

7-2-2017

## An Assessment of Frequently Challenged LGBTQ\* Books in Alabama Public Libraries

Sonja Sheffield

*University of Southern Mississippi*, [sonja.sheffield@eagles.usm.edu](mailto:sonja.sheffield@eagles.usm.edu)

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/seln>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

---

### Recommended Citation

Sheffield, Sonja (2017) "An Assessment of Frequently Challenged LGBTQ\* Books in Alabama Public Libraries," *The Southeastern Librarian*: Vol. 65 : Iss. 2 , Article 2.

Available at: <https://digitalcommons.kennesaw.edu/seln/vol65/iss2/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Southeastern Librarian by an authorized editor of DigitalCommons@Kennesaw State University. For more information, please contact [digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu](mailto:digitalcommons@kennesaw.edu).

# An Assessment of Frequently Challenged LGBTQ\* Books in Alabama Public Libraries

Sonja Sheffield

Sonja Sheffield is currently the Fortified Coordinator at Bethel Engineering and 2016 MLIS graduate from the University of Southern Mississippi. She can be reached at [Sonja.sheffield@eagles.usm.edu](mailto:Sonja.sheffield@eagles.usm.edu).

## INTRODUCTION

Libraries are often seen as safe places for all people in a community. Libraries draw in diverse members of the community who all feel generally safe in the public space (Leckie and Hopkins, 2002, p. 353). Libraries often strive to be places of “no judgment” where all are treated equally and can have their information needs met in an unbiased fashion (American Library Association, 2006). There are also initiatives in many libraries to serve various marginalized groups in a community, such as immigrants (Shen, 2013), those with disabilities (Ross and Atkin, 2002), and the homeless (Ayers, 2006).

Though civil rights for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning or Queer and \*other individuals (LGBTQ\*, Chapman and Birdi, 2016, p 2) people have advanced greatly in the last 20 years, they are still often marginalized in many communities (Kite and Bryant-Lees, 2016, p. 166). The inclusion of information and reading material for this group is of great importance in public libraries. This is because, in some communities, LGBTQ\* individuals may otherwise have very little access to these materials. This study will attempt to look at the public libraries in Alabama with focus on their service to the LGBTQ\* community through an assessment of LGBTQ\* challenged books available in each library.

### *Problem Statement*

As a state located in the heart of the Bible Belt, one might expect library access to LGBTQ\* books to be limited. This survey focusing on county public library systems only, suggests that many such libraries may be more open to providing access to LGBTQ\* books than expected. This survey may provide some tentative conclusions.

This study determined the number (and percentage) of books with LGBTQ\* content on the ALA most challenged books list then examined how many and which of these books are in the collections of public libraries of Alabama.

### *Research Questions*

R1. How many and which of the top ten most challenged books listed by ALA in the last fifteen years have been challenged because of LGBTQ\* subject matter?

R2. Of these, how many of Alabama’s county public library systems have these books?

R3. How many copies are in each library’s collection and in what format are they available?

### *Assumptions*

It was assumed that the library Online Public Access Catalogs (OPACs) in this study are cataloged accurately so that relevant books in the collections can be accessed. It was also assumed that the books that are challenged for ‘homosexuality’ do indeed have LGBTQ\* characters or topics included in them.

### *Importance of the Study*

Findings of this study may help researchers understand the basic availability of LGBTQ\* materials in a single, mostly rural, southern state. Those who may find this study of interest include collection development librarians, library managers, social workers working with LGBTQ\* individuals and school officials interested in the availability of resources for LGBTQ\* students.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### *Censorship*

Censorship is an age-old tradition in countless cultures for numerous reasons. From as early as Plato in the 300’s B.C., to the censorship committees of the 1500’s, to modern day, various writings have been banned (Connelly, 2009, p. 84). Removing information from the public has been done by governments (Maret, 2011), community groups and individuals (Gaffney, 2014, pg. 731-732). Governments that pursue censorship may be motivated by a wide variety of reasons including the following: protection of sensitive information such as in the military or intelligence service and removing materials that a government does not want distributed to the general populace for reasons of controlling the public (Maret, 2011, pg. 208). Others who advocate for removing materials often consider certain topics, information or beliefs to be morally offensive (Connelly, 2009, p. 84).

Information that is censored often surrounds hotly contested or highly emotional issues or is considered dangerous by a group in power. For example, during the Cold War, information about communism was often censored. This was often done by preventing information from ever reaching the United States rather than directly removing materials from the library, but the effect -was the

same (Richards, 2001, p. 198). Another example of government censorship can be seen in the ban on teaching slaves how to read before the U.S. Civil War for fear that it would make them dissatisfied with their station in life and possibly even rebel (Morris, 1996, pg. 347). In this case all information available to an entire population was restricted.

In public libraries in the United States, the most common reason to challenge a book is because it is seen as offensive to a group of people (ALA, 2002, p. 366-369 as cited by American Library Association, n.d.) Despite recent gains in civil rights, the LGBTQ\* community still suffers discrimination (Kite and Bryant-Lees, 2016, p. 166). From the milestone decision of the American Psychiatric Association declaring that it would no longer consider homosexuality a mental illness in 1973 (Drescher, 2015, p. 565), to legalized marriage (e.g. United States v. Windsor, 2013), things have changed greatly in a short period of time. Because of increased visibility, there are now more books and materials available to the LGBTQ\* community and this increase in visibility has made the LGBTQ\* community, despite making great gains, a target of discrimination and censorship (Burke, 2008, p. 248).

Members of the LGBTQ\* community have often looked to books for information about themselves and to understand their own emotions (Passet, 2012, p.750). If a library is to meet the needs of all members of a community, those members that may be marginalized may have an even higher need to have materials available to them. Reading with characters that share an LGBTQ\* individual's orientation or gender identity or learning about others that are also members of the LGBTQ\* community can help that person to feel average, a part of a society, safer and accepted (Leviathan, 2004, p. 45; Passet, 2012, p. 762). This can be crucial to the development and even survival of LGBTQ\* people. Members of the LGBTQ\* community have higher suicide rates and are still often targeted for violence (Vincent, 2015, p. 285).

### *Collection Assessment of LGBTQ\* Materials*

There have been several different assessments of LGBTQ\* materials available in various public libraries. Rothbauer and McKechnie's (1999) survey of forty Canadian Libraries used a list of forty LGBTQ\* titles drawn from Jenkins (1998) "authoritative and comprehensive bibliography of ninety-nine fiction titles for young adults with gay and lesbian themes" (p. 33). Also in 1999, Spence did a survey of urban public libraries in Canada and the United States. In this case nineteen libraries' collections were assessed and all ninety-nine of the Jenkins (1998) bibliography titles were used. In the United Kingdom, Chapman and Birdi (2016, p. 18) used a checklist of LGBTQ\* books made up of titles drawn from various booklists and bibliographies and then double checked the list and sent it to "key professionals in LGBTQ\*" fields (p. 9) for feedback. Chapman and Birdi identified 476 fiction titles for their study. All of these studies found that LGBTQ\* holdings were inconsistent across libraries, even those of similar size, and that almost all libraries had

relatively small holdings compared to holdings for other groups.

There is a paucity of data about LGBTQ\* materials available at libraries in the southeast. One study examined whether having anti-discrimination ordinances affecting LGBTQ\* communities had any effect on the amount of LGBTQ\* materials in the public libraries (Stringer-Stanback, 2011). This study looked only at the most populous, and therefore the most urban, counties. The question was not whether any library had adequate materials, though a reader could certainly draw conclusions on their own, but whether an official mandate to not discriminate against LGBTQ\* persons changed the amount of materials available to those persons. In this case, the law made little difference.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Sources of information*

One primary source of information for this study included the American Library Association's website listing the "Top Ten Frequently Challenged Books Lists of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" (ALA, 2016) for the list of titles that were searched for among the public libraries of Alabama. A list of Alabama counties was used from CountyState Info Web Site (CountyState Info, 2013) to make a list of potential county-wide library systems to assess. Each county in Alabama was searched using Breeding's Library Technology Guide (n.d.) and Google to determine whether or not there is a county-wide OPAC.

### *Procedure*

The stated reasons for the challenges of the books listed in the American Library Association's "Top Ten Frequently Challenged Books Lists of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" was evaluated to determine if the book was challenged because of LGBTQ\* content. A list of these titles was compiled along with the number of times and years in which each book made the top ten list.

Second a search of the Internet for public libraries in each Alabama county was performed. Alabama has sixty-seven counties. By searching the Internet and using Library Technology Guides (Breeding, n.d.) it was found that only a small number of counties, eleven (16%) had a county-wide OPAC. Six (9%) of the OPACs search several libraries (though not all libraries) in a given county, and were also included in this assessment. Several sparsely populated counties have only one library and in eight (12%) that single library had an OPAC. One county (Escambia) has several libraries, but the only OPAC belongs to the county-wide "books by mail" program. This OPAC was included as well. In total, twenty-six OPACs representing thirty-nine percent of Alabama counties were used for this study.

Each OPAC was searched for each title compiled from ALA's list of challenged books. Finally, when a library was found to have a title, the number of copies, location of copies (if applicable), the accessibility of the title and the format of the copies were noted. Collection assessment data were collected and compiled in an Excel file and analyzed to address each research question.

### **Limitations**

Because this study was only performed in Alabama and only in county libraries, the findings cannot be generalized to include other public library systems within or outside of the state of Alabama. Also, because only titles on the ALA's most frequently challenged book list were searched for in this study, the study cannot be generalized to include other types of materials or all LGBTQ\* books. This study's purpose was to take a preliminary look at LGBTQ\* resources available in Alabama. It did not look at library collections in other states, libraries other than public libraries, or other community resources. It also focused on only county library systems. The resources in this study included only the most frequently challenged ALA books that were challenged because of homosexuality and does not include other resources such as movies or periodicals. This study also does not explore the reasons behind the lack of LGBTQ\* materials approximated by this study; it does not address differences in population between libraries, budgets or local laws that may affect the number of LGBTQ\* titles held.

### **RESULTS**

#### ***R1. How many and which of the top ten most challenged books listed by ALA in the last fifteen years have been challenged because of LGBTQ\* subject matter?***

The American Library Association's "Top Ten Frequently Challenged Books Lists of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century" contains only books challenged from 2001 through 2015. Furthermore, the Office of Intellectual Freedom, the arm of the ALA that collects data about challenged books, did not start collecting data until 1990, so there is no comparable data before that year (ALA, 2016).

ALA's website lists the top ten challenged books for each year listed. Many of the titles are challenged several years in a row, and are often challenged for a number a reasons each time. In total, seventy-three separate titles made up the top ten list over fifteen years (ALA, 2016, see Appendix A). ALA lists the reasons that a book was challenged and they include "sexually explicit", "offensive language", "unsuited to age group", "violence", "homosexuality", "occult/Satanism", "racism", "political viewpoint", "religious viewpoint", "drugs/alcohol/smoking", "suicide" and "anti-family" (ALA, 2016). For the purposes of this study, the "homosexuality" tag was the one of interest. From 2001 to 2015, sixteen books (22%) on ALA's top ten list were challenged for homosexuality (Table 1.).

There appears to be no significant change in the number of titles challenged for homosexuality over the years based on the data used in this assessment (Figure 1.). The number of  
*The Southeastern Librarian, Vol. 65, no. 2, Summer 2017*

books challenged for homosexual content from 2001 to 2015 ranged from one to five. The most number of books challenged for homosexual content per any given year was two; with five years having just two challenges for homosexual content in the top ten list. There does seem to be a peak in challenges from 2006 to 2009, but it is unclear why. An examination of a Timeline of LGBT History (Pride Center, n.d.) shows that rights, court cases and other news stories does not show an obvious link to this peak, though further research may be warranted.

#### ***R2. Of these, how many of Alabama's county public library systems have these books?***

Twenty-six of sixty-seven (39%) Alabama counties were represented in this assessment. All of the counties assessed had at least one of the challenged books available for check out. There was a wide variety of challenged books held. No title was held by all of the libraries assessed; however, all of the titles searched for were held in at least one library. Macon County had the least number of challenged titles, having only one (6.25%) of the challenged titles. Jefferson County held the highest, fourteen of sixteen titles (87.5%) (Figure 2.)

Though all of the libraries assessed had at least one challenged book, there was quite a range of the number of titles and books held across that state. The population of the counties assessed ranged from 658,466 in Jefferson County, which is also home to the largest city in Alabama, Birmingham, to 11,670 in Wilcox County according to the 2010 U.S. Census (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.). Though Jefferson County had the highest percentage of challenged titles held (88%), Wilcox County was not the lowest, though it was at the low end at twenty-five percent. Examining population size may not be the complete answer. The 2010 U.S. Census also looked at population density, which can give an idea about how urban or rural a county is overall. Again, Jefferson County had the highest density at about five hundred and ninety-three people per square mile, with Wilcox County the most sparsely populated at a density of about thirteen people per square mile (U.S. Census Bureau, n.d.) The total population of a county was a good predictor of the population density. Though there was some variation, the relationship is more or less linear (Figure 3.). The library with the lowest number of titles, Macon County, is an outlier. No other county system has less than twenty-five percent of the challenged titles held.

It is uncertain why the number is so low in Macon County. There can be a whole host of reasons, including budget cuts, lack of purchasing new titles across the library system or even a reluctance to purchase books with LGBTQ\* themes because bias within the predominately African-American community (Lewis, 2003, p. 75).

### **R3. How many copies are in each library's collection and in what format are they available?**

All of the books listed as challenged for "homosexuality" on ALA's top ten list were held by at least one of the libraries. The total number of copies held over the twenty-six county library systems assessed was 1,356. Of these, the most common form was a physical book. There were 1,226 books (90% of all copies) in all libraries. There were also ninety-one audio books (7%), one of those being an e-audio book, and thirty-nine e-books (3%) available (see Figure 4., Appendix B.).

Most frequently, only one copy of an individual title was held; however, as many as fifty-two copies for a series and twenty-three copies of a single book were held. Most of these copies were easily accessible, though there were a small number of books that were not in the regular stacks for check out. In one library, two of the copies of one title were in reference; though this same system had seven other books available for check out. In one other case, a library had its single copy of the challenged title behind the circulation desk. It was able to be checked out, but it would have to be asked for by the patron. In the final example of a book not being readily accessible, the only copy of the challenged title was in storage. It appears to be able to be checked out, but it would also have to be requested by the patron.

The total number of copies available across the counties varied quite a bit and was not directly related to population size. There is a general trend showing that the greater the population, the greater the number of challenged titles held (Figure 3.). However, the number of total copies was more variable. Population was not as reliable an indicator when looking at the total number of copies available in a library system (Figure 5.).

## **DISCUSSION**

There was a wide range of findings. Ten of twenty-six (38%) systems assessed in this study owned less than fifty percent of the challenged titles (Figure 2.). One county held only one of the titles and only a single copy of that title. Another had one hundred and forty-nine copies of fourteen of the sixteen titles (Figure 6.). Most of the copies available were easily accessible for check out as they were not in reference, on reserve nor had any barrier to patron use. There were also a fair number of e-books available allowing users the ability to check out and read books fairly anonymously, however, owning or borrowing the means to do so is still a barrier in some places (Acedo & Leverkus, 2014, p. 50).

Though they accounted for only four of 1,356 copies, some books were not freely available on the shelves for patrons to check out (Appendix B.). Two copies of nine copies of *It's Perfectly Normal* were in reference in Marshall County, the only copy of *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* was in storage/on reserve in Etowah County, and the only copy of *It's Perfectly Normal* was behind the circulation desk in

Chambers County. Though the two copies of *It's Perfectly Normal* are in reference and cannot be checked out, Marshall County has seven other copies that are on the shelf and able to be checked out directly by patrons. In this case, the two copies in reference may give more patrons access, because they can still find the information that they are looking for even if the title is checked out. It is unclear why Etowah County's only copy of *The Perks of Being a Wallflower* is in storage/on reserve or why Chambers County's only copy of *It's Perfectly Normal* is behind the circulation desk. Though it appears that both books are able to be checked out, requiring patrons to request a book is a form of a barrier to access. According to ALA's page on Restricted Access,

Physical restrictions and content filtering of library resources and services may generate psychological, service, or language skills barriers to access as well. Because restricted materials often deal with controversial, unusual, or sensitive subjects, having to ask a library worker for access to them may be embarrassing or inhibiting for patrons desiring access (2014). Putting restrictions on books may be the result of 'covert censorship according to Moody (2005). Books may be targets of censorship not based on a particular librarian's opinions, but on the "perceived 'community standards'" (Moody, 2005, p 142). It is unclear what the case is in Etowah and Chambers Counties, but there does seem to be an attempt to add a level of difficulty to checking out these two titles.

There were some books that were surprisingly not held by all libraries, despite the popularity of the books with the general public. First, there were no copies of *The Color Purple* by Alice Walker in the Macon County library system. Also, the absence of *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou in the Fayette and Escambia County systems was unexpected. Though these books were challenged for homosexual content, as well as various other complaints, they have been nominated for or won several literary awards (NBF, n.d.; Pulitzer Prize, n.d.). There are several possible reasons for this absence. The books could have worn out, or rarely checked out and weeded as a result. They may have been lost or missing and not replaced. It is unclear whether the libraries in question ever had copies of these classic titles, so no assumption can be made that they were never purchased or removed from the shelves as a result of patron complaints.

The number of challenged titles held varied widely across the collections assessed. The county with the lowest number of titles and copies was Macon County with only one copy of a single title. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (USCB, n.d.), Macon County has about 19,000 residents. More than eighty percent of the population is African American, less than twenty percent have education beyond high school, and roughly thirty-two percent live in poverty. The county with the highest percentage of challenged titles was Jefferson County, which had fourteen of the searched titles (88%). Montgomery County held the

highest number of copies of a single title at one hundred and sixty-six to the second place one hundred and forty-nine held by Jefferson County. Jefferson County has an approximate population of 658,000, is seventy-seven percent white, almost thirty percent of residents have a bachelor's degree, or higher, and just fourteen percent live in poverty (USCB, n.d.). Whether all of these factors, one factor or a combination of other factors, lead to what appears to be quite a wide discrepancy in materials serving the LGBTQ\* community would be a question for a future study.

## CONCLUSIONS

There are several reasons to think that the presence of LGBTQ\* materials in Alabama would be limited. Alabama is in the heart of the Bible Belt, a place well known for its cultural and social conservatism, including widespread disapproval of LGBTQ\* individuals (Lennon-Dearing & Delavega, 2016, p. 1171-1172). Alabama has even had a state legislator attempt to ban any public monies being used to purchase books with LGBTQ\* topics or characters (Barack, 2005, p. 24). However, this study suggests that despite this, access to LGBTQ\* books may not be quite as restrictive as might have been predicted.

This study assessed the availability of LGBTQ\* materials in a sampling of Alabama public libraries based on the number and percentage of books with LGBTQ\* content on the ALA most challenged books list. The results showed that the number of books challenged from 2001 to 2015 was relatively steady over the short period for which information is available. All Alabama counties assessed

had at least one challenged title in their collection and all counties, except one, had a minimum of twenty-five percent of the titles. In all of the counties considered, there were a total of 1,356 copies of books challenged for homosexual content. Most were easily available for check-out as books, audio-books or e-books, but there were a small number of cases where the book was restricted.

There are several questions that may be worth pursuing. Will adding more years of challenged books change the results? Additional years of books challenged for homosexual content may show stronger trends in libraries or in patterns of challenges. A more complete survey of all books with homosexual content or characters may also be useful to fully understanding the materials available, or not, to the LGBTQ\* community across the state. An attempt to understand why there is discrepancy between library systems' abilities to serve their local LGBTQ\* community and how to change this would be a wide-ranging, but useful topic. Possibly a closer look at libraries that seem to be restricting access to a controversial book by placing barriers to the information may show a pattern of restriction, or that these particular books were exceptions. Looking more closely at why some libraries have a larger number of challenged books may also be productive. Understanding the reasons for lack of materials, whether local values, budgetary considerations, or other reasons, may be useful to helping LGBTQ\* people connect to resources more effectively in their communities. Expanding this search to other types of libraries may also give more insight to the total resources of LGBTQ\* members of various communities.

Table 1. Books Challenged on Grounds of Homosexuality.

Title	Year Challenged														
	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015
Alice (series)	X	X	X			X					X			X	
And Tango Makes Three [2005]						X	X	X	X	X		X		X	
Athletic Shorts [1991]						X									
Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out [2014]															X
Gossip Girl (series) [2002-2009]						X		X			X				
I Am Jazz [2014]															X
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings [1969]	X	X		X			X								
It's Perfectly Normal [1994, 2009]			X		X		X							X	
King & King [2002]			X	X											
My Sister's Keeper [2004]									X						
Revolutionary Voices [2000]										X					
The Color Purple [1982]							X		X						
The Kite Runner [2003]								X				X		X	
The Perks of Being a Wallflower [1999]				X		X	X	X	X				X	X	
Two Boys Kissing [2013]															X
Uncle Bobby's Wedding [2008]								X							
<b>TOTAL TITLES CHALLENGED</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>3</b>

Figure 1. Number of Titles Challenged for 'Homosexuality' from 2001-2015

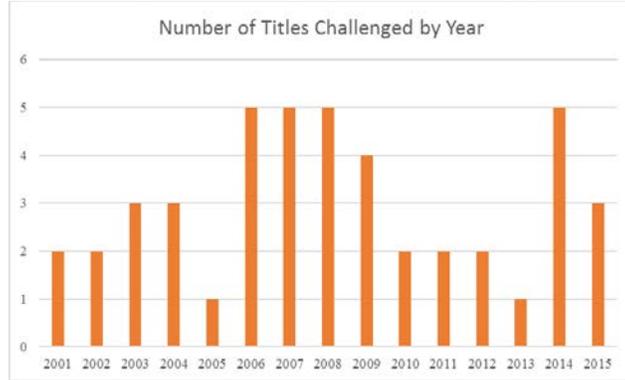


Figure 2: Challenged Titles Held by County Systems in Alabama

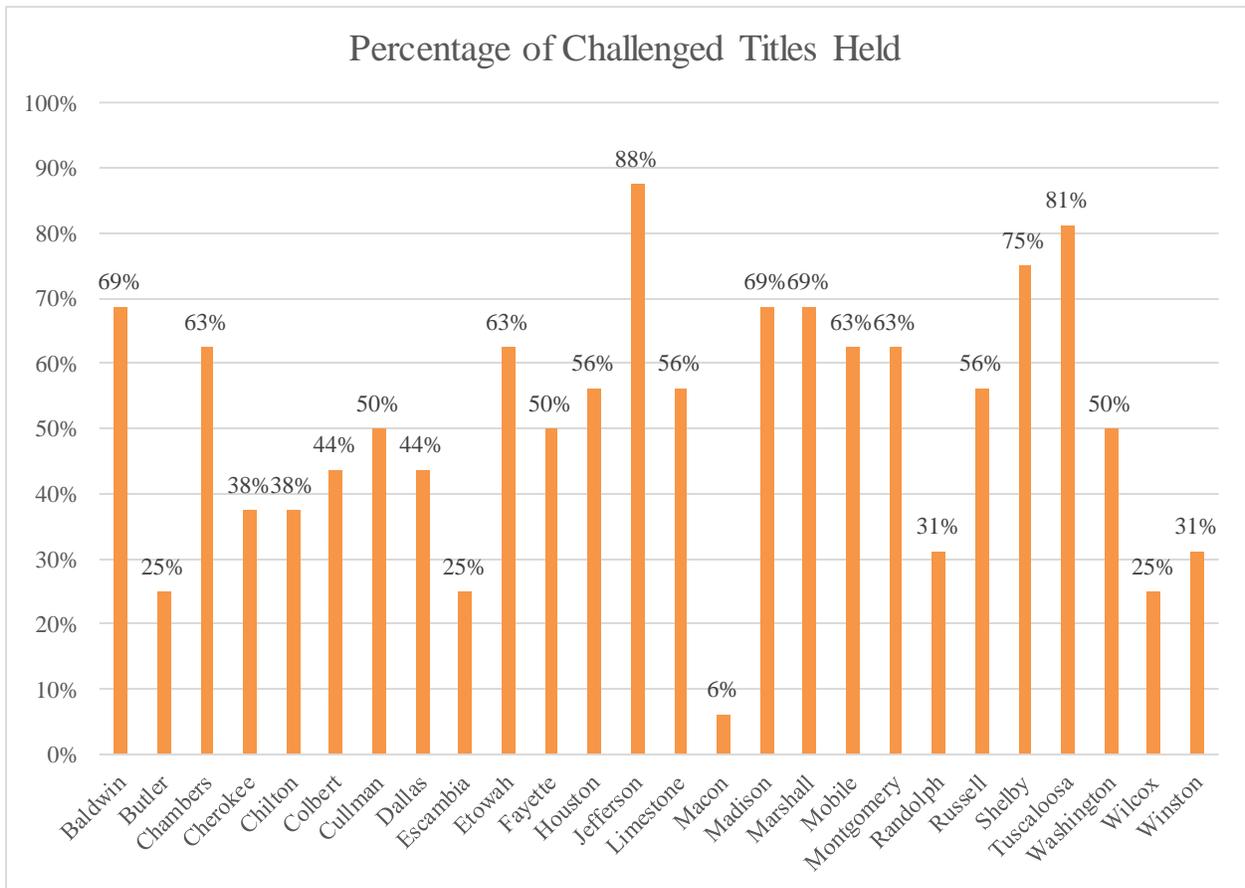


Figure 3. Total Population to Population Density

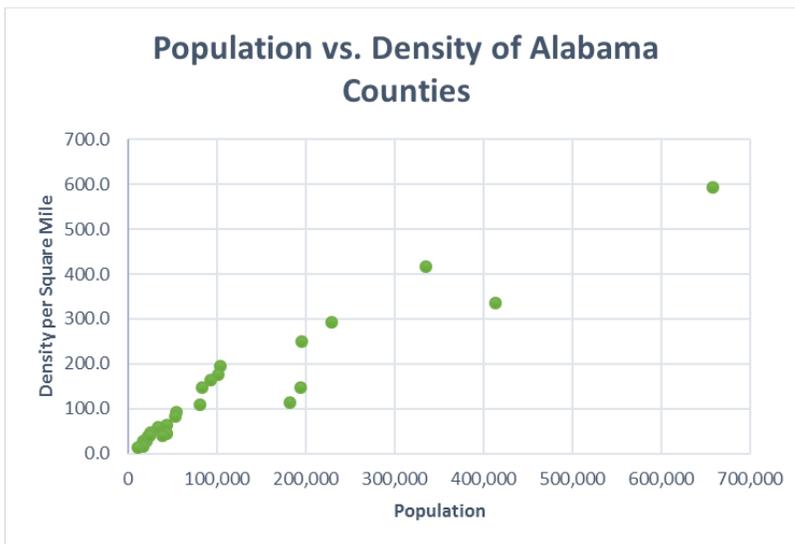


Figure 4. Format of Challenged Books

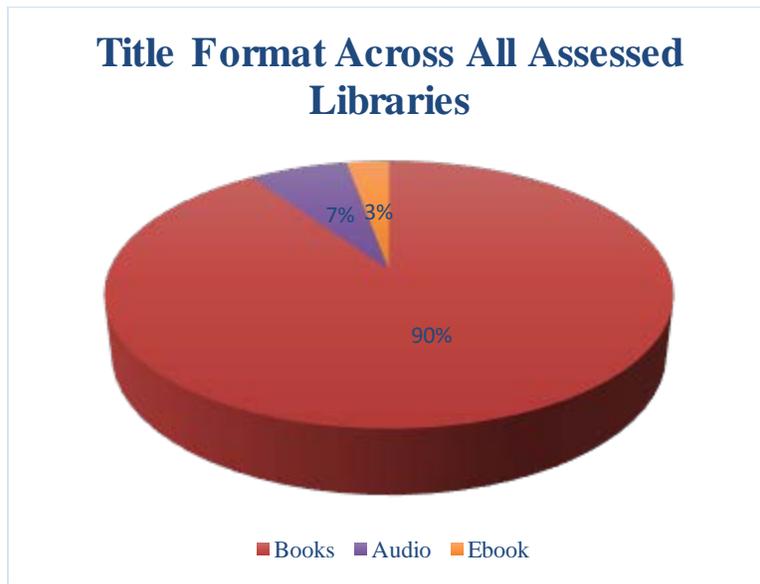


Figure 5. Number of Copies Held per One Thousand Residents.

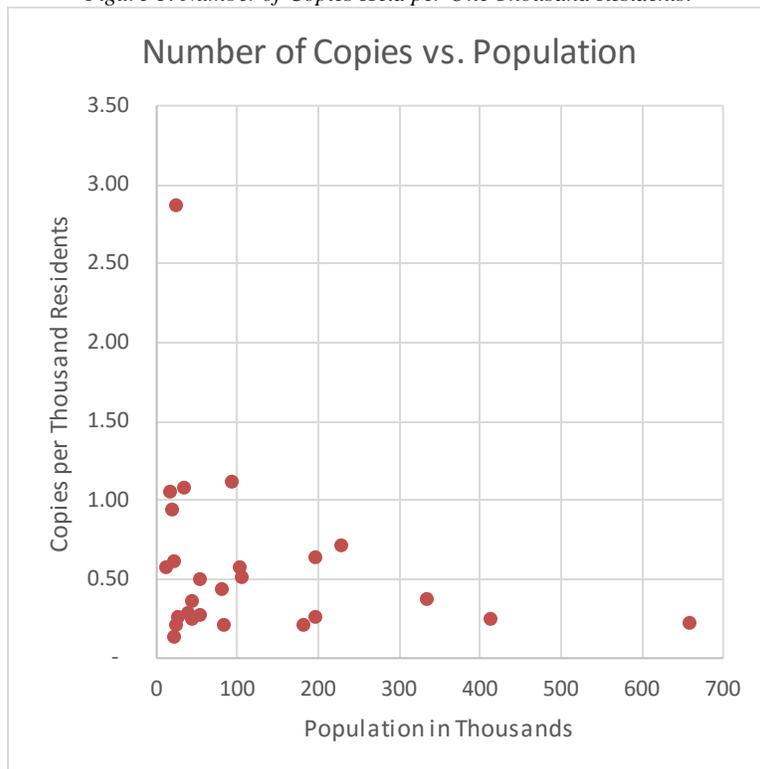
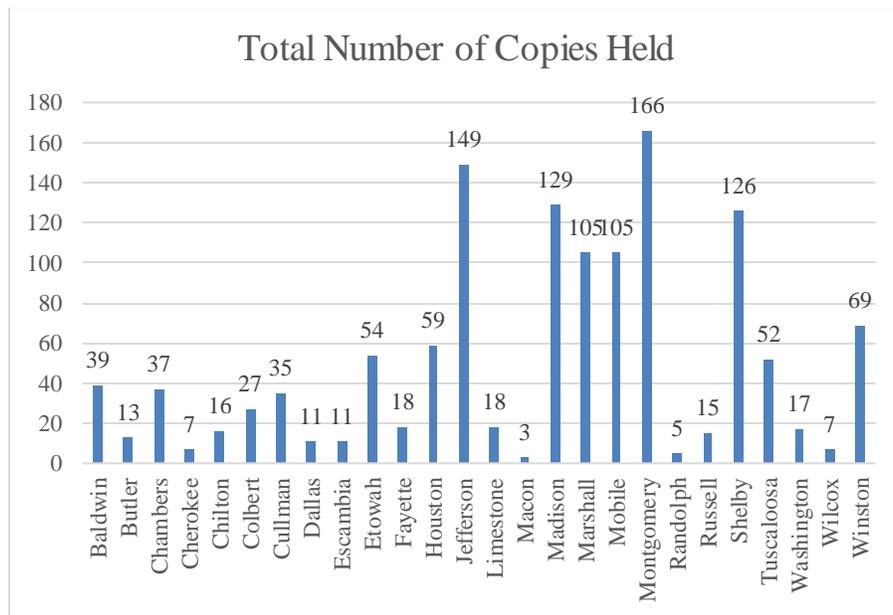


Figure 6. Total Number of Copies of Challenged Books Held



#### REFERENCES

- Acedo, S., & Leverkus, C. (2014). Updates on ebooks: Challenges & changes. *Knowledge Quest*, 43(1), 44-52.
- American Library Association. (n.d.). The censor: Motives and tactics. [Web Site]. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/bbooks/challengedmaterials/preparation/censor-motives-and-tactics>
- American Library Association. (2002). *Intellectual Freedom Manual* (6th ed.). Chicago: American Library Association.
- American Library Association. (2006). Code of ethics of the American Library Association. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/proethics/codeofethics/codeethics>
- American Library Association. (2014). Restricted access to library materials: An interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/restrictedaccess>
- American Library Association. (2016). Top ten frequently challenged books lists of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Retrieved from <http://www.ala.org/bbooks/frequentlychallengedbooks/top10>
- Ayers, S. (2006). The poor and homeless: An opportunity for libraries to serve. *Southeastern Librarian*, 54(1), 66-74.
- Barack, L. (2005). AL lawmaker to ban pro-gay books. *School Library Journal*, 51(1), 24.
- Burke, S. (2008). Removal of gay-themed materials from public libraries: Public opinion trends, 1973–2006. *Public Library Quarterly*, 27(3), 247-264.
- Breeding, M. (n.d.). Library Technology Guides. Retrieved November 02, 2016, from <https://librarytechnology.org/>
- 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.
- Connelly, D. (2009). To read or not to read: Understanding book censorship. *Community & Junior College Libraries*, 15(2), 83-90.
- CountyState Info. (2013). Alabama Counties • Official Sites • AL. Retrieved from <http://www.countystate.info/Alabama.htm>

- Drescher, J. (2015). Out of DSM: Depathologizing homosexuality. *Behavioral Sciences*, 5(4), 565-575.
- Gaffney, Loretta M. (2014). No longer safe: West Bend, young adult literature, and conservative library activism. *Library Trends*, 62(4), 730-739.
- Jenkins, C. (1998). From queer to gay and back again: Young adult novels with gay/lesbian/queer content, 1969-1997. *The Library Quarterly*, 68(3), 298-334.
- Kite, M., & Bryant-Lees, K. (2016). Historical and contemporary attitudes toward homosexuality. *Teaching of Psychology*, 43(2), 164-170.
- Leckie, G., & Hopkins, J. (2002). The Public Place of Central Libraries: Findings from Toronto and Vancouver. *The Library Quarterly*, 72(3), 326-372.
- Lennon-Dearing, R., & Delavega, E. (2016). Do social workers apply “love thy neighbor thyself” to gay, lesbian, bisexual and transpersons in the South? *Journal of Homosexuality*, 63(9), 1171-1193.
- Levithan, D. (2004). Supporting gay teen literature. *School Library Journal*, 50(10), 44-45.
- Lewis, G.B. (2003). Black-white differences in attitudes toward homosexuality and gay rights. *Public Opinion Quarterly*, 67(1), 59-78.
- Maret, S. (2011). *Government secrecy* (1st ed.). (Research in social problems and public policy, v. 19; Research in social problems and public policy, v. 19). Bingley, U.K.: Emerald.  
<http://public.eblib.com/choice/publicfullrecord.aspx?p=662382>
- Moody, K. (2005). Covert censorship in libraries: a discussion paper. *Australian Library Journal*, 54(2), 138-147.
- Morris, T. D. (1996). *Southern slavery and the law, 1619-1860* (Studies in legal history; Studies in legal history). Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press.
- National Book Foundation. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.nationalbook.org/index.html>
- Passet, Joanne E. (2012). Hidden in plain sight: gay and lesbian books in Midwestern public libraries, 1900-1969. *Library Trends*, 60(4), 749-764.
- Pride Center. (n.d.). Timeline of LGT History. Retrieved from <https://www.uwgb.edu/pride-center/files/pdfs/Timeline-of-LGBT-history.pdf>
- Pulitzer Prize. (n.d.). Retrieved from <http://www.pulitzer.org>
- Reitz, J. M. (2016). Online Dictionary for Library and Information Science. Retrieved 08 May, 2016 from [http://www.abc-clio.com/ODLIS/odlis\\_about.aspx](http://www.abc-clio.com/ODLIS/odlis_about.aspx).
- Richards, P. I. (2001). Cold war librarianship: Soviet and American library activities in support of national foreign policy, 1946-1991. *Libraries & Culture*, 36(1), 193-203.
- Robbins, L. S. (2000). *The dismissal of Miss Ruth Brown : Civil rights, censorship, and the American library*. Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press.  
<http://search.ebscohost.com/login.aspx?direct=true&scope=site&db=nlebk&db=nlabk&AN=22924>
- Ross, V., & Akin, L. (2002). Children with learning disabilities and public libraries: An e-survey of services, programs, resources and training. *Public Library Quarterly*, 21(4), 9-18.
- 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.
- Shen, L. (2013). Out of information poverty: Library services for urban marginalized immigrants. *Urban Library Journal*, 19(1), 1-12.

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

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.

United States v. Windsor, 570 U.S. \_\_\_\_ (2013)

United States Census Bureau (n.d.). Quick Facts. Retrieved November 16, 2016, from <http://www.census.gov/quickfacts/>

Vincent, J. (2015). Why do we need to bother?: Public library services for LGBTQ people. *Library Trends*, 64(2), 285-298.

## Appendix A

### ALA's List of the Top Ten Challenged Books from 2001-2015

Title	Author
A Bad Boy Can Be Good for a Girl	Stone, Tanya Lee
A Stolen Life	Dugard, Jaycee
Alice (series)	Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds
And Tango Makes Three	Richardson, Justin & Parnell, Peter
Arming of America: The Origins of a National Gun Culture	Bellesiles, Michael
Athletic Shorts	Crutcher, Chris
Beloved	Morrison, Toni
Beyond Magenta: Transgender Teens Speak Out	Kuklin, Susan
Bless Me, Ultima	Anaya, Rudolfo
Blood and Chocolate	Klause, Annette Curtis
Bone (series)	Smith, Jeff
Brave New World	Huxley, Aldous
Bridge to Terabithia	Paterson, Katherine
Captain Underpants	Pilkey, Dav
Crank	Hopkins, Ellen
Crazy Lady!	Conly, Jane Leslie
Detour for Emmy	Reynolds, Marilyn
Drama	Telgemeier, Raina
Fallen Angels	Myers, Walter Dean
Fifty Shades of Grey	James, E.L.
Flashcards of My Life	Harper, Charise Mericle
Forever	Blume, Judy
Fun Home	Bechdel, Alison
Go Ask Alice	Anonymous
Gossip Girl (series)	Von Ziegesar, Cecily
Habibi	Thompson, Craig
Harry Potter	Rowling, J.K.
I Am Jazz	Herthel, Jessica & Jennings, Jazz
I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings	Angelou, Maya
In the Night Kitchen	Sendak, Maurice
It's Perfectly Normal	Harris, Robie
It's So Amazing! A Book About Eggs, Sperm, Birth, Babies and Families	Harris, Robie
Julie of the Wolves	George, Jean Craighead
King & King	de Haan, Linda

Looking for Alaska	Green, John
Lush	Friend, Natasha
My Mom's Having a Baby! A Kid's Month-by-Month Guide to Pregnancy	Butler, Dori Hillestad
My Sister's Keeper	Picoult, Jodi
Nasreen's Secret School: A True Story from Afghanistan	Winter, Jeanette
Nickle and Dimed	Ehrenreich, Barbara
Of Mice and Me	Steinbeck, John
Olive's Ocean	Henkes, Kevin
Persepolis	Satrapi, Marjane
Revolutionary Voices	Sonnie, Amy (ed.)
Roll of Thunder, Hear my Cry	Taylor, Mildred D.
Saga	Vaughan, Brian & Staples, Fiona
Scary Stories (series)	Schwartz, Alvin
Summer of my German Soldier	Greene, Bette
Taming the Star Runner	Hinton, S.E.
The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian	Alexie, Sherman
The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn	Twain, Mark
The Bluest Eye	Morrison, Toni
The Catcher in the Rye	Salinger, J.D.
The Chocolate War	Cormier, Robert
The Color of Earth (series)	Hwa, Kim Dong
The Color Purple	Walker, Alice
The Curious Incident of the Dog in the Night-Time	Haddon, Mark
The Earth, My Butt, and Other Big Round Things	Mackler, Carolyn
The Glass Castle	Walls, Jeanette
The Golden Compass / His Dark Materials (trilogy)	Pullman, Philip
The Holy Bible	
The Hunger Games (trilogy)	Collins, Suzanne
The Kite Runner	Hosseini, Khaled
The Perks of Being a Wallflower	Chbosky, Stephen
Thirteen Reasons Why	Asher, Jay
To Kill a Mockingbird	Lee, Harper
ttyl, ttfn, l8r, g8r (series)	Myracle, Lauren
Twilight (series)	Meyer, Stephenie
Two Boys Kissing	Levithan, David
Uncle Bobby's Wedding	Brannen, Sarah S.
We All Fall Down	Cormier, Robert
Whale Talk	Crutcher, Chris
What my Mother Doesn't Know	Sones, Sonya

## Appendix B

### “Top Ten” Books Challenged for Homosexuality Found in Select Alabama County Public Libraries

County name	Alice (series)			And Tango Makes Three			Athletic Shorts			Beyond Magenta			Gossip Girl (series)			I Am Jazz			I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings			It's Perfectly Normal			King & King		
	book	audio	ebook	book	audio	ebook	book	audio	ebook	book	audio	ebook	book	audio	ebook	book	audio	ebook	book	audio	ebook	book	audio	ebook	book	audio	ebook
Baldwin				2					1	1		1	34		4				13		1	3					
Butler	1																		4								
Chambers	4			1			1						17						6			1**					
Cherokee	2																		1								
Chilton	3																		1			1					
Colbert													10						2			1					
Cullman	3							1					11	1					3								
Dallas							1						1						10								
Escambia													8														
Etowah	26						2						13						1			1					
Fayette	5									1			5			1											
Houston	9		4										21						9	2		2					
Jefferson				8			3		1	2			12		2	4			18	4*		13			3		
Limestone							1	1					5						1	1		2					
Macon																			3								
Madison				3			1			3			45						11	3		9†					
Marshall	44			1						1			35						4	1		1					
Mobile				2						4			8						22	12	1	10					
Montgomery	50			8			4						40			1			34	1							
Randolph	1																		1								
Russell	1									1									2			2					
Shelby				2	1		1		1	1	1	1	20		3	1			23	2	2	5					
Tuscaloosa				2			1			1			22			1			3	3	1	2					
Washington	3						4												1			1					
Wilcox																			3								
Winston	52												8						1								
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>315</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>177</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>

County name	My Sister's Keeper			Revolutionary Voices			The Color Purple			The Kite Runner			The Perks of Being a Wallflower			Two Boys Kissing			Uncle Bobby's Wedding			Total number of challenged books	Total number of copies
	book	audio	ebook	book	audio	ebook	book	audio	ebook	book	audio	ebook	book	audio	ebook	book	audio	ebook	book	audio	ebook		
Baldwin	9	3					5		2	15	6	2	3						1			11	106
Butler							4			4												4	13
Chambers	2						3			1			1									10	36
Cherokee	1						1			1			1									6	7
Chilton	4						3			3	1											6	16
Colbert	3	1					3		1	3	1		2									7	27
Cullman	6						2			5	1		2									8	35
Dallas		1					4			1	1		1									7	20
Escambia							1			1			1									4	11
Etowah	2						3			3	1		1†			1						10	53
Fayette	1	1					1			1	1				1							8	18
Houston	1						1			4	1		2	1		1						9	58
Jefferson	17			1			16		1	21	5	2	9		2	3	2	2				14	147
Limestone	2						1			2			1				1					9	18
Macon																						1	3
Madison	5	1					13			18	3		11	2		2						11	121
Marshall	2						3	1		4	2		4			2						11	105
Mobile	4	3					10	6		7	4		10			2						10	105
Montgomery	14	2					7			4			1									10	166
Randolph	1						1			1												5	5
Russell	1						2			1	1		3			1						9	15
Shelby	16		2				14	1	1	13	4		8		1	2						12	126
Tuscaloosa	2						4			4	1		2			1	1		1			13	52
Washington		1					4			2			1									8	17
Wilcox	2						1			1												4	7
Winston							3			5												5	69
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>		<b>1356</b>

\* one copy is e-audio

\*\* book is available for check out, but located behind the circulation desk

†2 copies are in reference