

## ABSTRACT

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Title: Words of Men, Lives of Women: A Poetry Collection in Response to the Examination of LGBTQ+ Characteristics and Minority Traits Observed in Female Poets of the 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century

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When authors are described by literary critics, they are often times done so in a way that demeans them. Specifically, female authors in the LGBTQ+ community find themselves being labeled as “lesbian author,” and other authors find themselves referred to as “black, female, lesbian, activist author”. This research was conducted to find examples of this occurring to famous writers, like Audre Lorde, who is often defined by the minorities that she represented. In response to this, the poetry collection touches upon subjects of uniqueness, and whether or not more knowledge or personal experience could heighten or expand what is already known about female authors in the LGBTQ+ community. The collection touches upon topics of working in a male-dominated job, trying to find a place as a feminist in a surrounding of good men figures, coming out as a lesbian to a conservative family, and the role of a mother in one’s personal and future life. Further writing is needed to gain a better understanding of the roles of lesbian activists in poetry, in order to expand knowledge upon the idea of writing about experience.