Fall 2023

ENG 110

Claire Alexander-Joly

Should LGBTQ Books Ever Be Removed from the Shelves?

Research question:

Is there ever a reasonable cause for removing books about LGBTQ experiences from the shelves?

Annotated Bibliography:

Citation 1: Perfas, Samantha Laine. “LGBTQ Book Challenges Are on the Rise. Here’s Why.” *Harvard Gazette*, Harvard Gazette, 29 June 2023, [news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2023/06/lgbtq-book-challenges-are-on-the-rise-heres-why/.](https://news.harvard.edu/gazette/story/2023/06/lgbtq-book-challenges-are-on-the-rise-heres-why/)

In this article, the author describes a situation in which an openly transgender athlete—Schuyler Bailar—wrote a novel. Outrage ensued within certain groups, which led to the book being banned in several states because of the discussion on gender identity. Kids need to understand who they are, and these books can help them understand themselves better. The article also outlines that most LGBTQ books are challenged because of sexual content, although some bans are to block children from reading about LGBTQ people altogether.

This source outlines the theory that LGBTQ books should be banned for sexual content, even though no sexual content is shown within some books. Thus, preventing kids—who may feel the same as these authors—from understanding how they feel or who they are.

Citation 2: Natanson, Hannah. “Objection to Sexual, LGBTQ Content Propels Spike in Book Challenges.” *The Washington Post*, WP Company, 13 July 2023, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2023/05/23/lgbtq-book-ban-challengers/>

It is no secret that parents do not want their children to be exposed to sexually explicit material at a young age. The views on what is sexually explicit have become skewed, mixing in LGBTQ topics. Out of 986 novels challenged from 2021-2022, about 601 novels describe sexual themes while 182 novels included LGBTQ topics. 114 of those LGBTQ novels were also categorized as sexual, while the other 68 novels are challenged for just including discussion of sexuality and gender. One example of a challenging book was *Call Me Max.* Some challenged this book in fear that its main idea was to force their children to question their gender identity.

This source is vital in outlining the reasoning behind some banning or challenging of novels. Even though some novels are banned due to descriptions of LGBTQ ideas and characters—even without any sexual content—the main cause of banning LGBTQ novels is topics of sexual explicitness.

Etc.

Thesis:

The only reasonable cause to remove books from shelves is for sexually explicit imagery.