BEYOND BORDERS

queer eros and ethos (ethics)
in LGBTQ young adult literature

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While there are a growing number of Young Adult Literature (YAL) texts that reflect the differential gender and sexual realities of today’s students (Miller, 2014b) there is also a growing phenomenon in adolescent culture that shows that some youth eschew gender and sexual labels (Miller, forthcoming A, B, 2014c). Faced with these realities, literacy teacher educators and their preservice teachers, and secondary English language arts (SELA) teachers are challenged to mediate literacy learning that affirms these differential realities in their SELA classrooms. That said, how can teachers move beyond discussions relegated to only gender and sexuality and embrace a continuum that includes the (a)gender and (a)sexuality complexities and intersectionalities that students embody? One such strategy emerges from these additions of the (a) in front of both gender and sexuality, which demonstrates an expanding awareness that some people do not ascribe to social definitions for either. (A)gender references those who may eschew gender, and its biological, historical, and even social definitions and (a)sexuality refers to those who are not sexual or who do not identify with a sexual orientation. Placing these nuanced additions to the ephemeral “LGBT” ... acronym adds to the corpus of queering literacy practices that both aids in and advances literacy
teaching that can undo restrictively normative conceptions of sexual and gendered life, and honors them as separate and distinct categories. Introduced in the new Queer Literacy Framework (QLF), a tool that both contributes to queering the classroom and reading YAL queerly, this model takes up the unhinging of (a)gender from (a)sexuality and provides principles and commitments along with subsequent strategies for preservice and inservice literacy teachers that supports them to develop and embody the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to help all students learn (NCATE, 2000) while simultaneously supporting them to remain open to redefinition and renegotiation when they come up against social limits.

HISTORIOGRAPHY: BUILDING THE QUEER LITERACY FRAMEWORK

Gender and sexuality norms, conscribed under heteropatriarchy, have established violent and unstable social and educational climates for the millennial generation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans*, intersex, agender/asexual, gender creative, and questioning youth (LGBT+IAGCQ+, a historicized version of this acronym recognizing current experiences of young people) (Miller, forthcoming B). While many studies by GLSEN and their allies show that LGBT+IAGCQ+ feel safer overall in schools than their LGBTQ+ (gender variant, used by some researchers) predecessors, due to shifts in national and state policies and amendments advocating for LGBT rights, state anti-bullying laws, increased numbers of Gay-Straight Alliances (GSAs), and a wider social acceptance of LGBTQ+ people (GLSEN, 2011, 2013), schools still struggle to normalize the inclusion of a LGBTQ+ positive curricula (GLSEN, 2013). This work fundamentally addresses, through a QLF, how literacy teacher educators can support preservice teachers to understand and read (a)gender and (a)sexuality through a queer lens; how to rework social and classroom norms where bodies with differential realities in classrooms are legitimated and made legible to self and other; how to shift classroom contexts for reading (a)gender and (a)sexuality; and how to support classroom students toward personal, educational, and social legitimacy through understanding the value of (a)gender and (a)sexuality self-determination and justice. Although the QLF can be applied to literacy practices in Pre-K–12 schooling contexts, this work focuses specifically on its application to YAL in secondary (grades 7–12) English preservice teacher education.

For students to be self-determined, autonomous beings, they must be afforded favorable opportunities or have opportunities “worth wanting” (Howe, 1997) from within favorable social contexts (Leonardi & Saenz, 2014). When we consider that gender and sexuality categories, which predate our existence, typically...
shape how we think inwardly about ourselves and others, classrooms that fail to affirm students’ (a)gender and (a)sexual diversity contribute to students not wanting to connect or participate in learning. However, when favorable social conditions are present, students can experience an internal safety that has limitless possibilities for students to be “read” or “made” legible both to themselves and others (Butler, 2004). Applying the QLF to YAL for grades 7–12, these questions, concerns, and conditions are accounted for by inviting in a reading of adolescence/ies that encourages (a)gender and (a)sexuality self-determination that can pivot toward (a)gender and (a)sexuality justice. As adolescents come to see their realities reflected, affirmed, and made legible both through literacy practices in the classroom and society, self-determination, and hence, a queer autonomy, can be realized.

NUANCED LANGUAGE SUPPORTING THE QLF

Unpacking key language within the QLF can support teachers as they begin to work with the framework. Queer refers to a suspension of rigid gender and sexual orientation categories (Jagose, 1996). Through its application to disrupt what is perceived as normative, queer is underscored by attempts to interrogate and interrupt heteronormativity by acknowledging diverse people across gender, sex, and desires (e.g., emotional and/or sexual) (Blackburn & Clark, 2011). Queer also embraces the freedom to not be boxed into any one identity category or to be positioned based on an identity category during a spacetime (Miller & Norris, 2007); rather, it invites people to interstitially, intersectionally move beyond, even away from, and even to later return to, identity categories (Britzman, 1997). Queer is therefore not relegated to just LGBTAGCQ people, but is inclusive of any variety of experience that transcends socially and politically accepted categories for gender and sexual orientation. The use of the word queer in the framework is enveloped by a continuum for (a)gender and (a)sexuality expressions.

Self-determination is the right to make choices to self-identify in a way that authenticates one’s self-expression, and which has potential for the embodiment of self-acceptance. It is also a type of self-granted or inherited permission that can help one refute or rise above social critique. It presumes choice and rejects an imposition to be externally controlled, defined, or regulated. It presumes that humans are entitled to unsettle knowledge, which can generate new possibilities of legibility. It means that any form of (a)gender or (a)sexuality deserves the same inalienable rights and should be afforded the same dignities and protections. Such de facto rights thus grant individuals ways of intervening in and disrupting social and political processes because one’s discourse and self-determined ways of being
demonstrate placement as a viable stakeholder in society, revealing that no one personhood is of any more or less value than any other.

For this work, (A)gender and (a)sexuality justice and queer autonomy are interchangeable terms because they each ideologically reflect an actualized freedom of humans to be self-expressive without redress of social, institutional, or political violence. Were (a)gender and (a)sexuality justice actualized, homophobia, transphobia, gendertyping, and hence, compulsory gender and sexuality labeling, would be deemed as systemic forms of violence that would incur appropriate consequences. In sum, teachers who take up a QLF can be agents for social, political, and personal transformations.

**UNEVEN BODIED REALITIES**

Many people have been conditioned to believe that they are dependent on norms and external forces for social acceptance and worth. These norms, which are put on psyches from birth, maintain status quo beliefs and make identities legible and readable. One’s legibility is therefore socially mediated and constituted. One cannot exist without drawing upon the sociality of norms that precede one’s existence, so from inception, personhood is constituted outside the self, leaving little space for organic experiences of internal safety. When we are not accepted, bodies are open to violence (emotional, psychic, physical, psychiatric, etc.). Violence is thereby a symptom of anxiety for those threatened by unintelligibility. Gender and sexuality therefore operate as regulatory norms and symbolic signifiers of power, that remind us that under patriarchal domination, the external can limit self-determination, and subsequently, self-worth. Thus, in a society that only protects some, and where external realities are regulated, the question we are left with is one of deep moral consequence: How can teacher educators rework gender and sexuality norms so all bodies are entitled to experience and can experience self-determination with a resultant, queer autonomy?

The classroom space reserves immeasurable possibility for such changes to occur because it holds contemporaneous plurality. Teachers thereby have great agentive possibility to rupture dangerous dichotomies and myths about gender and sexuality while educating adolescence/ies about how all students (and others) can be rendered legible. Bodies are not reducible to language alone because language continuously emerges from bodies as individuals come to know themselves. Bodies are constantly generating and invent new knowledges: “The body gives rise to language and that language carries bodily aims, and performs bodily deeds that are not always understood by those who use language to accomplish certain conscious aims” (Butler, 2004, p. 199, on Felman, 2002). For bodies in schools to become self-determined, though, individuals must be afforded opportunities...
to develop internal safety, or the embodied trust that galvanizes individuals to take risks and to be their authentic selves (Leonardi & Saenz, 2014; Meyer & Leonardi, forthcoming). As a tool to help develop internal safety, and to shift norms to affirm differential bodied realities, just how can the QLF subvert the master’s discourse? The QLF is a synthesis of theoretical mappings borne out of a common cumulative finding that suggests that for students to succeed and stay invested in school, curriculum must affirm their lived worlds (Miller, 2009; Murray, 2014).

For students, then, who are LGBTIAGCQ or have differential bodied realities, they are typically highly attuned to prevailing gender and sexual norms and often feel unsafe from the moment they cross onto school property (Miller, Burns, & Johnson, 2013). Gaps in codes of conduct, posters that do not reflect their realities, gendered and heteronormative school events, locker rooms, gendered bathrooms, notes home that reinforce heteronormative or gender norms, and a hetero, gender-normative and undemocratic classroom curriculum, all ignore their truths, delegitimizing their lived realities, and make absent a sense of communal belonging (GLSEN, 2013). Such macroaggressions (Miller et al., 2013), day after day, and year after year, scream to students they don’t matter, and systemically destabilize their ability to ever feel or experience safety at school, and even in their lives, writ large. These contextual realities, however, can be shifted by a deeper and more informed understanding of how heteronormativity and gender-normativity vulnerability students in our schools, which can lead toward contexts shifting.

Moses drew from Kymlicka and Raz’s work in particular ways—integrating their ideas to support a conceptualization of personal autonomy and self-determination. Moses’s (2002) concept of “autonomy as self-determination” provides a framework to analyze race-conscious education policies that mitigate the racism and oppression often experienced by students of color in U.S. educational institutions. Moses then conceptualizes the ideal or possible realization of self-determination through two specific conditions: favorable social contexts of choice and authenticity. Leonardi and Saenz (2014) take up these concepts and apply it to how queer youth, as they experience internal safety, can become self-determined. Building from Moses, they proffered that internal safety requires “both autonomy and self-determination and that these components are contingent upon favorable social contexts of choice” (p. 207). Drawing from the combined works of Moses (2002) and Leonardi and Saenz (2014), I extend these concepts to queering literacy instruction.

For students to experience (a)gender and (a)sexuality self-determination, then, two conditions must be present: they must be afforded favorable social contexts and have authentic identity-affirming choices. In the classroom, then, optimal
conditions that make self-determination possible include activities that foster independence, agency, integrity, an adequate range of options, and which authenticate cultural identity (Moses, 2002). When such conditions are normalized, students can develop internal safety, and as a result, are more likely to take risks and be their authentic selves. To foster conditions that can lead to internal safety, schools must strive to rid the environment of “unsafety” (e.g., all forms of bullying, see Chapter 10, Miller, Burns, & Johnson, 2013) by eliminating all enactments of domination and oppression (Young, 1990) from the micro to the macro level across practices and policies. Schools predicated on democratic values that inspire independence, integrity, and an adequate range of options can ostensibly shift the prevailing schooling environment.

WHY A QLF MATTERS

The QLF is a critical interventionist and political strategy to challenge the taken-for-granted value of hegemonic demarcations of gender and sexuality assumed under patriarchy and hidden within and by curriculum. It is a strategy for teachers of literacy to reinscribe, instate, and affirm differential bodied realities and give voice to those who experience illegibility and delegitimizability. Because social norms have great structural power in shaping the lived realities of people, and humans come to identify with a set of social conventions from birth (Miller, 2012), when gender and sexuality norms are fixed and rigid, people are made vulnerable to internalized and external oppressions. Wherefore social norms most often reinforce self-acceptance and can take a toll on one’s psyche by destroying self-love, acceptance, and internal safety, when one does not ascribe to binary gender or sexual orientation categories, the QLF as a tool for personal legitimization, disrupts oppressive gender and sexual diversity narratives and affirms all forms of (a)gender and (a)sexuality expression. A QLF matters because it positions teachers as agentive, who, through their teaching, can affect and influence adolescence/isd while simultaneously challenging and expanding social norms.

Why Not Using a QLF Matters

To not challenge current understandings of gender and sexuality norms, we are left with a myopic and vulneribilized understanding of the evolving lived realities of people. If we ascribe to a recurrence of sameness, it creates a flattening and uni-dimensional perspective of gender and sexuality, while it continues to delegitimize those who do not ascribe to gender and sexuality norms by relegating them to ongoing inferior status. In the literacy classroom (and eventually for
The QLF and YAL

The QLF comprises 10 principles with 10 subsequent commitments for educators to queer literacy practices. The framework is underscored by the notion that our lives have been structured through an inheritance of a political, gendered, economic, social, religious, and linguistic system with indissoluble ties to heteropatriarchy. This is not to suggest that we should do away with (a)gender and (a)sexuality categories altogether, but that we pivot into an interstitial paradigm that refuses to close itself or be narrowly defined, and strive to shift and expand norms that account for an interstitiuality of (a)gender and (a)sexuality complexities and differential bodied realities. In this new space, the in-between, the incommensurable, the open, and the yet-to-be-defined, a QLF can shift norms that operationalize currently and possibly future lives.

The framework is intended to be an autonomous, ongoing, non-hierarchical tool within a teaching repertoire; it is not something someone does once and moves away from; rather, the principles and commitments should work alongside other tools and perspectives within a teacher's disposition. Below, axioms are provided to support literacy teacher educators and their preservice teachers and SELA teachers to work through the framework. Following the framework, each principle and subsequent commitment has examples of “possible” pre-reading, comprehension, cultural connection strategies that could be applied to Young Adult (YA) texts. Though the focus for this piece is the application of the QLF to teaching YAL, an intention of the framework is that it can be applied and taken up across multiple genres and disciplines within literacy acquisition, as was not intended for any sole literacy purpose.

YAL has been undervalued in many circles of academic research as a type of reading that doesn't have literary quality or merit or transferable reading capital compared to that of canonical works (see Miller, 2013, 2014d; Miller & Slifkin, 2010). Under current Neoliberal testing and standards regimes, we would be remiss to not develop rationales and strategies to support teachers staking ground and supporting the criticality of teaching YAL and YA queerly.
Applications across the QLF

In addition to key terms when working across the framework, there are several axioms that can be presupposed and applied to each principle:

Table 1. Axioms.

- We live in a time we never made, gender and sexuality norms predate our existence;
- Non-gender and sexual "differences" have been around forever but norms operate to pathologize and delegitimize them;
- Children’s self-determination is taken away early when gender and sexuality are inscribed onto them. Their bodies/minds become unknowing participants in a roulette of gender and sexuality norms;
- Children have rights to their own (a)gender and (a)sexuality legibility;
- Binary views on gender and sexuality are potentially damaging;
- Gender must be dislodged/unhinged from sexuality;
- Humans have agency;
- We must move away from pathologizing beliefs that police humanity;
- We are all entitled to the same basic human rights; and,
- Life should be livable for all.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Principles</th>
<th>Commitments of Educators Who Queer Literacy</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Refrains from possible presumptions that students are heterosexual or ascribe to a gender.</td>
<td>Educators who use queer literacy never presume that students are a particular sexual orientation or a gender.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Understands gender as a construct which has been and continues to be impacted by intersecting factors (e.g., social, historical, material, cultural, economic, religious).</td>
<td>Educators who employ queer literacy are committed to classroom activities that actively push back against gender constructs and provide opportunities to explore, engage, and understand how gender is constructed.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Recognizes that masculinity and femininity constructs are assigned to gender norms and are situationally performed.</td>
<td>Educators who engage with queer literacy challenge gender norms and gender-stereotypes and actively support students’ various and multiple performances of gender.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Understands gender and sexuality as flexible.</td>
<td>Educators who engage with queer literacy are mindful about how specific discourse(s) can reinforce gender and sexuality norms, and they purposefully demonstrate how gender and sexuality are fluid, or exist on a continuum, shifting over time and in different contexts.</td>
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</tbody>
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5. Opens up spaces for student self-define with chosen (a)gender, (a)sexuality, (a)pronouns or names.

6. Engages in ongoing critique of how gender norms are reinforced in literature, media, technology, art, history, science, math, etc.

7. Understands how Neoliberal principles reinforce and sustain compulsory heterosexism, secures homophobia; how gendering secures bullying transphobia; and how heteronormativity placates a heteroepistemic political economy.

8. Understands that (a)gender (a)sexuality intersect with identities (e.g., culture, language, age, religion, social body type, accent, height, disability, and national origin) that inform students’ beliefs and, thereby, actions.

9. Advocates for equity across categories of (a)gender and (a)sexuality orientations.

10. Believes that students who identify on a continuum gender and sexual minority (GSM) deserve to learn environments free of but not harassment.

Fig 1. A queer literacy framework.

Drawing from the proactive readings of gender, sexuality, and gender identity, Smiler and Mosse (2002) suggest
5. Opens up spaces for students to self-define with chosen (a)gender(s), (a)sexuality, (a)pronouns, or names.

6. Engages in ongoing critique of how gender norms are reinforced in literature, media, technology, art, history, science, math, etc.

7. Understands how Neoliberal principles reinforce and sustain compulsory heterosexism, which secures homophobia; how gendering secures bullying and transphobia; and how homonormativity placates a heterosexual political economy.

8. Understands that (a)gender and (a)sexuality intersect with other identities (e.g., culture, language, age, religion, social class, body type, accent, height, ability, disability, and national origin) that inform students' beliefs and, thereby, actions.

9. Advocates for equity across all categories of (a)gender and (a)sexuality orientations.

10. Believes that students who identify on a continuum of gender and sexual minorities (GSM) deserve to learn in environments free of bullying and harassment.

Educators who engage with queer literacy invite students to self-define and/or reject a chosen or preferred gender, sexual orientation, name, and/or pronoun.

Educators who use queer literacy provide ongoing and deep discussions about how society is gendered and primarily heterosexual, and thus invite students to actively engage in analysis of cultural texts and disciplinary discourses.

Educators who employ queer literacy understand and investigate structural oppression and how heterosexism sustains (a)gender violence, and generate meaningful opportunities for students to become embodied change agents and to be proactive against, or to not engage in, bullying behavior.

Educators who engage with queer literacy do not essentialize students' identities, but recognize how intersections of culture, language, age, religion, social class, body type, accent, height, ability, disability, and national origin, inform students' beliefs and, thereby, actions.

Educators who employ queer literacy do not privilege one belief or stance, but advocate for equity across all categories of (a)gender and (a)sexuality orientations.

Educators who use queer literacy make their positions known, when first hired, to students, teachers, administrators, and school personnel and take a stance when any student is bullied or marginalized, whether explicitly or implicitly, for (a)gender or (a)sexuality orientation.

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Fig 1. A queer literacy framework inviting (a)gender and (a)sexuality self-determination and justice.

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Drawing from the principles in Figure 1, examples of how to disrupt normative readings of gender, sexuality, and expressions are provided. In order to foster (a)gender and (a)sexuality self-determination, these possible activities are built upon Moses's (2002) suggestions of independence, agency, integrity, an adequate
range of options, and ways to authenticate cultural identity. Each principle and subsequent commitment therefore has strategies for pre-reading, comprehension, and making cultural connections.

**Principle 1:** Refrains from possible presumptions that students are heterosexual or ascribe to a gender.

**Commitment:** Educators who use queer literacy never presume that students are a particular sexual orientation or a gender.

**Applications to YAL:**

**Pre-reading strategies:**

*Explore characteristics of sexual orientation markers*
- Ask students where notions of heterosexuality come from.
- Ask students how heterosexuality is reinforced in society and by their families.
- Reflect on who benefits (e.g., see policy for heterosexual married couples under law) and who is marginalized by heterosexuality.
- Ask students to discuss what makes someone heterosexual.
- Ask students what characteristics demonstrate heterosexual behavior.
- Ask students to consider why and which authors try to reinforce heterosexual orientation privileges. If so, which authors have they observed enacting this?

*Explore characteristics of gender markers*
- Ask students where notions of gender arise. Ask them how such notions are reinforced. Ask, do people have to “be” or “have a gender”?
- Ask students what ideas, concepts, behaviors, mannerisms, activities, dress, feelings, occupations, seem to be identified with gender. Ask them for examples in society where gender seems fluid and non-descript. Ask for examples where people seem (a)gender or gender flexible.
- Ask students what makes gender matter?
- Ask, what happens to people who are gender flexible or who seem to behave in a gender that is different than their assigned sex.
- Ask students how gender and sex are different.
- Ask students to consider why and which authors try to reinforce binary gender behaviors and performances. If so, which authors have they observed enacting this? What have they learned from those texts?

**Comprehension strategies:**
- Ask, how are characters in the text treated because of gender or sex?
- Ask, are there any characters who seem to transcend gender or sexual orientation markers?

**Cultural Connectives:**
- Ask students to explore intersectionality. For example, they might choose a story about an athlete, media, a live with whom do not ascribe to their gender and/or gender identity. The future.
- Ask students in their lives who do not ascribe to their gender and/or gender identity.

**Principle 2:** Under-impact by interreligious.

**Commitment:** Educational activities that actively explore, engage, and...

**Applications to YAL:**

**Pre-reading strategies:**
- Ask students of gender pres.
- Ask students pressed due to...
- Ask students which are involved in cultural, economic...
- Ask students oppressed due to...
- Ask students that are involved in cultural, economic...

...
- Ask, for the characters in the text, are there any personal, social, familial, cultural, economic, linguistic, political, or religious consequences for transcending gender or sexual orientation markers?
- What sort of support (if any) is given to elements or characters who question the gender or sexual orientation binary? What happens to those elements/characters?
- Ask, how does the author resolve any conflict incurred by characters that transcend gender and/or sexual orientation markers?
- Ask, for any characters, how does the author treat healing? Remorse? Redemption? The future?
- Ask students in what ways these self-identified characters acted as change agents in their lived worlds. Who, what, and/or how were they impacted?

**Cultural Connections:**
- Ask students to make connections between YAL characters and artists, musicians, athletes, media personalities, religious figures, politicians, friends, or family, etc., who do not ascribe to expected gender or sexual orientation markers. What are their stories? How were/are they treated? What have they experienced? How are their lives today? What have you learned about gender or sexual orientation markers from those individuals? What can you now teach others about those who do not ascribe to expected gender or sexual orientation markers?

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**Principle 2:** Understands gender as a construct that has been, and continues to be, impacted by intersecting factors (e.g., social, historical, material, cultural, economic, religious).

**Commitment:** Educators who employ queer literacy are committed to classroom activities that actively push back against gender constructs and provide opportunities to explore, engage, and understand how gender is constructed.

**Applications to YAL:**

**Pre-reading strategies:**
- Ask students to reflect on how they (and others) are privileged or benefit because of gender presentation. Consider contexts.
- Ask students in what ways they (and others) have been marginalized or felt oppressed due to gender presentation. Consider contexts.
- Ask students to consider how intersectional aspects to their identity (or others), which are invisible or less legible to others, such as social, historical, material, cultural, economic, or religious affiliations might generate more privileges or benefits. Consider contexts.
- Ask students in what ways they (and others) have been marginalized or felt oppressed due to how their gender presentation intersects with social, historical, material, cultural, economic, or religious aspects of their identities. Consider contexts.
• Ask students to consider which authors try to reinforce gender and sexual orientation privileges. If so, which authors have they observed enacting this? What have they learned from those texts?

**Comprehension strategies:**

• Ask students to consider how YAL characters with intersectional identities understand their intersectional identities. Based on the narrative, do they understand that they are granted privileges or denied them based on context?
• Ask students to consider how YAL characters with intersectional identities are treated in the text. In which spaces are they treated equally or marginalized? Which aspects of their identities seem to “trouble” others’ safety? What causes those “disturbances?”
• Ask students to consider how YAL characters with intersectional identities in the text experience microaggressions (see Miller, 2012; Miller, Burns, & Johnson, 2014). How do they respond? How don’t others come to support the characters? Is there a learning curve?
• Ask students to reflect on the support systems who embrace YAL characters with intersectional identities. How do such supports stabilize or affirm these characters? In what ways do those relationships influence the pathos, ethos, and logos of the narrative?
• Ask students in what ways these characters with intersectional identities acted as change agents in their lived worlds. Who, what, and/or how were they impacted?

**Cultural Connections:**

• Ask students to make connections and draw inferences between YAL characters and artists, musicians, athletes, media personalities, religious figures, politicians, friends, or family, etc., who have intersectional identities. What are their stories? How were/are they treated? What have they experienced? What aspects of their identities have granted them benefits or how have they experienced privilege? What aspects of their identities have marginalized them? How are their lives today? What have you learned about intersectionalities from these individuals? What have you learned about the ways they perform their identities? What can you now teach others about how identities are impacted by social, historical, material, cultural, economic, and religious intersections?

**Principle 3:** Recognizes that masculinity and femininity constructs are assigned to gender norms and are situationally performed.

**Commitment:** Educators who engage with queer literacy challenge gender norms and gender-stereotypes and actively support students' various and multiple performances of gender.
Applications to YAL:

**Pre-reading strategies:**

- Ask students what typical characteristics comprise masculinity and femininity. Ask, where do these come from? How are they reinforced? Do these characteristics necessitate one's gender? Are there any rules that say you have to behave as one or the other?
- Ask students to reflect on the people, situations, and context where they have experienced support for their gender presentations.
- Ask students to reflect on situations where they have been “surprised” that individuals have experienced support or affirmation for gender presentation.
- Ask students to consider the reasons about whom, and in which spaces and situations, they have observed people either affirmed or marginalized based on gender presentation.
- Ask students to consider the reasons for affirmation or marginalization and connect it to how people perform masculinity or femininity.
- Ask students to consider which authors try to reinforce gender and sexual orientation stereotypes. If so, which authors have they observed enacting this? What have they learned from those texts?
- Ask students what elements of a text can be perceived as being masculine (active, powerful) and feminine (passive, marginalized) and how do the characters support these traditional roles?
- Ask students, *which literary elements* in a text might they perceive as interstitial, which lend, support, or refute a perceived gender binary or sexuality. In other words, which elements exhibit those traits of both, or even neither? Which elements stand out that help to develop a critique?

**Comprehension strategies:**

- Ask students to consider how YAL characters who exhibit traditionally conscribed masculine or feminine characteristics are treated in the text. Reflect on how those who play with, or refuse, gender acculturation, are portrayed and treated.
- Ask how masculine or feminine characteristics are reinforced in the text. Who and what policies these characteristics?
- Ask students how masculine or feminine identities are treated in the text. In which spaces are they treated equally or marginalized? Which aspects of their identities seem to “trouble” others’ safety? What causes those “disturbances”?
- Ask students to reflect on if they were surprised that YAL characters experienced support or affirmation for their gender presentation. Describe the context that lent itself to such affirmation (e.g., in place policy, GSA, small social circles, etc.).
- Ask students which characters push back against masculine or feminine and other gender stereotypes. What seems to give them the strength, drive, or will to do so?
- How do characters experience empowerment when they also simultaneously experience discrimination? What stabilizes or affirms their identities?
- Ask students how the author either reinforces or pushes back against textual elements that are perceived as being masculine (active, powerful) and feminine (passive, marginalized) and how do the characters support or refuse these traditional roles?
- Ask students how the author employs literary elements that might be perceived as interstitial that lend, support, or refute a perceived gender binary or sexuality. In other words, what elements exhibit those traits of both, or even neither? Which elements stand out that help to develop a critique?
- Ask students in what ways these self-realized characters acted as change agents in their lived worlds. Who, what, and/or how were they impacted?

Cultural Connections:
- Ask students to make connections and draw inferences between YAL characters and artists, musicians, athletes, media personalities, religious figures, politicians, friends, or family, etc., who have identities that do not demonstrate binary masculine/feminine characteristics. What are their stories? How were/are they treated? What have they experienced? What aspects of their identities have granted them benefits or how have they experienced privilege? What aspects of their identities have marginalized them? How are their lives today? What have you learned about the ways they perform their identities? What can you now teach others about transcending or not ascribing to gender norms?

Principle 4: Understands gender and sexuality as flexible.
**Commitment:** Educators who engage with queer literacy are mindful about how specific discourse(s) can reinforce gender and sexuality norms, and they purposefully demonstrate how gender and sexuality are fluid, or exist on a continuum, shifting over time and in different contexts.

**Applications to YAL:**

**Pre-reading strategies:**
- Ask students to consider the contexts that have impacted their understandings of gender and sexuality.
- Ask students to consider if their feelings or desires have unexpectedly shifted toward a person regardless of sex, or gender, or perceived gender. Ask them to reflect on what impacted that shift? If a shift was experienced, did they anticipate that shift and how did that affirm their self-awareness?
- Ask students to reflect on themselves or people they know and their process of coming to terms with different embodied identities. What was their process? What did that feel like? Were there joys? Obstacles? How did others respond?
- Ask students to reflect on why LGBT*IAGCQ are often placed together in one acronym. Ask them to consider if any aspects of the acronym should be separated, and why.
Ask students to discuss how what they've been told or studied has influenced an understanding of gender and sexuality and how that compares and contrasts from an embodied or observational perspective.

Ask students if they know anyone who does not identify with the characteristics of a gender. In what ways do they seem different? Ask them how they feel about the difference.

Ask students if they know anyone who does not identify with a sexual orientation. In what ways do they seem different? Ask them how they feel about the difference.

Ask students if people must identify with a gender? Ask them if they know anyone who refuses to identify with a gender at all. Ask them to respectfully and anonymously describe how that person self-identifies. Introduce the term (a)gender.

Ask students if people must have a sexual orientation? Ask them if they know anyone who refuses to identify with a sexual orientation. Ask them to respectfully and anonymously describe how that person self-identifies. Introduce the term (a)sexuality.

Ask students to reflect how people's identities shift over time and even by context. Ask them to draw from personal experience. Explain that the same can be true about (a)gender presentation and identification and one's (a)sexuality.

Ask students if they have a right to determine their own (a)gender identities.

Ask students if they have a right to determine their own (a)sexuality identities.

Ask students if they have a right to determine others' (a)gender identities. Explore.

Ask students if they have a right to determine others' (a)sexuality identities. Explore.

Ask students to consider which authors explore (a)gender and (a)sexual self-determination. What have they learned from those texts?

Comprehension strategies:

Ask students to consider how YAL characters with nonbinary gender identities describe themselves. What are their lived realities like (e.g., home, school, social systems, activities etc.)? How are those characters treated? Do they experience support? Are they bullied? Do they have a job? Are they college-bound? What perceived social, emotional, psychological consequences, if any, do those characters experience? What perceived social, emotional, psychological benefits, if any, do those characters experience?

Ask students to consider how YAL characters with nonbinary sexual orientations describe themselves. What are their lived realities like (e.g., home, school, social systems, activities etc.)? How are those characters treated? Do they experience support? Are they bullied? Do they have a job? Are they college-bound? What perceived social, emotional, psychological consequences, if any, do those characters experience? What perceived social, emotional, psychological benefits, if any, do those characters experience?
• Ask students to consider how YAL characters’ identities are fluid and shift in different contexts. What informs such shifts?
• Ask students to consider how YAL characters experience their own (a)gender and (a)sexuality self-determination? How does that strengthen and enhance their well-being?
• Ask students to consider how self-determined YAL characters support others around them.
• Ask students how self-determined YAL characters become agents of change in the text. Who grows or matures as a result of these characters’ identities? Who, what, and/or how were they impacted?

Cultural Connections:
• Ask students to make connections and draw inferences between YAL characters and artists, musicians, athletes, media personalities, religious figures, politicians, friends, or family, etc., who do not experience their gender or sexual orientations as binary. What are their stories? How were/are they treated? What have they experienced? What aspects of their identities have granted them benefits or how have they experienced privilege? What aspects of their identities have marginalized them? How are their lives today? What have you learned about the ways they perform their identities? What can you now teach others about those who do not experience their gender and/or sexual orientation as binary?

Principle 5: Opens up spaces for students to self-define with chosen (a)genders, (a)sexuality, (a)pronouns or names.

Commitment: Educators who engage with queer literacy invite students to self-define and/or reject a chosen or preferred gender, sexual orientation, name, and/or pronoun.

Applications to YAL:

Pre-reading strategies:
• Ask students if they like their names. Why or why not? Ask them if they have a right to change their name or prefer to be called by a different name.
• Ask students which pronouns the English language has for gender. Ask them if they like those. If not, what other suggestions do they have. Ask have they ever considered that some people don’t feel certain pronouns fit their identities.
• Ask students if people have a right to refuse to be pronounced. Are there any “real” rules that keep a person from selecting pronouns that fit more appropriately. Are there any “real” rules that keep a person from refusing to be identified by a pronoun?
• Ask students what it feels like to have something private about themselves revealed.
• Ask students why respecting privacy is important.
• Ask students why some people might be uncomfortable sharing aspects of their (a)gender or (a)sexuality with others.

• Ask students in what respect for (a)gender or (a)sexuality or (a)pronoun choice?
• Ask students if they demonstrated respect for (a)gender or (a)sex
• Ask students how well they understand their own, with family?
• Ask students if they understand pronouns, and their lived worlds

Cultural Connection
• Ask students to reflect on art, music, friends, or family, how (a)sexuality reveals itself. How do they respond? How are they performing their identity right to self-disclosure?
- Ask students in what ways teachers can demonstrate respect for students' privacy related to (a)gender or (a)sexuality and (a)pronoun choice (refusal to be pronounced).
- Ask students in what ways schools, doctors, dentists, coaches, etc., can demonstrate respect for students' privacy related to (a)gender or (a)sexuality and (a)pronoun choice.
- Ask students to consider which authors explore issues of chosen (a)gender, (a)sexuality, (a)pronouns, and naming. What have they learned from those texts?

Comprehension strategies:
- Ask students if YAL characters revealed private information to anyone about (a)gender or (a)sexuality, chosen names or (a)pronouns.
- Ask students if any of the YAL characters had private information related to (a)gender or (a)sexuality publically revealed.
- Ask students how the YAL characters responded to the breach of information.
- Ask students if there were any consequences or redress about the breach.
- Ask students why the YAL characters were uncomfortable sharing aspects of their (a)gender or (a)sexuality with others.
- Ask students in what ways teachers, parents, peers, family, social circles, others demonstrated respect for YAL characters' privacy related to (a)gender or (a)sexuality and (a)pronoun choice (refusal to be pronounced).
- Ask students in what ways the YAL characters who revealed their (a)gender, (a)sexuality, and chosen name or (a)pronoun choice felt normalized in school, home, with family, peers, etc.
- Ask students in what ways these self-defined characters acted as change agents in their lived worlds. Who, what, and/or how were they impacted?

Cultural Connections:
- Ask students to make connections and draw inferences between YAL characters and artists, musicians, athletes, media personalities, religious figures, politicians, friends, or family, etc., who have had private aspects of their (a)gender and/or (a)sexuality revealed publically. What are their stories? What have they experienced? How were/are they treated? Was there an apology? How did they respond? How are their lives today? What have you learned about the ways they perform their identities? What can you now teach others about respecting one's right to self-disclose?

Principle 6: Engages in ongoing critique of how gender norms are reinforced in literature, media, technology, art, history, science, math, etc.

Commitment: Educators who use queer literacy provide ongoing and deep discussions about how society is gendered and primarily heterosexual, and thus invite students to actively engage in analysis of cultural texts and disciplinary discourses.
Applications to YAL:

Pre-reading strategies:

- Ask students to log how gender norms are reinforced in a chosen movie, talk show, TV show. How is gender policed?
- Ask students to log how gender norms are reinforced in school (other classes, school policies, messages, posters, sports, etc.). How are gender norms socially policed?
- Ask students to log how gender norms are reinforced in different disciplines and genres/subject genres within technology, art, history, radio, music, literature, science, math, sports, policy, etc. How are gender norms socially policed?
- Ask students to provide examples about where in these disciplines there is push back against gender norms. Ask, what have they learned from the push back?
- Ask students to consider which authors explore social policing and reinforcement of (a)gender and (a)sexuality. What have they learned from those texts?

Comprehension strategies:

- Ask students to log how gender norms are reinforced in a YAL text across different aspects of characters' lives. How are gender norms socially policed in the text?
- What messages do the characters receive? How are they interrupted and disrupted?
- Ask students to provide examples about who pushes back against these gender norms. Ask, what have they learned from the push back?
- Ask, how was gender interrupted? What impact does this have on the characters or social environment? How do people come to read each other differently?
- Ask students in what ways these characters acted as change agents in their lived worlds. Who, what, and/or how were they impacted?

Cultural Connections:

- Ask students to make connections and draw inferences between YAL characters and artists, musicians, athletes, media personalities, religious figures, politicians, friends, or family, and in any academic discipline, etc., who have pushed back against gender norms and embrace (a)gender presentation. What are their stories? What have they experienced? How were/are they treated? How are their lives today? What have you learned about the ways they perform their identities? What can you now teach others about challenging gender norms and embracing (a)gender presentations?

Principle 7: Understands how Neoliberal principles reinforce and sustain compulsory heterosexism, which secures homophobia; how gendering secures bullying and transphobia; and how homonormativity placates a heterosexual political economy.

Commitment: Educators who employ queer literacy understand and investigate structural oppression and how heterosexism sustains (a)gender violence, and generate meaningful opposition against.
meaningful opportunities for students to become embodied change agents and to be proactive against, or to not engage in, bullying behavior.

Applications to YAL:

*Pre-reading strategies:*

- Define with students, Neoliberalism, heterosexism, homophobia, cisgender, transphobia, and homonormativity.
- Ask students to reflect on (a)gender and (a)sexuality stereotypes. What are the dangers of stereotypes?
- Ask students to reflect on how Neoliberalism generates oppressive views about gender and secures cisgenderism and transphobia.
- Ask students to reflect on how Neoliberalism generates oppressive views about sexuality and secures heterosexism, homonormativity, and homophobia.
- Ask students what kinds of words or actions are used to bully people who are (a)gender or LGBT*AGCCQ.
- What consequences emerge from such policing and who experiences them?
- Who benefits as a result of such policing?
- Ask students to explore how LGTGBGV people are depicted in film and TV as caricatures or tokens, and if the contexts seem authentic.
- Ask students to consider which authors explore Neoliberalism and policing of gender and sexuality. What have they learned from those texts?

*Comprehension strategies:*

- Ask students how characters are impacted by Neoliberalism, how it generates oppressive views about gender and secures cisgenderism and transphobia.
- Ask students which characters appear stereotypes about (a)gender and (a)sexuality. What are the dangers of stereotypes? What can they lead to? Why do they think the author used these stereotypes?
- Ask students to reflect on how characters are impacted by Neoliberalism, how it generates oppressive views about sexuality and secures heterosexism, homonormativity, and homophobia.
- Ask students how LGTGBGV families and cultures are portrayed (e.g., financial stability, successful careers, long-term relationship status, etc.)
- Do transgender, genderqueer, and (a)gender characters have to exhibit certain qualities to compensate for their gender identity and corresponding presentation?
- Are there photos and illustrations that positively acknowledge queer identities or political/social movements (e.g., same-sex parents, marches, rallies, photos with captions)?
- If present, are LGTGBGV people depicted as caricatures or in authentic contexts? Are they tokens? Explore.
- Are photos/illustrations of LGTGBGV more or less sexualized than those depicting heterosexual individuals and relationships? Explore.
- Ask students to identify bullying words or actions against LGBTIAGCQ and (a)gender characters. What are the social, emotional, physical, and/or psychological consequences of the bullying? Did anyone intervene? What was the outcome on the victim? How did the narrative resolve?
- Ask students to reflect on how any characters experience consequences that emerge from such policing?
- Who benefits as a result of such policing?
- Ask students which characters are in leadership roles and to describe the roles they play. What is the proportion of heterosexual to those whose identities are LGTBGV? What kinds of messages does this create?
- Ask students to reflect on the settings (schools, parades, sports, bars, homes, political rallies, etc.) for all characters in the narrative. Do stereotypes reinforce stereotypes or do they challenge them? Is there any bias present in the proportion of text where cisgender and transgender or gender variant individuals cohabit? Between where heterosexual and lesbian, gay, and/or bisexual cohabit?
- Are cisgender and transgender people working cooperatively on projects? Do some of these settings appear to provide or be associated with privilege? Exclusion or marginalization? If any, what are the social, emotional, physical, and/or psychological consequences on people? What are the benefits of cooperative and affirming spaces?
- Ask students in what ways any of these characters acted as change agents in their lived worlds. Who, what, and/or how were they impacted?

Cultural Connections:
- Ask students to make connections and draw inferences between YAL characters and artists, musicians, athletes, media personalities, religious figures, politicians, friends, or family, etc., who have pushed back against how Neoliberalism polices peoples' lived realities and strives to reinscribe (cis)gender norms, heterosexuality, and homonormativity. What are their stories? What have they experienced? How were/are they treated? How are their lives today? What have you learned about the ways they perform and live through their identities? What can you now teach others about challenging Neoliberal principles that reinforce and sustain compulsory heterosexism, (which secures homophobia); how gendering secures bullying and transphobia; and how homonormativity placates a heterosexual political economy.

Principle 8: Understands that (a)gender and (a)sexuality intersect with other identities (e.g., culture, language, age, religion, social class, body type, accent, height, ability, disability, and national origin) that inform students' beliefs and, thereby, actions.

Commitment: Educators who engage with queer literacy do not essentialize students' identities, but recognize how intersections of culture, language, age, religion, social
class, body type, accent, height, ability, disability, and national origin, inform students' beliefs and, thereby, actions.

Applications to YAL:

**Pre-reading strategies:**

- Ask students to reflect on their own (a)gender presentations and (a)sexual orientations.
- Ask students to consider how other aspects of their identities such as, but not limited to, culture, language, age, religion, social class, body type, accent, height, ability, disability, and national origin, intersect with their (a)gender presentations and (a)sexual orientations. In what ways have they benefitted because of these intersections?
- Ask students to consider how intersectional aspects to their identity (or others), which are invisible or less legible to others, such as certain cultural identifiers, disabilities, class status, or national origin, etc., might generate more privileges or benefits.
- Ask students in what ways they (and others) have been marginalized or felt oppressed due to aspects of their intersectionalities.
- Ask students if and why they have ever tried to “pass” in a context by hiding or masking aspects of their identities.
- Ask students to consider which authors have a facility to handle issues related to intersectionalities. What have they learned from those texts?

**Comprehension strategies:**

- Ask students to consider how characters understand aspects of their intersectionalities.
- In what ways do these characters benefit because of these intersections?
- In what ways do these characters experience stressors because of these intersectionalities?
- Ask students to consider if and why characters try to pass in certain contexts and hide or mask aspects of their identity.
- Ask students to consider which aspects these characters try to hide in order to pass.
- Ask students in what ways these characters with intersectional identities acted as change agents in their lived worlds. Who, what, and/or how were they impacted?

**Cultural Connections:**

- Ask students to make connections and draw inferences between YAL characters and artists, musicians, athletes, media personalities, religious figures, politicians, friends, or family, etc., who have intersectional identities. What are their stories? What have they experienced? How were/are they treated? How are their lives today? What have you learned about the ways they perform their identities? What can you now teach others about intersectional identities?
Principle 9: Advocates for equity across all categories of (a)gender and (a)sexuality orientations.

Commitment: Educators who employ queer literacy do not privilege one belief or stance, but advocate for equity across all categories of (a)gender and (a)sexuality orientations.

Applications to YAL:

Pre-reading strategies:
- Ask students to reflect on how their current (a)gender identity or (a)sexuality entities or benefits them in different contexts. How does that make them feel?
- Ask students if they’ve ever felt that they were a problem to be fixed. Explore personal stories. How did that make them feel? What were the outcomes?
- Ask students if they’ve ever felt marginalized and in what context(s)? Explore personal stories. How did that make them feel? What were the outcomes?
- Ask students to reflect on the connotations of the word help. Are there instances in any of the aforementioned contexts where the word felt loaded? How might the term seem problematic? Explore.
- Ask students to reflect on how a peer or someone they know experiences marginalization because of their current (a)gender identity or (a)sexuality. Ask them to infer how that makes the person feel? Ask, do you wish you could intervene? If so, how?
- Ask students if they have ever struggled with their bodies or know someone who has. What happened?
- Ask students if they think that all people are happy living in the bodies into which they were born. Ask them to reflect on what people who struggle with their bodies may experience day-to-day, and over time.
- Ask students to consider who owns a body. Ask, does a person have the right to change something about their body?
- Ask students to consider why it might be important to be happy or content with one’s body.
- Ask, do people whose bodies have differential realities have equal rights? Why or why not?
- Ask, do they know of people who experience marginalization from society, family, culture, religion, and in policies because of their differential bodied realities?
- Ask, do they know people with differential bodied realities who experience justice or equity?
- Ask, should all bodies be afforded equitable rights? Explore.
- Ask students to consider which authors have a facility to handle issues related to equity or striving for equity for differential bodied realities. What have they learned from those texts?

Comprehension strategies:
- Ask students how intersectional identities for (a)gender and LGBT+AGCQ characters are treated by the author. Are they presented as a problem that needs to be solved or fixed? Is there is this juxtaposed to cisgender make it, does it appear that a character who is (a)gender person to accept or be?
- Explore the dangers of such.
- Ask students to reflect on utility entities or benefits that those characters feel.
- Ask students to reflect on ences marginalization because Ask them to infer how they want to intervene? If so, how?
- Ask students which characters does. What happened?
- Ask students to reflect on which they were born. At day, and over time.
- Ask students to consider rights to change something.
- Ask students to consider body.
- Ask, do characters, who? Why or why not?
- Ask, how do characters engage with religion, and in policies?
- Ask, should characters, v rights? Explore.
- Ask students in what way acted as change agents impacted?

Cultural Connections:
- Ask students to make cc and artists, musicians, at friends, or family, etc., w ential bodied realities. V were/are they treated? I the ways they perform t equity and justice for di
be solved or fixed? Is there pressure to conform if they are to succeed? And, how is this juxtaposed to cisgender and heterosexual storylines? In order to succeed or make it, does it appear that it would require a cisgender person to accept or help a character who is (a)gender? Does it appear that it would require a heterosexual person to accept or help a character who is lesbian, gay, bisexual, or asexual? Explore the dangers of such storylines.

- Ask students to reflect on which characters’ current (a)gender identity or (a)sxuality entities or benefits them in different contexts. How do those benefits make those characters feel?
- Ask students to reflect on how a character’s peer or someone they know experiences marginalization because of their current (a)gender identity or (a)sxuality. Ask how might they infer how that makes the characters feel? Ask, do the characters want to intervene? If so, how?
- Ask students which characters struggle with their bodies or know someone who does. What happened?
- Ask students to reflect on which characters are happy living in the bodies into which they were born. Ask them to reflect on what they may struggle with day to day, and over time.
- Ask students to consider who owns characters’ bodies. Ask, do characters have rights to change something about the body?
- Ask students to consider why the character wants to be happy or content with the body.
- Ask, do characters, whose bodies have differential realities, have equal rights? Why or why not?
- Ask, how do characters experience marginalization from society, family, culture, religion, and in policies because of their differential bodied realities?
- Ask, do any characters, with differential bodied realities, experience justice or equity? Explore.
- Ask, should characters, with differential bodied realities, be afforded equitable rights? Explore.
- Ask students in what ways these characters with differential bodied realities acted as change agents in their lived worlds. Who, what, and/or how were they impacted?

Cultural Connections:

- Ask students to make connections and draw inferences between YAL characters and artists, musicians, athletes, media personalities, religious figures, politicians, friends, or family, etc., who have experienced equity and justice for their differential bodied realities. What are their stories? What have they experienced? How were/are they treated? How are their lives today? What have you learned about the ways they perform their identities? What can you now teach others about equity and justice for differential bodied realities?
Principle 10: Believes that students who identify on a continuum of gender and sexual minorities (GSM) deserve to learn in environments free of bullying and harassment. Commitment: Educators who use queer literacy make their positions known, when first hired, to students, teachers, administrators and school personnel and take a stance when any student is bullied or marginalized, whether explicitly or implicitly, for (a)gender or (a)sexuality orientation.

Applications to YAL:

Pre-reading strategies:

- Ask students if they have ever experienced or currently experience microaggressions or bullying because of their actual or perceived (a)gender or (a)sexuality. Ask, how did the bullying impact them? What were the psycho, social, emotional, or physical consequences? Has it stopped? What made it stop?
- Ask students if they have ever bullied or are currently bullying someone because of their actual or perceived (a)gender or (a)sexuality. Ask, how do they think it impacted others? Ask them to consider the psycho, social, emotional, physical or possible long-term consequences? Did they stop? If not, ask them if they want to need support to stop.
- Ask students if they know someone who has ever experienced or currently experiences microaggressions or bullying because of their actual or perceived (a)gender or (a)sexuality. Ask, how did the bullying impact the person? What were the psycho, social, emotional, physical or possible long-term consequences? Ask if they intervened. Has it stopped? What made it stop?
- Ask students if there is a GSA, anti-bullying program, anti-bullying curriculum, statements against bullying in the code of conduct (are identities enumerated? Who is included or excluded in the policy?), or a peer-support network in the school. Ask, what impact do those elements seem to have on the school environment?
- Ask students if individual classrooms or the school feels safe. What stances have teachers or the school taken to generate a safe and inclusive environment?
- If school feels unsafe, what could help make it safe? How might they get involved?
- Ask what they wish they could tell a teacher, administrator, or other school personnel about themselves or other students who feel unsafe.
- Ask students if their local community has outreach and organizations that affirm GSM. Are they aware of any local or state policies that support GSM?
- Ask students if they know of any local, state, or national policies that affirm GSM. If so, what are they and what kind of impact do they have on people?
- Ask students to consider which authors have addressed bullying and harassment related to GSM. What have they learned from those texts?

Comprehension strategies:

- Ask students which characters experienced or currently experience microaggressions or bullying because of their actual or perceived (a)gender or (a)sexuality. Ask, how did the bullying impact them? What were the psycho, social, emotional, physical or what made it stop?
- Ask students which characteristic of actual or perceived (a)gender or (a)sexuality? Does it think it is impacting their social, emotional, physical behavior? Has it stopped?
- Ask students what role they are experienced or currently played or perceived (a)gender or (a)sexuality? Ask the character or the victim or possible long-term consequences? What made it stop?
- Ask students if the school anti-bullying curriculum identities enumerated? In the school. Ask, what environment?
- Ask students if characters feel safe. What textual teachers or the school told?
- If school feels unsafe, what kind of support can be?
- Ask, do characters express administrator, or other school unsafe?
- Ask students if the text affirm GSM. Are characters?
- Ask students if the authors affirm GSM. If so, what?
- Ask students in what world. Who, what, and?

Cultural Connections:

- Ask students to make co and artists, musicians, friends, or family, etc., with their stories. What did they treat others? How have you learned about you now teach others about...
emotional, physical or possible long-term consequences? Has it stopped? What made it stop?

- Ask students which characters ever bullied or are currently bullying someone because of actual or perceived (a)gender or (a)sexuality. Ask, how does the character think it is impacting others or even themselves? Ask them to consider the psycho, social, emotional, physical, or possible long-term consequences of the bullying behavior? Has it stopped? How did it stop?

- Ask students what role the character plays in relation to someone who has ever experienced or currently experiences microaggressions or bullying because of actual or perceived (a)gender or (a)sexuality. Ask, how did/does the bullying impact the character or the victim? What were/are the psycho, social, emotional, physical or possible long-term consequences on each? Ask, if they intervened. Has it stopped? What made it stop?

- Ask students if the school setting in the text has a GSA, anti-bullying program, anti-bullying curriculum, statements against bullying in the code of conduct (are identities enumerated? Who is included? Excluded?), or a peer-support network in the school. Ask, what impact do those elements seem to have on the school environment?

- Ask students if characters in the text think school or an individual classroom feels safe. What textual evidence supports their point of view? What stances have teachers or the school taken to generate a safe and inclusive environment?

- If school feels unsafe for characters, ask students what could help make it safe? What kind of support could your students offer or say to characters in the text?

- Ask, do characters express an inward or outward desire to tell a teacher, administrator, or other school personnel about students or themselves who feel unsafe?

- Ask students if the text describes local community resources or organizations that affirm GSM. Are characters aware of any local or state policies that support GSM?

- Ask students if the author describes any local, state, or national policies that affirm GSM. If so, what are they and how are they woven into the plot?

- Ask students in what ways these characters acted as change agents in their lived worlds. Who, what, and/or how were they impacted?

Cultural Connections:

- Ask students to make connections and draw inferences between YAL characters and artists, musicians, athletes, media personalities, religious figures, politicians, friends, or family, etc., who have experienced bullying or bullied others. What are their stories? What have they experienced? How were/are they treated? How did they treat others? How are their lives today? Were amends made? If so, how? What have you learned about the ways they perform their identities? What can you now teach others about anti-bullying?

Fig 2. The 10 principles and commitments of educators who queer literacy.
CONCLUDING COMMENTS FOR THE EFFICACY OF THE QLF

While amazing literacy practices exist as intervention and disruption against reproduction mindsets about binary beliefs on gender and sexuality, the United States has neither legislated nor developed extensive frameworks for inclusion of LGBT*AGCQ*-affirming and positive curricula across schools of Education. This absence continues to secure and affirm some of the once-legislated beliefs and attitudes about gender and sexuality. We still have a long way to go in this country if we aspire for students to embody internal safety about their (a)gender and (a)sexuality and to be read and made legible both to self and other.

Teacher education and professional development for teachers that support (a)gender and (a)sexuality self-determination, and that remain open to evolving understandings of (a)gender and (a)sexuality, can generate a stabilized futurity for (a)gender and (a)sexuality justice; as individuals leave schools, they can remain autonomous and embodied by an internalized safety as they navigate their life pathways. Such justice can disrupt potentially portentous oppressions and instead lead to harmonious spaces that can benefit the lives of youth coming into the world, and, eventually, educational contexts. To not address or affirm the (a)gender and (a)sexuality differences in our youth, is to reinsert gender and sexual violence.

A hope for the QLF is for teacher education programs to take up this work and modify it to their social, racial, linguistic, and geographic contexts. By teaching preservice students about how bodies are vulnerable to reinforcing hidden ideologies, the QLF and other queer-affirming and inclusive curriculum (Miller, forthcoming B), can deepen literacy works' agency to rupture oppressive narratives that can then be recast into school and across community spaces. As preservice teachers study, unpack, and practice the QLF, they will develop a repertoire of resources that they, in turn, can utilize in classroom practice. Such practice can instill in their dispositions confidence to address LGBT*AGCQ*-topics in the classroom. Over time, then, as more literacy teacher educators (and others) continue to use the QLF across different disciplines, its effect can have real-time generative consequences for students, who, as stewards with expanding mindsets, can truly begin to create more equitable and accepting spaces. As teachers' (and others') dispositions expand to support the well-being of students' personal and social legitimacies through understanding their own and the value of others' (a)gender and (a)sexuality rights to self-determination, (a)gender and (a)sexuality justice is not just possible, it can be realized.

Such a realization is happening in education at the policy level. The newly vetted Standard VI in secondary English teacher preparation, a standard for social justice, advocates for LGBT*AGCQ*-topics, amongst other topics related to traditionally undervalued identities in the classroom. (For specific lessons and assessments see Alsup & Miller, 2014; Miller, 2014a, b, c, d [challenges to YAL

and text complexity], in press; NCTE, 2012. Quent studies can support teacher educ-

tegrate topics of (a)gender and (a)sexuality preparation (NCTE, 2012).

Over time, and as other disciplines with queer-inclusive curriculum, min-complexity, and that affirm students' di determination, a queer autonomy has re-

ized and integrated curricular piece—a

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I'd like to thank Elizabeth Dutro for her insights were invaluable. I want to thank and for deepening the QLF's theoretical tussling through the murky and complex i

NOTES

1. See Moses (2002) for a robust discussion terized by Raz's (1979) concepts of integ Hierin, these terms are thoroughly defined.

2. For an extended discussion on "internal self

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Britzman, D. P. (1997). What is this thing c lesbian youth. In S. de Castell & M. B differences on educational praxis (pp. 183-


and text complexity], in press; NCTE, 2012.) This new anchor and these subsequent studies can support teacher education programs to reflect on ways to integrate topics of (a)gender and (a)sexuality not just in SELA but across all of teacher preparation (NCTE, 2012).

Over time, and as other disciplines work to develop academic standards along with queer-inclusive curriculum, mindful of readings with increasing textual complexity, and that affirm students' differential bodied realities, and, hence, self-determination, a queer autonomy has real-time possibility for becoming a normalized and integrated curricular piece—and that would be the ultimate justice.

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NOTES

1. See Moses (2002) for a robust discussion of autonomy as self-determination, which is characterized by Raz's (1979) concepts of integrity, independence, and adequate range of options, etc. Herein, these terms are thoroughly defined.

2. For an extended discussion on "internal safety" see Leonardi and Saenz's (2002) conceptualization.

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