

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Queer Advisory Committee

Charge: *To develop plans to assist teachers in making schools, colleges, and universities safe and welcoming places for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, gender nonconforming, intersex, queer, and questioning people, and their allies to initiate and sustain conversation about the relevance of gendered, sexual, and affectional identities to reading and writing lives, to teaching lives, and to the well-being of students; to promote inquiry into issues of sexuality and gender identity and expression in the teaching of literacy and literature; to encourage proposals for presentation of such inquiry through public meetings such as the NCTE Annual Convention; to support individuals in the production of publishable written reports of such inquiry; and to select excellent proposals for inclusion in Annual Convention.*

Major activities: What major actions, projects, initiatives, or studies in your charge have been completed by your group since July 1, 2018? In each activity describe the more important features of the work, and connect your work to the [NCTE Vision Statement](#), if applicable.

1. List names, affiliations, and geographic region for all committee members.

- CHAIR, Henry “Cody” Miller (2021) (SUNY Brockport, Brockport, NY)
- Katherine Mason Cramer (2020) (Wichita State University, KS)
- S. Adam Crawley (2020) (at Oklahoma State University)
- Darryn Diuguid (2021) (McKendree University, Lebanon, IL)
- Rick Joseph (2021) (Birmingham, Bloomfield Hills, MI)
- sj Miller, (2019) (Santa Fe Community College, NM)
- Summer Melody Pennell (2020) (Truman State University, Kirksville, MO)
- Vanessa Perez (2021) (Clinton High School, Clinton, OK)
- Tadayuki Suzuki (2021) (SUNY Cortland, Cortland, NY)
- LaMar Timmons-Long (2021) (Hudson High School of Learning Technologies, New York, NY)
- Craig A. Young (2020) (Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania)

2. What actions, projects, initiatives, or studies are “in progress” at this time?

- a. Working with NCTE to select and promote a range of conference sessions that address the committee’s charge
- b. publishing original pieces for NCTE’s official blog, *Literacy and NCTE*, monthly that offer educators pedagogical, curricular, and policy practices to best support and affirm LGBTQIA* students, families, and communities; original posts on *Literacy and NCTE* are scheduled until the end of the year; original posts for the months of October, November, and December are planned or in the process of being planned and written
- c. call for LGBTQIA*-themed issue of *English Journal* is currently in circulation; call is being shared on social media; more information about the specific call is outlined in the following section
- d. develop and conduct an #NCTEchat dedicated to addressing LGBTQIA* topics in English education
- e. establishment and bestowment of the LGBTQ+ Advocacy and Leadership Award; recommendation is outlined in last year’s report
- f. partnering with the Gender and Sexualities Equality Alliance to promote visibility of LGBTQIA* topics at NCTE

3. What have you accomplished so far, and what is your timeline for future work?

- a. Members of the committee volunteered to review for session proposals submitted with the LGBTQ strand

Cody Miller and Craig Young attended the conference planning session in D.C. during February; per last year’s report, the goal is to have one novice reviewer (Cody) attend with one experienced reviewer (Craig) and for this year’s novice review to be next year’s experienced reviewer, which creates an opportunity for a new member to attend and help plan the conference

We fulfilled all of our allotted spots for the LGBTQ strand. Additionally, we worked with other committee members to collaborate and ensure a larger number of LGBTQ identified conference sessions were present than allotted. Of 173 proposals labeled with the LGBTQ strand, we accepted 45 sessions. The breakdown of specifics is below:

| Elementary | Middle level | Secondary | General |
|------------|--------------|-----------|---------|
| 5 | 9 | 23 | 8 |

- b. Published pieces for the months of January to August are provided below:

| Month | Author | Link |
|----------|---------------------|---|
| January | Henry “Cody” Miller | http://www2.ncte.org/blog/2019/02/lgbtqia-affirming-classrooms/ |
| February | Vanessa Perez | https://www2.ncte.org/blog/2019/02/libraries-can-be-lgbtq-affirming-spaces-on-school-campuses/ |
| March | Adam Crawley | https://www2.ncte.org/blog/2019/03/lgbtq-inclusive-childrens-literature/ |
| April | Summer Pennell | http://www2.ncte.org/blog/2019/04/lgbtq-ya-literature-recommendations/ |
| May | LaMar Timmons-Long | https://www2.ncte.org/blog/2019/05/affirming-black-queer-youth/ |
| June | Dana Stachowiak | https://www2.ncte.org/blog/2019/06/how-literacy-teachers-can-support-lgbtqia-students/ |
| July | Katie Cramer | https://www2.ncte.org/blog/2019/07/the-power-of-story-and-classroom-management-in-affirming-sexual-and-gender-diversity/ |
| August | Rick Joseph | https://www2.ncte.org/blog/2019/08/creating-lgbtq-affirming-elementary-classrooms-day-one/ |

- c. Call for LGBTQIA*-themed issue of *English Journal* is currently in circulation; the call reads as follows:

Affirming LGBTQ+ Identities
Submission Deadline: January 15, 2020
Publication Date: September 2020

Editor: Toby Emert

Guest Coeditors: Paula Greathouse, Brooke Eisenbach, and Henry “Cody” Miller, NCTE LGBTQ Advisory Committee

“Some of the work of the English classroom . . . should be about exposing and analyzing how we read and write our sexual identities in textual and embodied worlds and how we can both confound and be confounded in our expectations.”

—Viv Ellis, “What English Can Contribute to Understanding Sexual Identities”

A decade ago, in March 2009, *English Journal* published an issue that focused on LGBTQ+ voices and ELA classroom considerations. We have seen remarkable changes in visibility, legal status, and social acceptance of LGBTQ+ communities since the issue appeared, but our cultural institutions, including schools, still routinely struggle to promote and provide equitable status and treatment for people who identify on the queer spectrum.

Because the emphasis of our work as English teachers is on the art of telling human stories, we are uniquely positioned to engage students in important discussions about empathy, inclusion, and activism concerning LGBTQ+ issues. But national, state, and district policies, resistant stakeholders, or our own uncertainties about how to signal support in a responsible way often limit our curricula and our teaching.

In this issue of *English Journal*, we want to hear how teachers are helping students explore the concept of intersectional identities that include but are not limited to queer, gender diverse, gay, lesbian, bisexual, trans, and questioning. We welcome stories that describe obstacles teachers face in implementing queer-inclusive curricula and suggested strategies for responding to these obstacles. We invite authors to share practices that create opportunities for students to research, write about, read about, and discuss matters of gender, gender identity, or sexual identity. Which texts that feature the stories of LGBTQ+ characters have you found most compelling and affirming for students? What insights can you offer colleagues working with canonical texts that they might “queer” with students? How can we move beyond tolerance and acceptance to inclusion and belonging?

- d. Discussed initial idea at NCTE meeting; committee still needs to meet and determine who is interested in co-hosting the chat, constructing questions for the chat, and working to advertise the chat on Twitter; Cody Miller will reach out to NCTE social media team before the end of the year to determine viable dates for the chat
 - e. Mollie Blackburn was named the inaugural recipient of the LGBTQ+ Advocacy and Leadership Award; award is provided when application warrants bestowment; we will work to nominate candidates we believe will meet the criteria for presentation of the award
 - f. Dana Stachowiak, Summer Pennell, and Cody Miller are working with Emily Kirkpatrick to secure a banner that promotes the work of LGBTQIA* educators at the 2019 NCTE conference
- 4. How has the work of your group contributed to NCTE’s role in shaping the profession of teaching and/or the understanding of literacy in educational contexts?**
- a. Conference sessions speak to the range of educators who compose NCTE’s membership from elementary education to teacher education
 - b. Topics of original blog posts address K-12 educators, librarians, and teacher educators; original blog posts offer practical, classroom-based practices for supporting and affirming LGBTQIA* students, families, and communities through young adult literature, children’s literature, writing instruction, professional development, classroom management, and outreach; blog posts are shared via social media to heighten the impact and visibility of the work being conducted by the committee; blog posts offer potential for future research articles and conference proposals/presentations
 - c. The *English Journal* issue will attend to the progress made since the 2009 issue, including the political, cultural, curricular, and pedagogical shifts in the last decade; the issue will also attend to contemporary and lasting challenges that educators face when working to creating affirming ELA experiences for LGBTQIA* youth, families, and communities
 - d. Twitter chats remain a popular venue for teachers to learn and develop their professional expertise and identities; #NCTEchat has been very successful in engaging in a broad group of teachers throughout the various chats; our chat would provide accessible professional learning for English teachers to create affirming ELA curriculum and pedagogy for LGBTQIA* youth, families, and communities
 - e. LGBTQIA* students deserve curriculum, pedagogy, and professionals who will affirm their identities; many LGBTQIA* educators have made the goal of creating just schools their mission but the institution of NCTE had not acknowledged that work in an official, institutional manner; the award acknowledges the contributions of LGBTQIA* literacy educators and speaks to the importance of honoring LGBTQIA* leaders within the organization of NCTE and the field of teaching English broadly
 - f. A banner at the conference will highlight the work of LGBTQIA* educators within NCTE and the teaching of English and literacy broadly

Suggestions from your group: Your good ideas help direct future NCTE actions.

1. What significant changes or trends in our field point to action from the Council?

- Continued attacks on LGBTQIA* students, families, communities, and educators from federal, state, and local governments
- Despite growth in quantity of LGBTQIA*-centered texts, the texts are continually challenged and banned in schools
- Teachers need professional learning opportunities to develop LGBTQIA*-affirming pedagogies and curriculum

2. What trends need to factor into medium- to long-term NCTE planning?

- Continue focusing on censorship, which disproportionately negatively impacts LGBTQIA*s texts from being included in classroom and library material
- Continue supporting inclusion of LGBTQ strand in conference planning
- Continue working on creating gender-inclusive and affirming spaces for all genders
- Critical vetting of speaks to avoid [homophobic instances such as the one from last year](#)
- Explicit discussions of how NCTE will support LGBTQIA* students, educators, and families in the current political climate
- Highlighting of work by LGBTQIA* educators in online and physical spaces
- Intentional recruitment of LGBTQIA* educators to write conference proposals, blog entries, and manuscript submissions

Cody Miller, Chair