

February 2019

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Recommended Citation

Vanfosson, Jason D. (2019) "Jenkins, Christine A., and Michael Cart. Representing the Rainbow in Young Adult Literature: LGBTQ+ Content since 1969. Rowman and Littlefield, 2018. 310 pages. ISBN: 978-1-4422-7806-6," *Research on Diversity in Youth Literature*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 2 , Article 5.

Available at: <https://sophia.stkate.edu/rdyl/vol1/iss2/5>

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Christine A. Jenkins and Michael Cart have become a collaborative force in the field of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer/questioning young adult literature. Their 2006 co-authored book, *The Heart Has Its Reasons: Young Adult Literature with Gay/Lesbian/Queer Content, 1969-2004*, receives a much-needed update in their latest project, *Representing the Rainbow in Young Adult Literature: LGBTQ+ Content since 1969* (2018). Readers will immediately notice a significant change in the title that indicates some of the updates this study makes for a more contemporary audience. The authors opt to use the acronym LGBTQ+, prioritize lesbian identities by placing the L first, include bisexual representation, and expand their study to include groups that might remain marginalized from the LGBTQ schematic. This change indicates the substantial growth and inclusion that queer young adult (YA) literature has witnessed since 2006.

In the introduction to the study, Jenkins and Cart define their project “to chart the evolution of the field and to identify titles that are remarkable either for their excellence or for their failures” (xiii). They break this mission into two parts. The first part, “A Survey of LGBTQ+ Literature,” provides a historical overview of the growing field of young adult LGBTQ+ fiction for a young adult audience. The authors include a chapter on literature before Stonewall, which incorporates a

brief discussion of adult texts, and continue with a decade-by-decade approach with individual chapters on the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, and 2000s. The final chapter of this section considers literature written from 2010 to 2016 that enables Jenkins and Cart to consider the number of changes in the publishing industry that has facilitated an increase of titles produced in the field. Specifically, they cite the increase of lesbian and gay protagonists, the inclusion of bisexual characters, the growth of transgender literature, and the development of queer characters who are also people of color as some of the most relevant shifts in this six-year period. The authors, though, rightly remain critical of the field and explain that, among other issues, a “truly unfortunate continuity is the ongoing segregation of the sexes in LGBTQ+ literature” with only 1.7 percent of books that include both “a gay *and* a lesbian teen character” (130). In short, the worlds of gay and lesbian characters rarely intersect in fiction, despite the prevalence of lived experiences (including, as the authors point out, their own friendship) that prove this as an unrealistic aspect of these novels.

In the chapters that offer a historical overview, Jenkins and Cart once again utilize a three-part framework inspired by Rudine Sims Bishop’s approach to African American representations in children’s literature after the United States Civil Rights Movement found in her study *Shadow and Substance: Afro-American Experience in Contemporary Children’s Fiction* (1982). The categories for Jenkins and Cart’s analysis become homosexual visibility, “in which a character who has not previously been considered gay/lesbian comes out either voluntarily or involuntarily;” gay assimilation, in which the text “assumes the existence—at least in the world of the story—of a *melting pot* of sexual and gender identity:” and queer consciousness, which “show[s] LGBTQ+ characters in the context of community” (xiv-xv). While these categories are non-exhaustive

and create some limitations, the writers use them to provide a much-needed structure to this body of literature. Furthermore, these categories present readers with a clear understanding of how the trajectory of LGBTQ+ literature has developed from almost minimal and problematic representations to a community of representation that gives a more diverse experience and perspective of gender and sexuality.

While the content of the first part of *Representing the Rainbow in Young Adult Literature* remains largely unchanged from *The Heart Has Its Reasons*, the authors make slight structural revisions that create a more readable narrative. The chapter on literature in the new millennium gets the most revision of these as the writers update the chapter to include books written between 2006 and 2009.

In the second part of the book titled, “Breaking Down the Barriers,” Jenkins and Cart make the most substantial contributions to the field by examining bisexual inclusion, transgender and intersex representation, LGBTQ+ comics and graphic novels, and LGBTQ+ nonfiction. These are welcomed additions to the study because of the increase in visibility of these groups, genres, and mediums.

In the chapter on bisexuality, the authors note the “depressingly small” number of books that feature a bisexual protagonist (149). They focus on five books that indicate the vast experience of adolescent bisexuality, only to conclude that these books make comparable conclusions. Namely, they observe “being bisexual is frustratingly—and sometimes painfully—confusing for the persons in question” and “if they act on their impulses or even make them public, they may be perceived by their potential partners as inherently promiscuous, sluttish, or selfish, or cheats” (157). Although this chapter ultimately serves to rein-

scribe some of these ambiguities regarding bisexual identity, Jenkins and Cart offer a useful template for subsequent writers and publishers to craft more meaningful stories that feature bisexual characters.

According to Jenkins and Cart, transgender literature has fared better in the number of books recently published that offer a trans experience or perspective with thirty-eight titles since the publication of Francesca Lia Block's short story "Dragons in Manhattan" in 1996 (162). The authors also note that trans representation is a fairly recent phenomenon in YA literature with most titles appearing within the last ten years. While the discussion of the books is thoughtful, I became distracted by the language that Jenkins and Cart use to discuss these trans representations. Particularly objectionable is the authors' use of terms such as "male-to-female" (162), "female-to-male," and "born a girl" (163) because of the trans community's rejection of these terms to break down a binary that allows for more diverse expressions and experiences of gender. The rhetoric surrounding the trans experience also suggests that trans people are not born any particular gender, but rather *assigned* a gender at birth ("Glossary of Terms.") Jenkins and Cart advocate that, "The language of being transgender is important but very complicated and often confusing, demanding careful attention from readers" (175). The writers take care to consider the role of the language in the texts that they read, yet the anachronistic language in this chapter ultimately diverts attention from their otherwise thoughtful analyses. The conclusion of this chapter includes a brief discussion of the only three novels that showcase intersex characters in YA literature and a call for more books addressing this experience.

Another beneficial addition is the overview the authors provide of comics and graphic novels with LGBTQ+ content. Jenkins and Cart helpfully delineate subsections on comic books, manga, gay young adults in comics, and graphic

novels. In addition to providing a number of comics featuring LGBTQ+ characters, the chapter opens with a brief discussion that historicizes the role sexuality played in the Comics Code in the United States.

The final chapter of this study considers YA nonfiction that features LGBTQ+ content. Again, Jenkins and Cart create a helpful structure to tackle this overwhelming task. They survey encyclopedias, self-help and advice books for young adults, autobiographies and memoirs, and LGBTQ+ history and issues. This chapter begins with a needed discussion of information access for queer people who might not feel comfortable asking for assistance. While fiction remains the majority of books published in LGBTQ+ literature, the writers demonstrate the importance of nonfiction texts about the LGBTQ+ community as a resource for young readers who may have questions they want answered or who want to see stories of real queer people living and existing in the world. They cite Nancy Garden's 1982 novel, *Annie on My Mind*, as an example of a fictional work that models how young people need nonfiction texts that represent and honestly discuss queer bodies and identities. Librarians and educators, particularly, will find this chapter filled with valuable texts and analyses that will serve the students and young people with whom they work.

In the conclusion, aptly titled "What a Wonderful World?", the authors make a few final statements about the needs of LGBTQ+ literature. Notably, they explain that "[T]he literature still needs to be even more all-inclusive to offer a better depiction of the complexities of the real world anent homosexuality and to ensure that all readers might see their faces reflected in it" (221). Since 2016, the end of Jenkins and Cart's study, the field of LGBTQ+ literature has only started to answer this call with increased representation and diverse perspectives. For example, asexuality—a section noticeably absent from *Representing the*

Rainbow—has seen an emergence of representation in mainstream YA literature with titles such as Chip Zdarsky and Erica Henderson’s *Jughead* (2016), Kathryn Ormsbee’s *Tash Hearts Tolstoy* (2017), and Claire Kann’s *Let’s Talk about Love* (2018). Still, YA fiction with LGBTQ+ content needs more books speaking to the intersections of experience and diversity.

The writers also conclude that this literature “urgently needs to include more stories about young people of color” (222). While I agree with the authors that more people of color must be represented in this field, I would also welcome future editions of this book to take an intersectional approach to analyzing LGBTQ+ content. For example, when discussing Jacqueline Woodson’s *The Dear One* (1991), the writers parenthetically note, “This was only the second novel in the genre to include characters of color who are homosexual, Rosa Guy’s *Ruby* being the first” (84). These texts are culturally significant because of the diversity they represent within the LGBTQ+ community, yet I found myself wanting the authors to move beyond identifying characters of color to analyzing the position of these books in the larger narrative of YA literature with LGBTQ+ content.

Jenkins and Cart include four appendices that librarians, educators, and researchers of LGBTQ+ literature will find themselves repeatedly consulting. The first appendix includes a thorough and up-to-date bibliography of LGBTQ+ titles in all genres from 1969 to 2016. The bibliography includes subsections on series fiction, bisexual representations, transgender characters, intersex content, comics and graphic novels, and nonfiction. The authors include many titles that are not discussed in the individual chapters, thereby creating a more comprehensive snapshot of LGBTQ+ literature from 1969-2016 than otherwise possible within the collection’s anthologizing aims. A second appendix creates a visual

representation of the growth of LGBTQ+ content in YA fiction that succinctly shows the development of the genre. The next appendix includes a listing of books that have won the Stonewall Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature from the American Library Association, as well as the winners of the Lambda Literary Award for Children's and Young Adult Literature. The authors also note LGBTQ+ books that have been award winners or honors for the Michael L. Printz Award, the William C. Morris Award for Excellence in First Fiction, and the Margaret Alexander Edwards Award.

Representing the Rainbow in Young Adult Literature: LGBTQ+ Content since 1969 serves as a needed resource for librarians, educators, and scholars. This study offers insight into the history and trajectory of LGBTQ+ representation in a systematic and accessible way that is readable and engaging, while also pointing to the gaps and growth opportunities within the field. I hope that as the LGBTQ+ literature continues to grow, Jenkins and Cart will continue to grow and revise their thorough history and bibliographic study that has become a touchstone for those studying and working in LGBTQ+ literature for young adults.

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