

The Experience of Empathy With the LGBTQ+ Community Through Narrative Transportation When Not LGBTQ+: A Qualitative Investigation

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Abstract

In this study, non-LGBTQ+ college students described their experiences of reading a novel with LGBTQ+ characters from the formers' perspectives. The target population for this study was cisgender, heterosexual, traditionally-aged college students, defined as 18-35 years of age. Eight participants fully participated in the discussion and were interviewed for the study. The participants were located globally, in a variety of countries. The research methodology was generic qualitative inquiry and data was collected through semi-structured interviews. Upon grouping the interview responses, seven themes emerged. These themes can be summarized as follows: Participants identified reading the LGBTQ+ text as an overall positive experience, which allowed them to gain a fuller understanding of the LGBTQ+ perspectives. They described enjoying using an online discussion platform and shared a strong connection to characters because of the participants' similar experiences and feelings. All of the participants wanted to read more LGBTQ+ novels in the future. The results of this study revealed that all of the study's participants experienced empathy while reading and experienced a different perspective from reading an LGBTQ+-centered text.

Keywords: Empathy, LGBTQ+ literature, LGBTQ+, Narrative Transportation

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Introduction

Despite progress towards equality in many spheres, the LGBTQ+ community often faces discrimination and violence in Northern America (Nadal, 2019). Discrimination towards the LGBTQ+ community takes place in, but is not limited to, the workplace (Guo, 2015; Holman et al., 2019; Nadal, 2019; Teeman, 2019), education (Parks, 2014; Woodford et al., 2018), personal areas such as bathroom usage (Markell & Weingarten, 2016; Nadal, 2019) and in health care (Casey et al., 2019). LGBTQ+ members are more likely to commit suicide versus their non-LGBTQ+ peers (Aranmolate et al., 2017; Day et al., 2020), and many LGBTQ+ members have reported that bullying and violence toward them is not uncommon (Aranmolate et al., 2017; Frank & Baker, 2019), especially members of the LGBTQ+ community who are also persons of color (Casey et al., 2019; Day et al., 2020). Role models and non-LGBTQ+ allies are extremely important when it comes to the safety of members of the LGBTQ+ community (Day et al., 2020; Dhupa, 2016). This safety becomes an increasing concern during the current COVID-19 pandemic, where online teaching is prevalent and students may be in an unsupportive home (Fish et al., 2020).

It is increasingly important for teachers to not avoid mentioning LGBTQ+ individuals in a positive way, and to not exclude this community in any way, starting in early child education, because by avoiding acknowledging this community, it isolates students who either have parents who are LGBTQ+ or who themselves are LGBTQ+ (Day et al., 2020; Dentato et al., 2016). In the current political climate, positive LGBTQ+ representation is increasingly important (Suarez et al., 2021). Despite this, teachers often neglect LGBTQ+ themes in their classroom (Batchelor et al., 2018) and face pushback from the community or schools when teaching LGBTQ+ literature (Page, 2017). This results in teachers feeling reluctant to teach inclusive literature (Hermann-Willmarth & Ryan, 2015; Page, 2017) despite finding this literature to be valuable (Page, 2017; Suarez et al., 2021).

Being able to see more representation of LGBTQ+ members in more spaces combats homophobia (Bryan, 2017; Suarez et al., 2021). Despite an obvious need for empathy and inclusiveness for the LGBTQ+ community, and with several studies showing that schools with inclusive curricula have students with a greater sense of connectedness to their school community and other students (Booker, & Campbell-Whatley, 2018; Day et al., 2020), only a small percentage of students were taught positive representations about LGBTQ+ people, history, or events in their schools (Parks, 2014) even though there is importance in learning about LGBTQ+ history (Graves & Dubrow, 2019).

The English Language Arts (ELA) curriculum is an area where positive representations for LGBTQ+ people can be easily incorporated (Hermann-Willmarth et al., 2015; Schieble & Polleck, 2017). Traditionally, the literary canon involves classic literature and authors, which tends to lack diversity, and many attempts to incorporate diverse authors are seen as adding unnecessary fluff to a curriculum (Jones, 2019; Schieble & Polleck, 2017). Research shows that literature is often used to explore empathy (Newstreet et al., 2019), as it is reflected when the observer registers what others can see, feel and observe (Breithaupt, 2011; Thexton et al., 2019). This is related to narrative transportation specifically identifying empathy as the act of imagining and getting "caught up" in a narrative (Gerrig, 1993). Narrative transportation has been studied to see how it can be applied to media consumption and marketing (Anaza et al., 2020), but I suggest that it may have applications in the classroom, in the context of being

engaged in empathy through literature instead of being engaged in empathy solely in the context of reacting to others or one's surroundings.

This study explored empathy through the lens of narrative transportation theory and the use of online discussion to facilitate connections to characters and an understanding of plot. In this present study, non- LGBTQ+ college students described their experiences of reading a novel with LGBTQ+ characters from the former's perspectives, as opposed to current limited research involving same-sex attraction, empathy, and narrative transportation, which quantitatively looked at using empathy and narrative transportation to persuade (Mazzocco et al., 2010; Vafeiadis et al., 2020).

Narrative transportation, a subset of theory of mind, was coined by Gerrig (1993) and explained by Van Laer et al., (2014). It uses the metaphor of travel to conceptualize the state of detachment from the world of origin into the world which the characters experience, because of the reader's engrossment in the text (Van Laer et al., 2014). For narrative transportation to take place, readers process the stories in terms of receiving and interpreting; they must try to understand the experience of the character through empathy and generate vivid images of the story plot, as if they are feeling and experiencing the events themselves (Gerrig, 1993).

Methodology

The present study uses generic qualitative inquiry (Percy et al., 2015). This methodology is selected when other methodologies do not suffice and looks at the subjective experience and external happenings and events of the participants. Additionally, generic qualitative data seeks information from representative samples of people about real-world events and processes, or about their experiences. It includes the use of rich data to determine themes, and looks at a broad range of opinions, ideas, or reflections. This present study investigates a real-world process to look at a broad range of reflections.

Research Design

This present generic qualitative study used semi-structured interviews to collect data from eight participants after an online discussion, which is aligned with generic qualitative inquiry (Percy et al., 2015). Prior to the discussion group, the participants each read the novel *Two Boys Kissing*, by David Levithan (2015). They then participated in an asynchronous discussion via a private Facebook group led completely autonomously by my research assistant. The data used for this study was only the interviews that took place after the discussion group. Each participant participated in a 20-30 minute recorded audio interview via Skype with me. The interviews were transcribed using an automated transcribing application, and the data analysis was conducted using a combination of inductive and thematic analysis.

Target Population and Sample

The target population for this study was cisgender, heterosexual, traditionally-aged college students. Traditionally-aged is defined as 18-35 years of age. The exclusion criteria were members of the LGBTQ+ community and learners on the autism spectrum. The research question specifically looks at how non-LGBTQ+ members experience empathy when reading

LGBTQ+ texts, so exclusion criteria had to include any member of the LGBTQ+ community. Additionally, there is some theory of mind research that shows that autistic individuals experience mental processes differently than neurotypical individuals (Andreou & Skrimpa, 2020; Harmsen, 2019; Livingston et al, 2019); therefore, individuals with autism were also excluded from the present study.

Participant Selection

Participants were recruited by me and the research assistant and through approved private Facebook groups and public Facebook groups. There was also a snowball recruitment method, as participants were encouraged to share the information about the study with others. Facebook was chosen to recruit since the discussion group was held in a private Facebook group. The Facebook groups were all related to reading and book clubs. Potential participants contacted me through email. I then asked screening questions to determine eligibility. After eligibility was determined, potential participants were given an informed consent form. Upon receipt of this form, participants were given a PDF of the novel and instructions about how to join the private Facebook group for the discussion.

Data Collection

A private Facebook group was created for the study, and the rules and expectations were pinned to the announcements section. The discussion group was exclusively run by the research assistant. I was an observer and only engaged as far as to “like” posts to encourage participation. The research assistant posed questions every few days and asked participants to respond to at least two peers. No data was collected during this phase. Data was collected during the Skype interviews. The interviews were recorded and digitally transcribed. Interviews were semi-structured.

Participant Demographics

The participants were asked to provide the information below. They were informed that they could leave blank any information they did not want to disclose. Any information that participants wanted to leave blank was labeled as DNA. All answers were in short answer format to reflect the participant’s identity in the way that they felt to be most accurate. The answers in the table are exactly as written by each participant. The information is presented as follows:

Table 1: Participant Demographic Information

Participant	Race	Gender	Age	Religion	Years in University/College
1	Mixed	Female	27	Judaism	3
2	Brown	Female	23	Islam	3
3	Japanese	Female	30	Not Religious	7.5 years
4	Black	Female	24	Christian	4
5	Asian	Male	32	Muslim	3
6	White	Female	20	Christian	3
7	Mixed	Female	29	DNA	3
8	White	Female	21	Christian	4

Research Methodology Applied to the Data Analysis

I used semi-structured interviews to code for themes and conduct the analysis. All participants were de-identified using an alphanumeric code to protect their anonymity. The analysis of the interview responses was an ongoing process, which required that I glean information from the rich data provided through the interviews, as described below (Creswell, 1998). Then I looked for recurring words and themes, and subsequently used this information to arrive at a conclusion about commonalities among the participants.

Presentation of Data and Results of the Analysis

Upon grouping the interview responses, seven themes, with numerous sub-themes, emerged. These themes were created from an inductive viewpoint, based on the participants' responses and not by any predetermined categories. These seven themes were: 1) A Positive Overall Experience; 2) Enjoyed Using Facebook Groups; 3) Related to Situations and Characters; 4) Experienced Immersion in the Book; 5) Insightful Experience Reading LGBTQ+ Text; 6) Fuller Perspectives Towards the LGBTQ+ Community and Their Struggles; 7) Desire to Read LGBTQ+ texts in the future.

Positive Overall Experience

The first theme that emerged was regarding a positive overall experience. The participants reported that they enjoyed the experience and enjoyed learning about a new perspective. For example, Participant 7 stated: "I really enjoyed the book. I cried many, many times throughout." One participant (Participant 7) recommended that her teenagers read the text, saying: "I have two sons, one's 13 and one is 10 and I want them to read this book eventually." The participants enjoyed reading something they would not normally read: "I really enjoyed the novel. I think it was really awesome to read a book that wasn't necessarily something that I would have picked right away" (Participant 6) and "I really enjoyed it. I enjoyed learning about the experience of others" (Participant 7).

Enjoyed Experience Using Facebook Groups

The second theme that emerged was related to the participants' enjoying the experience using Facebook groups. None of the participants had ever used Facebook for academic discussions, and although they wanted more interaction from their peers and the research assistant, they found the discussion helpful in understanding the characters and the plot.

Related to Situations and Characters

The third theme that emerged came from relating to situations and characters within the novel. Although the participants were not LGBTQ+, they still related to the experiences and feelings of the character: "I guess I was surprised that I did connect with a lot of the characters" (Participant 8). Participant 8 continued: "There's a lot of connection between somebody who is LGBTQ and someone who isn't because I was able to relate to the character more than what I thought." Some participants worried about the characters and had to take breaks because the experience upset them or reminded them of their own experiences, as Participant 1 shared:

There was one [moment] where I kind of actually had to stop for a moment, and it was a trip down memory lane. . . it was similar to how my relationship was with my husband, when [it was] beginning, and. . . I had to stop because it was just like, that was big for me.

The participants were able to feel strong emotions with the characters because they could relate to how they themselves would feel, and they felt empathy towards the characters and their situation. The participants looked forward to a resolution with the characters, they made broader connections outside of just the LGBTQ+ experience, and they realized that they have more in common with LGBTQ+ individuals than they had thought they had.

Experienced Immersion in the Book

The fourth theme that emerged was regarding experiencing an immersion in the book. Many participants felt that the book was realistic: "It was quite realistic to me. And then what they've gone [through]. . . and the struggles they've gone through were all real. . . it actually happens" (Participant 2), and they found themselves invested in the story and characters, although it did take time for this to happen.

Participant 8 described her immersion in the book:

At the end, I was racing to the finish line to finish the story. . . At the very end. . . I didn't even realize I was reading until I was done. . . all the stories are jumping so fast and little things. . . were happening. . . I didn't realize I was crying.

Insightful Experience Reading LGBTQ+ Texts

The fifth theme that emerged was related to an insightful experience reading an LGBTQ+ text. Only one participant had read an LGBTQ+ text before, although all of the participants enjoyed the text that they read for this study and expressed interest in reading more LGBTQ+ texts and recommending these texts to others: "It is beneficial for others to read these types of

novels. I think that the reason we don't talk about two boys kissing is because we don't know how they feel" (Participant 8).

Many participants found that reading an LGBTQ+ text was not only not controversial but showed that there are many things that are "normal" about LGBTQ+ characters.

Participant 8 conveyed this as follows:

At first I thought it was going to be difficult [to read this text]. A lot of my family members were like, "I can't believe you are reading that." Then once I started reading it.

. . . . honestly, it is just like any other book, you know, with a girl and a boy being the main character[s]. . . so I [don't] see a big issue with it. While it was LGBTQ+. . . it was just another, like another book that I had in my hand.

Some of the participants felt that it was no different than cisgender/heterosexual texts, and all the participants felt that they gained perspective, even if they did not fully understand the experience of LGBTQ+ people. The participants found that reading this book was beneficial for them.

Fuller Perspectives Towards the LGBTQ+ Community and Their Struggles

The sixth theme that emerged related to the perspectives towards the LGBTQ+ community and their struggles. Many participants did not realize the struggles that LGBTQ+ people experience: "It takes courage for homosexuals to say they are homosexual, so I appreciate that fact" (Participant 2), or the history of LGBTQ+ people.

Participant 8 described her lack of knowledge regarding LGBTQ+ history:

I had to stop for a second and just think, "I cannot believe that that happened." Because I'm not familiar with the background of what [LGBTQ+ people] struggled through during that time, so like, when I read that. . . . I had to step back for a second. . . . I couldn't believe it.

Some participants did not know any LGBTQ+ people in real life because of the social pressure surrounding same-sex attraction: "We are seeing [LGBTQ+] people actually [trying to be a] part of our Zimbabwean context but people are failing to react and to recognize LGBTQ+ [people] so they are hiding in their own world" (Participant 4).

Desire to Read LGBTQ+ Texts in the Future

The seventh theme that emerged was a desire to read LGBTQ+ texts in the future, as all of the participants expressed a willingness to read LGBTQ+ texts in the future.

Participant 2 noted her feelings about reading LGBTQ+ texts:

We should read more [LGBTQ+ texts] to get more knowledge and insight about them. And to understand them and to understand their views and points. I don't think I will avoid the genre. I would love to read more books in this genre.

The participants found that the text was helpful and that learning new perspectives was helpful. Participant 4 said that reading this text would help support empathy towards others: “I believe that we, as people. . . should actually start understanding [and] start to empathize, and to read to understand [other] people within our society.”

Another participant (Participant 6) said:

I think a lot of people don't understand the LGBTQ+ community. My whole thought is whenever there's anger or aggression in life, it's usually out of ignorance or misunderstanding. I think seeing people who don't understand [and seeing] people who are ignorant and just spew hateful things is something that we're facing today in many cases, whether it's about the LGBTQ+ community, or about race, because people will always find something to be angry about. But I think taking a chance to educate those people on what this is actually like is really important.

Conclusion

Confirmation of Current Research on Empathy

Dore et al. (2018) stated that empathy includes recognizing that an individual's mental state can differ from one's own and that those experiencing empathy can anticipate others' perspectives. This was confirmed in the current study. During the interviews, many participants reported that reading *Two Boys Kissing* allowed them to experience a “different” perspective and view. They overwhelmingly made connections with the characters and shared similar perspectives and feelings in their own lives, but they also anticipated how the characters would feel and react and had their own feelings about this.

Confirmation of Narrative Transportation in Current Study

Thompson et al. (2018) claimed that different types of stories may impact the degree of transportation. Although it can be seen from the data of the current study that all the participants experienced transportation within the text, they did experience different degrees of transportation. For example, Participant 5 only felt that he was swept up into the novel half of the time, stating: “What did bring me into the history into those words, it's just like a 50/50. For me, it just depends on where you're reading.” When I asked Participant 8 if she felt “swept up” in the reading, she said that she did not, but then later in the interview she said: “At the end, I was racing to the finish line to finish the story. So, at the very end, I was like I didn't even realize I was reading until I was done.” This suggests that there was a level of transportation which took place for her. One of the factors that appeared to impact the participants' level of transportation was the structure of the text.

Need for LGBTQ+ Literature and Discussion

Short (2012) asserted that the importance of stories is often overlooked: “These stories create our views of the world and the lens through which we construct meaning about ourselves and others. We also tell stories to make connections, form relationships and create a community with others” (p. 9). Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2009) explained the dangers of only being exposed to one perspective in her Ted Talk entitled *The Danger of a Single Story*, as she said: “Many stories matter. Stories have been used to dispossess and to malign, but stories can also be used to empower and to humanize. Stories can break the dignity of a people, but stories

can also repair that broken dignity” (17:13). Dodge and Crutcher (2015) wrote: “Schools often perpetuate harmful single stories through class texts. Teachers are in a unique position to disrupt the single story through texts they teach” (p. 95).

Research clearly shows that reading LGBTQ+-centered literature benefits LGBTQ+ students. However, although research, books, training, and internet posting about the need for LGBTQ+ inclusive programming in secondary schools has been discussed (Parks, 2014) teachers actually feel pressured to maintain heteronormativity in the classroom (Allen, 2018; Holman et al., 2019). Hermann-Wilmarth and Ryan (2019) suggested that this may be perhaps due to fear of parents and suggest that fear of parents is not enough to not teach LGBTQ+ texts. Since adolescents must complete compulsory English/Language Arts courses, it is possible that incorporating LGBTQ+-centered texts could be accomplished with success (Vetter et al., 2021).

Confirmation of a Need For LGBTQ+ Texts and Discussion

Short (2012) said: “We also tell stories to make connections, form relationships and create a community with others” (p. 9). This was seen in the present study both through the text itself, and the use of the Facebook discussion group. Participant 7 shared that she goes out of her way to read texts that hold different perspectives than her own so that she can make connections with others who are unlike herself: “I just want to learn about other outlooks and stuff.” Participant 6 said that she enjoyed the experience specifically because of those connections and perspectives; she shared and learned from others both in the text and within the discussion group: “I think this has just been a really great opportunity to hear other people's perspectives and get to learn a little bit more about them.”

Lastly, in addition to choosing a different methodology, it would be beneficial for participants to be asked to journal, and for the researcher to collect data during the discussion itself. This present study only collected data from the semi-structured interviews, after the discussions took place. Adding journaling from the participants and observation data from the researcher during the discussion, in addition to the semi-structured interviews, would yield richer data. Participant 8 assumed that other group members would share the same perspective as her parents but this ended up not being the case, as she felt that all of the participants were respectful and supportive of the book’s content:

I was expecting more people to be more people to not support. Like, you know, the idea of two boys kissing and kind of be, like, disgusted by the book. I guess I was surprised that a lot of the people have the same thoughts as me and kind of all. Like we all kind of did with everyone in the story.

This participant was also the youngest participant in the study group and the only participant who shared any response or opinions about her family’s views on the subject matter. The present researcher wonders if Participant 8’s family’s reactions would have been more influential on the participant if she were a secondary school student and not a college student. This leads the current researcher to conclude that school districts and teachers should be more forthcoming with the positive research regarding using LGBTQ+ texts in the classroom, if they want to continue to diversify school texts and support students of different minority groups. Furthermore, I gained the understanding that although Participant 8 was the youngest

participant in the study, she was still independent enough to be aware of her own experience with the text and determine how the LGBTQ+ topic and characters felt for her.

Despite her family's objections, Participant 8 voiced her own willingness to read LGBTQ+ texts in the future:

Honestly, it's just like any other book, you know, with a girl and a boy being the main character, anything that happened in it, you know, it could have been a grown boy in there. So, I didn't see a big issue with it.

Participant 5 shared similar feelings about reading LGBTQ+ books:

For me, the LGBT community is just as normal, as everyone knows, for me, especially doesn't have to be special. You know why? Because it's just like, it always sucks, or we live a normal life, we always falter, I also struggle.

As described above, only a small percentage of students were taught positive representations about LGBTQ+ people, history, or events in their schools (Parks, 2014). In regard to this, Participant 8 shared her lack of awareness about LGBTQ+ history:

I didn't stop reading completely, but I had to stop for a second. I cannot believe that that happened. Because I'm not familiar with the background of what they struggled through during that time. So, like, when I read that it kind of like, just like, I had to step back for a second, like, like, I couldn't believe it.

Assumptions

Based on previous research by Gerrig (1993), it was assumed that the participants would experience narrative transportation, during which they would put themselves into the role of the LGBTQ+ characters. It was assumed that this may challenge some of their previously held beliefs (Mazzocco et al., 2010; Vafeiadis et al., 2020) and that they may feel more compassion or understanding towards the LGBTQ+ community (Parks, 2014). These assumptions were demonstrated to be partially correct, but also partially incorrect. Although all the participants expressed empathy with the characters and felt "swept up" in the story, through engagement or empathy with the characters, none of the participants claimed that this text challenged any of their previously held beliefs. In fact, all the participants reported that this text either reinforced their previously held beliefs towards the LGBTQ+ community, or further added positively to their beliefs. Two participants specifically mentioned that they previously had not thought about LGBTQ+ members in depth at all, and therefore this text did not challenge their beliefs, but perhaps challenged their social practices.

Limitations

One limitation of this study was the delimitation that it focused on participants who are currently enrolled in a college or university. It would have been interesting to see if participants who were younger or were less educated (i.e., current high school students) would have challenged the text more or would have been as open to sharing in the Facebook discussion group. Additionally, there was the limitation that the eight participants consisted of seven women and one man. It would have been more balanced, and therefore more effective, if there had been more men involved. Another delimitation was that the study only included people who did not self-identify as being on the autism spectrum. The autism

exclusion was because studies show that those with autism may not experience theory of mind like those who are not on the autism spectrum (Andreou & Skrimpa, 2020; Harmsen, 2019; Livingston et al, 2019). However, this definitely narrowed the eligibility for the study, and during recruitment, I did receive angry and offended emails from those who felt that including this exclusion criteria, and the delimitation of excluding LGBTQ+ individuals, was unethical or unfair.

In addition, it could be argued that only individuals who were open to reading an LGBTQ+ would have volunteered for the study, which would impact the results of the study to make it more positive towards LGBTQ+ issues and characters. Those who did not already have a positive view of LGBTQ+ issues and characters may not have wanted to participate in the study itself because it could have been offensive or off-putting to them. As a result, the results may also be skewed towards a more favorable light regarding LGBTQ+ texts.

The methodology itself also had limitations. Generic qualitative inquiry allows for a relatively shallow understanding of a phenomenon, and unlike quantitative studies, does not allow for generalization (Creswell, 1998). Although this study fills the gap in the research, as indicated above, this topic needs to be further investigated using other research methods, such as case study (Gerring, 2006), to gain a deeper understanding of the experience of empathy during narrative transportation while reading a text with characters who are different from the reader.

Recommendations for Further Research

Based on the data of the current study, it is my recommendation that further research be done in several areas corresponding to this study. First, it would be beneficial for this study to be replicated using a different LGBTQ+ text. Since the narrativity of this text was lower due to the use of “ghosts” or “The Us,” it negatively impacted the narrative transportation of the participants. Although all the participants experienced transportation and feelings of empathy, it would be beneficial to have another qualitative study done on this subject using a fictional LGBTQ+ text with higher narrativity. Also, the study happened to be made up of 7 women and 1 male. It is recommended that in the future, studies include a balanced ratio of male and female individuals, as well as non-binary individuals. Additionally, it would be interesting to see how other online social platforms worked regarding the online discussion. It would further add to the research to have data using other social networking platforms besides Facebook to see if there is any difference in using these different social networking platforms, as well as studies replicating this current study using more conventional online discussion platforms.

Based on the delimitations in the study, as described above, I also suggest that further research be done with more mixed audiences (LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+) to see if there are different experiences in empathy and discussion content between these different audiences. Perhaps by opening up the inclusion criteria, more data could be collected regarding the experience of empathy while reading LGBTQ+ texts, and the information collected from LGBTQ+ students and non-LGBTQ+ students would allow for richer data for further investigation about empathy and narrative transportation. Additionally, I used college-aged students to simplify the recruitment process and to avoid at-risk populations. Further research could be done using secondary school students to gather more information regarding their experiences of empathy, focused on both LGBTQ+ and non-LGBTQ+ students. It would be interesting to see if, like Participant 8, family members would share opinions about

LGBTQ+ issues and individuals, and if that comes up in any capacity in the experience of empathy while reading the novel. This may also provide more data on the use of social networking platforms for use as discussion tools because accessibility and the protection of identity may be another factor for younger students.

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