

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS COLLECTIONS POLICY STATEMENTS

LGBTQIA+ Studies

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I. Scope

This Collections Policy Statement covers materials within the scope of LGBTQIA+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer/Questioning, Intersex, and Asexual) studies. The plus sign symbol (+) at the end represents the broadest inclusion of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and forms of gender expression, and stands in place for new terminologies and language that may emerge. There are varying definitions of LGBTQIA+ studies, but for the purposes of this statement it can be defined as an interdisciplinary field of academic study that has as its focus the experiences, ideas, politics, scholarship, and histories of LGBTQIA+ people, communities, cultures, and institutions. LGBTQIA+ studies has grown to become an international field of research, with academic programs all over the world. As such, non-English language acquisitions are an important part of LGBTQIA+ collection development.

This statement provides specific guidance for a group of core materials in the Library of Congress Classification range HQ, but as it is an interdisciplinary field, relevant materials can found in the classified collections from A-Z. Therefore, this document also provides general guidance related to relevant materials across all subject areas. Due to the fast pace of emerging scholarship in this field, these areas may not be exhaustive, and attention must be paid to the continually evolving terminologies and language related to sexuality and gender.

This document does not provide guidance for collecting materials related to women's & gender studies, as these subject areas are covered by the separate [Women's and Gender Studies](#) Collections Policy Statement. LGBTQIA+ studies overlaps with women's & gender studies, but there are distinct methods, theories, publications, and academic programs that set these fields apart. While gender touches almost every discipline and realm of human life, it is important to emphasize that a) gender, sex, and sexuality are by definition different concepts and (b) there is a great diversity of approaches to defining, applying and critically interrogating these terms across disciplines. As an interdisciplinary subject, it is often necessary to reference related Collections Policy Statements as subjects overlap. For example, to find further guidance on the Library's collecting of materials related to LGBTQIA+ legal issues, see the [Law](#) Collections Policy Statement.

II. Diverse and Inclusive Collecting Statement

As the nation's de facto national library, the Library of Congress strives to build an expansive, yet selective, collection that records the creativity of the United States and is reflective of the nation's diversity and complexity. The Library's mandate is to have collections that are inclusive and representative of a diversity of creators and ideas. A priority includes acquiring material of underrepresented perspectives and voices in the Library's collections to ensure diverse authorship, points of view, cultural identities, and other historical or cultural factors. The Library also seeks to build a research collection that comprises a globally representative sample of international materials that are diverse in voice and perspective, relative to their places of origin, further supporting the Library's mission to sustain and preserve a universal collection of knowledge and creativity for Congress and future generations.

Diverse collecting is mentioned within many of the Library's Collections Policy Statements. In addition, the Library has adopted several specific collection policies in an effort to ensure it is building an inclusive and representative collection. For more information, see the Library's Collections Policy Statements on [Ethnic Materials](#), [LGBTQIA+ Studies](#), [Women's and Gender Studies](#), [Independently Published and Self-Published Textual Materials](#), and [Countries and Regions with Acquisitions Challenges](#).

III. Research Strengths

As the de facto national library of the United States, the Library of Congress seeks to preserve the history and life of LGBTQIA+ communities in the United States and acquire a broad representative international collection. Historically, the Library has collected LGBTQIA+ materials, with many of the earlier titles coming to the Library via Copyright deposit. The depth, breadth and longevity of Library collecting and the diversity of acquisition sources and methods has provided the Library with a collection of LGBTQIA+ materials that span centuries and continents. The great strength of the Library's historical materials in this area has resulted in authors and researchers frequently referencing its collection items, making possible the publication of a number of books, articles, and creative works. Relevant materials can be found throughout the Library's collections in all formats.

Areas of Distinction

- The Library of Congress' holdings related to the U.S. Homophile Movement (1945-1970) are extensive. In addition to the personal papers of homophile activists such as Frank Kameny, Lilli Vincenz, and Paul Kuntzler, the Library is also home to a well-rounded selection of early pre-Stonewall LGBTQIA+ publications. These collections are frequently referenced by authors and researchers.
- Periodical titles both overseas and domestic published from the early 19th century to present that reflect social and political organizing as well as historic and contemporary academic discourse in LGBTQIA+ studies. These titles include full runs of rare and out-of-print titles like *The Mattachine Review*, *The Ladder*, *The Homosexual Citizen*, *Christopher Street*, *The Advocate*, and *The Journal of Homosexuality*. Non-English language homophile titles are also available, including *Vennen* (Dutch, 1949- 1974) and *Der Kreis* (Switzerland).
- Materials which document the social, political and cultural history of transgender and gender non-conforming people and organizations, including runs of rare periodicals such as *Turnabout: A Magazine of Transvestism*, *Chrysalis: A Journal of Transgressive Gender Identities*, and *The Glad Rag : Journal of the Transvestite/Transsexual Social Group* (UK).

- Historic and contemporary politics and activism, including personal papers, correspondence and first person accounts of influential figures including Bayard Rustin, Larry Kramer, and Jan Krc.
- LGBTQIA+ writing including poetry, literature, literary history and journals, as well as personal papers of authors and literary figures like Walt Whitman, Solita Solano, and Edna St. Vincent Millay. The Library holds many first edition or limited print-run monographs of groundbreaking or otherwise important items.
- The American Folklife Center collections include LGBTQIA+ materials such as the National AIDS Memorial Quilt Archive, oral history collections, and the organizational records of the DC Dyke March.
- Materials on the history and evolution of the study of LGBTQIA+ psychology and sexology, including the personal papers of Sigmund Freud, Anna Freud, and Lilli Vincenz. The Library enables a cross-cultural comparison of these works, including publications from early 19th century sexology institutes in Germany (including Institut für Sexualwissenschaft), Vienna, and Japan, as well as a number of professional journals and monographs.
- The Veterans History Project (VHP) collections contain upwards of 100 self-identifying LGBTQIA+ veterans' stories from World War II through recent conflicts. VHP also hosts two online exhibits drawn from LGBTQIA+ veterans' experiences: "Serving in Silence" and "Speaking Out: LGBT Veterans." VHP actively collects LGBTQIA+ materials.
- LGBTQIA+ Web Archive Collections. There are two distinct LGBTQIA+ web archive collections, the [LGBTQ+ Studies Web Archive](#) and the [LGBTQ+ Politics and Politicians Web Archive](#). As of June 2020, these collections include over 650 sites. These collections will continue to grow.
- Premier LGBTQIA+ collections in Rare Book and Special Collections, including the Stathis Orphanos Christopher Isherwood Collection, the James Ingram Merrill Collection, the Gene Berry and Jeffrey Campbell Collection, and the Delta Collection.
- Nearly comprehensive coverage of the evolution of HIV/AIDS in the United States and globally. This includes scientific, legal, academic and governmental publications, conference reports and proceedings, and periodicals and newspapers covering HIV/AIDS. The National AIDS Memorial Quilt Records in the American Folklife Center contain over 200,000 items.
- Non-English language LGBTQIA+ materials in the General Collections date back to the early 19th century, and earlier materials can be found in Special Collections. Holdings are particularly strong in German- language LGBTQIA+ materials, and the German language collections include over 7 million items. The Asian Division collections contain a number of rare and unique pre-19th century materials, as well as recent publications. The Hispanic Division provides excellent subject coverage including recordings of LGBTQIA+ authors and subjects in the PALABRA Archive. Some of the oldest materials can be found in the African and Middle Eastern Division, including rare legal and religious texts as well as the homoerotic poetry of Abū Nuwās al-Salamī (c. 756 – c. 814). This is a major strength of the Library collections, allowing for comparative research that spans centuries.
- Performing arts, including the Music Division collections of the Alvin Ailey Dance Foundation, Cole Porter, Leonard Bernstein, and Jonathan Larson (*RENT*).
- Audiovisual and recorded sound materials featuring influential figures such as Audre Lorde, James Baldwin, and Adrienne Rich. Further, the National Audio-Visual Conservation Center Motion Picture Reading Room holds a number of essential films, including rare documentary footage of early homophile activism (*The Second Largest Minority*) and a documentary of the first Pride march in 1970 (*Gay and Proud*).

IV. Collecting Policy

LGBTQIA+ studies materials are selectively acquired in all formats collected by the Library and in a wide

range of languages. For materials produced in or about the U.S., the Library seeks to collect at a research level. International materials are collected as well, with the intention to hold a substantive collection that can support independent original research. Further, the Library seeks to have copies of all works deemed to be influential in the topic area, regardless of method of production/publication.

The Library Acquires:

- Scholarly works, in a wide range of languages and formats, on LGBTQIA+ studies and its subfields. Equally, retrospective publications will be acquired as needed to fill gaps or strengthen the collections in specific areas.
- Materials related to LGBTQIA+ research methods. The Library seeks to provide a well-rounded selection of materials which feature LGBTQIA+ research frameworks, methods, and epistemologies.
- Bibliographies and reference works related to LGBTQIA+ studies and its subfields, comprehensively.
- U.S. historical and primary source materials, especially first-hand accounts of LGBTQIA+ communities and individuals, whenever possible; international materials are selectively collected. Within this type of collection, U.S. publications and primary materials that document historical events and movements related to LGBTQIA+ are of particular interest, such as those related to the U.S. Homophile movement and HIV/AIDS activism of the 1980s.
- Materials in a wide range of languages and formats to support a research-level collection that documents the political participation of LGBTQIA+ and gender non-conforming individuals and communities, organizations, and/or politicians and political activists. In general, materials are collected that provide a record of political activities as they intersect with LGBTQIA+ and gender identities and representation.
- LGBTQIA+ dedicated publications/publishers or publishers that are known for seeking out LGBTQIA+ authors, LGBTQIA+ self-publishing, LGBTQIA+ periodicals and other materials produced by, about, or for LGBTQIA+ individuals or organizations are all collecting priorities.
- Materials which were nominated for and/or won a leading U.S. or international LGBTQIA+ award, especially those that are literary or research-based.

Topics of Special Interest

In order to ensure a broad representative collection, the Library seeks to expand its collecting in a number of thematic areas within the LGBTQIA+ studies subject area. Areas of special interest for the Library that will, when possible, be collected comprehensively include materials by, for, or about LGBTQIA+:

- Social, political, and cultural, movements and traditions in published and unpublished form
- Literature, including literary theory and analysis
- Black, Latinx, and/or indigenous individuals, families, communities and organizations, especially Two Spirit, trans and non-binary communities of North America
- Transgender, non-binary, intersex, and gender non-conforming people, communities and organizations including materials which provide a record of past, current and future access to gender-

affirming and gender-inclusive healthcare, employment, and housing

- Intersex individuals, communities and organizations
- Theoretical frameworks and philosophical thought, with a special emphasis on queer theory, queer ethics and philosophy, anti-fascism, queer of color theory, necropolitics, historical materialism, and critical race theory
- Hate crimes, including statistics and legislation
- Experiences of marginalization, including heterosexism, homophobia, transphobia, transmisogyny
- Publishing history and print cultures and subcultures, including self-published works, and artist books and zines
- Immigration, refugees and migration, diaspora studies
- Housing rights, access, discrimination and experiences of homelessness, including materials which document the rates and responses to chronically under housed LGBTQIA+ demographics, particularly youth and elders
- Labor and economics, including class analysis and critiques of economic theories and systems, such as materials related to “pinkwashing”
- Drag and gender-non conforming art and performance, especially materials related to state, local and national histories, and especially localities of “ball culture”
- Sex work, with an emphasis on statistics, first person accounts, decriminalization, legislation, and the relationships between sex work, law enforcement and the criminal justice system
- Ability and disability, accessibility
- Working-class and low-income people and communities, employment discrimination
- Experiences of detainment, arrest, imprisonment and incarceration
- Education and curriculum at all levels, including resources for curriculum reform
- Youth experiences
- Human rights abuses, legislation, and organizing
- Politics, political candidates, voting rights
- Psychology and physical and mental health, including conversion therapy
- Data sets, particularly related to any topics listed here as a topic of special interest

This policy does not preclude the acquisition of materials falling outside the above policies, for the permanent collection, when such materials contain information of particular concern to Congress and to the United States Government. This includes information not found elsewhere in the Library of Congress collections, or that must be acquired to facilitate reference or research use.

V. Best Edition and Preferred Formats Statement

The Library acquires materials conforming to the Copyright Office Best Edition statement for selected formats as published. For guidance regarding best editions for material acquired via the Copyright Office, see: <http://copyright.gov/circs/circ07b.pdf>.

For guidance regarding recommended formats for material acquired via all other means; e.g., purchase, exchange, gift and transfer, see: <http://www.loc.gov/preservation/resources/rfs>.

For information regarding electronic resources, open digital content, web archiving, and data sets, see the following Supplementary Guidelines: <http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/electronicresources.pdf>, <https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/opencontent.pdf>, <http://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/webarchive.pdf>, and <https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/datasets.pdf>.

VI. Acquisition Sources

Throughout the Library's history, copyright deposits have formed part of the strength of the LGBTQIA+ studies collections. The other methods of acquisition—exchange, gift or donations, purchase, and Cataloging in Publication have also been significant sources contributing to this strength. Each of these methods will continue to be important for future collecting. However, due to innovations in publishing and changing preferences for how creators choose to express themselves, attention will be paid to trends and emerging platforms for communication in order to ensure that a diverse level of collecting in this area is accomplished. Further, increased attention and monitoring of the range of digital publishing, electronic resources and self-publishing are necessary in order to expand collecting into new topic areas. For specific guidance on collecting self-published materials see the Library of Congress [Collections Policy Statement Supplementary Guidelines for Independently Published and Self-Published Textual Materials](#). Due to the wide variety of formats in self-publishing and the collecting challenges self-published materials can pose, the Library attempts to identify on an annual basis a select number of self-published items of historic relevance to be collected by the Library. In particular, LGBTQIA+ content on the Internet is expected to become increasingly important over time, and web harvesting will be used to capture this material. Due to the interdisciplinary nature of the topic area, coordination across several subject areas and collecting documents is necessary to ensure appropriate collecting. See <https://guides.loc.gov/lgbtq-studies/subject/publishing> for a list of current LGBTQIA+ publishers.

Zines and related self-published materials are an important format for LGBTQIA+ studies and collecting these materials is a priority. Most zines are not submitted for Copyright and are often not sold by large publishers; therefore, attention will be paid to established and emerging vendors in order to ensure diverse and inclusive collecting in this area. Many zines can be purchased from an online vendor or zine distro (short for distribution), and there are a number of zine festivals and events throughout the year which are a potential acquisition source. As the majority of zines produced are not sold online or via an established vendor, regional and independent vendors will be located for both U.S. and international zine acquisition. For a list of current LGBTQIA+ zine creators and distributors, see: <https://guides.loc.gov/zines>.

VII. Collecting Levels

Meeting the Library's Diverse and Inclusive Collecting Statement (see Section II) and the collecting levels outlined below requires continual evaluation of the publishing landscape, sources of expression, current events, and socio-cultural trends to thus maintain effective collecting policies and acquisitions methods. Changes in publishing or in the creation of materials covered by this policy statement may necessitate collecting efforts not explicitly referenced here. Such efforts will be handled on a case-by-case basis while the Library evaluates the need for policy statement updates.

Due to the interdisciplinary nature of LGBTQIA+ studies materials, it is not effective to limit collecting based on the Library of Congress Classification system. However, specific guidance is provided here for the HQ classification range (see below), where a number of core materials historically have been classified. For materials that fall within the scope of this document, the Library collects most U.S. materials at a research level 4, but attempts to acquire at a comprehensive level 5 certain topic areas. Unless denoted in the chart below, non-U.S. materials are collected at an instructional support level 3.

Subjects listed under the above "Topics of Special Interest" (see Collecting Policy) will be collected

comprehensively whenever possible.

For explanation of the Collecting Levels used by the Library, see <https://www.loc.gov/acq/devpol/cpc.html>

HQ Collecting Levels for LGBTQIA+ Studies

The range of numbers HQ12-HQ2030.7 covers only a portion of the LGBTQIA+ studies collections which are classed from A to Z throughout the classification schedules.

| LC Classification | Subject | U.S. Levels | Non-U.S. Levels | Notes |
|-------------------|---|-------------|-----------------|---|
| HQ12-472 | Sexual life. Erotica | 4 | 3 | See also PQ |
| HQ18-HQ30.7 | Sexual Behavior and Attitudes. Sexuality. | 5 | 4 | Includes materials related to gender identity and queer theory. |
| HQ31-64 | Sex instruction and sexual ethics | 4 | 3 | |
| HQ71-72 | Sexual deviations | 4 | 3 | Older materials were classified under sexual deviations or the medical term, paraphilias. This dated term was used to label all non-heterosexual, non-cisgender sexual and gender orientations and identities. This classification is sometimes still applied to LGBTQIA+ materials. Likewise, historical LGBTQIA+ materials have been classified under HQ71-2. |
| HQ74-74.2 | Bisexuality | 5 | 4 | |
| HQ75-76.8 | Homosexuality. Lesbianism | 5 | 4 | |
| HQ77-77.95 | Transvestism, Transexualism | 5 | 4 | Other terms include transgender, non-binary, gender non-conforming, |

| LC Classification | Subject | U.S. Levels | Non-U.S. Levels | Notes |
|---------------------|--|-------------|-----------------|---|
| | | | | gender fluid, genderqueer. |
| HQ79 | Sadism. Masochism. Fetishism, etc | 4 | 3 | |
| HQ101-440.7 | Prostitution | 4 | 3 | Sex work is another term used. |
| HQ503-1064 | The family. Marriage. Home. | 4 | 3 | |
| HQ793-799.2 | Youth. Adolescents. Teenagers. | 4 | 3 | Special emphasis on LGBTQIA+ homeless youth, youth movements |
| HQ801-801.83 | Courtship. Dating. | 4 | 3 | |
| HQ961- HQ997.5 | Free love, polygamy and polyandry | 4 | 3 | |
| HQ1001-1057 | The State and Marriage. The Church and Marriage. | 5 | 4 | |
| HQ1075-1075.5 | Sex Roles. | 5 | 4 | Also classed under GN479.65- GN479.7. Gender role is the preferred term. Sex role relates to biology, gender role is social and cultural. |
| HQ1088- HQ2030.7 | Men. Women. Feminism. | 4 | 3 | |
| HQ2042-2044 | Life style. | 4 | 3 | |

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