

Creating A Young Adult LGBTQ+ Collection

The proposed collection is a small selection of items for young adults in the LGBTQ+ community in Fort Bend County. A search of the library catalog for Fort Bend County Libraries returns about 250 items, but all are classified as “Adult,” even works such as *The Book of Awesome Queer Heroes* by Eric Rosswood and Kathleen Archambeau and the graphic novel *Belle of the Ball* by Mari Costa (Fort Bend County Libraries). As a result, the proposed collection would be specifically for young adults.

Fort Bend County has an estimated population of around 1.02 million people, making it the eighth largest county in Texas (“Fort Bend County, Texas”). The county is widely recognized as among the most diverse in Texas (Shey). The single largest racial demographic is white at 37.03%, followed by Asian at 21.83%, Black or African American at 20.54%, Native American at 0.38%, and Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander at 0.05%. About 13.75% identify as two or more races while 6.43% fall under “other” (“Fort Bend County, Texas”). In one survey, 29% of Fort Bend County residents identified diversity as the community’s greatest strength (“Destination Houston” 11), and about 70% described immigration as a net positive to the economy (15).

Despite its diversity, Fort Bend County has lagged behind in terms of support for the LGBTQ+ community. The first local Pride festival did not occur until 2024 (Shey). Even figuring out just how many live in the county is tricky. Gallup polls estimated that about 5.6% of Americans identify as LGBTQ+, but solid numbers can be difficult to come by in red states, where fewer people may be “out” publicly. According to the 2020 Census, Fort Bend County reported less than 1% same-sex households (Carter). From those numbers alone, anywhere from

about 10,000 to 57,000 members of the queer community could call the county home, which means a sizable community with specific needs of its own.

With that in mind, it becomes important to determine what sort of materials patrons may want and need. One survey of students at the College of Staten Island yielded interesting insight into the sort of reading material LGBTQ+ library patrons were most likely to seek out. Even though the study concerned an academic library, “the most popular suggestion was books and movies...that address LGBTQ issues that are NOT academic,” suggesting that they specifically desire “to access books, articles, and films that address their growth and personal development needs” (Hays 124). This idea is what drives the collection proposed here: Using various suggested reading lists online to provide LGBTQ+ patrons with fiction and nonfiction materials that reflect their own experiences and can offer guidance where needed with an eye toward BIPOC works in particular.

Works Cited

- Carter, Daniel. "U.S. census and other surveys likely undercount the number of LGBTQ+ people living in Texas." *Houston Public Media*, 24 August 2023, www.houstonpublicmedia.org/articles/lgbtq/2023/08/24/460481/u-s-census-and-other-surveys-likely-undercount-the-number-of-lgbtq-people-living-in-texas.
- "Destination Houston: A Growing Region's Path to Prosperity." *Rice University*, 19 May 2025, rice.app.box.com/s/u3oigkr1frmz0hwlexqbupq986newen.
- "Fort Bend County, Texas Population 2026." *World Population Review*, 2026, worldpopulationreview.com/us-counties/texas/fort-bend-county.
- Fort Bend County Libraries*, www.fortbendlibraries.gov.
- Hays, Anne. "A Question of Space: Surveying Student Usage of LGBTQ Resources in the LBGTQ Student Center Library and the Campus Library." *New Review of Academic Librarianship*, vol. 26, no. 1, Jan. 2020, pp. 110–32. *EBSCOhost*, doi-org.libezp.lib.lsu.edu/10.1080/13614533.2018.1564336.
- Shey, Brittanie. "Fort Bend County, most diverse in Texas, gets its first Pride festival." *Chron*, 24 June 2024, <https://www.chron.com/culture/article/fort-bend-county-pride-19522286.php>.