is reported according to the Systematic Reviews and Meta-Analyses extension for Scoping Reviews guidelines (PRISMA-ScR) (Tricco et al., 2018).

For this study we incorporate a novel extension into the traditional scoping review method. We offer a justification for this change and an outline of the revised method below. A full discussion of its benefits and challenges is beyond the scope of this study but will be presented in a future publication.

Confirmation bias in scoping reviews

Scoping reviews have evolved since Arksey and O'Malley's (2005) original methodological framework. The method has moved closer to that adopted in systematic reviews in order to improve rigour and quality and to reduce bias. Changes include:

- increased clarity in reporting to promote reproducibility and consistency (Colquhoun et al., 2014; Peters et al., 2020);
- a systematic approach to the search, including multiple databases, and with full reporting and peer review of strategies (McGowan et al., 2016; Morris, Boruff, & Gore, 2016);
- blinded screening during study selection (Levac et al., 2010; Peters et al., 2020)

The subsequent stages of data extraction, charting and synthesis have remained largely unchanged. This is where the most intense qualitative analysis takes place, the researcher's subject expertise bringing insight and context into the interpretation of data (Cresswell, 2009; Denzin & Lincoln, 2018). The term *researcher as instrument* is often applied to qualitative researchers in recognition of this role.

Nevertheless, qualitative researchers are also human beings, with complex identities combining for example gender, sexuality, race, language and socioeconomic status. While a researcher's identity can add richness and depth to scoping reviews, it can also introduce confirmation bias — the tendency to interpret information in a way consistent with one's existing beliefs and worldview (Pohl, 2005). Researchers will therefore unavoidably already have a preconceived idea of what the final results of their scoping review might be, which risks discouraging further examination of the data once those preconceived ideas have been met. The review may thus not necessarily present the fullest and most unbiased findings available. From our experience supporting such scoping reviews we believe the risk of cognitive bias to be significant, and note that this risk has received no attention in the literature.

We wished to reduce the effect of our confirmation biases, while retaining the richness and depth offered by the *researcher as instrument*. Considering artificial intelligence (AI), we note that researchers using AI in knowledge syntheses have so far aimed to *replace* some of the human-mediated work to reduce the workload and thus speed up the review. This includes AI-developed search strategies (e.g. Wang, Scells, Koopman, and Zuccon, 2023; Guimarães, Joviano-Santos, Reis, Chaves, and Observatory of Epidemiology, Nutrition, Health Research (OPENS), 2024) and data synthesis (e.g. Kee, Li, Kong, Tang, and Chuang, 2019; Ali and Kannan, 2022).

Our aim was different. We wished to explore how AI

could *complement* human-mediated work by contributing a second, external point of view unencumbered by confirmation bias, thus potentially offering a novel, unexpected understanding of the same data. In this, we were inspired by the work of such researchers as Maltezos, Luhtakallio, and Meriluoto (2024), who have analysed image datasets by simultaneously applying ethnographic methods and AI-enabled image analyses. Their overall analysis is iterative, the results from the two branches of their analysis iteratively cross-feeding into each other, driving a virtuous circle of increasingly more detailed and complete analysis.

We similarly conducted two separate, concurrent data extraction and synthesis exercises — the first using the traditional 'researcher as instrument' approach, and the second using the AI-enabled technique of *topic modelling*, described below. We likewise iteratively fed the results of each analysis into the other until saturation. Well-conducted scoping reviews should by nature be iterative, the researchers going back to the literature repeatedly as their understanding develops (Levac et al., 2010), while improving their literature search as this improved understanding generates new search terms (Morris et al., 2016). Our experience leads us to suspect that not all scoping reviews are so conducted, and that our incorporation of AI into the scoping review method might be one way to encourage a return to a more iterative approach (Frati, 2024, personal communication).

Because of this concurrent analysis, and being unaware of any other scoping reviews using AI in this way, we have named this method the *parallel synthesis scoping review*. A schematic of this approach is provided at Figure 2.

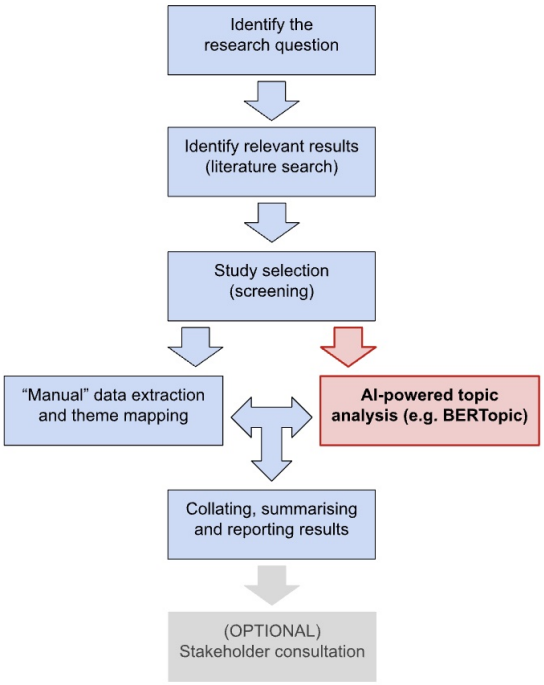

Figure 2: *Modified scoping review workflow*

Identifying relevant studies

As we expected to find only a small body of relevant literature we conducted a highly sensitive, very broad, iterative systematic scoping search to identify candidate articles (Morris et al., 2016). An initial strategy (provided at Appendix 1) for Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts LISTA (EBSCO) was constructed using LISTA subject terms, keywords and boolean operators AND/OR to combine the concepts of LGBTQ+ people and communities, and librarianship or information seeking. This strategy was then translated to Scopus, Web of Science, Medline (Ovid), Embase (Ovid) and Cumulated Index to Nursing and Allied Health Literature CINAHL (EBSCO) We also scanned the bibliographies of selected articles. Searches were performed in November 2023, and no limits were applied relating to language or date of publication.

Study selection

Duplicates were removed using Endnote X21 software (Clarivate Analytics, 2024) and Covidence, a web-based collaboration knowledge synthesis platform (Veritas Health Innovation, 2024). We also used Covidence to manage article screening.

Inclusion and exclusion criteria We adopted the following inclusion and exclusion criteria:

Inclusion criteria: All articles discussing any aspect of library collections for LGBTQ+ patrons from which relevant data could be extracted, including those covering censorship and book bans.

Exclusion criteria: Articles which:

(i) are purely calls to action, or motivational, with no data that could be extracted;

(ii) cover multiple groups from which LGBTQ-specific data could not be isolated;

(iii) are restricted to resource lists or purchase recommendations.

Two reviewers independently screened candidate articles by title/abstract and then full text; any disagreements were resolved by a third reviewer. Agreement between the reviewers was very high ($\kappa = 0.894$).

Data extraction, charting and synthesis

Human-mediated extraction In Covidence (Veritas Health Innovation, 2024) we prepared a custom data extraction template (Figure 3). Data extraction was performed independently by two authors selected at random, with a third reconciling any differences. Special consideration was given to the three factors outlined above.

Main findings from paper

- Findings/relevant information

Professional context

- How does this paper link to. . . ?
  - Patron
  - Librarian
  - Library/institution
  - Librarianship as a whole

The three factors

- Does this link to any of the three factors from (Siegel, Morris, & Stevens, 2020)? Does it connect any 2 or 3 of these factors?
  1. Personal values
  2. Public visibility
  3. Duty of care

Other notes

Figure 3: *Data extraction template in Covidence*

Topic modelling extraction Here we depart from the traditional scoping review methodology in order to incorporate *topic modelling* into our data extraction, charting and synthesis.

Topic modelling is the analysis of a corpus of documents using machine learning to isolate word and phrase patterns, cluster them, and thus reveal the underlying, latent themes present in those documents (Mattingley, 2021; Page & Sealy, 2021). It is one of several natural language processing (NLP) techniques which also include *sentiment analysis*, *keyword extraction* and *summarization*.

Until recently the most popular topic modelling method was Latent Dirichlet Allocation (LDA) (Blei, Ng, & Jordan, 2001, 2003; Churchill & Singh, 2023). A new, more powerful topic modelling technique called BERTopic (Grootendorst, 2024a) is now rapidly gaining popularity due to its use of *sentence transformers*, an NLP algorithm which can take account of contextual information in documents, and because of the detailed, hierarchical topic representations it can produce (SBERT.net, 2024); this is the method used here.

To prepare our articles we converted them into plain text using simple Python scripts, excluding tables as these usually contained very short clauses which would have reduced the quality of the final topic map. We preferred the HTML format, which we extracted with `BeautifulSoup` (L. Richardson, 2024), as these extracted more cleanly. Where an HTML version was not available we extracted from the PDF using `PyPDF2` (Fenniak et al., 2024). Some PDF files required OCR techniques for extraction; for these we used `pytesseract` (Hoffstaetter et al., 2024), a wrapper to Google's Tesseract OCR engine. All extracted texts were combined into one file.

The topic model was generated using BERTopic using the `bertopic` package (Grootendorst, 2024a) within a Python wrapper script (Appendix 3). BERTopic is a highly modular method with six core stages (Grootendorst, 2024a):

1. **Embeddings:** Documents are converted into numerical representations within, in our case, a 768-dimensional dense vector space using the `all-mpnet-base-v2` sentence-transformer model (Hugging Face, 2024).
2. **Dimensionality reduction** from 768 to 2 using the default `UMAP` (McInnes, 2024).
   UMAP is a stochastic algorithm, i.e. it makes use of randomness. Each run will thus produce a slightly different result. We ran multiple iterations of this step to confirm that we could interpret each output similarly in terms of concept cluster.
3. **Clustering:** Data is clustered into groups of similar embeddings, allowing for topics extraction. We used the default `hdbscan` (McInnes, Healy, & Astels, 2017).
4. **Vectorizers** fine-tune the topic representation, ensuring a best fit and to remove stop words (e.g. *the*, *and*). We used the default `count-vectorizer` component of `scikit-learn` (Pedregosa et al., 2011).
5. **c-TF-IDF** calculates the differences between clusters through word frequencies. Enabled by default in OCRopic.
6. **Fine-tuning** summarises and labels topics. We used `MaximalMarginalRelevance` which minimises duplicate words and labels (Grootendorst, 2024b).

As each stage is highly configurable we performed multiple extractions using different configurations until we found the most helpful representation.

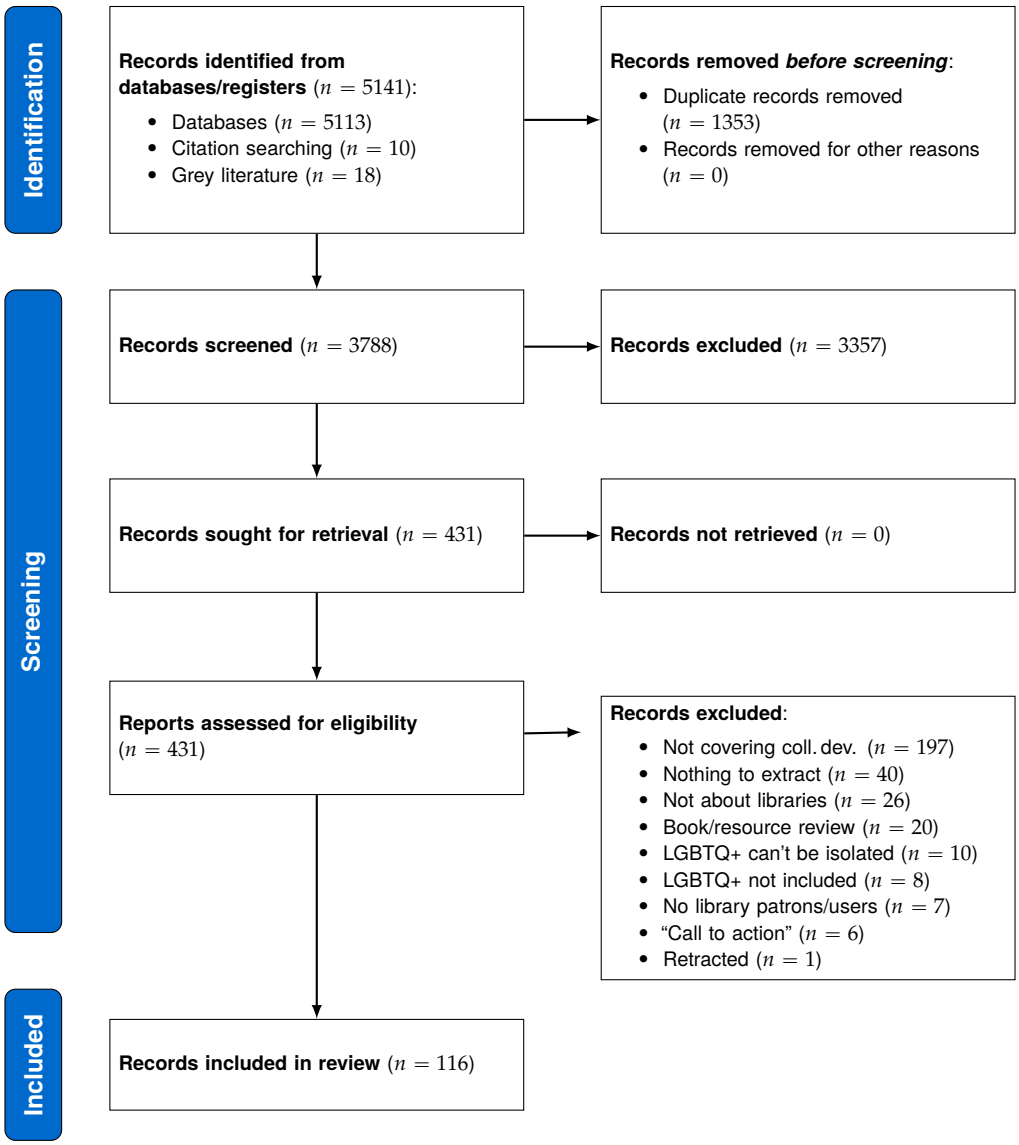

Figure 4: *PRISMA-ScR chart*

Results and analysis

Identification of studies

The PRISMA-ScR (Figure 4) charts an overview of the article selection process. Searches generated 3,788 unique candidate articles after deduplication, of which 3,760 were retrieved from databases, while 28 were identified from bibliography checking and grey literature. Following title/abstract screening we excluded 3,357 records, leaving 431 full texts. 315 sources were excluded during full text screening for reasons specified in the PRISMA-ScR diagram at Figure 4, or for not discussing LGBTQ+ library collections. 116 sources were carried forward.

Data synthesis

Human-mediated data synthesis Our human-enabled analysis started by considerating different stakeholders: (i) librarians, (ii) libraries and local library systems, (ii) the profession of librarianship, (iv) LGBTQ+ people, allies, and the community, and (v) individuals and organisations involved in book challenges. Our analysis was inspired by Mead's conceptual framework for patient-centred care (Mead & Bower, 2000) due to its clear description of stakeholders and the influences on, and connections between them. We also considered the role of the three factors (Siegel et al., 2020).

In a traditional scoping review we would have completed the analysis at this stage. As we are following

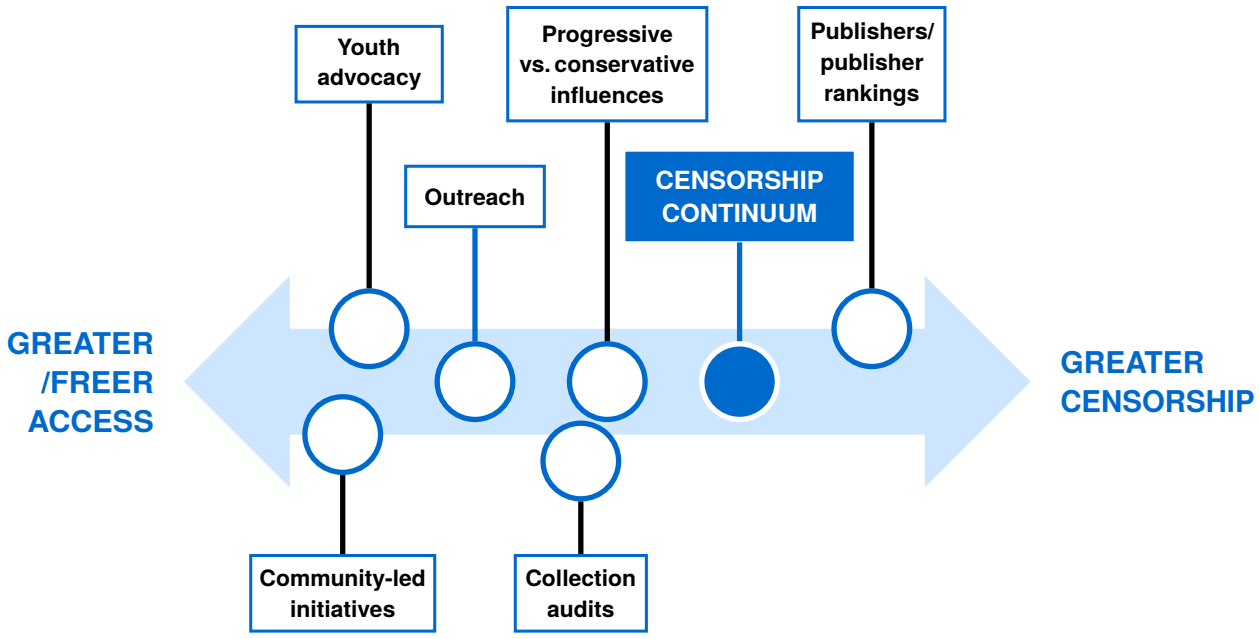

Figure 5: *Simplified view of results from BERTopic analysis*

a parallel synthesis approach we paused the human-mediated analysis before completion and began to incorporate the findings from the topic model, adopting the back-and-forth, cross-feeding approach described above. An outline of the paused analysis is at Appendix 2.

Data synthesis mediated by topic modelling The topic model provided a radically different view of our data, as shown in the annotated raw results (Appendix 4) and simplified view (Figure 5). The overarching structure of the topic map is a continuum, starting with free access to LGBTQ+ library collections on one extreme, and censorship or lack of access at the other. The *Youth advocacy* and *Community-led initiatives* clusters are forms of outreach to a defined stakeholder, while the *Publishers/publisher rankings* cluster is a form of censorship, as we will see below. Henceforth we refer to this continuum as the *Outreach* ↔ *Censorship Continuum*.

The Outreach ↔ Censorship Continuum (Figure 5) contains several subclusters, one of which is labelled *Censorship continuum*. Figure 6 shows a simplified expanded view of this cluster (for the annotated raw results see Appendix 5). This deeper inspection of the topic model draws out more behaviours relating to LGBTQ+ collection development, such as *Covert collection development* and *Self-censorship*.

There are clear connections between the elements in the *Censorship* subcluster, and the three factors. The *Personal biases and prejudices* factor is associated with *Self-censorship*, and the *Public visibility of work* factor is associated with *Covert collection development* and with *Locally-led book challenges* (or more specifically, to the fear of inviting such challenges).

Exemplars

We extracted sixteen frequently-discussed representative behaviours or actions associated with LGBTQ+ library collections, such as *self-censorship due to bias* in librarians, or *collection policy development*. These behaviours, which we have named *exemplars*, are summarised in Table 1 below, followed by a brief outline and summary of sources. Firstly, we define some necessary vocabulary:

Bibliocide: Any covert practice aiming to either stopp a book from entering the collection, or remove it once added (Berman, 2001);

Book challenge: An attempt to have a resource removed, or to restrict access, based on the objections of a person or group (American Library Assocation, 2023);

Book ban: The removal of materials based on the objections of a person or group (American Library Assocation, 2023; Bickford & Lawson, 2020);

Collection development policy: Guidelines used by libraries for the selection, purchasing, and deselection of materials (American Library Assocation, 2023);

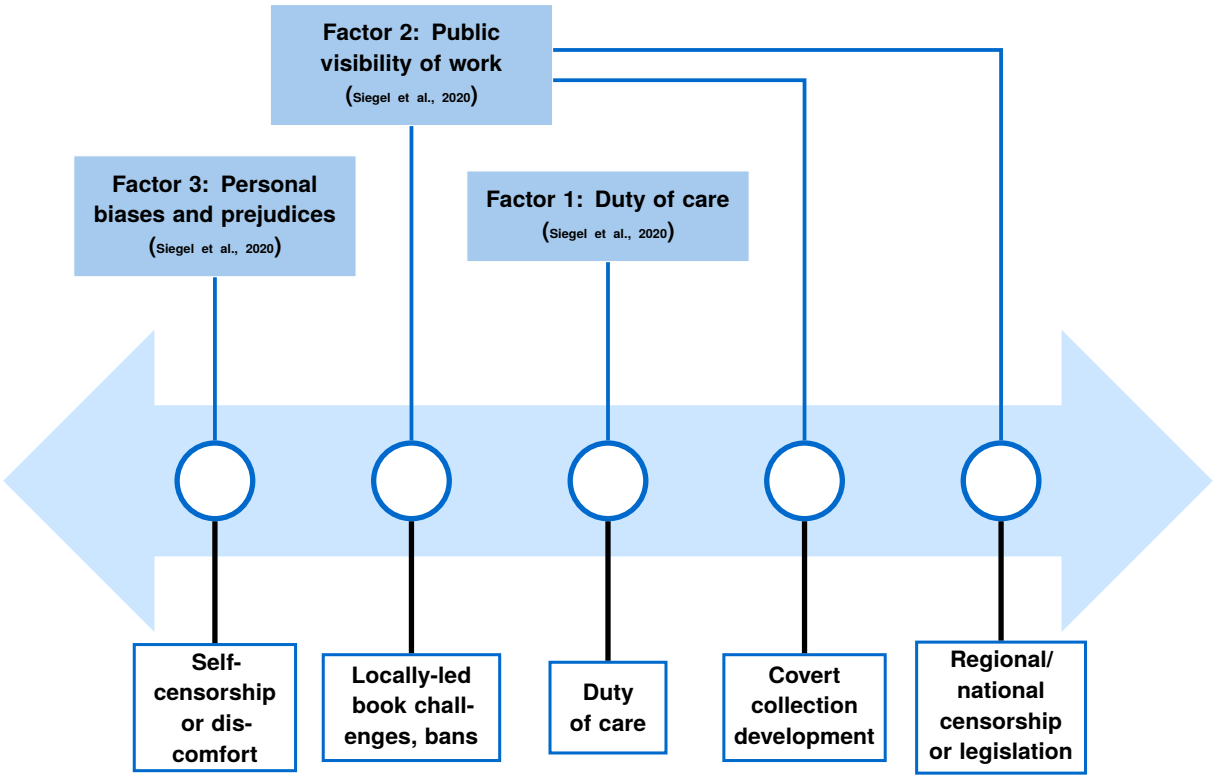

Figure 6: *Simplified and expanded view of the "Censorship Continuum subcluster"*

Hard censorship: The use of power by an authority figure (Clark et al., 2023) to force the removal of book from a library or to stop its acquisition (Vissing & Juchniewicz, 2023). We identified two types:

Overt An open and public removal;
Covert A clandestine removal, conducted quietly and without public awareness.

Self-censorship: Conscious or unconscious choices by librarians and other information workers to deny access to specific works, or to deliberately make those works harder to identify and borrow, on the basis of fear or uncertainty about the reaction by authorities or users, or through personal bias or prejudice (Dawkins, 2018; International Federation of Library Associations, 2019). Such censorship risks going unrecorded, making it more difficult to identify and to counter. We emphasise that self-censorship is not always intentional;

Soft censorship: The use of formal or informal punishment or threats of punishment (e.g., dismissal, reputational damage, budget cuts) to pressure librarians into avoiding acquiring certain materials (Clark et al., 2023; Dawkins, 2018). The resulting censorship is thus 'delegated' to the purchasing librarian who is then pressured to self-censor.

Hard censorship exemplars

[1] **Direct hard censorship / direct book bans** *Direct* or *overt* book bans are the most frequently discussed in the mass media (recent examples are Blair, 2024; Rogero, 2024; Shaffi, 2023 and Wong, 2024) and are a popular subject in recent academic literature. Being overt, they can create a backlash and awareness of censorship, resulting in reversal or a compromise such as relocation (Clark-Hunt & Creel, 2023; Glick, 2001).

(i) **Motivations for book challenges:** LGBTQ+ books are by far the most common target of challenges (Bickford & Lawson, 2020; Foerstel, 1994; Nyby, 2023; Oliver, 2024; Pinsky & Brenner, 2023), and challenges are more common in school libraries than public libraries (Bickford & Lawson, 2020). They are typically motivated by a belief that any book on an LGBTQ+ subject is automatically sexually explicit — even picture books — and that any behaviour which does not align with 'traditional' (heteronormative) values is immoral

#	EXEMPLAR	NOTE	KEY ARTICLES
HARD CENSORSHIP:			
1	Direct hard censorship, book bans	An active and public decision to not stock a particular title following a successful public challenge, or through the decision of censor	(Alexander, 2005; Bickford & Lawson, 2020; Burke, 2008; Clark-Hunt & Creel, 2023; Day, 2023; Escobedo, 2023; Foerstel, 1994; Gaffney, 2014; Nyby, 2023; Pickering, 2023; Pinsky & Brenner, 2023; Sarles, 2022; Sheffield, 2017; Steele, 2021; Trinier, Fletcher, & Halsey, 2023; Whelan, 2006)
2	Indirect hard censorship, book bans	Where a library system removes a library's choice of material for other reasons such as 'age-appropriateness evaluation', or refuses to purchase while blaming budgetary pressures.	(Berman, 2001; Clark-Hunt & Creel, 2023; Dinotola, 2022; Gardner, 2006; Glick, 2001; Pierce Garry, 2015; Pinsky & Brenner, 2023; Whelan, 2006)
SELF-CENSORSHIP:			
3	Self-censorship through personal views	A decision by an individual librarian to not stock a title because of personal opposition to its contents	(Altobelli & Lambert, 2022; Becnel & Moeller, 2021; Carmichael, 2000; Chapman, 2013; Downey, 2005, 2013; Hughes-Hassell, Overberg, & Harris, 2013; Rickman, 2015; Siegel, Morris, & Stevens, 2020)
4	Self-censorship through fear of conflict	The practice of actively not stocking LGBTQ+ materials due to a desire to avoid conflict or "rocking the boat" by inviting challenges, despite personally wishing to.	(Alexander, 2005; Altobelli & Lambert, 2022; Becnel & Moeller, 2021; Betts-Green, 2020; Carmichael, 1998; Chapman, 2013; Dinotola, 2022; Downey, 2005, 2013; Gardner, 2006; Hughes-Hassell, Overberg, & Harris, 2013; Jorm, 2023; Kurz, 2018; Moody, 2005; Oltmann, 2016; Passet, 2012; Pierce Garry, 2015; Rickman, 2015)
5	Self-censorship through fear of judgement, judgement	A concern that the community will negatively judge the character of the responsible librarian if they purchase LGBTQ+ materials	(Betts-Green, 2020; Downey, 2005, 2013)
6	Self-censorship through ignorance or apathy	Although these are not active attempts to stop LGBTQ+ collection development because of personal views, they result in weaker LGBTQ+ collections and are thus a form of soft-censorship.	(Alexander, 2005; Austin, 2019a; Bryant, 1995; Chapman & Birdi, 2016; Dinotola, 2022; Downey, 2005, 2013; Gardner, 2006; Goldthorp, 2007; Monroe, 1988; Ritchie, 2001; Trinier, Fletcher, & Halsey, 2023; Whelan, 2006)
7	Covert collection development	Where LGBTQ+ materials are purchased but not promoted, or shelved inaccessibly, through ignorance of fear of a backlash.	(Chapman, 2013; Parks, 2012; Sheffield, 2017; Steele, 2021)
SOFT CENSORSHIP:			
8	Lack of support from the library administration	Where librarians might wish to stock LGBTQ+ resources but are overruled, or fear being overruled or intimidated, by the library administration or local government	(Alexander, 2005; Beaudry, 2019; Goldthorp, 2007; Monroe, 1988; Oltmann, 2016; Sarles, 2022; Steele, 2021)

#	EXEMPLAR	NOTE	KEY ARTICLES
9	Libraries in rural and suburban areas *Note: in Figure 7 #9a relates to librarians and #9b to the library.*	Libraries located in such areas, or serving religious colleges or communities, are likely to see conflicts between a conservative community and the collections wishes of their librarians.	(Bosman, 2016; Dinotola, 2022; Oltmann, 2016; Pierce Garry, 2015; Spence, 1999)
10	Censorship by publishers and reviewers	When publishers or reviewers sideline LGBTQ+ titles for being 'niche', or about sex.	(Altobelli & Lambert, 2022; Clyde & Lobban, 2001; Creel, 2018; Downey, 2005, 2013; Gardner, 2006; Hachette Book Group, 2021; Hilton Boon & Howard, 2004; Howard, 2005; Joyce, 2000; Kilpatrick, 1996; Migneault, 2003; Passet, 2012; Rothbauer & McKechnie, 1999; Spence, 1999, 2000; Sweetland & Christensen, 1995)
DESIRE FOR ACCESS:			
11	Collection representativeness audits	Evaluation of a collection's inclusiveness by comparison against a standard, or inductively	(Bosman, 2016, 2023; Chapman, 2013; Chapman & Birdi, 2016; Clyde & Lobban, 2001; Creel, 2018; Hicks & Kerrigan, 2020; Howard, 2005; Hughes-Hassell, Overberg, & Harris, 2013; Lee & Freedman, 2010; Migneault, 2003; Moss, 2008; Pecoskie & McKenzie, 2004; Pierce Garry, 2015; Proctor, 2020; Rothbauer & McKechnie, 1999; Scoggins, 2018; Stringer-Stanback, 2011; Vallie & Szabo, 2022; Willis, 2004)
12	Ethics: National collection codes of conduct, "Freedom to read" statements, support during controversies	Statements from international or national library associations (e.g. CFLA, ALA), in support of intellectual freedom and uncensored library collections. Support from such bodies during a local/regional controversy.	(Alexander, 2005; Altobelli & Lambert, 2022; American Library Assocation, 2004; Associazione Italiana Biblioteche, 2012; Beaudry, 2019; Canadian Federation of Library Assocations (CFLA), 2019; Gardner, 2006; Hicks & Kerrigan, 2020; Ritchie, 2001; Sarles, 2022)
13	Overtly inclusive collection policies	Published standards which a library commits to using when considering purchases	(Alexander & Miselis, 2007; Betts-Green, 2020; Clark-Hunt & Creel, 2023; Kurz, 2018; Preer, 2014; Ritchie, 2001; Sarles, 2022; Taraba, 1990; Trinier, Fletcher, & Halsey, 2023)
OUTREACH:			
14	Community-led collection development, LGBTQ+ advisory committees	The involvement of the local LGBTQ+ community, including groups appointed by the library system, in recommending or actively purchasing items for the library's collection	(Austin, 2019b; Blackburn & Farooq, 2020; Day, 2023; Iemma, Mott, Renaud, & Sintetos, 2019; Kostakis, 2018; McKinney, 2018; Oltmann, 2016; Pavenick & Martinez, 2022; Sancho-Brú, McIntyre, & Raventós, 2019; Tusing & Miller, 2019)
15	Digital book-ban busting	Campaigns such as Brooklyn Public Libaries' *Books Unbanned*, which grants nationwide ebook access to users affected by local book bans.	(Mikel & Blackwell, 2023; Pickering, 2023)
16	Librarian as activist	Where the librarian actively connects the library to the LGBTQ+ community and campaigns against anti-LGBTQ+ discrimination	(Alexander, 2005; Carmichael, 2000; Encarnacion, 2005; Jeffery, 2023; Sancho-Brú, McIntyre, & Raventós, 2019; Sarles, 2022; G. A. Stevens, Morris, Nguyen, & Vardell, 2019; Tusing & Miller, 2019)

Table 1: *Exemplars*

(Bickford & Lawson, 2020; Burke, 2008; Pinsky & Brenner, 2023).

(ii) **Demographics of book challengers:** Support for challenges and bans is lowest among young people and those with higher educational attainment (Burke, 2008; Nyby, 2023). It is higher among parents than non-parents and also correlates with religious belief; Protestants are most likely to support challenges (with variations between denominations), followed by Catholics, Jewish people, and those with no religious affiliation (Burke, 2008).

Many challenges come from political groups (Clark-Hunt & Creel, 2023), and their number correlates with support for conservative-leaning political parties (Nyby, 2023).

[2] **Indirect hard censorship / indirect book bans**

Indirect hard censorship is less straightforwrd to isolate and challenge, which is precisely why it is practiced. We identified 3 subtypes:

(i) **Pre-purchase bibliocide:** These are covert methods exercised by authority figures or bodies — such as the board of the library, city, county or school — to prevent libraries from purchasing LGBTQ+ titles. They include:

- deeming a title 'age-inappropriate' without specifically stating the title is being removed for covering LGBTQ+ topics (Pinsky & Brenner, 2023);
- deliberately exhausting budgets on 'non-controversial' materials to justify not purchasing LGBTQ+ titles (Pierce Garry, 2015);
- endlessly 'reviewing' LGBTQ+ titles which never make it to the shelves (Glick, 2001);
- appointing an unaccountable 'library coordinator', empowered to reject any purchase without reason (Whelan, 2006).

(ii) **Post-purchase, pre-shelving bibliocide:** Any individual involved in processing materials before their arrival on the shelf might abuse their authority to censor materials which conflict with their personal biases and prejudices, despite the wishes of the public-facing librarian.

Cataloguers for example, who amongst other duties influence the physical location of a title within the library, might misclassify that title as reference to prevent it from being checked out (Berman, 2001; Sheffield, 2017). *And Tango Makes Three*[2] has been misclassified as adult fiction, or under a subject such as *Psychology* (Gardner, 2006).

(iii) **Post-shelving bibliocide** Community members or even library staff can deliberately remove or hide any titles on the shelves to which they object (Oliver, 2024).

Self-censorship

> *Outside censorship is almost certainly less pervasive and less damaging to intellectual freedom than. . . inside censorship.* (Berman, 2001)

[3] **Self-censorship through personal bias**

Many librarians continue to harbour negative opinions towards parts or all of the LGBTQ+ community (Cooke, 2005; Critchfield & Powell, 2012; Dinotola, 2022; Downey, 2005; Greenblatt, 2003; Knapp, 2022; Siegel et al., 2020). Dinotola (2022) notes the need for more open-minded librarians in southern Italy to counter their covert collection policies and lack of promotion. A further clear example is provided by Willis (2004), whose study of four HBCU[3] libraries concludes that:

> *[D]eveloping collections in gay and lesbian studies has posed a particular challenge [. . .] it is possible that negative attitudes about homosexuality may be at the root of a reluctance [. . .] of libraries to take full advantage of what opportunities do exist.*

Librarians may justify such censorship by claiming duty of care. Becnel and Moeller (2021) quote one librarian who:

> *. . . would prefer students read [the book] with somebody that's going to be providing them with a conversation about [it]. . .*

Others might claim that there isn't sufficient budget, possibly because of pre-purchase bibliocide (see above), However, as Downey (2013) notes

> *. . . the things we forego during tight budget times reflect our values.*

[4] **Self-censorship through fear of conflict**

The drastic increase in book challenges and bans seen in recent years has created a work environment

in many libraries that is hostile and threatening. Threats of physical attack or public shaming are also on the rise (Daly, 2022; Pendharkar, 2022), making this form of self-censorship not only understandable, but sometimes a matter of survival (Jefferson & Dziedzic-Elliott, 2023).

Even in the absence of such threats the knowledge and fear of it will dissaude many librarians (Kaney, 2012; Oltmann, 2016), who will ask "*'Who's going to complain?' [. . .] not, 'Who needs this?'* (Jensen, 2024), or worry they are displaying 'deviant' behaviour and overtly opposing a less than tolerant community (Betts-Green, 2020). Moody (2005) describes this as "*possibly the most insidious form of censorship*".

Librarians may feel that purchasing LGBTQ+ materials can do more harm than good, by being unnecessarily provocative (Gardner, 2006) or by making the library unwelcoming to the community. They may also feel that their role is to serve the general community, even by removing items that the community feels shouldn't be there (Curry, 1997 as cited by Moody, 2005). Such motivation has a strong overlap with *self-censorship through personal bias*.

[5] **Self-censorship through fear of judgement**

Fear of being visibly associated with LGBTQ+ library work can be a significant concern for librarians (Siegel et al., 2020), who might ask themselves "*What will it say about me?*" (Downey, 2013). Although Cornog (2016) argues that these fears have diminished, more recent events have overtaken this and fears seem to be rising amongst conservatives that discussions of sexuality with young people are 'grooming' (Natanson & Balingit, 2022; Pendharkar, 2022).

For some librarians, collection of LGBTQ-themed books risks being interpreted as an endorsement of LGBTQ+ 'lifestyles' (Downey, 2005, 2013; Greenblatt, 2003; Joyce, 2000).

> *Fear of judgment [. . .] about purchasing LGBT-themed materials is probably the most thorny trap that librarians fall into, and the most difficult to address.*" (Downey, 2013)

[6] **Self-censorship through ignorance or apathy**

Librarians are often misinformed or simply indifferent regarding the issues and needs of their LGBTQ+ patrons (Downey, 2005). We identified two subtypes:

(i) **Conscious/perceived ignorance ('Duty of care')**

Our Factor 1, this arises from discomfort between a librarian's perceived lack of knowledge about LGBTQ+ needs and their awareness of their professional duty to meet those needs. Librarians may feel that they have a 'duty of care' analagous to that of a physician to their patient, in which a potentially vulnerable patron is placing trust in the librarian to provide reliable and affirming sources of information. The librarian's perceived ignorance of that patron's needs, and awareness that this might result in harm to the patron, can encourage librarians to self-censor, believing it is better to do nothing than cause harm.

Librarians receive a deluge of complex questions relating to sex, gender and sexuality (Siegel, 2007) while having to consider materials they may not fully understand (Knapp, 2022) They are often poorly prepared for this because of, in our view, a failure to properly include the needs of LGBTQ+ people within library MLIS curricula (Hill & McGrath, 2018; Mehra, 2014; Ren, Alemanne, & Colson, 2022), lack of appropriate continuous education options (Morris & Hawkins, 2016; Siegel et al., 2020), and poor diversity within the profession (Wexelbaum, 2014) depriving librarians of mentors.

(ii) **Unconscious ignorance**

Arguably the single most common form of censorship in libraries, commonly noted in our corpus for public librarians ((Dinotola, 2022; Goldthorp, 2007) and school librarians (Altobelli & Lambert, 2022).

In all cases this exemplar leads to weak collections and a lack of collection promotion, a further barrier to access (Parks, 2012).

Stealth circulation

Stealth circulation (Bryant, 1995), or '*under the radar browsing*' (Downey, 2013), occurs when an LGBTQ+ library user consults materials discreetly, without borrowing them, to avoid discrimination from library staff, or outing oneself (Downey, 2005). This fear is a major access barrier for many LGBTQ+ patrons, (Acevedo-Polakovich, Bell, Gamache, & Christian, 2013; Morris & Roberto, 2016), who are less likely to directly borrow LGBTQ+

materials and even less likely to request an interlibrary loan (Martin & Murdock, 2007; Tsang, 1990) despite the common belief that these options justify excluding titles (Downey, 2005; Greenblatt, 2003; Joyce, 2000).
Because of stealth circulation, usage stats may appear misleadingly low. To unaware or apathetic libraries they may even appear low enough to justify removal of materials, or a budget reduction. Librarians cannot rely on the assumption that their LGBTQ+ patrons will simply ask for what they need (Betts-Green, 2020; Downey, 2005; Greenblatt, 2003). Downey (2013) advises librarians to check not just usage stats, but also the cracked spines and worn pages of these materials.

"There is no local LGBTQ+ community or demand for LGBTQ+ materials"
This is particularly strong in conservative communities (Alexander, 2005; Downey, 2005, 2013; Greenblatt, 2003; Joyce, 2000) but can also be encouraged by stealth circulation, or by misinterpretation of the slower circulation of LGBTQ+ materials compared to the general collection (Hawkins, Morris, Nguyen, Siegel, & Vardell, 2017). School librarians are frequently unaware of any LGBTQ+ young people at their school (Altobelli & Lambert, 2022).

"LGBTQ+ equality has now been achieved"
This leads to the belief that there is no longer a need to pay special attention to LGBTQ+ collections or services (Altobelli & Lambert, 2022), or that the adoption of such measures as LGBTQ-inclusive non-discrimination policies removes all barriers to access (Betts-Green, 2020). We refer to this belief as '*post-homophobia*' in our discussion, where we discuss it in detail.

This exemplar can be combatted through awareness campaigns and training (Dinotola, 2022), or by recruitment of a librarian who identifies as LGBTQ+ (Morris & Roberto, 2016). In universities LGBTQ+ academic research is often interdisciplinary, meaning that necessary acquisitions and collection updates can fall through the cracks between faculties and the library without the active involvement of a specialist librarian Graziano (2016).

[7] **Covert collection development** Many public-facing librarians acquire LGBTQ+ materials, but deliberately make them harder to identify or check out (Ritchie, 2001). We refer to this as *Covert collection development* (CCD).

For librarians working in a conservative context, CCD is sometimes seen as a benevolent compromise — LGBTQ+ materials are acquired, and a backlash or challenge is avoided. LGBTQ+ materials may be placed in storage or held behind the circulation desk — a significant barrier for the reasons outlined under *stealth circulation* above.

Children's picture books, such as *Heather Has Two Mommies*, may be shelved with books for older children or teens (Steele, 2021). In this form, CCD represents a double barrier to access; materials are both being hard to find, and require that a potentially vulnerable patron overtly request the title from library staff (Tsang, 1990).

There is ongoing debate over whether LGBTQ+ titles should be shelved together or dispersed within the wider collection. Chapman (2007) outlines that the main considerations are (i) ease of use, (ii) identity affirmation vs a desire for anonymity, (iii) risk of vandalism and (iv) consultation with the local LGBTQ+ community. She notes a trend towards separate and visible collections, which we believe has continued due to improving public attitudes.

Soft censorship

[8] **Lack of support from the library administration**

This includes threats such as library budget cuts should a title be acquired (Clark-Hunt & Creel, 2023; Dinotola, 2022), or escalation of a challenge beyond the library to elected officials, with the associated risk to the librarian of stressful harassment and targetting (Clark-Hunt & Creel, 2023). It can also be subtle, such as withdrawal of support for librarians (Jefferson & Dziedzic-Elliott, 2023) by claiming a need to observe 'library neutrality' or to serve 'the entire community' (Goldthorp, 2007).

We speculate that the lack of published literature covering this exemplar is due to a wish by interested librarians to avoid inviting conflicts with their employer or local government.

[9] **Libraries in rural and suburban areas**

The physical location of the library (its *territorial context* (Dinotola, 2022)) can have an important influence on its LGBTQ+ collections by bringing together a cluster of circumstances leading to other censorship exemplars.

- Dinotola (2022) saw a strong discrepancy between LGBTQ+ collections in Milan and Sicily,

caused by the conservative nature of Sicilian society;

- Support for book challenges in the US is highest in the South, followed by the Midwest, and somewhat lower for the rest of the country (Burke, 2008). Libraries in the Southern US hold fewer resoures for LGBTQ+ teens than those in the North (Brendler et al., 2017).
- In Canada, small cities see more challenges, followed by medium-sized cities, with big cities seeing the fewest challenges (Nyby, 2023).
- In communities with a lack of adults supportive of LGBTQ+ students, those students have a greater need for library workers and librarians who are more welcoming and inclusive in their collections (Williams & Deyoe, 2015).

A common issue in rural and/or conservative areas is a willingness on the part of the librarian to acquire LGBTQ+ titles, which is thwarted by a local conservative community which would resist this due to its lack of acceptance for LGBTQ+ people and its unwillingness to see materials covering 'sexual' topics (Betts-Green, 2020). This leads to correspondingly weaker collections (Sheffield, 2017).

Opinions differ on whether LGBTQ+ people living in rural areas experience more hostility than their heterosexual peers. Wienke and Hill's (2013) research on LGBTQ+ people living in rural areas of the US claims there is little to support the premise that rural living is incompatible with the needs and wants of gay men and lesbians. Betts-Green (2020) critiques this research, noting that it was conducted in the relatively liberal Northeast and Midwest US, while also ignoring LGBTQ+ young people who are still dependent on adults such as parents or guardians. This group experiences significant hostility (Palmer, Kosciw, Bartkiewicz, & GLSEN, 2012), and are not always able to live openly, or to move away.

[10] **Censorship by reviewers and publishers**

The counterintuitive concept of publisher or reviewer self-censorship can seriously impact the quality of LGBTQ+ collections.

(i) **Censorship through lack of reviews**

Evidence has long existed of the direct link between review availability and collection strength (Serebnick, 1992). Traditional review sources such as *Publisher's Weekly*, *Books in Print* and *Booklist* have proven poor places to seek reviews on LGBTQ+ materials.

(i) reviewers might avoid LGBTQ+ titles because they consider such titles 'niche' and commercially unviable, or because they are wrongly described as being sexually explicit (Hachette Book Group, 2021; Sweetland & Christensen, 1995);

(ii) LGBTQ+ young adult (YA) titles receive on average fewer reviews than comparable non-LGBTQ+ titles (Hilton Boon & Howard, 2004). This problem can even affect picture books (Spence, 2000);

(iii) LGBTQ+ materials published by smaller presses are even less likely to be reviewed (Gardner, 2006; Joyce, 2000; Migneault, 2003);

(iv) LGBTQ+ graphic novels are frequently ignored due to their content, but also because they often published independently (Greyson, 2007);

(v) LGBTQ+ titles in Spanish are double-censored by review sources due to the content and the language (Bosman, 2023).

Downey (2013) provides the counterpoint that alternative sources for LGBTQ+ titles, such as the *Lambda Literary Review* (Lambda Literary, 2024) and the ALA Rainbow Round Table *Book and Media Reviews* (ALA Rainbow Round Table, 2024), are easily accessible.

When LGBTQ+ titles *are* properly reviewed, the reviews tend to be positive and unprejudiced (Rothbauer & McKechnie, 1999; Sweetland & Christensen, 1995), although reviews sometimes omit a title's LGBTQ+ characters (Passet, 2012).

(ii) **Censorship by the publisher eco-system** This takes the following forms:

(i) LGBTQ+ children and young adult books almost exclusively celebrate unchallenging LGBTQ+ characters who conform to the norms and gender expectatations of heterosexual society (Lester, 2014);

(ii) Publishers may label their LGBTQ+ children's and young adults' publications as age inappropriate (Hachette Book Group, 2021; Sweetland & Christensen, 1995) or sexually explicit *'even when*

> *they are about cartoon animals who stand several feet away from each other at all times'* (Altobelli & Lambert, 2022).

Librarians typically streamline their work through *acquisitions outsourcing*, automatically purchasing materials which meet preset criteria. Lack of awareness of these forms of censorship and the consequent need for active intervention can thus lead to weak LGBTQ+ collections (Moody, 2005).

Exemplars linked to promotion of access, and outreach
The remaining exemplars illustrate actions taken by librarians to counter censorship and engage with their local LGBTQ+ communities. They are thus the counterweight to the hard, soft and self-censorship exemplars above.

[11] **Collection representativeness audits**

There are abundant examples of librarians working to improve their LGBTQ+ collections by conduct representativeness audits. A discussion of the methodologies used is beyond the scope of this study, but we note that in all cases they point to weaknesses in the audited collection. A list is provided in Table 1.

[12] **Ethics: National collection codes of conduct and "Freedom to read" statements**

Providing library patrons with relevant resources is an ethical concern in librarianship (Pateman & Vincent, 2016). Many international and national library associations have published uncompromising statements against censorship and in support of intellectual freedom, such as the Canadian Federation of Library Assocations (CFLA) (2019), American Library Assocation (2004), the UK's Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP) (2024) and Italy's Associazione Italiana Biblioteche (2012).

At the international level, IFLA/UNESCO's *Public Library Manifesto* (2022) states:

> *The services of the public library are provided on the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, ethnicity, gender, religion, nationality, language, social status, and any other characteristic. [. . .] Collections and services should not be subject to any form of ideological, political or religious censorship, nor commercial pressures.*

Hicks and Kerrigan (2020) posit that the lack of a national policy document for Ireland helps explain why its public library system '[is] overwhelmingly representative of the gay, adult white male experience, to the detriment of other groups'. For the same reason, Migneault (2003) finds that Quebec's LGBTQ+ collections are poor both in quantity and representativeness.

While these declarations can act as a strong motivation and support for librarians wishing to improve their LGBTQ+ collections in often challenging circumstances, others have used them to hide behind public, but purely passive, statements of support (Gardner, 2006; Ritchie, 2001). Ghaziani (2019) describes such measures as *'performative progressiveness'* — visible on the surface, but disappearing when actual LGBTQ+ collections are examined more closely.

[13] **Overtly inclusive LGBTQ+ collection policies**

The importance of a clear, robust and thorough policy and the correlation between a weak policy and a weak collection, are emphasised in the corpus (Alexander & Miselis, 2007; Betts-Green, 2020; Bosman, 2023; Clark-Hunt & Creel, 2023; Kurz, 2018; Martin & Murdock, 2007).

Early literature tended to focus on the importance of policies in building strong LGBTQ+ collections (e.g. Taraba, 1990). Contemporary authors are more interested in how policies can help to defeat book challenges, finding that strong policies *'. . . serve as an education tool for governing bodies and the general population'* (Clark-Hunt & Creel, 2023). In the well-documented example of West Bend, IN[4], challengers were asked if they were familiar with the library's policy and were required to demonstrate why the challenged title did not meet it (Preer, 2014).

Strongly progressive policies do not always lead to strong LGBTQ+ collections, leading some to complain about 'vague' policies which lack diversity and which have been adopted purely to demonstrate 'performative progressiveness', or to protect the library from legal action (Betts-Green, 2020; Day, 2023).

[14] **Commmunity-led collection development, LGBTQ+ advisory committees**

Many librarians have actively involved the local community in LGBTQ+ collection decisions, aiming to foster a spirit of cooperation while ensuring the collection is highly representative of the community. Examples found in our corpus include:

- The '*Gay Bibliography*', an early (1980) community-produced listing, including information on access (McKinney, 2018).
- Barcelona, Spain: the '*Trans Identities and Gender*' - a collaboration between the library and local trans authors, the local trans community, and the public (Sancho-Brú, McIntyre, & Raventós, 2019).
- Involving faculty and students:
  - Long Beach, California: Involvement of faculty and students in developing an endowed LGBTQIA+ academic library collection (Pavenick & Martinez, 2022).
  - University of Nebraska: Involvement of faculty, students in creating a diverse and inclusive medical collection (Blackburn & Farooq, 2020)
- Oregon City, Oregon: a collaboration between the public library and a local group of LGBTQ+ teens to develop a dedicated collection (Tusing & Miller, 2019).
- West Oakland, California: A participatory action research project where LGBTQ+ youth of colour worked with librarians to select materials for a drop-in centre (Austin, 2019b).

Day (2023) and Kostakis (2018) both note that community collection development not only results in better collections, but also helps to build trust and confidence in library institutions. In school libraries a *Gay-Straight Alliance* (GSA)[5] can often get involved in ensuring that a school library has a strong and representative collecion (Oltmann, 2016).

LGBTQ+ advisory committees can range from distinct and exclusively LGBTQ+, to collaboration with LGBTQ+ members of broader committees. Philippopoulos (2023) advises medical librarians to seek feedback on collections and on the use of inclusive language from LGBTQ+ members of the patient advisory committee.

[15] **'Digital book ban busting'**

A striking bold anti-censorship move, these projects serve as a *de facto* overturning of book bans by providing access to large libraries of e-books to any young person, regardless of where they live and without ID checks (Mikel & Blackwell, 2023).

They also address several of the issues which encourage stealth circulation, by offering privacy, and allowing users to avoid library staff. This will hopefully lead to more reliable circulation information. Prominent examples include *Banned Book Club* (Digital Public Library of America, 2024) and *Books Unbanned* (Mikel & Blackwell, 2023).

[16] **Librarian as activist**

Librarian as activist is a term we have adopted to describe the mindset and approach of those librarians who conduct active outreach to, and advocate for, those vulnerable to library censorship — in this context the LGBTQ+ community.

Librarians with this mindset are strongly motivated to conduct the activities described in exemplars 11, 12, 13 and 14, but also to surpass this work. Walters (2022) names this '*defensive librarianship*' as it defends communities vulnerable to library censorship by actively '*. . . making sure there are books, tools, information, and resources for everyone [and] to create an environment that explicitly welcomes the many, but also explicitly deters the few.*'

At the national and international levels, *librarians as activists* build on passive codes of conduct and *Freedom to Read* statements (Exemplar 12) by campaigns against book challenges and censorship (A. Stevens & Frick, 2018). Such work includes:

- Anti-censorship toolkits (American Library Assocation, 2024; Jeffery, 2023) and resource guides (Jeffery, 2023; Zyp–van der Laan, 2024);
- Book challenge registers (Oliver, 2024; Zyp–van der Laan, 2024) providing a centralised resource to inform anti-censorship strategies and campaigns.
- *Librarians as researcher activists*, who conduct academic research to build an evidence base from which their colleagues can draw;
- Anti-censorship work motivated by personal religious belief. Stahl and Kushner (2014) make the case that collecting LGBTQ+ materials is a Jewish moral good. Saving a soul (**פיהוה נפש** [*pikuach nefesh*]) is an imperative that takes precedence over all other commandments. Because making needed library materials available to vulnerable LGBTQ+ youth can save a life it is, in their opinion, a virtuous act in Judaism.

Combined framework

From our stakeholder-centred and continuum-centred analyses, and our 16 exemplars, we conclude that the most insightful underlying framework is that at Figure 7.

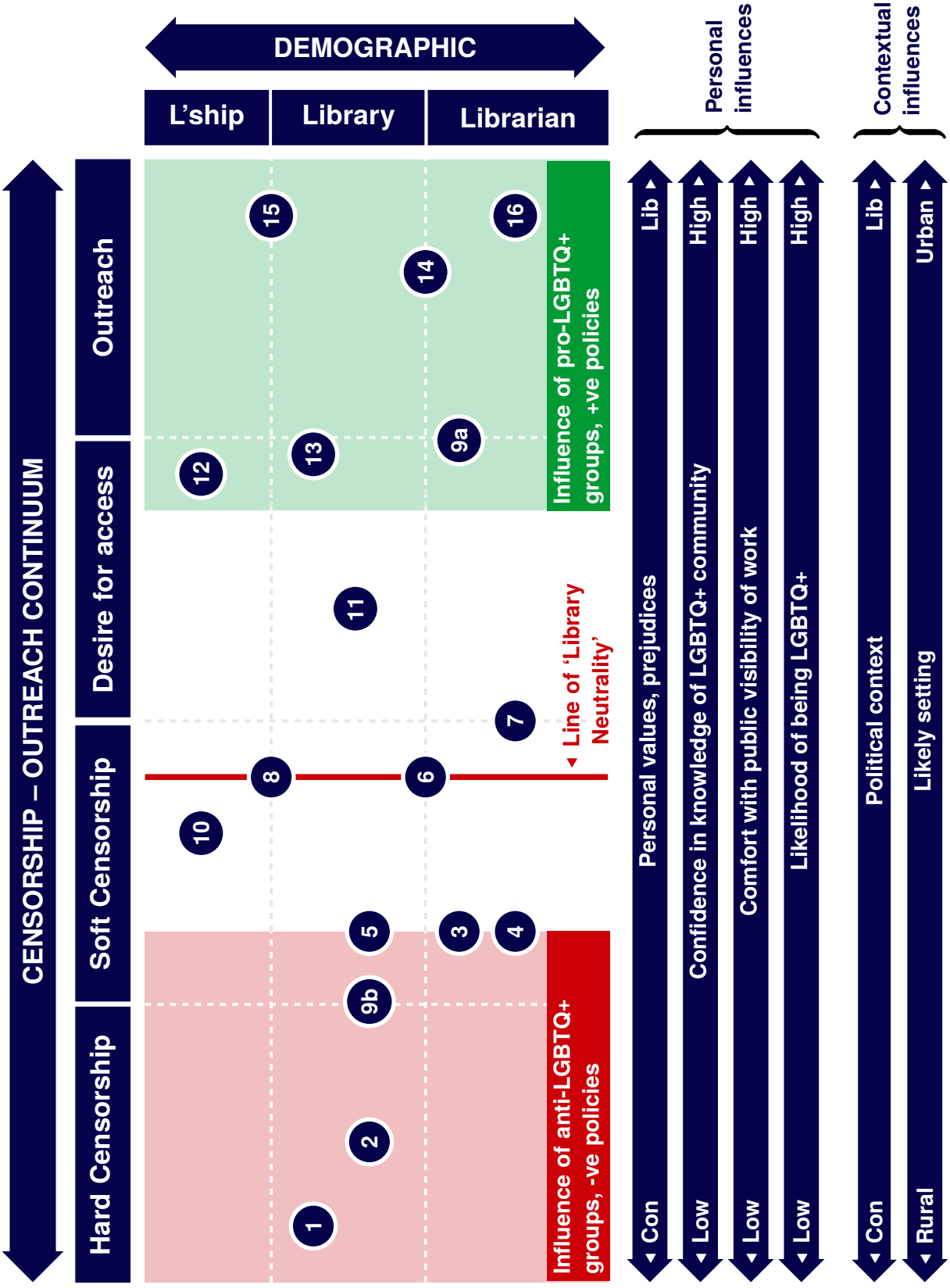

Figure 7: *The combined literature map after parallel synthesis*

The Outreach ↔ Censorship continuum is the x-axis, plotted against stakeholders on the y-axis. Each axis is subdivided into zones to assist with interpretation. The 16 examplars are plotted against their best fit against both axes, providing a synthesised map of the whole corpus as a conceptual scatter plot.

Influences on LGBTQ+ collection development The final stage of our analysis provided insight into our research question: *"What are the factors that influence libraries and librarians during the collection of LGBTQ+ library materials?"* This insight came from:

(i) further iterations of engagement with the corpus;

(ii) induction, by comparing exemplars and considering what might attract a library or librarian to be drawn to one examplar over another.

From this analysis we isolated eight influences which fall into three groups. These are described further in Table 2.

Personal influences These correlate with librarians' social identity and history, and match or closely relate to the three factors.

Contextual influences Also referred to as *territorial context* (Dinotola, 2022), these are influences linked to the library's local environment.

Community influences These are influences exerted by either the LGBTQ+ community and its allies, or by politically motivated anti-LGBTQ+ groups.

The personal and contextual influences are shown as double-headed arrows in Figure 7, as the strength of their influence in a particular context will encourage behaviours towards one end of the Outreach ↔ Censorship Continuum or the other. For example, for the influence *Comfort with public visibility of work*, a lower comfort level will encourage a form of censorship, while a higher comfort level will encourage outreach work and accessible LGBTQ+ collections.

The two community influences each only relate to one side of the chart: anti-LGBTQ+ groups correlate with censorship, while LGBTQ+ people/groups correlate with access and outreach. These influences are thus shown as coloured bands on their respective ends of Figure 7.

We conclude that the answer to our research question — those factors which influence libaries and librarians in the collection of LGBTQ+ library materials — lies in the interplay of the eight identified personal, community and contextual influences.

Discussion

Through our parallel synthesis analysis, we have attempted to simplify the complex ecosystem surrounding LGBTQ+ library collections, and tease out the influences that affect their quality and availability.

We now wish to take our thinking a stage further, by demonstrating that much of our framework and analysis can in fact be viewed as being generated by, and supported upon, one core human need:

> *Everybody, regardless of their identity, needs a safe space where they can be affirmed and feel safe, without judgement, and where they can explore their identity and worldview with like-minded people. That safe space can be physical, virtual, or even purely intellectual.*

We will build this argument by considering:

(i) the mixed blessings of a 'post-homophobic' world which often, perhaps counterintuitively, increase the need for LGBTQ+ safe spaces;

(ii) the backlash driving the current surge in library censorship and how they belie the myth of library neutrality; and

(iii) the example of LGBTQ+ young people.

Problem 1: 'Post-homophobia' and the continuing need for safe spaces

Recent advances in public tolerance and greater visibility of LGBTQ+ people have, at least in much of the Global North, created a world that is commonly seen as 'post-homophobic' (Boulila, 2019; Jenzen, 2022), in which explicit LGBTQ+ acceptance is assumed to be the majority position (Svendsen, Stubberud, & Djupedal, 2018) and where LGBTQ+ people are regularly told that they are now equal and accepted without reservation.

Despite this, 'post-homophobic' acceptance is not as complete as it might appear. In fact it is frequently *performative progressiveness* (Brodyn & Ghaziani, 2018; Ghaziani, 2019), a purely passive acceptance of LGBTQ+ rights; exemplars 12 and 13 are illustrations of this in libraries. As Warner (1993) notes, tolerance of LGBTQ+ people does not erase the primacy and privilege enjoyed by heterosexual people in society.

In the 'post-homophobic' world prejudice has not disappeared but is now transitioning from overt manifestations to more covert and subtle forms such as microaggressions, heterosexism and cissexism (Munro,

INFLUENCE	RANGE	NOTE	KEY EXEMPLARS
PERSONAL INFLUENCES:			
Confidence in personal LGBTQ+ knowledge	LOW ↔ HIGH	Factor 1 (Siegel, Morris, & Stevens, 2020)	(LOW) 6(i), 7 (HIGH) 13, 14, 16
Comfort with public visibility of work	LOW ↔ HIGH	Factor 2 (Siegel, Morris, & Stevens, 2020)	(LOW) 4, 5 (HIGH) 13, 14, 16
Personal values and prejudices	CONservative ↔ LIBeral	Factor 3 (Siegel, Morris, & Stevens, 2020), also called 'personal sensitivity' (Dinotola, 2022). The weakest of the factors, except for titles relating to sexual practices (Jefferson & Dziedzic-Elliott, 2023; Siegel, 2007; Siegel, Morris, & Stevens, 2020)	(CON) 1, 2, 3, 6, 7 (LIB) 9, 12, 13, 14, 16
Likelihood of being LGBTQ+ or an ally	LOW ↔ HIGH	Very closely connected with 'Personal values and prejudices' above. LGBTQ+ librarians display higher comfort levels than non-LGBTQ+ librarians (Siegel, Morris, & Stevens, 2020), possibly explained by (i) an additional responsibility felt by LGBTQ+ librarians to provide support and encouragement to their community and (ii) much lower concern felt by LGBTQ+ librarians relating to public visibility.	(HIGH) 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 16
CONTEXTUAL INFLUENCES (TERRITORIAL CONTEXT):			
Political context	CONservative ↔ LIBeral	This can take a number of forms depending on the nature of the political context. Censorship implications include support for regressive book challenges, micromanagement or the appointment of a censor, threats of funding cuts if a challenged title isn't removed (Moody, 2005), or the use of unrelated excuses for removing a title such as a lack of budget, or age inappropriateness.	(CON) 1, 2, 4, 5, 6(ii), 7, 8, 9
		A more progressive political climate can lead to robust book collection policies and book challenge procedures, and encouragement for LGBTQ+ outreach and for displays and increased access to banned books.	(LIB) 11, 13, 14, 15, 16
Physical context	RURAL ↔ URBAN	Libraries in more rural areas or smaller cities tend to have a more conservative political context, but they are also more likely to have a disconnect between librarians who want to stock LGBTQ+ materials, and a community or library which does not (Bosman, 2016; Dinotola, 2022; Oltmann, 2016; Pierce Garry, 2015; Spence, 1999). Covered in detail by Betts-Green (2020).	(RURAL) 1, 2, 4, 5, 6(ii), 7, 8, 9
COMMUNITY INFLUENCES:			
Anti-LGBTQ+ individuals, groups	N/A	These groups can be range from locally-based to national and supranational. They promote a chilling effect which drives librarians towards censorship and away from outreach and access, which we cover in the discussion.	1, 2, 8
LGBTQ+ community, allies	N/A	A vocal local LGBTQ+ community and allies can encourage behaviours towards the outreach/access end of the spectrum and demonstrate a need for LGBTQ+ materials.	13, 14, 16

Table 2: *The eight influences on LGBTQ+ collection development*

Travers, & Woodford, 2019). The targets of such prejudice not only suffer the pain of the prejudice itself, but also find themselves in a society which denies the existence and/or importance of that prejudice. This conveys three tacit but powerful messages:

(i) any problems must be the target's fault (Jenzen, 2022) and, presumably, an overreaction or unjustified;

(ii) they should minimise the relevance of their sexuality or gender presentation to their social identity (Jones, 2018); and

(iii) there is a continuing need for spaces where LGBTQ+ people can be themselves without worrying about the exhausting effect of constant microaggressions, stigmatization and the pressures of external society. Arguably, this need has increased.

Physical spaces The 'post-homophobic' world has triggered other changes. An illuminating example is LGBTQ+ bars, in practice often gay bars, which have historically played a key role as a safe space or 'gaybourhood' (Mattson, 2023) and as "*. . . bulwarks against heteronormativity, helping LGBTQ people build community and resist marginalization*" (Hartless, 2019). Because increased acceptance means that many LGBTQ+ people are now able to live openly and outside the closet, some are choosing to socialise in straight or mixed places (Mowlabocus, 2021). This change is often posited as one of several reasons either for the closure of gay bars, or for their conversation to straight or 'mixed' (Campkin & Marshall, 2017; Gill, 2024), although others find that this argument oversimplifies a complex interplay of factors (Renninger, 2018) such as the push to 'cleanse' neighbourhoods in preparation for capital investment (Doan, 2015), or the realities of survival in a competitive market.

The attentive reader might note that we said '***many** LGBTQ+ people*'. This was intentional, as the price that LGBTQ+ people must pay for access to these spaces is homonormativity, i.e. assimilation, living according to the unspoken rules and socially sanctioned norms of the hegemonically heterosexual spaces they are now permitted to share (Duggan, 2002; D. Richardson, 2005). A double standard is applied here — to paraphrase Mowlabocus (2021): gay men's presence should add a bit of *fabulousness*, but should not grant them any freedom that may be deemed sexual.

For many LGBTQ+ people this is an acceptable tradeoff, particularly if they can and are willing to 'pass' as heterosexual. For others these restrictions, along with the closure of purely LGBTQ+ spaces, present a painful narrowing in the choice of places where they can feel safe and be themselves, engage with their broader community, connect with peers and role models, and, in the case of LGBTQ+ youth, be guided in their transition to healthy adulthood (Robertson, 2014; Rosario, Schrimshaw, & Hunter, 2008). This requirement to conform to homonormativity is most punitive for trans people, as well as those are still exploring their identity; such groups are the least likely to benefit from 'post-homophobia' in its current form.

Virtual spaces LGBTQ+ people were among the earliest virtual pioneers (Gross, 2003), and LGBTQ+ youth are now increasingly abandonging physical spaces for virtual spaces (Cavalcante, 2018), which have become a critical resource (Brady, Churchill, Son, Hanckel, & Byron, 2018). Virtual spaces can provide a place where LGBTQ+ people can be open, without the need to articulate or explain themselves (Rak, 2005). Here they can engage in identity development, to a greater extent than their heterosexual peers (Ceglarek & Ward, 2016), connect with role models, encounter new ideas, participate in the LGBTQ+ community (Brady, Byron, & D'Souza, 2022), and provide information such as on coming out (Brady et al., 2022; Fox & Ralston, 2016). Despite such benefits, navigation of these spaces for LGBTQ+ people is complex. Social media platforms are not designed with the needs of LGBTQ+ people in mind, thus LGBTQ+ users must approach these spaces as marginalised people (Carrasco & Kerne, 2018).

A major concern for LGBTQ+ users of virtual spaces is *privacy*. Facebook is by default publicly open, requires users to use their real name (Facebook Inc., 2024) and discourages anonymity. It is also likely to be used by the LGBTQ+ user's family or work colleagues, who might be unaware of the user's LGBTQ+ identity or disapprove of it, actively or privately. The photo-sharing site Tumblr permits anonymity and, for a long time, offered an alternative, 'cyberqueer' (Wakeford, 2002) space where LGBTQ+ youth could discover themselves and share their personalities through images, text and video (Cavalcante, 2018). It developed into a space particularly attractive to trans (Renninger, 2015), gender non-confirming and non-binary users, and those with intersectional identities such as LGBTQ+ persons of colour (Cho, 2018), and asexual people (Schudson & van Anders, 2019). Sadly, this ended in 2018 when Tumblr heteronormatively decided to ban 'adult content' (Iovine, 2022), a decision met with dismay (Byron, 2019).

Because of the different audiences and privacy affordances offered by each platform, LGBTQ+ users may seek varying levels of visibility across platforms, practicing *strategic outness* (Orne, 2011) or *selective visibility*

(Carrasco & Kerne, 2018). On platforms like Facebook users may simply ignore the requirement for a single profile per user by having a 'public' homonormative profile, and a private LGBTQ+ one where they are more open (Carrasco & Kerne, 2018). Many LGBTQ+ users practice strategic outness by implicitly hinting at their identity in ways visible only to other LGBTQ+ people, such as sharing relevant news stories or carefully curated photos, or participating in activism (Carrasco & Kerne, 2018). The risk of accidental disclosure is a significant worry, and LGBTQ+ users will think carefully before publicly changing their sexuality tag (e.g. to 'interested in men') or showing interest in certain events which may be announced publicly. The strategies used as part of strategic outness increase the risk of *context collapse* — the bleeding together of distinct separate spheres of a person's life such as work and family (boyd, 2011). The consequences of context collapse for an LGBTQ+ person can be at best highly embarassing, or worse.

Even when an Internet presence is specifically created for and by LGBTQ+ people, it can still succumb to homonormativity and a narrow definition of what it means to be a happy and resilient LGBTQ+ person. For example the US-based *It Gets Better* Project (2024), created in 2010 following reports of the suicides of bullied queer teenagers, includes a wide diversity of voices and has undoubtedly helped very many people. It has also been critiqued for its homonormativity (Grzanka & Mann, 2014), its implied message that overcoming homophobia is entirely up to the individual (Gal, Shifman, & Kampf, 2016) because 'post-homophobic' society will welcome them, and its lack of people who do not "fit social standards of physical attractiveness, and those who challenge heteronormativity and adherence to gender norms" (Brandon-Friedman & Kinney, 2021; Jenzen, 2022).

Finally, online spaces do not exist outside of the broader society of which they are part, and replicate that broader society's prejudices (Brady et al., 2022) such as hatred against indigenous people (Farrell, 2021), racism, racial fetishisation (Han & Choi, 2018), HIV stigma, hatred against fat people (Farrell, 2021), transphobia and even white nationalism (Barrett, 2020). Discrimination and prejudice within the LGBTQ+ community, is also replicated. Prejudice can be linked to hierarchies or 'pecking orders' among LGBTQ+ people, placing gay men at the top and trans people at the bottom, and rendering some people less 'fitting than others' (Formby, 2017).

The continuing need for safe spaces Each of our examples leads to the same conclusions:

(i) 'Post-homophobia' works well for some LGBTQ+ people, but much less so for those unable or unwilling to conform to homonormativity;

(ii) Discrimination and prejudice against LGBTQ+ people have not disappeared in the 'post-homophobic' world, they have simply adopted new, more subtle forms;

(iii) The need for spaces of safety, freedom, openness and escape has not disappeared, and in many cases has intensified;

(iv) The further one's sexual or gender identity strays from the majority's, the harder it is to find safe spaces.

While those belonging to other marginalised groups, such as those marginalised through race, religion, or socioeconomic status, are likely to be born into a family and community with a shared identity and experiences (Brady et al., 2022), LGBTQ+ people are usually isolated, being born into heterosexual and cisgender families; they must thus seek alternative ways to discover who they are, identify community, and find spaces where they can feel free and safe, and be themselves (Iantaffi, 2024, personal communication).

The 'post-homophobic' world misleadingly invites us to believe that it can provide such spaces, while physical 'gaybourhoods' and safe spaces are closing or changing, and social media, while being a crucial resource, is also precarious and often aggressively unwelcoming to those with intersectional identities. The need for alternative safe spaces is pressing.

Libraries and the 'brave new world' of LGBTQ+ identity formation

Identity-formation, the acquisition of a stable and enduring sense of identity and the finding of one's place in society, is a central part of adolescence (Erikson, 1968). For LGBTQ+ teens, this step involves learning about one's sexuality or gender through role models (Encarnacion, 2005; Iantaffi & Barker, 2018) and reliable information (Cass, 1979), all while navigating a heteronormative society (Robertson, 2014).

The role of the library as a highly important source of such information should be self-evident (Chapman, 2013; Chapman & Birdi, 2016; Joyce, 2000; Kurz, 2018; Monroe, 1988; Rauch, 2011). Library resources covering LGBTQ+ identities, culture and history can provide vital support towards developing a positive, healthy identity (Lukenbill, 2002; Schrader, 2007), and the high number of articles in our corpus relating to library

services to LGBTQ+ teens demonstrates that many librarians instinctively understand this.

LGBTQ+ fiction books have an equally important role to play. All young people can develop through reading literature (Pickering, 2023; Pierson, 2017). LGBTQ+ teens use the characters they find in books as a reminder that they are not alone (Alexander, 2005; Altobelli & Lambert, 2022; Whelan, 2006), and find an exceptionally powerful source of self-affirmation when seeing characters similar to themselves in graphic novels (Morgan, 2017). Exposing non-LGBTQ+ teens to LGBTQ+ books can foster a climate of tolerance (Whelan, 2006), and a commitment to equality (Manfredi, 2009).

Despite this, recent authors question whether libraries are still providing a good service to LGBTQ+ youth. Censored collections prevent young people from understanding their own identities (Pinsky & Brenner, 2023) and teach them that they are devalued (Bishop, 1990). This is exacerbated by the overwhelmingly homonormative content of much LGBTQ+ children's and young adult's literature (Lester, 2014) which does not represent them. Meanwhile, an increasing proportion of LGBTQ+ youth identity as fluid in either their sexual orientation or gender identity (Rosenberg, 2018; Scheffey, Ogden, & Dichter, 2019), a source of stress and anxiety (Srivastava, Hall, Krueger, & Goldbach, 2023). Austin (2019b) notes that "*. . . youth belonging to these groups must often route around traditional contexts, such as schools or libraries, to locate books that contain representative characters, scenarios, or culturally relevant themes.*"

Graphic novels are a particular focus of challenges, possibly to their visual nature (Mastricolo, 2019). Moeller and Becnel (2021, 2020, 2024a, 2024b) find that some librarians self-censor because they (i) are uncomfortable with the graphic novel format and don't understand it (ii) are surprised to find that not all graphic novels are aimed at children, (iii) feel more proscriptive due to fear of parental reaction and (iv) restrict access to LGBTQ+ graphic novels to higher age limits than comparable non-LGBTQ+ graphic novels.

Beyond censorship, fear of discrimination or of having to share their sexual orientation or gender identity is also relevant. LGBTQ+ people very highly value safety from discrimination and prejudice when seeking services (Garvey & Rankin, 2012; Grant et al., 2014; Koester et al., 2013; Morris & Roberto, 2016; Spatz, 2014; Weber, 2019). This is particularly true for LGBTQ+ teens who are exploring their often more fluid identities (Stewart, Spivey, Widman, Choukas-Bradley, and Prinstein, 2019; Iantaffi, 2024, personal communication). Stealth circulation and the popularity of schemes like Brooklyn Public Library's *Banned Books* (Mikel & Blackwell, 2023) and the *Banned Book Club* (Digital Public Library of America, 2024) demonstrate the importance of privacy and anonymity to these patrons.

Many LGBTQ+ teens are increasingly unlikely to see the library as a safe space because of this lack of anonymity (Clavijo-Toledano, Heredero-Cardona, Úbeda-Cano, & Boté-Vericad, 2022; Wexelbaum, 2018), or the lack of literature in which they can see themselves (Austin, 2019b; Schrader, 2009; Smolkin & Young, 2011).

Problem 2: Censorship, silencing and library neutrality

> *History does not repeat itself, but it rhymes.* (Reik (1965), commonly attributed to Twain)

The current wave of book bans and challenges is merely the latest of many conservative backlashes designed to reverse recent progress towards equality. It is a pre-emptive strike designed to halt progress before equality might be achieved (Faludi, 2006; Jefferson & Dziedzic-Elliott, 2023). In the context of libraries, it should not be seen as confirmation that equality has been achieved, a fact made very clear by our analysis above. It can, however, be seen as a sign that libraries are slowly getting closer (Jefferson & Dziedzic-Elliott, 2023).

Although much less likely to use the term, conservative-minded people desire safe spaces just as much as other sections of society (Helstrom, 2022; Huntsberry, 2021; Waldham, 2021). Some conservatives manifest this need by seeking social spaces such as conservative clubs on their campus (Havey, 2020), similarly to any other interest group. More extreme conservatives, however, require that the entire world be their safe space, where they are shielded from worldviews which they find intolerable or which do not form part of their own lived experiences. Such a definition of safe space demands the complete silencing and removal from the public sphere of whole sectors of society such as LGBTQ+ people. This is the principal driver behind the recent explosion in book challenges. One might even see it as a form of cancel culture.

Censorship is fundamentally a question of power (Butler, 1998). Foucault's view of *power* and its relationship to *knowledge* thus offers helpful insights. For Foucault, *power* is not just something that is exercised in single acts of control, but is dispersed and pervasive — 'power is everywhere' and 'comes from everywhere' (Foucault, 2008). *Knowledge*, according to Foucault, is that knowledge which is created and publicly accepted as 'truth' within a vast network of power relationships (Foucault,

2008; Fruhling, 2024). Some of these relationships govern the production of knowledge, such as scientific funding, itself controlled by academic institutions and governments. Others govern what is generally accepted as 'true', such as public opinion. *Power* and *knowledge* are thus so inextricably linked for him that he considered them one concept which he termed *power/knowledge* (Foucault, 1980, 1982, 2008).

The considerable power exercised by the general public to collectively decide what is within the range of accepted knowledge and acceptable discourse is an example of power/knowledge, as it limits the actions of political leaders who wish to be reelected (D'Aiello, 2024, personal communication). This range is sometimes referred to as the Overton Window (Mackinac Center for Public Policy, 2024).

Examining larger groups such as the US-based *Moms for Liberty* through this lens starkly clarifies their ambitious and radical aim — to change the entire nature of contemporary power/knowledge. Such groups have weaponised book challenges through large-scale organisation, allowing challengers to demand the banning of sometimes hundreds of titles at a time (e.g. through Rated Books (2024)). This new ability to mount such challenges at the click of a button has attracted the description *censorship as a service* (Oliver, 2024). The US *Project 2025*[6] would extend this by criminalising the acquisition of any LGBTQ+ library materials and allowing for the prosecution of librarians (EveryLibrary Institute, 2024).

Such activism is not just intended to force LGBTQ+ people to confirm to heteronormativity, but to completely remove them from the range of common knowledge and discourse and over time to obstruct society's ability to even knowledgably discuss them, or make such discussions unacceptable by placing them beyond the Overton Window (D'Aiello, 2024, personal communication). Library censorship of LGBTQ+ collections plays directly into this aim. If LGBTQ+ library patrons see censored or non-existent LGBTQ+ collections and clear ignorance from librarians of the local LGBTQ+ community, they will see the library as just another oppressor, not a place to visit for self-affirmation, or even reliable information. A downward spiral is the consequence, as rejection of the library by LGBTQ+ patrons will allow some librarians to justify further passivity and censorship, and acceptance of book challenges.

The Censorship ↔ Outreach continuum is a manifestation of the struggle between two mutually incompatible visions of what a safe space should be. Libraries who remove LGBTQ+ materials because of 'neutrality' are in fact just working to change the discourse away from LGBTQ+ people, and exclude them from the public sphere. Inclusion of LGBTQ+ materials affirms the place of LGBTQ+ people within society and grants them a crucial additional safe space.

A neutral position between these two options is clearly unattainable — there is no such thing as *Schrödinger's Library Book* — and both the presence and absence of a book are political decisions (Oliver, 2024). Any attempt to achieve library neutrality in this context will thus unavoidably result in censorship. It is for this reason that a our framework at Figure 7 places the red *Library neutrality* line within *Soft censorship* — because there is no middle way and no possiblity of being neutral.

Concrete actions

Strong LGBTQ+ library collections can be a crucial safe space for the LGBTQ+ community and libraries have an ethical duty to provide them. How might libraries and libraries draw on our results to formulate concrete actions that achieve this aim?

Mehra and Davis' *Strategic Diversity Manifesto for Public Libraries* (2015) provides a mechanism for libraries to "*. . . address gaps in embracing [and to] analyze and translate into concretized actions their picture of diversity as grounded in the reality of their representative communities*".

The Manifesto is structured around three practical components, the (i) '*Who*', (ii) '*How*', and (iii) '*What*':

Who?
The LGBTQ+ community is not homogenous.

- Many will be comfortable conforming to homonormativity and heteronormativity, while others may be unwilling, unable, or still discovering their identity;
- An increasing number of LGBTQ+ people reject traditional labels such as 'lesbian' or 'male' as they explore their identity more freely than previous generation;
- Many community members have a strong need for privacy, anonymity, use of appropriate terminology and respect for pronouns.

How?
We encourage librarians to:

- understand the many types of censorship that can affect LGBTQ+ collections;
- reflect on their own identity and how its different parts correlate with the eight influences;
- be aware that, even if they are completely accepting of LGBTQ+ people and live in an outwardly liberal

and accepting environment, their library's LGBTQ+ patrons may still lack a safe space and look to their library to provide one.

What?
We encourage librarians to:

- remember the importance of privacy and anonymity to many LGBTQ+ patrons;
- offer anonymity, such as through expanded digital collections, and consider ways to offer digital library access to specific LGBTQ+ groups without requiring identification;
- be aware of stealth circulation, and avoid basing collections decisions purely on usage statistics;
- monitor their library's LGBTQ+ collections for interference from community censorship such as removing or hiding titles;
- remember that LGBTQ+ collection development requires strong proactivity. Even LGBTQ+ materials overwhelmingly depict only a narrow range of LGBTQ+ identities, and publisher and reviewer censorship make materials harder to find.

In offering these suggestions we recognise that for many librarians their implementation, while desirable, might present a risk to their reputation, livelihood and even personal safety.

Conclusion

The entire literature around LGBTQ+ library colection development can be plotted against an Outreach ↔ Censorship Continuum, which is itself the product of a power struggle between two competing visions of the safe space. This realisation is both sobering and inspiring.

Sobering, because it is a vivid demonstration that librarians working with LGBTQ+ collections are primarily occupied with ensuring the survival and use of those collections despite the increasing forces of censorship, often demonstrating considerable bravery, and wish to share their experiences to assist others. Censorship has many faces, some easier to identity and target than others, which feature prominently in our list of examplars. They are so central to our corpus that they form the backbone of our entire analysis.

And yet, inspiring. Notwithstanding the ultimately harmful actions of censoring librarians, the literature is full of accounts of their colleagues ensuring that survival and use of LGBTQ+ collections, engaging with their communities, and providing the information and resources that LGBTQ+ people want and need. This attitude exemplifies what G. A. Stevens, Morris, Nguyen, and Vardell (2019) describe as the *Librarian as activist*, whose work is validated and celebrated by organisations at both the international (UNESCO and IFLA, 2022) and national (American Library Assocation, 2004; Associazione Italiana Biblioteche, 2012; Canadian Federation of Library Assocations (CFLA), 2019; Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP), 2024) levels.

Gates (1993) elegantly sums up this mindset, in a discussion on racial discrimination which is also germaine here:

> *. . . you don't go to the teacher to complain about the school bully unless you know that the teacher is on your side.*

Library neutrality is neither possible nor desirable. All libraries and librarians must make a decision between access and outreach, or censorship and opposition.

Limitations

(i) We believe that the adoption of parallel synthesis helped us to see beyond our own confirmation biases, but we stress that we are not claiming this approach has removed *all* confirmation bias. Furthermore, all literature reviews are based on the works of authors who are human, and who therefore have biases.
(ii) Our corpus covers several decades, during which time there have been major changes in the landscape of LGBTQ+ rights, and library collections.
(iii) Although we engaged with a large body of literature beyond the original LGBTQ+ corpus identified through the database search, it was impratical to examine every article talking about censorship beyond this corpus.
(iv) Practical constraints forced us to limit the depth of our discussion. We plan to address this in a future publication.

Acknowledgements

We warmly thank Sabine Calleja, Dr Alan D'Aiello, Francesca Frati, Dr Alex Iantaffi, Tara Mawhinney, Andrea Miller-Nesbitt, Tony Nguyen, Eleni Philippopoulos, Dr K R Roberto, Dr Alisa Beth Rod and Dr Daz Saunders for insightful conversations, and for their helpful comments and suggestions.

Funding

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors.

Endnotes

1. In this study we use the acronym LGBTQ+ to stand for lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer, questioning, ace (an umbrella term used to describe a lack of, varying, or occasional experiences of sexual attraction) and others. We acknowledge that terminology is rapidly evolving and do not intend to minimise the presence of communities represented by the "+" sign.
2. A children's book about two male penguins rearing a baby
3. *Historically Black Colleges and Universities* – institutions of higher education in the United States that were established before the Civil Rights Act of 1964 with the intention of primarily serving African Americans (Wikipedia, 2024b)
4. For a detailed description of this case see Gaffney (2014), Peterson (2014) and Preer (2014)
5. Also known as *Gender-Sexuality Alliance* or *Queer–straight Alliance (QSA)*. Student-led or community-based organizations, found in schools, colleges, and universities mostly in the US and Canada, aiming to provide a safe and supportive environment for LGBTQ+ individuals and allies (Wikipedia, 2024a).
6. A radically right-wing blueprint to overhaul the US goverment taking office in 2025

Author Biographies

Martin Morris is an associate librarian at McGill University, Montreal, where he serves as academic liaison to departments related to engineering and earth & planetary sciences. He holds an MSc in Library and Information Studies from Robert Gordon University. His previous experience includes times as a hospital librarian, a health sciences liaison, and as a public librarian in the United Kingdom. His research interests focus on library services to underrepresented populations, research synthesis methods, and bibliometrics.

Gregg A. Stevens is the Manager of Education and Clinical Services at the University of Massachusetts Chan Medical School's Lamar Soutter Library. In this position he works closely with medical and graduate nursing students and faculty. Gregg has a Master of Science in Library Science from the University of Kentucky and a Master of Science in Biological Sciences from Florida Atlantic University. His primary research area is the role of health sciences librarians in improving the health of the LGBTQ+ community through access to quality medical information.

John Siegel has worked at the University of South Carolina (USC) Upstate as Coordinator of Library Instructional Services since 2018. John holds a Master of Library Science degree, as well as a Master of Education degree in adult and professional learning. His professional interests include meeting the needs of diverse populations (i.e. LGBTQ+ , people with disabilities, military, and non-traditional students), trauma-informed librarianship, and intellectual freedom. Prior to joining USC Upstate, John worked at the University of Arkansas at Little Rock and the DuBois campus of Penn State University.

References

Acevedo-Polakovich, I. D., Bell, B., Gamache, P., & Christian, A. S. (2013). Service accessibility for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth. *Youth & Society*, *45*(1), 75–97. doi:10.1177/0044118X11409067

ALA Rainbow Round Table. (2024). Rainbow Round Table Book and Media Reviews. Available at: https://www.glbtrt.ala.org/reviews/. Accessed 15 July 2024.

Alexander, L. (2005). Gay display controversy: A threat to intellectual freedom. *Florida Libraries*, *48*(2), 24–27.

Alexander, L., & Miselis, S. D. (2007). Barriers to GLBTQ collection development and strategies for overcoming them. *Young Adult Library Services*, *5*(3), 43–49.

Ali, I., & Kannan, D. (2022). Mapping research on healthcare operations and supply chain management: A topic modelling-based literature review. *Annals of Operations Research*, *315*(1), 29–55. doi:10.1007/s10479-022-04596-5

Altobelli, R., & Lambert, N. J. (2022). LGBTQ-inclusive collections: School librarian self-reflections and collection development guide. *Knowledge Quest*, *50*(4), 22–29.

American Library Assocation. (2004). The freedom to read statement. Available at: https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement. Accessed 5 July 2024.

American Library Assocation. (2023). Intellectual freedom and censorship Q & A. Available at: https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/freedomreadstatement. Accessed 2 August 2024.

American Library Assocation. (2024). "Report Censorship" Toolkit. Available at: https://www.ala.org/tools/challengesupport/share. Accessed 2 August 2024.

Arksey, H., & O'Malley, L. (2005). Scoping studies: Towards a methodological framework. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *8*(1), 19–32. doi:10.1080/1364557032000119616

Ashby, R. (1987). Library services to gay and lesbian people. *Assistant Librarian*, *80*(10), 153–155.

Associazione Italiana Biblioteche. (2012). Codice deontologico dei bibliotecari: principi fondamentali [Librarians' code of ethics: Fundamental principles]. Available at: https://www.aib.it/documenti/codice-deontologico/. Accessed 5 July 2024.

Austin, J. (2019a). Lines of sight and knowledge: Possibilities and actualities of transgender and gender non-conforming youth in the library. In B. Mehra (Ed.), *LGBTQ+ librarianship in the 21st century: Emerging directions of advocacy and community engagement in diverse information environments* (pp. 167–196). doi:10.1108/S0065-283020190000045012

Austin, J. (2019b). Representative library collections as a response to the institutional oppression of LGBTQ youth of color. *The International Journal of Information, Diversity & Inclusion*, *3*(1), 91–111. doi:10.33137/ijidi.v3i1.32269

Barrett, E. L. (2020). Sexing the margins: Homonationalism in gay dating apps. In D. N. Farris, D. R. Compton, & A. P. Herrera (Eds.), *Gender, sexuality and race in the digital age* (pp. 115–136). doi:10.1007/978-3-030-29855-5_7

Beaudry, R. (2019). Censorship in Canadian schools. *Canadian School Libraries Journal*, *3*(1), 2–2. Retrieved July 10, 2024, from https://journal.canadianschoollibraries.ca/censorship-in-canadian-schools

Becnel, K., & Moeller, R. A. (2021). 'Stepping on eggshells' and dodging that 'can of worms'. *Journal of Intellectual Freedom & Privacy*, *6*(3), 7–18. doi:10.5860/jifp.v6i3.7617

Berman, S. (2001). 'Inside' Censorship. *Progressive Librarian*, (18), 48–63.

Betts-Green, D. (2020). 'We could do better': Librarian engagement in LGBTQ collection development in small and rural public libraries in the Southern U.S. *Public Library Quarterly*, *39*(6), 510–536. doi:10.1080/01616846.2020.1737493

Bickford, J. H., & Lawson, D. (2020). Examining patterns within challenged or banned primary elementary books. *Journal of Curriculum Studies Research*, *2*(1), 16–38. doi:10.46303/jcsr.02.01.2

Bishop, R. S. (1990). Mirrors, windows, and sliding glass doors. *Perspectives*, *6*(3). Retrieved from https://scenicregional.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/08/Mirrors-Windows-and-Sliding-Glass-Doors.pdf

Blackburn, H., & Farooq, O. (2020). LGBTQIA-R: Creating a diverse and inclusive medical collection at a public metropolitan university. *Collection Management*, *45*(1), 3–18. doi:10.1080/01462679.2019.1597799

Blair, E. (2024, April 16). Report: Last year ended with a surge in book bans. https://www.npr.org/2024/04/16/1245037718/book-bans-2023-pen-america/. Accessed 5 July 2024.

Blei, D. M., Ng, A. Y., & Jordan, M. I. (2001). Latent Dirichlet Allocation. In T. Dietterich, S. Becker, & Z. Ghahramani (Eds.), *Advances in Neural Information Processing Systems* (Vol. 14, pp. 601–608). MIT Press. Retrieved April 15, 2024, from https://proceedings.neurips.cc/paper_files/paper/2001/file/296472c9542ad4d4788d543508116cbc-Paper.pdf

Blei, D. M., Ng, A. Y., & Jordan, M. I. (2003). Latent Dirichlet Allocation. *Journal of Machine Learning Research*, *3*(Jan), 993–1022. Retrieved April 15, 2024, from https://www.jmlr.org/papers/volume3/blei03a/blei03a.pdf

Bosman, E. (2016). The availability of gay and lesbian materials in Protestant college libraries. *Collection Management*, *41*(2), 94–106. doi:10.1080/01462679.2016.1169963

Bosman, E. (2023). The Availability of Spanish Language LGBTQ Nonfiction Books in the United States–Mexico Borderland. *Collection Management*, *48*(3), 257–281. doi:10.1080/01462679.2023.2172508

Boulila, S. C. (2019). *Race in post-racial Europe: An intersectional analysis*. Rowman & Littlefield.

boyd, d. (2011). Social network sites as networked publics: Affordances, dynamics, and implications. In Z. Papacharissi (Ed.), *A networked self: Identity, community and culture on social network sites* (pp. 39–58). Routledge.

Brady, R., Byron, P., & D'Souza, S. (2022). LGBTQ+ communities and digital media. In D. A. Rohlinger & S. Sobieraj (Eds.), *The Oxford Handbook of Digital Media Sociology* (pp. 339–361). doi:10.1093/oxfordhb/9780197510636.013.22

Brady, R., Churchill, B., Son, V., Hanckel, B., & Byron, P. (2018). Twenty years of 'cyberqueer': The enduring significance of the Internet for young LGBTIQ+ people. In P. Aggleton, R. Cover, D. Leahy, D. Marshall, & M. L. Rasmussen (Eds.), *Youth, Sexuality and Sexual Citizenship* (pp. 151–167). Routledge.

Brandon-Friedman, R. A., & Kinney, M. M. K. (2021). Does it get better? Exploring 'It Gets Better' videos using visual sociology. *Journal of LGBT Youth*, *18*(4), 421–437. doi:10.1080/19361653.2019.1691107

Brendler, B., Beckman, L., Adkins, D., Sandy, H. M., Wiggins-Prelas, N., & Adams, V. (2017). 'Provide the Highest Level of Service': Public Library Collections of LGBTQ* Materials for Adolescents in the United States. *Journal of Research on Libraries & Young Adults*, *8*(1), 1–32.

Brodyn, A., & Ghaziani, A. (2018). Performative progressiveness: Accounting for new forms of inequality in the gayborhood. *City & Community*, *17*(2), 307–329. doi:10.1111/cico.12298

Bryant, E. (1995). Pride and prejudice. *Library Journal*, *120*(11), 37–39.

Burke, S. K. (2008). Removal of gay-themed materials from public libraries: Public opinion trends, 1973–2006. *Public Library Quarterly*, *27*(3), 247–264. doi:10.1080/01616840802229552

Butler, J. (1998). Ruled out: Vocabularies of the censor. In R. C. Post (Ed.), *Censorship and silencing: Practices of cultural regulation* (pp. 247–259). Los Angeles: Getty Research Institute.

Byron, P. (2019). 'How could you write your name below that?' The queer life and death of Tumblr. *Porn Studies*, *6*(3), 336–349. doi:10.1080/23268743.2019.1613925

Campkin, B., & Marshall, L. (2017). LGBTQ+ cultural infrastructure in London: Night venues, 2006-–2017. Available at: https://www.ucl.ac.uk/urban-lab/sites/urban-lab/files/executive-summary-lgbtq-cultural-infrastructure-in-london-night-venues.pdf. Accessed 10 July 2024.

Canadian Federation of Library Assocations (CFLA). (2019). Statement on intellectual freedom and libraries. Available at: https://cfla-fcab.ca/en/guidelines-and-position-papers/statement-on-intellectual-freedom-and-libraries/. Accessed 5 July 2024.

Carmichael, J. V. (1998). Homosexuality and United States libraries: Land of the free, but not home to the gay. In *'98 IFLA Amsterdam (17-19 August 1998)*.

Carmichael, J. V. (2000). 'They sure got to prove it on me': Millennial thoughts on gay archives, gay biography, and gay library history. *Libraries & Culture*, *35*(1), 88–102. Retrieved February 19, 2024, from https://www.jstor.org/stable/25548801

Carrasco, M., & Kerne, A. (2018). Queer visibility: Supporting LGBT+ selective visibility on social media. In *Proceedings of the 2018 CHI Conference on Human Factors in Computing Systems* (pp. 1–12). doi:10.1145/3173574.31738

Cass, V. C. (1979). Homosexual identity formation: A theoretical model. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *4*, 219–235. doi:10.1300/J082v04n03_01

Cavalcante, A. (2018). Tumbling into queer utopias and vortexes: Experiences of LGBTQ social media users on Tumblr. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *66*(12), 1715–1735. doi:10.1080/00918369.2018.1511131

Ceglarek, P. J., & Ward, L. M. (2016). A tool for help or harm? How associations between social networking use, social support, and mental health differ for sexual minority and heterosexual youth. *Computers in Human Behavior*, *65*, 201–209. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2016.07.051

Chapman, E. L. (2007). Separate versus integrated collections for GLBT fiction in the public library service: A literature review. Available at: https://seapn.org.uk/separate-versus-integrated-collections-for-glbt-fiction-in-the-public-library-service-a-literature-review/. Accessed 15 April 2024.

Chapman, E. L. (2013). No more controversial than a gardening display? Provision of LGBT-related fiction to children and young people in U.K. public libraries. *Library Trends*, *61*(3), 542–568. doi:10.1353/lib.2013.0010

Chapman, E. L., & Birdi, B. (2016). 'It's woefully inadequate': Collections of LGBTQ* fiction for teens in English public library services. *Journal of Research on Libraries & Young Adults*, *7*(1), 1–29.

Chartered Institute of Library and Information Professionals (CILIP). (2024). Intellectual freedom, freedom of access to information and freedom of expression for librarians and information professionals. Available at: https://www.cilip.org.uk/resource/resmgr/cilip/policy/intellectual_freedom/Intellectual_freedom_policy_.pdf. Accessed 5 July 2024.

Cho, A. (2018). Default publicness: Queer youth of color, social media, and being outed by the machine. *New Media & Society*, *20*(9), 3183–3200. doi:10.1177/14614448177447

Churchill, R., & Singh, L. (2023). Using topic-noise models to generate domain-specific topics across data sources. *Knowledge and Information Systems*, *65*(5), 2159–2186. doi:10.1007/s10115-022-01805-2

Clarivate Analytics. (2024). Endnote. Available https://endnote.com. Accessed 10 January 2024.

Clark, C. J., Jussim, L., Frey, K., Stevens, S. T., Al-Gharbi, M., Aquino, K., ... Bleske-Rechek, A., et al. (2023). Prosocial motives underlie scientific censorship by scientists: A perspective and research agenda. *Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences*, *120*(48), e2301642120. doi:10.1073/pnas.230164212

Clark-Hunt, L. K., & Creel, S. (2023). Interviews with Public Librarians on Their Experiences in Cases of Censorship. *Public Library Quarterly*. doi:10.1080/01616846.2023.2243201

Clavijo-Toledano, M., Heredero-Cardona, L., Úbeda-Cano, N., & Boté-Vericad, J. J. (2022). Sexual orientation for the LGBTQ+ community: Information sources and barriers. *IFLA Journal*. doi:10.1177/03400352231202508

Clyde, L. A., & Lobban, M. (2001). A door half open: Young people's access to fiction related to homosexuality. *School Libraries Worldwide*, *7*(2), 17–30. doi:10.29173/slw7096

Colquhoun, H. L., Levac, D., O'Brien, K. K., Straus, S., Tricco, A. C., Perrier, L., ... Moher, D. (2014). Scoping reviews: Time for clarity in definition, methods, and reporting. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, *67*(12), 1291–1294. doi:10.1016/j.jclinepi.2014.03.013

Cooke, J. C. (2005). Gay and lesbian librarians and the 'need' for GLBT library organizations. Ethical questions, professional challenges, and personal dilemmas in and 'out' of the workplace. *Journal of Information Ethics*, *14*(2), 32–49.

Cornog, M. (2016). Erotophobia, homophobia, and censorship in US libraries: An historical overview. *Journal of Information Ethics*, *25*(2), 42–58.

Creel, S. (2018). The 2014 Rainbow List: A descriptive study of the list and ten public libraries' ownership. *Journal of Research on Libraries & Young Adults*, *9*(1), 1–15.

Creelman, J. A., & Harris, R. M. (1990). Coming out: The information needs of lesbians. *Collection Building*, *10*(3/4), 37–41. doi:10.1108/eb023281

Cresswell, J. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches*. Sage.

Critchfield, R., & Powell, D. M. (2012). Well-intentioned censorship is still censorship: The challenge of public library employees. In V. Nye & K. Barco (Eds.), *True Stories of Censorship Battles in America's Libraries* (pp. 8–13). American Library Association.

Curry, A. (1997). *The limits of tolerance: Censorship and intellectual freedom in public libraries*. Lanham, MD: Scarecrow Press.

Daly, D. (2022, July 22). Threatened by armed, anti-LGBTQIA+ extremists in Coeur d'Alene, a children's librarian leaves her job. *School Library Journal*. Accessed 15 August 2024. Retrieved from https://www.schoollibraryjournal.com/story/threatened-by-armed-anti-lgbtqia-extremists-in-coeur-dalene-id-a-childrens-librarian-leaves-her-job-first-person/

Dawkins, A. M. (2018). The decision by school librarians to self-censor: The impact of perceived administrative discomfort. *Teacher Librarian*, *45*(3), 8–12. Retrieved from https://libres.uncg.edu/ir/uncg/f/A_Dawkins_Decision_2018.pdf

Day, A. (2023). Seize the initiative: In-process LGBTQ+ research findings and their impact on connecting practices in New Zealand GLAMU institutions. *Proceedings of the Association*

for Information Science and Technology, *60*(1), 560–564. doi:10.1002/pra2.815

Denzin, N. K., & Lincoln, Y. S. (2018). Preface. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The SAGE Handbook of Qualitative Research*. Sage.

Digital Public Library of America. (2024). Digital Public Library of America launches the Banned Book Club to ensure access to banned books. Available at: https://www.prnewswire.com/news-releases/digital-public-library-of-america-launches-the-banned-book-club-to-ensure-access-to-banned-books-301881735.html. Accessed 30 June 2024.

Dinotola, S. (2022). Bias delle collezioni e data analysis: Un modello per lo studio comparato delle raccolte LGBTQ+ [Collection bias and data analysis: A model for the comparative study of LGBTQ+ collections]. *AIB Studi*, *62*(1), 73–103. doi:10.2426/aibstudi-13394

Doan, P. L. (2015). Why plan for the LGBTQ community? In *Planning and LGBTQ Communities* (pp. 1–16). Routledge.

Downey, J. (2005). Public library collection development issues regarding the information needs of GLBT patrons. *Progressive Librarian*, (25), 86–95.

Downey, J. (2013). Self-censorship in selection of LGBT-themed materials. *Reference & User Services Quarterly*, *53*(2), 104–107. doi:10.5860/rusq.53n2.104

Duggan, L. (2002). The new homonormativity: The sexual politics of neoliberalism. In R. Castronovo, D. D. Nelson, & D. E. Pease (Eds.), *Materializing Democracy: Toward a Revitalized Cultural Politics* (pp. 175–194). doi:10.1515/9780822383901-008

Encarnacion, A. J. (2005). The essentiality of G/L/B/T collections in public libraries. *Bookmobile & Outreach Services*, *8*(1), 7–22.

Erikson, E. H. (1968). *Identity youth and crisis*. New York, NY: W W Norton & Company.

Escobedo, F. (2023). When the censors come calling. *Young Adult Library Services*, *20*(3–4), 14–17. Retrieved November 8, 2023, from http://yalsjournal.ala.org/vol-20-no-3-4-spring-summer-2022/page-14

EveryLibrary Institute. (2024). Project 2025 and its consequences for libraries. Available at: https://www.everylibraryinstitute.org/report_project_2025. Accessed 18 August 2024.

Facebook Inc. (2024). Names on Facebook. Available at: https://www.facebook.com/help/1090831264320592. Accessed 24 July 2024.

Faludi, S. (2006). *Backlash: The undeclared war against American women*. New York: Three Rivers Press.

Farrell, A. (2021). It's just a preference: Indigenous LGBTIQ+ peoples and technologically facilitated violence. In A. Powell, A. Flynn, & L. Sugiura (Eds.), *The Palgrave handbook of gendered violence and technology* (pp. 335–353). doi:10.1007/978-3-030-83734-1_17

Fenniak, M., Stamy, M., pubpub-zz, Thoma, M., Peveler, M., exiledkingcc, & pypdf Contributors. (2024). The pypdf library. Available at: https://pypi.org/project/pypdf/. Version 4.2.0. Accessed 10 January 2024.

Foerstel, H. (1994). Conflict and compromise over homosexual literature. *Emergency Librarian*, *22*(2), 28–30.

Formby, E. (2017). *Exploring LGBT spaces and communities: Contrasting identities, belongings and wellbeing*. New York: Routledge.

Foucault, M. (1980). *Power/knowledge: Selected interviews and other writings 1972–1977*. Edited by Colin Gordon. New York: Pantheon.

Foucault, M. (1982). The subject and power. *Critical Inquiry*, *8*(4), 777–795. doi:10.1086/448181

Foucault, M. (2008). *The history of sexuality*. New York City: Vintage.

Fox, J., & Ralston, R. (2016). Queer identity online: Informal learning and teaching experiences of LGBTQ individuals on social media. *Computers in human behavior*, *65*, 635–642. doi:10.1016/j.chb.2016.06.009

Fruhling, Z. (2024). Foucault's concept of "Power/Knowledge" explained. Available at: https://www.zacharyfruhling.com/philosophy-blog/foucaults-concept-of-power-knowledge-explained. Accessed 12 August 2024.

Gaffney, L. M. (2014). No longer safe: West Bend, young adult literature, and conservative library activism. *Library Trends*, *62*(4), 730–739. doi:10.1353/lib.2014.0019

Gal, N., Shifman, L., & Kampf, Z. (2016). 'It Gets Better': Internet memes and the construction of collective identity. *New Media & Society*, *18*(8), 1698–1714. doi:10.1177/1461444814568784

Gardner, C. A. (2006). Welcoming Our GLBT patrons. *Virginia Libraries*, *52*(2), 45–50. doi:10.21061/valib.v52i2.1018

Garvey, J., & Rankin, S. (2012). Differences in perceptions of classroom climate for gender non-conforming students: A multi-level analysis. In *Annual Meeting of the American Education Research Association*, Vancouver, BC.

Gates, H. L., Jr. (1993). Let them talk: Why civil liberties pose no threat to civil rights. *The New Republic*, *209*(12–13), 37–49. Retrieved from https://newrepublic.com/article/149558/let-talk

Ghaziani, A. (2019). Cultural archipelagos: New directions in the study of sexuality and space. *City & Community*, *18*(1), 4–22. doi:10.1111/cico.12381

Gill, T. (2024, March 24). 'There's a gay bar in my pocket!': How 15 years of Grindr has affected gay communities and dating culture. *The Guardian*. Accessed 10 June 2024. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2024/mar/25/theres-a-gay-bar-in-my-pocket-how-15-years-of-grindr-has-affected-gay-communities-and-dating-culture

Glick, A. (2001). Disappearing books. *School Library Journal*, *47*(2), 18–19.

Goldthorp, J. D. (2007). Can Scottish public library services claim they are socially inclusive of all minority groups when lesbian fiction is still so inaccessible? *Journal of Librarianship & Information Science*, *39*(4), 234–248. doi:10.1177/0961000607083215

Gough, C., & Greenblatt, E. (Eds.). (1990). *Gay and lesbian library service*. Jefferson, NC: McFarland.

Grant, J. E., Odlaug, B. L., Derbyshire, K., Schreiber, L. R., Lust, K., & Christenson, G. (2014). Mental health and clinical correlates in lesbian, gay, bisexual, and queer young adults. *Journal of American College Health*, *62*(1), 75–78. doi:10.1080/07448481.2013.844697

Graziano, V. (2016). LGBTQ collection assessment: Library ownership of resources cited by master's students. *College & Research Libraries*, *77*(1), 114–127. doi:10.5860/crl.77.1.114

Greenblatt, E. (2003). Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender library users: Overcoming the myths. *Colorado Libraries*, *29*(4), 21–25.

Greyson, D. (2007). GLBTQ content in comics/graphic novels for teens. *Collection Building*, *26*(4), 130–134. doi:10.1108/01604950710831942

Grimshaw, J. (2010). A guide to knowledge synthesis: A knowledge synthesis chapter. Available at: https://cihr-irsc.gc.ca/e/41382.html. Accessed 2 August 2024.

Grootendorst, M. (2024a). BERTopic. Available at: https://maartengr.github.io/BERTopic/index.html. Version 0.16.0. Accessed 26 November 2023.

Grootendorst, M. (2024b). MaximalMarginalRelevance. Available at: https://maartengr.github.io/BERTopic/api/representation/mmr.html. Accessed 2024.

Gross, L. (2003). The gay global village in cyberspace. In N. Couldry & J. Curran (Eds.), *Contesting media power: Alternative media in a networked world* (pp. 259–272). Rowman & Littlefield.

Grzanka, P. R., & Mann, E. S. (2014). Queer youth suicide and the psychopolitics of 'It Gets Better'. *Sexualities*, *17*(4), 369–393. doi:10.1177/1363460713516785

Guimarães, N. S., Joviano-Santos, J. V., Reis, M. G., Chaves, R. R. M., & Observatory of Epidemiology, Nutrition, Health Research (OPENS). (2024). Development of search strategies for systematic reviews in health using ChatGPT: A critical analysis. *Journal of Translational Medicine*, *22*(1), 1–3. doi:10.1186/s12967-023-04371-5

Hachette Book Group. (2021). Important milestones in LGBTQ publishing. Available at: https://www.hachettebookgroup.com/articles/important-milestones-in-lgbtq-publishing/. Accessed 10 June 2024.

Han, C.-S., & Choi, K.-H. (2018). Very few people say 'No Whites': Gay men of color and the racial politics of desire. *Sociological Spectrum*, *38*(3), 145–161. doi:10.1080/02732173.2018.1469444

Hartless, J. (2019). Questionably queer: Understanding straight presence in the post-gay bar. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *66*(8), 1035–1057. doi:10.1080/00918369.2018.1491707

Havey, N. F. (2020). Radicalized on campus? (Un)coded whiteness as campus social movement. *Journal of Critical Thought and Praxis*, *10*(1). doi:10.31274/jctp.11566

Hawkins, B. W., Morris, M., Nguyen, T., Siegel, J., & Vardell, E. (2017). Advancing the conversation: next steps for lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, and queer (LGBT) health sciences librarianship. *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, *105*(4), 316–327. doi:10.5195/jmla.2017.206

Helstrom, L. (2022). Republicans are obsessed with safe spaces. Available at: https://medium.com/politically-speaking/republicans-are-obsessed-with-safe-spaces-337ea1912901. Accessed 12 August 2024.

Hicks, P., & Kerrigan, P. (2020). An intersectional quantitative content analysis of the LGBTQ+ catalogue in Irish public libraries. *Journal of Librarianship & Information Science*, *52*(4), 1028–1041. doi:10.1177/0961000619898212

Hill, R. F., & McGrath, M. M. (2018). Why is the conversation about LGBT students' information needs still in the closet? The role of the MLIS program in preparing culturally competent school librarians. In J. Percell, L. C. Sarin, P. T. Jaeger, & J. C. Bertot (Eds.), *Re-envisioning the MLS: Perspectives on the future of library and information science education* (Vol. 44, pp. 71–82). doi:10.1108/S0065-28302018000044B006

Hilton Boon, M., & Howard, V. (2004). Recent lesbian / gay / bisexual / transgender fiction for teens: Are Canadian public libraries providing adequate collections? *Collection Building*, *23*(3), 133–138. doi:10.1108/01604950410544674

Hoffstaetter, S., Bochi, J., Lee, M., Kistner, L., Mitchell, R., Cecchini, E., ... Akyüz, U. (2024). pytesseract. Available at: https://pypi.org/project/pytesseract. Accessed 10 January 2024.

Howard, V. (2005). Out of the closet... but not on the shelves? An analysis of Canadian public libraries' holdings of gay-themed picture books. *Progressive Librarian*, (25), 62–75.

Hugging Face. (2024). sentence-transformers/all-mpnet-base-v2. Available at: https://huggingface.co/sentence-transformers/all-mpnet-base-v2. Accessed 10 January 2024.

Hughes-Hassell, S., Overberg, E., & Harris, S. (2013). Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ)-themed literature for teens: Are school libraries providing adequate collections? *School Library Research*, *16*, 1–18. Retrieved from https://www.ala.org/aasl/pubs/slr/vol16

Huntsberry, W. (2021, July 1). The learning curve: Conservatives want a safe space from Critical Race Theory. *Voice of San Diego*. Accessed 10 August 2024. Retrieved from https://voiceofsandiego.org/2021/07/01/the-learning-curve-conservatives-want-a-safe-space-from-critical-race-theory/

Iantaffi, A., & Barker, M.-J. (2018). *How to understand your gender*. Philadelphia, PA: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.

Iemma, K., Mott, M., Renaud, J., & Sintetos, N. (2019). Stakeholder interviews and university collections: An exploratory methodology. *Journal of Archival Organization*, *16*(1), 45–51. doi:10.1080/15332748.2019.1642702

International Federation of Library Associations. (2019). IFLA Statement on Censorship. Available at: https://www.ifla.org/files/assets/faife/statements/ifla_statement_on_censorship.pdf. Accessed 15 August 2024.

Iovine, A. (2022). The death of Tumblr porn left a void no other site can fill. Available at: https://mashable.com/article/tumblr-adult-content-ban. Accessed 28 July 2024.

It Gets Better Project. (2024). It gets better. Available at: https://itgetsbetter.org. Accessed 25 July 2024.

Jefferson, R. C., & Dziedzic-Elliott, E. (2023). Not doing it: Avoidance and sex-related materials in libraries. *The Political Librarian*, *6*(2), 39–56. doi:10.7936/pollib.8812

Jeffery, J. (2023). Get ready, stay ready: A look at the New Community Action Toolkit. *Canadian School Libraries Journal*, *7*(2). Retrieved from https://journal.canadianschoollibraries.ca/get-ready-stay-ready-a-look-at-the-new-community-action-toolkit/

Jensen, K. (2024). Soft and quiet: Self-censorship in an era of nook challenges. Available at: https://bookriot.com/what-is-soft-or-quiet-censorship/. Accessed 2 August 2024.

Jenzen, O. (2022). LGBTQ youth cultures and social media. In J. Nussbaum (Ed.), *Oxford research encyclopedia of communication*. doi:10.1093/acrefore/9780190228613.013.1363

Jones, L. (2018). 'I'm not proud, I'm just gay': Lesbian and gay youths' discursive negotiation of otherness. *Journal of Sociolinguistics*, *22*(1), 55–76. doi:10.1111/josl.12271

Jorm, M. (2023). Reading the rainbow — queer-friendly school libraries. *Access*, *37*(2), 41–47.

Joyce, S. (2000). Lesbian, gay, and bisexual library service: A review of the literature. *Public Libraries*, *39*(5), 270–279.

Joyce, S., & Schrader, A. M. (1997). Hidden perceptions: Edmonton Gay Males and the Edmonton Public Library. *Canadian Journal of Information and Library Science/Revue canadienne des sciences de l'information et de bibliothéconomie*, *22*(1), 19–37.

Kaney, P. (2012). If I don't buy it, they won't come. In V. Nye & K. Barco (Eds.), *True stories of censorship battles in America's libraries* (pp. 14–18). Chicago, IL: American Library Association.

Kee, Y. H., Li, C., Kong, L. C., Tang, C. J., & Chuang, K.-L. (2019). Scoping review of mindfulness research: A topic modelling approach. *Mindfulness*, *10*, 1474–1488. doi:10.1007/s12671-019-01136-4

Kilpatrick, T. L. (1996). A critical look at the availability of gay and lesbian periodical literature in libraries and standard indexing services. *Serials Review*, *22*(4), 71–81. doi:10.1080/00987913.1996.10764348

Knapp, C. (2022). Creating safe and inclusive spacing for LGBT2Q+ youth in public and school libraries. *Journal of Library Administration*, *62*(6), 847–855. doi:10.1080/01930826.2022.2102385

Koester, K. A., Collins, S. P., Fuller, S. M., Galindo, G. R., Gibson, S., & Steward, W. T. (2013). Sexual healthcare preferences among gay and bisexual men: A qualitative study in San Francisco, California. *PLoS One*, *8*(8), e71546. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.0071546

Kostakis, W. (2018). We need to talk about this: Embracing challenging texts. *Access*, *32*(1), 6–11.

Kurz, R. F. (2018). Out of the closet but not on the shelf: Questions and concerns about collection development of LGBT books for teens. *Young Adult Library Services*, *16*(4), 20–25. Retrieved from http://yalsjournal.ala.org/?m=53337&i=523589&p=22

Lambda Literary. (2024). Lambda Literary Review. Available at: https://lambdaliterary.org/lambda-literary-review/. Accessed 15 July 2024.

Lee, K. Y., & Freedman, J. (2010). Odd girl in: Expanding lesbian fiction holdings at Barnard College. *Collection Building*, *29*(1), 22–26. doi:10.1108/01604951011015268

Lester, J. Z. (2014). Homonormativity in children's literature: An intersectional analysis of queer-themed picture books. *Journal of LGBT Youth*, *11*(3), 244–275. doi:10.1080/19361653.2013.879465

Levac, D., Colquhoun, H., & O'Brien, K. K. (2010). Scoping studies: Advancing the methodology. *Implementation Science*, *5*, 1–9. doi:10.1186/1748-5908-5-69

Lukenbill, B. (2002). Modern gay and lesbian libraries and archives in North America: A study in community identity and affirmation. *Library Management*, *23*(1/2), 93–100. doi:10.1108/01435120210413896

Mackinac Center for Public Policy. (2024). The Overton Window. Available at: https://www.mackinac.org/OvertonWindow. Accessed 13 August 2024.

Maltezos, V., Luhtakallio, E., & Meriluoto, T. (2024). Bridging ethnography and AI: a reciprocal methodology for studying visual political action. *International Journal of Social Research Methodology*, *0*(0), 1–16. doi:10.1080/13645579.2024.2330057

Manfredi, A. (2009). Accept the universal freak show. *Young Adult Library Services*, *7*(4), 26–31.

Martin, H. J., & Murdock, J. R. (2007). *Serving lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning teens: A how-to-do-it manual for librarians*. Chicago, IL: Neal-Schuman Publishers.

Mastricolo, P. (2019). Love ls love: An inside look at the banning of an LGBTQ+ comic. Available at: https://cbldf.org/2019/07/love-is-love-an-inside-look-at-the-banning-of-an-lgbtq-comic/. Accessed 11 August 2024.

Mattingley, W. J. B. (2021). Why use topic modeling? Available at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NocrN8YnF8Y. Accessed 10 May 2024.

Mattson, G. (2023). *Who needs gay bars? Bar-hopping through America's endangered LGBTQ+ places*. Redwood City, CA: Stanford University Press.

McGowan, J., Sampson, M., Salzwedel, D. M., Cogo, E., Foerster, V., & Lefebvre, C. (2016). PRESS peer review of electronic search strategies: 2015 guideline statement. *Journal of Clinical Epidemiology*, *75*, 40–46. doi:10.1016/j.jclinepi.2016.01.021

McInnes, L. (2024). Uniform Manifold Approximation and Projection (UMAP). Available at: https://github.com/lmcinnes/umap. Version 0.5.6. Accessed 10 January 2024.

McInnes, L., Healy, J., & Astels, S. (2017). hdbscan: Hierarchical density based clustering. *The Journal of Open Source Software*, *2*(11), 205. doi:10.21105/joss.00205

McKinney, C. (2018). 'Finding the lines to my people': Media history and queer bibliographic encounter. *GLQ: A Journal of Lesbian & Gay Studies*, *24*(1), 55–83. doi:10.1215/10642684-4254504

Mead, N., & Bower, P. (2000). Patient-centredness: A conceptual framework and review of the empirical literature. *Social Science & Medicine*, *51*(7), 1087–1110. doi:10.1016/S0277-9536(00)00098-8

Mehra, B. (2014). Integrating LGBTIQ representations across the library and information science curriculum: A strategic framework for student-centered interventions. In E. Greenblatt (Ed.), *Serving LGBTIQ library and archives users: Essays on outreach, service, collections and access* (pp. 298–309). Jefferson, NC: McFarland.

Mehra, B., & Davis, R. (2015). A strategic diversity manifesto for public libraries in the 21st century. *New Library World*, *116*(1/2), 15–36. doi:10.1108/NLW-04-2014-0043

Migneault, B. (2003). Les collections gaies et lesbiennes dans les bibliothèques publiques : Miroir de la société québécoise ? [Gay and lesbian collections in public libraries: A mirror of Quebec society?] *Documentation et bibliothèques*, *49*(1), 31–39. doi:10.7202/1030298ar

Mikel, A., & Blackwell, M. (2023). Books unbanned: Expanding access to content via library ebooks. *Computers in Libraries*, *43*(4), 23–27.

Moeller, R. A., & Becnel, K. (2020). "They're so stinkin' popular, How could you say no?" Graphic novel collection development and school librarian self-censorship. *The Library Quarterly*, *90*(4), 515–529. doi:10.1086/710262

Moeller, R. A., & Becnel, K. (2024a). Can we talk about these graphic novels? School librarians, censorship, and comics. In D. E. Sachdeva, S. L. Hull, S. C. Kimmel, & W. A. Whitaker (Eds.), *Supporting students' intellectual freedom in schools: The right to read* (pp. 161–177). doi:10.4018/978-1-6684-9655-8.ch009

Moeller, R. A., & Becnel, K. (2024b). It's different when it's written: School librarians and their struggles with comics. In *MEXINFO — International Symposium on Libraries and Censorship, Mexico City, Mexico, 6–8 August 2024*.

Monroe, J. (1988). Breaking the silence barrier: Libraries and gay and lesbian students. *Collection Building*, *9*(1), 43–46. doi:10.1108/eb023240

Moody, K. (2005). Covert censorship in libraries: A discussion paper. *Australian Library Journal*, *54*(2), 138–147. doi:10.1080/00049670.2005.10721741

Morgan, L. (2017). Reaching LGBTIQ teens through comics and graphic novels. In C. Smallwood & L. Sanborn (Eds.), *Gender issues and the library : Case studies of innovative programs and resources* (pp. 147–154). Jefferson, NC: McFarland.

Morris, M., Boruff, J. T., & Gore, G. C. (2016). Scoping reviews: Establishing the role of the librarian. *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, *104*(4), 346–353. doi:10.3163/1536-5050.104.4.020

Morris, M., & Hawkins, B. W. (2016). Towards a new specialization in health librarianship: LGBTQ health. *Journal of the Canadian Health Libraries Association/Journal de l'Association canadienne des bibliothèques de la santé*, *37*(1), 20–23. doi:10.5596/c16-007

Morris, M., & Roberto, K. R. (2016). Information-seeking behaviour and information needs of LGBTQ health professionals: A follow-up study. *Health Information & Libraries Journal*, *33*(3), 204–221. doi:10.1111/hir.12139

Moss, E. (2008). An inductive evaluation of a public library GLBT collection. *Collection Building*, *27*(4), 149–156. doi:10.1108/01604950810913715

Mowlabocus, S. (2021). Conclusion: Reflections on homonormativity. In *Interrogating homonormativity: Gay men, identity and everyday life* (pp. 223–236). doi:10.1007/978-3-030-87070-6_8

Munro, L., Travers, R., & Woodford, M. R. (2019). Overlooked and invisible: Everyday experiences of microaggressions for LGBTQ adolescents. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *66*(10), 1439–1471. doi:10.1080/00918369.2018.1542205

Natanson, H., & Balingit, M. (2022, April 5). Teachers who mention sexuality are 'grooming' kids, conservatives say. *Washington Post*. Accessed 15 August 2024. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2022/04/05/teachers-groomers-pedophiles-dont-say-gay/

Nyby, M. J. (2023). The demography of censorship: Examining correlations between cty demographics and materials challenges in Canadian libraries. *Canadian Journal of Information & Library Sciences/ Revue canadienne des sciences de l'information et de bibliothéconomie*, *18*(1), 1–28. doi:10.21083/partnership.v18i1.7105

Oliver, K. (2024). Keynote. In *MEXINFO — International Symposium on Libraries and Censorship, Mexico City, Mexico, 6–8 August 2024*.

Oltmann, S. M. (2016). 'They kind of rely on the library': School librarians serving LGBT students. *The Journal of Research on Libraries and Young Adults*, *7*(1), 1–21.

Orne, J. (2011). 'You will always have to 'out' yourself': Reconsidering coming out through strategic outness. *Sexualities*, *14*(6), 681–703. doi:10.1177/1363460711420462

Page, A., & Sealy, R. (2021). Topic modelling: A method for analysing corporate gender diversity statements. In *Handbook of research methods on gender and management* (pp. 161–180). doi:10.4337/9781788977937.00019

Palmer, N. A., Kosciw, J. G., Bartkiewicz, M. J., & GLSEN. (2012). Strengths and silences: The experiences of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender students in rural and small town schools. Available at: https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/files/2019-11/Strengths_and_Silences_2012.pdf. Accessed 12 July 2024.

Parks, A. F. (2012). Opening the gate. *Young Adult Library Services*, *10*(4), 22–27.

Passet, J. E. (2012). Hidden in plain sight: Gay and lesbian books in midwestern public libraries, 1900–1969. *Library Trends*, *60*(4), 749–764. doi:10.1353/lib.2012.0010

Pateman, J., & Vincent, J. (2016). *Public libraries and social justice* (1st ed.). doi:10.4324/9781315602905

Pavenick, A., & Martinez, G. (2022). Hearing and being heard: LGBTQIA+ cross-disciplinary collection development. *Collection & Curation*, *41*(4), 109–115. doi:10.1108/CC-07-2021-0021

Pecoskie, J. L., & McKenzie, P. J. (2004). Canadian census data as a tool for evaluating public library holdings of award-winning lesbian fiction. *Canadian Journal of Information &*

Library Sciences/Revue canadienne des sciences de l'information et de bibliothéconomie, *28*(2), 3–23.

Pedregosa, F., Varoquaux, G., Gramfort, A., Michel, V., Thirion, B., Grisel, O., . . . Duchesnay, E. (2011). Scikit-learn: Machine Learning in Python. *Journal of Machine Learning Research*, *12*, 2825–2830.

Pendharkar, E. (2022, September 22). A school librarian pushes back on censorship and gets death threats and online harassment. *Education Week*. Accessed 15 August. Retrieved from https://www.edweek.org/policy-politics/a-school-librarian-pushes-back-on-censorship-and-gets-death-threats-and-online-harassment/2022/09

Peters, M. D. J., Godfrey, C., McInerney, P., Munn, Z., Tricco, A., & Khalil, H. (2020). Scoping reviews. In E. Aromataris, C. Lockwood, K. Porritt, B. Pilla, & Z. Jordan (Eds.), *JBI manual for evidence synthesis*. Adelaide, Australia: Joanna Briggs Institute.

Peterson, M. C. E. (2014). Grassroots and Habermas in West Bend: Some reflections. *Library Trends*, *62*(4), 750–758. doi:10.1353/lib.2014.0012

Philippopoulos, E. (2023). More than just pronouns — gender-neutral and inclusive language in patient education materials: suggestions for patient education librarians. *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, *111*(3), 734–739. doi:10.5195/jmla.2023.1723

Pickering, G. (2023). 'Harmful to minors': How book bans hurt adolescent development. *The Serials Librarian*, *84*(1–4), 32–45. doi:10.1080/0361526X.2023.2245843

Pierce Garry, C. (2015). Selection or censorship? School librarians and LGBTQ resources. *School Libraries Worldwide*, *21*(1), 73–90. doi:10.14265.21.1.005

Pierson, C. M. (2017). Barriers to access and information for the LGBTQ community. *Canadian Journal of Information & Library Sciences/Revue canadienne des sciences de l'information et de bibliothéconomie*, *41*(4), 245–262. doi:10.3138/cjils.41.4.e17023

Pinsky, D., & Brenner, E. (2023). Threats to accessing information about sexuality: Examining the most frequently challenged books in the USA from 2011–2021. *Sex Education*, 1–14. doi:10.1080/14681811.2023.2272126

Pohl, R. F. (2005). *Cognitive illusions: A handbook on fallacies and biases in thinking, judgement and memory*. Hove: Psychology Press.

Preer, J. (2014). Prepare to be challenged! *Library Trends*, *62*(4), 759–770. doi:10.1353/lib.2014.0018

Proctor, J. (2020). Representation in the collection: Assessing coverage of LGBTQ content in an academic library collection. *Collection Management*, *45*(3), 223–234. doi:10.1080/01462679.2019.1708835

Rak, J. (2005). The digital queer: Weblogs and internet identity. *Biography*, *28*(1), 166–182. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/23541119

Rated Books. (2024). Rated books: know before you read. Available at: https://www.ratedbooks.org. Accessed 18 August 2024.

Rauch, E. W. (2011). GLBTQ collections are for every library serving teens! *Teacher Librarian*, *39*(1), 13–16.

Reik, T. (1965). Curiosities of the self: Illusions we have about ourselves. (Chap. The Unreachables: The Repetition Compulsion in Jewish History, p. 133). New York: Farrar, Straus & Giroux.

Ren, X., Alemanne, N. D., & Colson, L. M. (2022). How MLIS programs prepare students to serve diverse populations: The North American context. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*, *63*(3), 301–320. doi:10.3138/jelis-2021-0021

Renninger, B. J. (2015). 'Where I can be myself... where I can speak my mind': Networked counterpublics in a polymedia environment. *New Media & Society*, *17*(9), 1513–1529. doi:10.1177/1461444814530095

Renninger, B. J. (2018). Grindr killed the gay bar, and other attempts to blame social technologies for urban development: A democratic approach to popular technologies and queer sociality. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *66*(12), 1736–1755. doi:10.1080/00918369.2018.1514205

Richardson, D. (2005). Desiring sameness? The rise of a neoliberal politics of normalisation. *Antipode*, *37*(3), 515–535. doi:10.1111/j.0066-4812.2005.00509.x

Richardson, L. (2024). beautifulsoup. Available at: https://pypi.org/project/beautifulsoup4. Version 4.2.13. Accessed 15 March 2024.

Rickman, W. (2015). Collection development behaviors in school librarians: LGBTQQ books and resources. *Knowledge Quest*, *43*(5), 22–27.

Ritchie, C. J. (2001). Collection development of gay/lesbian/bisexual-related adult non-fiction in medium-sized Illinois public libraries. *Illinois Libraries*, *83*(2), 39–62.

Robertson, M. A. (2014). 'How do I know I am gay?': Understanding sexual orientation, identity and behavior among adolescents in an LGBT youth center. *Sexuality & Culture*, *18*, 385–404. doi:10.1007/s12119-013-9203-4

Rogero, T. (2024, July 2). Brazil's unparalleled spate of book bans is a page out of US culture wars. *The Guardian*. Accessed 7 July 2024. Retrieved from https://www.theguardian.com/world/article/2024/jul/02/brazil-book-bans

Rosario, M., Schrimshaw, E. W., & Hunter, J. (2008). Predicting different patterns of sexual identity development over time among lesbian, gay, and bisexual youths: A cluster analytic approach. *American Journal of Community Psychology*, *42*, 266–282. doi:10.1007/s10464-008-9207-7

Rosenberg, S. (2018). Coming In: Queer Narratives of Sexual Self-Discovery. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *65*(13), 1788–1816. doi:10.1080/00918369.2017.1390811

Rothbauer, P. M., & McKechnie, L. E. F. (1999). Gay and lesbian fiction for young adults: A survey of holdings in Canadian public libraries. *Collection Building*, *18*(1), 32–39. doi:10.1108/01604959910256526

Sancho-Brú, E., McIntyre, P., & Raventós, I. B. (2019). Bringing the trans and local community together: The 'Trans Identities and Gender' project. In B. Mehra (Ed.), *LGBTQ+ librarianship in the 21st century: Emerging directions of advocacy*

and community engagement in diverse information environments (pp. 243–270). doi:10.1108/S0065-283020190000045018

Sarles, P. (2022). Book banning in the USA. *Young Adult Library Services*, *20*(3/4), 23–28. Retrieved from http://yalsjournal.ala.org/vol-20-no-3-4-spring-summer-2022/page-23

SBERT.net. (2024). Sentence Transformers. Available at: https://www.sbert.net/. Accessed 10 January 2024.

Scheffey, K., Ogden, S., & Dichter, M. (2019). "The idea of categorizing makes me feel uncomfortable": University student perspectives on sexual orientation and gender identity labeling in the healthcare setting. *Archives of Sexual Behavior*, *48*(5), 1555–1562. doi:10.1007/s10508-019-1401-1

Schrader, A. M. (2007). 'I thought I'd find myself at the library': LGBTQ services & collections in public and school libraries. *PNLA Quarterly*, *72*(1), 4–9.

Schrader, A. M. (2009). Challenging silence, challenging censorship, building resilience: LGBTQ services and collections in public, school and post-secondary libraries. *Feliciter*, *55*(3), 107–109.

Schudson, Z., & van Anders, S. (2019). 'You have to coin new things': Sexual and gender identity discourses in asexual, queer, and/or trans young people's networked counterpublics. *Psychology & Sexuality*, *10*(4), 354–368. doi:10.1080/19419899.2019.1653957

Scoggins, R. (2018). Broadening your library's collection by implementing a LGBTQIA collection development project. *College & Research Libraries News*, *79*(3), 114–126. doi:10.5860/crln.79.3.114

Serebnick, J. (1992). Selection and holdings of small publishers' books in OCLC libraries: A study of the Influence of reviews, publishers, and vendors. *The Library Quarterly*, *62*(3), 259–294. doi:10.1086/602470

Shaffi, S. (2023). Third of UK librarians asked to censor or remove books, research reveals. *The Guardian*. 2023, 20 Apr. Retrieved July 5, 2024, from https://www.theguardian.com/books/2023/apr/20/third-of-uk-librarians-asked-to-censor-or-remove-books-research-reveals

Sheffield, S. (2017). An assessment of frequently challenged LGBTQ* books in Alabama public libraries. *Southeastern Librarian*, *65*(2), 1–14.

Siegel, J. (2007). Let's talk about sex: The librarians' response. *Journal of Hospital Librarianship*, *7*(2), 1–15. doi:10.1300/J186v07n02_01

Siegel, J., Morris, M., & Stevens, G. A. (2020). Perceptions of academic librarians toward LGBTQ information needs: An exploratory study. *College & Research Libraries*, *81*(1), 122–148. doi:10.5860/crl.81.1.122

Smolkin, L. B., & Young, C. A. (2011). Missing mirrors, missing windows: Children's literature textbooks and LGBT topics. *Language Arts*, *88*(3), 217–225. Retrieved from https://www.jstor.org/stable/41804253

Spatz, M. (2014). *The Medical Library Association guide to providing consumer and patient health information*. Lanham, Maryland: Rowman & Littlefield.

Spence, A. (1999). Gay young adult fiction in the public library: A comparative survey. *Public Libraries*, *38*(4), 224–229.

Spence, A. (2000). Controversial books in the public library: A comparative survey of holdings of gay-related children's picture books. *The Library Quarterly*, *70*(3), 335–379. doi:10.1086/603196

Srivastava, A., Hall, W. J., Krueger, E. A., & Goldbach, J. T. (2023). Sexual identity fluidity, identity management stress, and depression among sexual minority adolescents. *Frontiers in Psychology*, *13*, 1075815. doi:10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1075815

Stahl, S. F., & Kushner, J. L. (2014). Be-tzelem elohim — in the image of God: Identifying essential Jewish LGBTQ materials for Jewish libraries. *Judaica Librarianship*, *18*, 15–53. doi:10.14263/2330-2976.1032

Steele, J. E. (2021). Cases of censorship in public libraries: Wichita Falls, TX. *Public Library Quarterly*, *40*(2), 108–124. doi:10.1080/01616846.2019.1692324

Stevens, A., & Frick, K. (2018). Defending intellectual freedom: LGBTQ+ materials in public and school libraries. *Young Adult Library Services*, *17*(1), 35–39.

Stevens, G. A., Morris, M., Nguyen, T., & Vardell, E. (2019). Health sciences librarians in the field: Pioneers for LGBTQ+ health. In B. Mehra (Ed.), *LGBTQ+ librarianship in the 21st century: Emerging directions of advocacy and community engagement in diverse information environments* (Vol. 45, pp. 65–87). doi:10.1108/S0065-283020190000045015

Stewart, J. L., Spivey, L. A., Widman, L., Choukas-Bradley, S., & Prinstein, M. J. (2019). Developmental patterns of sexual identity, romantic attraction, and sexual behavior among adolescents over three years. *Journal of Adolescence*, *77*(1), 90–97. doi:10.1016/j.adolescence.2019.10.006

Stringer-Stanback, K. (2011). Young adult lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning (LGBTQ) non-fiction collections and countywide anti-discrimination policies. *Urban Library Journal*, *17*(1), 1–27. doi:10.31641/ulj170104

Svendsen, S. H. B., Stubberud, E., & Djupedal, E. F. (2018). Becoming queer after homotolerance: Youth affective worlds. In S. Talburt (Ed.), *Youth sexualities: Public feelings and contemporary cultural politics* (pp. 255–278). New York City: Bloomsbury Publishing USA.

Sweetland, J. H., & Christensen, P. G. (1995). Gay, lesbian and bisexual titles: Their treatment in the review media and their selection by libraries. *Collection Building*, *14*(2), 32–41. doi:10.1108/eb023399

Taraba, S. (1990). Collecting gay and lesbian materials in an academic library. In C. Gough & E. Greenblatt (Eds.), *Gay and Lesbian Library Service* (pp. 25–37). Jefferson, NC: McFarland.

Tricco, A. C., Lillie, E., Zarin, W., O'Brien, K. K., Colquhoun, H., Levac, D., ... Weeks, L., et al. (2018). PRISMA extension for scoping reviews (PRISMA-ScR): Checklist and explanation. *Annals of Internal Medicine*, *169*(7), 467–473. doi:10.7326/M18-0850

Trinier, J., Fletcher, C. A., & Halsey, C. (2023, March). Queer(ing) collections: Recommendations for uplifting queer stories. In *Proceedings of the 14th International Conference on Society and Information Technologies (ICSIT 2023)* (pp. 22–26). Inter-

national Institute of Informatics and Cybernetics. doi:10.54808/ICSIT2023.01.22

Tsang, D. (1990). Censorship of lesbian and gay materials by library workers. In E. Greenblatt & C. Gough (Eds.), *Gay and lesbian library service* (pp. 166–170). Jefferson, NC: McFarland.

Tusing, S., & Miller, B. (2019). Baby, I was born this way! How local teens helped a library deliver an LGBTQ collection. *OLA Quarterly*, *25*(4), 35–40. doi:10.5399/osu/1093-7374.25.04.09

UNESCO and IFLA. (2022). IFLA-UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 2022. Available at: https://unesdoc.unesco.org/ark:/48223/pf0000385149. Accessed 5 July 2024.

Vallie, K. E., & Szabo, S. (2022). LGBTQ+ books within middle school libraries and how librarians promote these LGBTQ+ books to students. In A. Sanders, L. Isbell, & K. Dixon (Eds.), *Incorporating LGBTQ+ identities in K-12 curriculum and policy* (pp. 387–404). doi:10.4018/978-1-7998-1404-7.ch010

Veritas Health Innovation. (2024). Covidence. Available at: https://covidence.org. Accessed 10 January 2024.

Vissing, Y., & Juchniewicz, M. (2023). Children's book banning, censorship and human rights. In J. Zajda, P. Hallam, & J. Whitehouse (Eds.), *Globalisation, values education and teaching democracy* (pp. 181–201). doi:10.1007/978-3-031-15896-4_12

Wakeford, N. (2002). New technologies and cyber-queer research. In D. Richardson & S. Seidman (Eds.), *Handbook of lesbian and gay studies* (pp. 115–144). Sage.

Waldham, P. (2021). Conservatives embrace safe spaces and trigger warnings. *Washington Post*. 2021, 27 Oct. Retrieved August 2, 2024, from https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/2021/10/27/safe-spaces-trigger-warnings

Walters, J. (2022). Out of many, one: Practicing defensive librarianship. *Children & Libraries: The Journal of the Association for Library Service to Children*, *20*(4), 5–7. doi:10.5860/cal.20.4.5

Wang, S., Scells, H., Koopman, B., & Zuccon, G. (2023). Can ChatGPT write a good boolean query for systematic review literature search? In *Proceedings of the 46th International ACM SIGIR Conference on Research and Development in Information Retrieval* (pp. 1426–1436). doi:10.1145/3539618.3591703

Warner, M. (1993). Introduction. In M. Warner (Ed.), *Fear of a queer planet: Queer politics and social theory* (pp. vii–xxxi). Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press.

Weber, M. (2019, April). *"With God's people": Individual paths and communal belonging at an LGBTQ+ church* (BA Dissertation, Haverford College Department of Religion, Haverford, PA). Available at: https://scholarship.tricolib.brynmawr.edu/items/a00cbd71-ca4e-481d-961f-356341918cb3.

Wexelbaum, R. (2014). LGBTIQ librarians and workplace issues. In E. Greenblatt (Ed.), *Serving LGBTIQ library and archives users: Essays on outreach, service, collections and access* (pp. 283–297). Jefferson, NC: McFarland.

Wexelbaum, R. (2018). Do libraries save LGBT students? *Library Management*, *39*(1/2), 31–58. doi:10.1108/LM-02-2017-0014

Whelan, D. L. (2006). Out and ignored: Why are so many school libraries reluctant to embrace gay teens? *School Library Journal*, *52*(1), 46–51.

Whitt, A. J. (1993). The information needs of lesbians. *Library & Information Science Research*, *15*(3), 275–288.

Wienke, C., & Hill, G. J. (2013). Does place of residence matter? Rural–urban differences and the wellbeing of gay men and lesbians. *Journal of Homosexuality*, *60*(9), 1256–1279. doi:10.1080/00918369.2013.806166

Wikipedia. (2024a). Gay–straight alliance. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Gay-straight_alliance. Accessed 18 August 2024.

Wikipedia. (2024b). Historically black colleges and universities. Available at: https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Historically_black_colleges_and_universities. Accessed 18 August 2024.

Williams, V. K., & Deyoe, N. (2015). Controversy and diversity: LGBTQ titles in academic library youth collections. *Library Resources & Technical Services*, *59*(2), 62–71. doi:10.5860/lrts.59n2.62

Willis, A. (2004). The greatest taboo and the HBCU. *Against the Grain*, *16*(1), 34–38. doi:10.7771/2380-176x.5412

Wong, J. (2024). Calls to ban books are on the rise in Canada. So is the opposition to any bans. Available at: https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/freedomtoreadweek-schools-1.7106913/. Accessed 5 July 2024.

Zyp–van der Laan, M. (2024). Recording censorship challenges in libraries — does your national library association need a register? In *MEXINFO — International Symposium on Libraries and Censorship, Mexico City, Mexico, 6–8 August 2024*.

Appendix 1

```
    (TI lgb OR TI lgbt* OR TI 2SLGBTQ* OR TI glbt OR TI gay OR TI bisexual* OR TI
homosexual* OR TI two-spirit* OR TI lesbian* OR TI transsexual* OR TI transgender* OR
TI intersex* OR TI queer* OR TI "men who have sex with men" OR TI "men having sex with
men" OR genderqueer OR TI non-binary OR TI "sexual minorit*" OR TI "gender minorit*" OR
TI "gender diverse" OR TI "sexually diverse"


    OR

    AB lgb OR AB lgbt* OR AB 2SLGBTQ* OR AB glbt OR AB gay OR AB bisexual* OR AB
homosexual* OR AB two-spirit* OR AB lesbian* OR AB transsexual* OR AB transgender* OR
AB intersex* OR AB queer* OR AB "men who have sex with men" OR AB "men having sex with
men" OR genderqueer OR AB non-binary OR AB "sexual minorit*" OR AB "gender minorit*" OR
AB "gender diverse" OR AB "sexually diverse"

    OR

    SU lgb OR SU lgbt* OR SU 2SLGBTQ* OR SU glbt OR SU gay OR SU bisexual* OR SU
homosexual* OR SU "same sex" OR SU two-spirit* OR SU lesbian* OR SU transsexual* OR SU
transgender* OR SU intersex* OR SU queer* OR SU "men who have sex with men" OR SU "men
having sex with men" OR SU non-binary OR SU "sexual minorit*" OR SU "gender minorit*"
OR SU "gender diverse" OR SU "sexually diverse"

    OR

    MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("LGBTQ people") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Transgender persons") OR
MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Gays & lesbians") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("LGBTQ community") OR
MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("LGBTQ students"))

    AND

    (TI (library OR libraries OR librarian*) OR AB (library OR libraries OR librarian*)
OR TI (information N3 (behaviour* OR behavior* OR study OR studies OR science OR
literac* OR use OR practice* OR seeking)) OR AB (information N3 (behaviour* OR
behavior* OR study OR studies OR science OR literac* OR use OR practice* OR seeking))

    OR

    MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Library collections") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Reserve
collections") OR MAINSUBJECT.EXACT("Special collections"))
```

Listing 1: *Example search strategy for LISTA/EBSCO*

Appendix 2

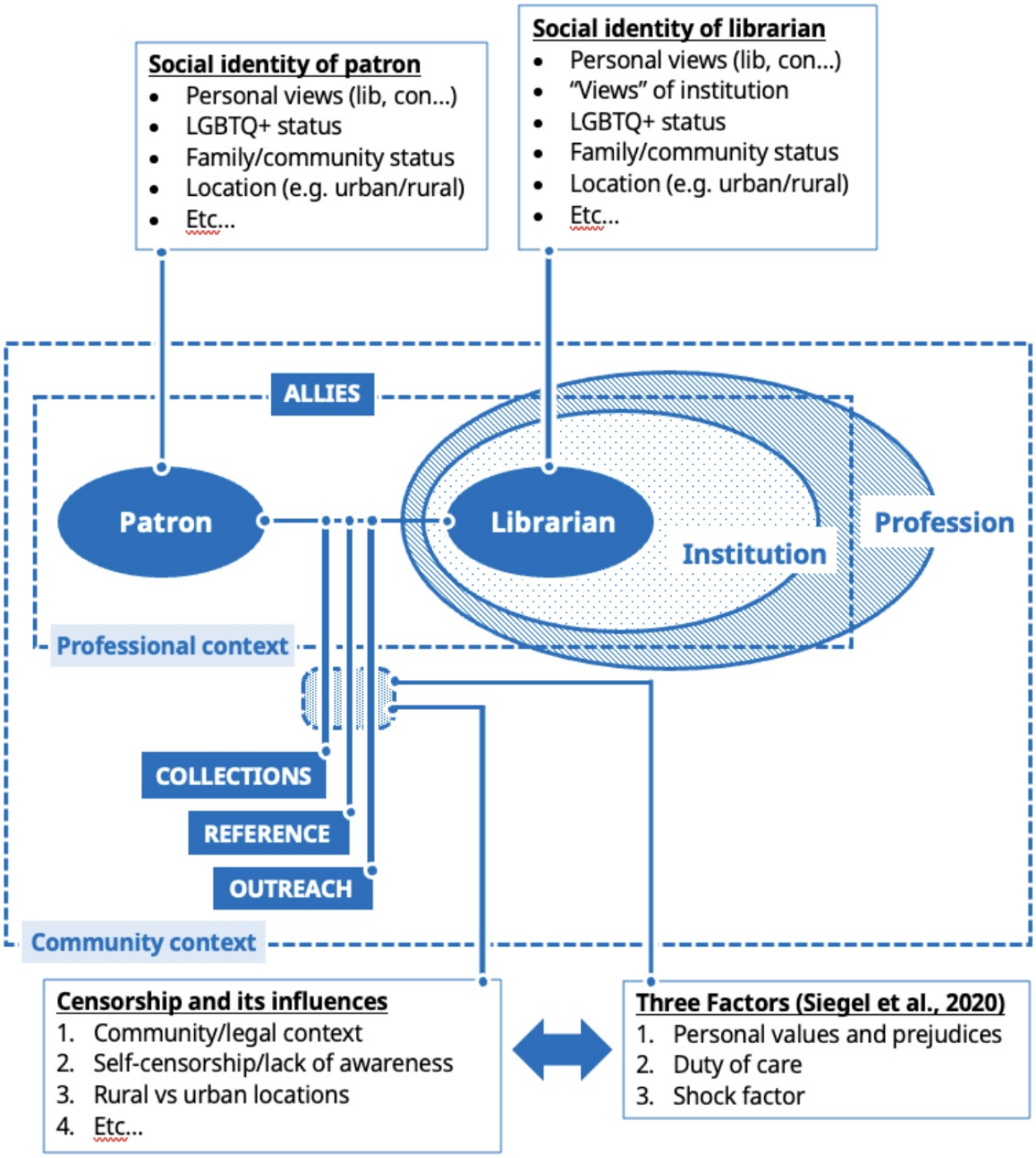

Figure 8: *Framework status after paused human-mediated synthesis*

Appendix 3

```python
#!/usr/bin/env python
# coding: utf-8

import sys, os, plotly, nltk
import pandas as pd
import numpy as np
import matplotlib.pyplot as plt
import seaborn as sns
from io import StringIO
from bertopic import BERTopic
from umap import UMAP
from hdbscan import HDBSCAN
from bertopic.representation import MaximalMarginalRelevance
from sklearn.feature_extraction.text import CountVectorizer
from sentence_transformers import SentenceTransformer
from transformers import pipeline
from bertopic.vectorizers import ClassTfidfTransformer
from pathlib import Path

with open('combined_full_texts.txt') as f_in: # Input combined texts
pub_data = list(line for line in (l.strip() for l in f_in) if line)  # Clean-up

embedding_model = SentenceTransformer("all-mpnet-base-v2")

umap_model = UMAP(
n_neighbors = 15, n_components = 2,
min_dist = 0.1, metric='euclidean',
random_state = 26)    # For reproducibility

hdbscan_model = HDBSCAN(
min_cluster_size = 10, min_samples = 5,
metric = 'euclidean', cluster_selection_method = 'eom',
prediction_data = True)

vectorizer_model = CountVectorizer(stop_words = "english")
ctfidf_model = ClassTfidfTransformer()
representation_model = MaximalMarginalRelevance(diversity = 0.3)

topic_model = BERTopic(
embedding_model = embedding_model,    # Step 1 - Extract embeddings
umap_model = umap_model,              # Step 2 - Reduce dimensionality
hdbscan_model = hdbscan_model,        # Step 3 - Cluster reduced embeddings
vectorizer_model = vectorizer_model,  # Step 4 - Tokenize topics
ctfidf_model = ctfidf_model,          # Step 5 - Extract topic words
representation_model = representation_model, # Step 6 - Diversify topic words
calculate_probabilities = True, verbose = True, language='english')

topic_model.visualize_topics()
```

Listing 2: *Python wrapper script used for BERTopic analysis*

Appendix 4

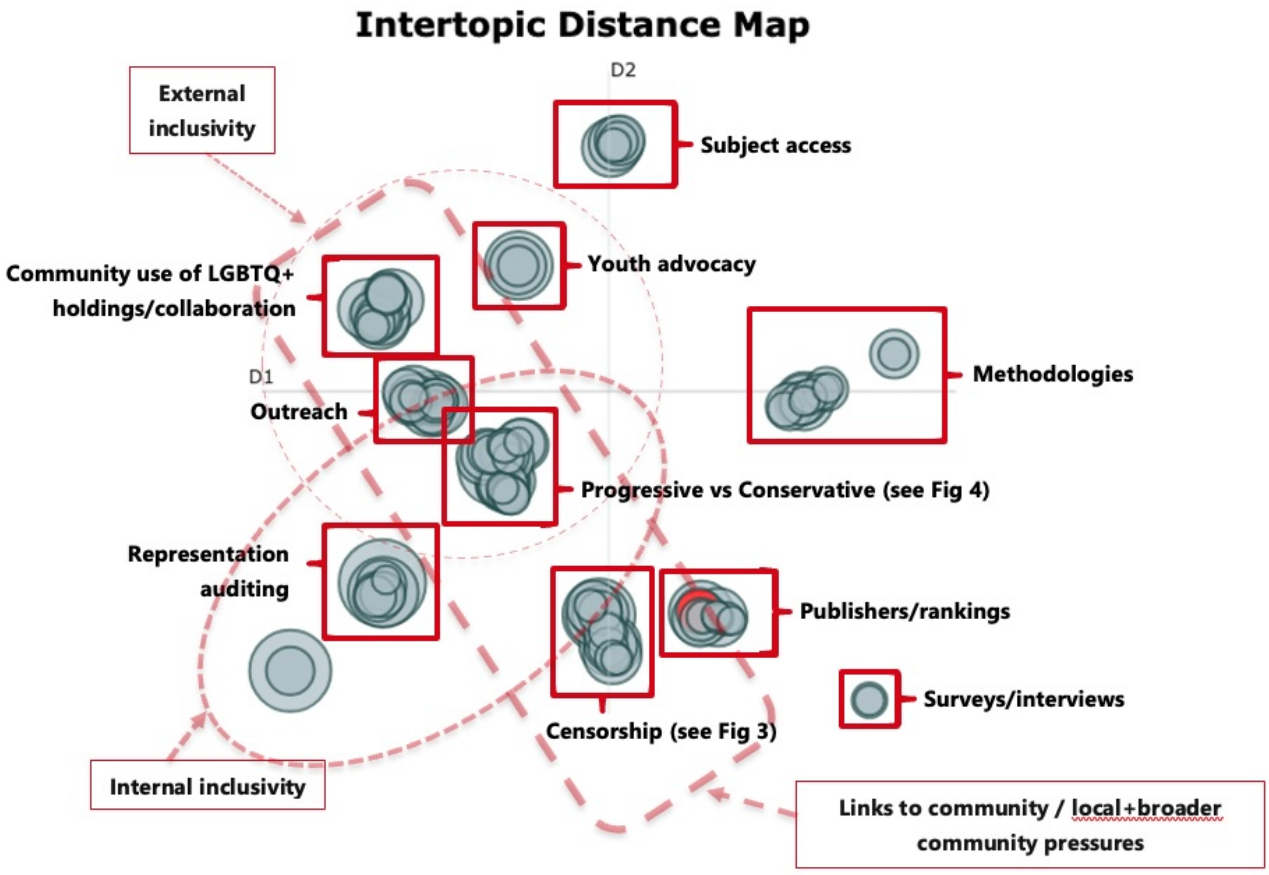

Figure 9: *Annotated raw output from topic model*

Appendix 5

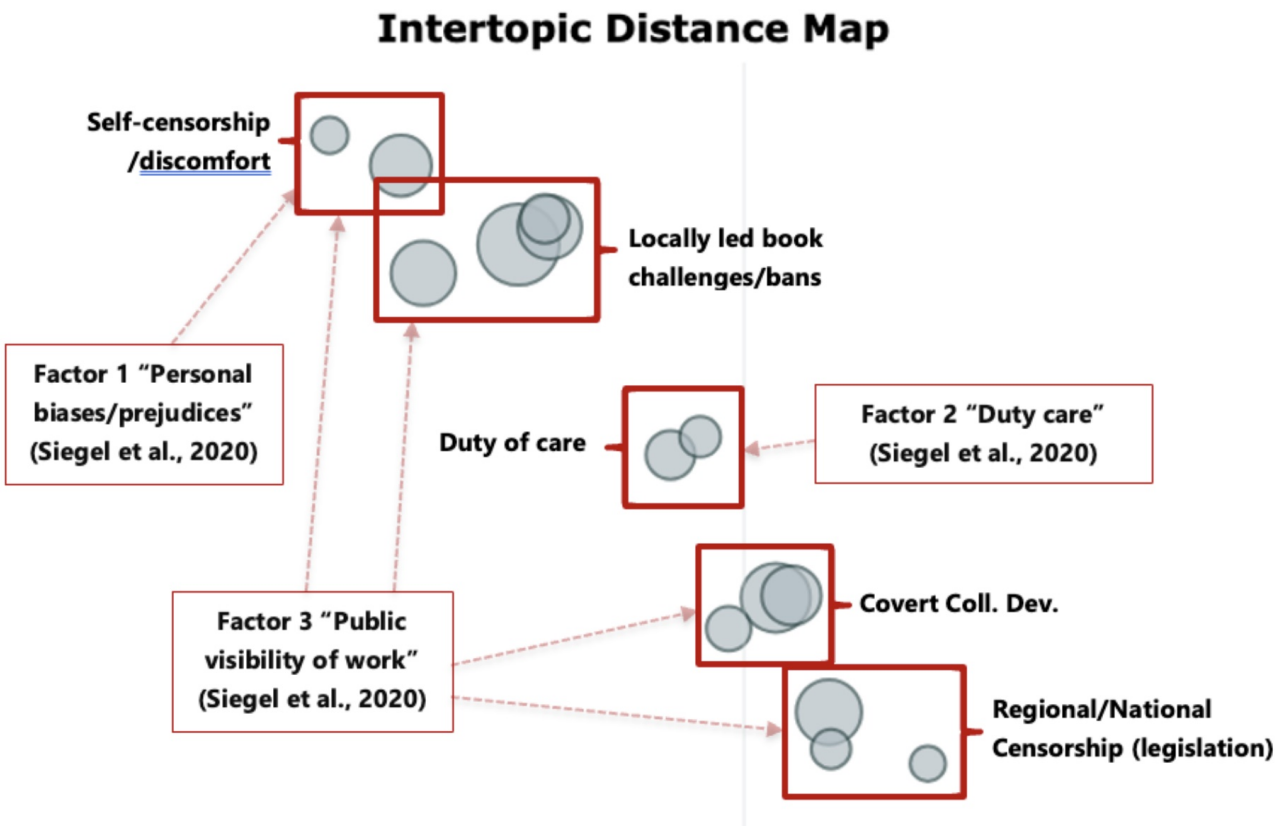

Figure 10: *Annoted raw output from 'censorship continuum' cluster*