

**LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING AGENDA  
WEDNESDAY, APRIL 17, 2024  
5:30 P.M.  
SPANISH SPRINGS LIBRARY  
7100A Pyramid Way, Sparks, NV 89436**

**Library Trustees**

Gianna Jacks, Chair  
Lea Moser, Vice-Chair  
Al Rogers, Trustee  
Ann Silver, Trustee  
Tami Ruf, Trustee

Members of the public may attend this meeting in person or can attend by teleconference by logging into the Zoom webinar accessible through the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84224131597>. If prompted, use the following passcode: 889408. Please note: the Zoom link option will require a computer or phone with internet access or the Zoom application with audio capabilities.

**Forum Restrictions and Orderly Conduct of Business.** The Library Board of Trustees conducts the business of the Washoe County Library system and its citizens during its meetings. The orderly, efficient conduct of the meeting is integral and necessary to allow the Board to conduct business. The Chair or presiding officer may order the removal of any person whose statements or other conduct disrupts the orderly, efficient or safe conduct of the meeting. Warnings against disruptive comments or behavior may or may not be given prior to removal. Examples of disruptive conduct include, without limitation, yelling, stamping of feet, whistles, applause, heckling, name calling, use of profanity, threatening use of physical force, or any other acts intended to impede the meeting or infringe on the rights of the Library Board of Trustees, staff, or meeting participants. The viewpoint of a speaker will not be restricted, but reasonable restrictions may be imposed upon the time, place, and manner of speech. Irrelevant and unduly repetitious statements and personal attacks which antagonize or incite others are examples of speech that may be reasonably limited.

**Public Comment.** Public comments are welcomed during the Public Comment period at the beginning of the meeting for all matters, whether listed on the agenda or not. Additionally, public comment specific to the action item being considered will be heard during individual action items on the agenda. Public Comment is limited to two (2) minutes per person. Persons may not allocate unused time to other speakers. During the "Public Comment" items, anyone may speak pertaining to any matter either on or off the agenda. Anyone wishing to provide live public comment may do so in person, or by teleconference by logging onto the Zoom webinar by accessing the above link. To provide public comment via Zoom, log into the meeting at the above link and utilize the "Raise Hand" feature during any public comment period. Additionally, persons are invited to submit comments in writing by emailing Jamie Hemingway, The County will make reasonable efforts to send all email comments received by 4:00 p.m. on the business day before the meeting to the Trustees prior to the meeting.

**Response to Public Comment.** The Board can deliberate or take action only if a matter has been listed on an agenda properly posted prior to the meeting. During the public comment periods, speakers may address matters listed or not listed on the published agenda. The Open Meeting Law does not expressly prohibit responses to public comments by the Board. However, responses from the Board members to unlisted public comment topics could become deliberation on a matter without notice to the public. To ensure the public has notice of all matters the Board will consider, Board members may choose not to respond to public comments, except to correct factual inaccuracies, ask for Staff action, or to ask that a matter be listed on a future agenda. The Board may do this either during the public comment item or during the following item: “Board Comment – limited to announcements, strategic plan activity updates, or issues proposed for future agendas and/or workshops.”

**How to Get Copies of Agendas and Support Documentation.** Copies of agendas and supporting documentation for items on the agenda are available to members of the public at the Downtown Reno Library Administration Office, 301 South Center Street, Reno, Nevada, and may be obtained by contacting Jamie Hemingway, or (775) 327-8341. Copies of agendas and supporting materials are also posted on the following websites: [www.washoecountylibrary.us](http://www.washoecountylibrary.us) and <https://notice.nv.gov>.

**Special Accommodations.** We are pleased to make reasonable accommodations for members of the public who are disabled, who need special accommodations or assistance, and wish to attend meetings. Should you require special assistance or accommodations for any Board meeting, please contact L J Burton at [LJBurton@washoecounty.gov](mailto:LJBurton@washoecounty.gov) or (775) 327-8341, at least 24 hours prior to the date of the meeting.

**Possible Changes to Agenda and Timing.** The Library Board of Trustees may take agenda items out of order, may consider two or more items in combination, may remove one or more items from the agenda, or delay discussion on an item. Items scheduled to be heard at a specific time will be heard no earlier than the stated time but may be heard later.

**Posting of Agenda.** Pursuant to NRS 241.020(4)(b), the agenda for the Trustees’ meeting has been posted at the following locations: Washoe County Courthouse, Washoe County Administration building, Downtown Reno Library, Incline Village Library, North Valleys Library, Northwest Reno Library, Sierra View Library, South Valleys Library, Spanish Springs Library, and Sparks Library. Further, in compliance with NRS 241.010, this notice has been posted on the official website for the Washoe County Library System at [www.washoecountylibrary.us](http://www.washoecountylibrary.us) and at <https://notice.nv.gov>.

We begin by acknowledging that we gather today on the ancestral homelands of the Wašičiw (Washoe), Numu (Northern Paiute), Newe (Western Shoshone), Nuwu (Southern Paiute), and Pipa Aha (Mojave), the original caretakers of the land that we now call Nevada. Washoe County, formally named after the Washoe people in 1861, continues to be a gathering place and home for Indigenous Peoples, and we recognize their rich history and deep connections to these lands. May we honor their past, present, and future stewardship by remembering that the health of the land and its people are inextricably linked.

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**LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION**  
301 South Center Street | PO Box 2151, Reno NV 89505  
(775) 327-8341 | [www.washoecountylibrary.us](http://www.washoecountylibrary.us)

The Board of Trustees may take action only on the items below that are preceded by the words “For Possible Action.” The Board will not take action on any other items.

- 0) Salute to the Flag
- 1) Roll Call [Non-Action Item]
  
- 2) Public Comment – Two Minute Time Limit Per Person [Non-Action Item]  
*No discussion or action by the Board may be taken upon any matter raised under this public comment section until the matter has been specifically included on an agenda.*
  
- 3) Approval of Meeting Minutes
  - a) Approval of Minutes from the Library Board Meeting of January 17, 2024 [For Possible Action]
  
- 4) Old Business [Non-Action Item]  
None
  
- 5) New Business
  - a) National Library Week Proclamation
  - b) Review and Possible Revision of Library Board of Trustee Bylaws [For Possible Action]
  - c) Discussion of Budget Analysis of Drag Queen Story Hour
  - d) Discussion and possible recommendation regarding the continuation of Drag Queen Story Hour program [For Possible Action]
  - e) Appeal of Library Director’s decision regarding book challenges as follows.  
Decisions on appeals should be based on the Collection Development Policy, the material, careful review of the objection and the American Library Association’s Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, Freedom to View Statement and Guidelines on Intellectual Freedom. [For Possible Action]
    - i. Challenge submitted by Sandee Tibbit regarding Gender Queer by Maia Kobabe, and Flamer by Mike Curato
    - ii. Challenge submitted by Darla Lee regarding Looking for Alaska by John Green, and Zenobia July by Lisa Bunker
    - iii. Challenge submitted by Mary Graham regarding Elatsoe by Darcie Little Badger and Date Me, Bryson Keeler by Kevin van Whye
    - iv. Challenge submitted by Bruce Foster regarding All Boys Aren't Blue by George M. Johnson
    - v. Challenge submitted by Dawn Cooper regarding Heartstopper Volume 3 by Alice Oserman
  
- 6) Reports
  - a) Library Director Update by Director Jeff Scott [Non-Action Item]

- b) Renew Washoe County Libraries Update by Director Jeff Scott [Non-Action Item]
- c) Spanish Springs Library Report by Library Branch Manager Jana MacMillan [Non-Action Item]
- 7) Staff Announcements [Non-Action Item]  
*No discussion or action may be taken upon any matter raised under this comment section until the matter has been specifically included on an agenda.*
- 8) Board Comment [Non-Action Item] – Limited to Announcements, Strategic Plan Activity, Updates or Issues Proposed for Future Agendas and/or Workshops
- 9) Adjournment



Item 3a

January 17, 2024 Library Board of Trustees Minutes

COVER PAGE

**LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING AGENDA  
WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 17, 2024  
5:00 P.M.  
DOWNTOWN RENO LIBRARY  
301 S. Center St.  
RENO, NV 89501**

**Library Trustees**

Gianna Jacks, Chair  
Lea Moser, Trustee  
Al Rogers, Trustee  
Ann Silver, Trustee  
Vacant

**The Board met in regular session in hybrid format via Zoom and in person.**

**CALL TO ORDER/SALUTE THE FLAG**

Chair Jacks called the meeting to order at 5:00 p.m. and led the meeting in the Pledge of Allegiance.

**2. ROLL CALL AND DETERMINATION OF QUORUM**

**Present:**

**Gianna Jacks, Vice-Chair  
Lea Moser Trustee (appearing virtually)  
Al Rogers Trustee  
Ann Silver, Trustee**

**Absent:**

**None**

**County Staff:**

**Jeff Scott Library Director  
Herb Kaplan Deputy District Attorney  
Dave Solaro, Deputy County Manager**

- 1) Public Comment – Three Minute Time Limit Per Person [Non-Action Item]  
*No discussion or action by the Board may be taken upon any matter raised under this public comment section until the matter has been specifically included on an agenda.*

Jesse Ebs

Tons of folks with different backgrounds here attending the meeting and frankly I think this is awesome. The difference is what makes the melting pot here tonight and that is what makes our City Great. Where our past, however, split is what makes us. I feel we should have the right to read whatever books we wish. We have people telling us that we shouldn't have access to certain literacy. Over 2000 books have been banned in the United States largely focusing on the LGBTQ community, people of color, and different diverse backgrounds and that is a great disservice to our culture. We lose the ability to start accepting our differences with each other and our society. Everyone should have access to read whatever they like and be able to express what we feel.

Nadin Jameas

Here to show support for inclusion programming and books that Jeff Scott has put together to that end I also encourage you to acknowledge the funds donated by the Friends of Washoe County. Nonprofit that has for decades supported the Washoe County library system. These funds are not paid by taxpayers who support inclusive programming. We need to keep these programs it is fundamental to the community. Spoke about drag queen story hour and stated the library does not pay a penny for a program that brings dozens. The event is posted on the library website and reflects messages of self-acceptance and love and empathy. Most reactionary groups are threatened by such positive messages because they teach our children to be more loving of themselves and others.

Debra Actenburg

Retired philosophy professor from UNR and Reno resident since 1982. Wanted to thank us for the activities on behalf of the community thank the Board and library system. Stated citizens are informed and they expand their horizons. Felt she is educated on a wide variety of topics and groups of people. Democrat governance requires citizens to know each other including knowing others who are different. Thank you for providing resources on racial and gender differences. And holding events on topics and training on the topics as well. Drag queen story hour is important that you resist efforts by well finance and well organized national and local groups. To cancel to the culture, they disagree with. Which of course they are not forced to read any books or attend any events they don't refer to. Libraries must be open sources of information and cultural connection. Thank you for continuing to be such sources and not being swayed by groups that would narrow our focus.

Hanna Decatos

16-year-old volunteer. If I am not reading or volunteering, I post book reviews on my blog and Instagram. Reading is her passion. Really appreciate Washoe County library and the staff. Born and raised in Reno and is a frequent library visitor. The library is a safe and successful fun place for everyone. Part of the library has diverse books. Loves the organized fun family events such as story time. One of my favorite things about volunteering is seeing how much little kids enjoy story hour.

Tarra Decatos

last month was the first time that I had attended a library board meeting. I feel we heard some hypothetical concerns about the library from some people. We heard real firstpers9on stories from

library users including myself whose lives have been significantly improved by libraries and improved by diverse books and by being themselves. Washoe County has the best library staff, the most wonderful people working in the library, and we have great books and great programming. I feel we need to come together as a community to support the library so they can continue to do the great work they already do.

Gail Townsend

We have tons of disagreement about what kind you feel is appropriate at the library whether it be books or programming. And there are people who do not see eye to eye in the community. I love and appreciate diversity as a fundamental part of this big and wonderful world. You meet all sorts of people, some whom understand or identify with some. Reading books is a core about temporarily assuming an unfamiliar point of view. We need to broaden our endlessly diverse experiences that has seen in life incorporation that knowledge into your own personal growth.

Ilya Arm

Came back in October to talk about how much fun she got doing ban book the focus was on ban books we focused on events like that story hour we miss the larger picture. It's not just about books, it's about power. The protesters' aim is to erase everything and everyone they disagree with. They want the power to recreate the library in their image. They want to erase the LGBTQ community by suppressing ideas they don't like advance the narrow religious view at the extensive mind and destroy intellectual freedom.

Candace Powell

Parent and proud library card holder been to a few meetings and have heard what other public commenters had to say. The uproar of supposed accessibility of pornography in our libraries sounds as if there is a shop set up inside our library system. It is a tale of reasonableness. We need to protect our children. My children and I attend the library every week and we have yet to come across anything of that sort. My daughter has borrowed and read 62 books over winter break and not even one of the books were inappropriate or pornographic. Real concern is teens and kids seeking porn at the library and it is just ridiculous.

Janice Jones

Representative of a large group of people who speak for many in the community. You are familiar with artistic grievances, the rationale behind them and the possible solutions we've offered. The list of grievances includes but are not limited to moving sexually explicit and pornographic reading material to adult sections of the library unavailable to small children and drag queen story hour at all Washoe libraries. Get control of Director Scott or terminate him and end all association with the American Library Association as many states across the nation have done. Possibly you all are paving the way or laying the groundwork to implement the solutions we have offered. We can not be sure it just appears to be long past the time that taxpayers, voter citizens, and all community members of Washoe County should receive the relief they are due from this board of trustees. Agenda Item 5G discussion to review director evaluation process I hope that the trustees and chair have had the time and opportunity to

review director Scotts May 2018 evaluation which was not much different than this one. There has not been a lot of improvement in the last five years.

Gordon Gossage

Has submitted an application to become a library board of trustee and gave these words yesterday to the County Commissioners. I want to serve on the library board because whether I agree with all elected and appointed leaders of all issues I want to do my part to emphasize cooperation rather than conflict. As of 2024 we can agree to solve the problem of our library in sun valley and co-create a library specializing in Spanish language materials. We can work with the leaders of our rodeo to help create an extensive Western Heritage. Our board service should primarily help our Director achieve organization goals we should provide a sounding board for ideas provide public support and respond to the director whenever. Ask the timely performing contributions of high quality. I have specific experience managing librarians.

Paul Larson

Hard to begin on this issue but I think we all agree that kids are precious to all of us. Every one of us were a kid at one time we were passing the baton down from generation to generation we want them to come to childhood and the one thing we do not want is the grooming of children in any way we know how psychologically damaging it is and there is a lifelong impact in that. Sexualization of children is absolutely off the table. We have reasonable restrictions on voting ages, access to alcohol, tobacco products, R rated materials. Lots of restrictions on what it age appropriate and what is not. And what adults choose to do in the bedroom is their business but hands off the kids. Please allow them to maintain their childhood.

Chris Daniels

I am Ginger Devine one of the drag queens that regularly read at drag queen story hour the thing I wanted to speak on most today is a unique perspective because I in the room with librarians and parents and children am seeing first hand the joy and beauty of these events. The things I hear about having to protect children from bubble parties because we always start drag queen story hour with bubble machines going off in the room and some nice curated playlist with children music and then the librarians actually lead the songs. The librarians then welcome the children to story hour and then I read two to three stories about a unicorn having a bad day about a child getting into some glitter everywhere and then they want more glitter and then a cat is in the glitter these are the stories being read to these children. During story hour I also speak to the families who attend and the lines go out the door of children and parents with smiles and who are joyful. They speak to me about family members who are no longer around because they didn't feel loved or accepted and wisht there were events like this when they were young. They are excited to take a picture with a drag queen and do arts and crafts with the center or amazing library staff.

Cate Salem

Wanted to thank Jeff Scott for the work he is doing for the libraries. We have so many beautiful libraries in this County going all the way to Incline Village. They are amazing along with the staff the services to this community is huge. From books to making videos available and even to allow voting in the libraries is an incredible service for out community and am grateful. Attended the last meeting and heard when

people would derive when comments were made concerning banning of books, they said they were not trying to ban books. Is grateful that the board takes time to come and listen to everyone and pay attention to everyone not being on the phone while we are talking that is awesome. You have a tough job it is not easy and trying to remember that this is a public library with emphasis on the public. Everyone deserves to have access to the library.

Amanda Molholland

Always grateful that everyone is able to share opinions openly and freely. Its one of the reasons she loves the library. Would like to express support for the events they are about fostering my love for reading and promoting inclusivity and celebrating diversity in a time of increase in literacy. As a former educator these are reasons to get children involved in more literacy. The library does provide a safe and welcoming space for families of all backgrounds. They can all come together and enjoy stories told by talented readers. These events offer an opportunity for children to learn about different perspectives, develop empathy, and embrace the beauty of individuality. Drag queen story hour contributes more inclusive contributes to a more inclusive society where everyone is valued and respected. Let us celebrate the power of storytelling and the joy it brings to children and families regardless of gender identity or expression.

Holly Carter

Former educator and lifelong library patron. Quick shout out to my mom for being a wonderful and intelligent mother who felt the love of books and the library for me. I love libraries and this is one of the few spaces people of all backgrounds can or at least should be able to enjoy freely and respectfully. Books have a great way of expanding world views leading that charge especially as young adult books. This year I was able to read books about love, about main characters with a physical disability, and books with main characters that are not all white citizens and straight. Its exciting since I did not get any of that when I was a kid so seeing that this is popular now is great. Supports the drag queen story hour.

Maggie Bab

A library user, reader, and educator here in the community. Wanted to speak in support of the efforts to be inclusive and incorporate diverse perspectives. To be able to go through the shelves and find books that are not separate because that in not equal and in the programming. The library is a vital resource and appreciate the efforts to nurture that in our community. I hope to see you continue and also look forward to engaging as we go through finding another Trustee.

Ryan Ma

Wanted to voice her opinion to pornographic materials being in areas accessible to children. She is not suggesting the literature be banned from the library only that they are not available to children. I am a woman that does not want to be silenced I have written educational materials addressing inclusivity and

cultural confidence that is not what this is about our children are our future and it is my opinion that their young brains should not be subjected to such materials.

Bruce Parks

Same thing Janice Jones said.

Bruce Foster Would like to let all the librarians know and all whom attended the meeting that the library has so much to offer in all kinds of different programs and outreach. We the people have a bit of an issue with one part of this area which was introduced by the Director of libraries. I am not sure if you read my emails but I just wish to encourage you to move all sexual explicit books to a designated adult section. We do not want to ban books we just need to get them away from the innocents and wish the books that highlight the LGBTQ trans ideology as well as drag queen story is harmful to the innocence culture has shifted over the years in a harmful way. We are now required to tolerate, accept, and participate in and celebrate this. Also expressed concern over the ideology at the National American library association conference that is happening this month in Baltimore, and it highlights this community as well. Emily Drabinski president of the ALA is a lesbian.

Roger Edwards

Father of three and grandfather of five great grandfather of two and a lover of the library. Memory of the library is going up and down the isles with my five-year-old and her dragging her finger along all the books and her awe of the overwhelming volumes from aisle to aisle back then we did not have to worry about some homosexual dressed up as a woman parading up and down in front of our children. Grooming them for illicit actions. These actions do not belong in a public library with children.

Alan Munson

Resident and library card holder and voting citizen who is not threatening anybody and not asking for any books to be banned what I am asking is that them books that have sexuality be placed in a spot not where children are. None of the children should be exposed to Sex at that early age.

Scott Finley

Washoe County resident with a military background in the financial management of the United States Air Force the Washoe County library board of trustees must eliminate fiscal responsibility and hold library director Jeff Scott accountable for his actions or lack thereof agenda item 5E seeks to review the costs associated with drag queen story which the director shall ensure the supporting materials pertinent to this agenda item are made available to trustees, Board, legal counsel and the public in accordance with NRS 241. The only material provided is an email sent by Director Jeff Scott to the library board of trustees stating that the five drag queen story hour during summer 2023 cost the library 0 dollars and that is partnership with our center support for volunteers and financial support of \$2,620. The summer event actually cost the library \$2,620 dollars but these costs were offset by its partnership with our center providing the support for volunteers and financial support. Where is the supporting materials that breaks down the cost accrued by the five drag queen story hours during the summer 2023. Even an itemized summary would be helpful to show the library board of trustees whether or not any additional expenses were incurred or overlooked by the director Jeff Scott.

Kylie Ball

15-year-old who really didn't want to speak but after hearing all the opinions of everyone she decided to show her opinion as well. There are some main issues the people have brought up tonight, one is sexuality books, and the other is from the story hour. The first one is pornography in books. I read quiet a lot mainly young adult books and most of them have overly sexual themes and most of them have not been marked as overly sexual they have been labeled as a romance but its something we can consider a sweet teen romance but it quickly devolves into something kind of sexual I do not want to be subjected to and I know that a lot of my friends are asexual as well and it something they are comfortable with. Everybody who is here for diversity is completely ignoring a big part of the community. Drag queen story hour many of us were focused on the benefits of diversity and I do not deny that I do not deny that this is a good thing as a Asian woman I am grateful for being accepted in this society however, things like drag queen story hour shows direct comparison to princesses is taking away female representation.

Gregory Wonderland

Local author who spent most of his life reading and creating stories. Decided to speak after hearing people say they don't want to ban books but to move them away to hide them in a corner where they are not accessible. In a public library everything is accessible. As persons of power, you have the ability to make decisions and every decision made to squirrel knowledge away to hide anything has a long definitive impact. Worried about teaching children the wrong things, teaching them that you should hide knowledge and not educate them about that knowledge is the wrong decision.

William Putchert

Heard a lot of discussion regarding children tonight and it made me think of Sir David Bowie who I am wearing his shirt tonight may consider to be drag queen and there is a lyric from his song changes that I think is appropriate. It says these children that we spit on as we try to change their world they are immune to your consultation they are quite aware.

Nichell Hull (virtual)

Director of wake-up Washoe County. Want to echo the numerous previously stated sentiments tonight, especially Janice Jones earlier. The majority of the public comment going back nearly five years now has been to say that most traditional Americans most traditional family people do not want their library to be an adult bookstore. They do not want their library to be a drag show for their innocent kids they want the kids to be kids they want their children to have a safe space. They want a maintained standard of age-appropriate material in our libraries and unfortunately it was Mr. Scott who indicated the bazar program drag queen preschool story hour in 2019 and weather the American Library Association recommended that program or not is material. A professional association just gives you guidance, gives



ideas and opportunities for advancement. They are not the decision maker for a local organization, that was Scott's decision.

December (Virtual)

Echo the majority support tonight for the libraries diverse and inclusive offerings the library is a public service for everyone, so it has books for everyone including Reno's thriving queer community. I am sorry if this offends certain groups, I invite you to use your critical thinking skills to wonder why am I upset when I believe the library should cater exclusively to me and my beliefs if you claim that you must control the freedom of information to protect the children as a history lover I am obliged to tell you this is a common fascist talking point. Grateful to have a library system that sees past the charade and supports our freedom to read.

Victoria Myer (Virtual)

Some of the comments regarding kids having access to porn on the phones or anywhere is not a good reason to have on the library shelves. Previous speaker is incorrect we did spend the summer documenting by call number all the books and what the contents are and the Board members have heard them and seen the copies of the books. The petition going around says no more sexually explicit books accessible to children. This is just common sense. These books are not somehow educational, and children do not need to learn about fisting and anal sex and masturbating. I don't care if heterosexual or homosexual children's minds need to be protected. This is getting to ridiculous proportions I am holding up to the camera the petition that has been circulating with over 1200 verifiable Washoe County residents who have signed the petition. We are tired of this argument it is time to make a move and a change and restrict these books.

Bri Schmidt (Virtual)

Program associate with Silver State equality a civil rights LGBTQ plus organization statewide for Nevada. Would like to clarify for the trustees that I know you have to listen and deal with a lot on this topic, so I appreciate your care and taking care of the library. I know a ton of people have shared what books they would like to have removed or put in a separate section and regardless of opinions on the contents of those books most of the books brought up are already filed in the adult nonfiction section.

Chair Jacks changed the order of the agenda as follows:

*5a Acknowledge \$80,000 Donation from Friends of Washoe County Library; \$50,000 Donation for South Valleys Library; \$139,117 Donation for Sierra View Library by Louis Nowak [For Possible Action]*

Jamie Hemingway introduced Friends of Washoe County Library and thanking them for their donation.

Move to acknowledge by Trustee Silver

Seconded by Trustee Rogers  
Vote in Favor was Unanimous

**3a** Approval of Minutes from the Library Board Meeting of December 20th , 2023 [For Possible Action]

Board comments.

Trustee Rogers commented on an error at the end of the December 20<sup>th</sup> minutes stating that Trustee Silver's motion was not a separate motion to acknowledge the Library Director's Evaluation.

Trustee Silver inquired as to the length of time it takes to complete the minutes. Director Scott replied it takes 30 hours to complete with the verbatim public comment minutes.

Chair Jacks stated her displeasure in the quality of the minutes and that they are completed by library staff. She also stated the library chambers are inadequate and she will not approve the minutes.

Trustee Rogers clarified his comments on the minutes that there was an error on the action item at the end of the Director's Evaluation item.

Trustee Rogers Moved to approve the minutes. Trustee Moser Seconded the motion.

Public Comment:

Bruce Parks commented that the minutes were not put before the public with sufficient time according to Nevada Revised Statutes.

Valerie Fiannaca expressed her displeasure over the accuracy of the minutes.

Board Comment:

Trustee Rogers inquired from DA Kaplan as to the requirement for the verbatim public comment. DA Kaplan replied there is no requirement to record the minutes verbatim.

Chair Jacks further expressed her displeasure regarding the minutes.

Board Vote:

YES	No
Trustee Moser	Chair Jacks
Trustee Silver	
Trustee Rogers	

**5c** Election of Vice-Chair for Library Board of Trustees [For Possible Action]

Chair Jacks nominated Trustee Moser for Vice Chair. Trustee Silver Seconds the Motion.

Chair Jacks that Trustee Moser has been one of the longest serving members on the board. Trustee Moser commented that she has the most time on the board and with her work experience can provide guidance for future reports.

Public Comment:

Bruce Parks supported Trustee Moser for Vice Chair

Board Vote

Vice Chair Moser is elected unanimously.

#### **5e** Review Costs of Drag Queen Story Hour [Non-Action Item]

Director Scott shared his report on Drag Story Hour.

Trustee Rogers inquired about how programs like this come about. Does the library perform Activity Based Costing to determine value of programs.

Director Scott replied that most of the library programs are developed by the Youth Services and Library Events Team who have a process to determine programs and events that align with our strategic plan.

Trustee Rogers inquired if there is a financial goal for programs.

Director Scott replied that the goal is to think about who is going to come to the event. Will this program have good attendance or not.

Chair Jacks stated that she was unhappy with the report and the information provided to the board.

Vice Chair Moser asked for the staff costs for putting on programs in the future.

Director Scott replied that we could do that in the future but would require Activity Based Costing process that involves Work Journaling and similar processes to determine that cost.

Trustee Silver inquired if Our Center gave us the funding directly.

Director Scott stated no, the costs were paid directly by Our Center.

Trustee Rogers stated that before we start questioning the cost of the storytime we look at the costs for all of our programs.

Director Scott stated that there was an audit of library programs that was conducted by the auditor and that information was sent to the library board.

#### **6b** Tax Initiative Update by Director Jeff Scott [Non-Action Item]

Director Scott provided an update on the Library Tax Initiative.

Trustee Rogers suggested some changes to the reporting and how we communicated the information to the public. Not to refer to it as a tax, but an override. Also suggested having an elevator pitch for the trustee to use for reaching out to the public.

Vice Chair Moser echoed Trustee Rogers comments and that the Director should provide updates and instruction on how the override should be discussed.

Chair Jacks expressed her displeasure of the update.

## **5b Review and Possible Revision of Library Board of Trustee Bylaws [For Possible Action]**

Chair Jacks led the discussion on the bylaws.

Trustee Silver suggested that the attendance should reflect the zoom attendance.

Chair Jacks suggested adding that the meetings can be conducted virtually.

Chair Jacks mentioned changes she would like to see in November and received feedback from DA Kaplan

DA Kaplan suggested that if there are further substantive edits, he suggests discussing them here and then bring them back at a future meeting.

Chair Jacks discussed meeting locations and adding the Pledge of Allegiance to the bylaws.

Chair Jacks clarified the strikethrough lines in the bylaws

DA Kaplan clarified the terms served for trustees.

Trustee Silver wanted clarification on trustees reaching out to political leaders.

Trustee Rogers wanted to keep the language in but adjust it for clarification.

Vice Chair Moser discussed concerned about library locations and having a place that is conducive for meetings.

Trustee Silver stated that she is not concerned about library locations or safety at those meetings and feels that chambers are very far removed from the public.

Trustee Rogers agreed with Trustee Silver's assessment and stated that the locations work but keep chambers as an option if necessary.

Chair Jacks stated that the library locations have improper recording devices.

DA Kaplan expressed concerned about extensive discussion and changes to the bylaws that are not reflected in the agenda packet. Suggested getting a list ahead of time and bring it forward at a future meeting.

Chair Jacks expressed concerned about the Chair and staff duties in putting the agenda together. Chair Jacks expressed changes she wanted on what constitutes a quorum.

DA Kaplan clarified that a majority is a best way to keep it as is.

Chair Jacks inquired about the public comments sections. DA Kaplan clarified that NRS requires two of three possible public comment periods (before, during action items, and after the meeting).

**5f Discussion and possible direction on Washoe County Library System policies including but not limited to all current, and new policies for prioritizing and standardizing with a schedule to review, update and consider new policies and what topics they might include. [Non-Action Item]**

Chair Jacks tabled this agenda item.

## **5g Library Director Eval**

**Trustee Silver suggested items to Washoe County HR, improve metrics and performance measures, have a more robust eval format.**

**Vice Chair Moser agreed with Trustee Silver review of Director Eval and has other documents that could be used to improve the process.**

**Trustee Silver suggested Washoe County HR to provide clear measurable performance standards.**

**Trustee Rogers expressed need for a timeline.**

#### **5d Trustee Manual**

**Chair Jacks led discussion of Trustee Manual**

**Vice Chair Moser suggested changes to Trustee Manual based on feedback from other libraries and agreed to work with Director Scott on updating the manual.**

**6a** Library Director Update by Director Jeff Scott [Non-Action Item]

Director Scott updated the library board on library events since the last meeting.

**6c/6d** Downtown Reno Library and Internet Library Report Tabled

**7** Staff Announcements

**8** Board Comments

Trustee Rogers expressed concerned about the renewal of the library expansion fund tax and wanted to champion this initiative.

Chair Jacks adjourned the meeting at 8:53

# ITEM 5a National Library Week Proclamation

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# Board of County Commissioners

## RECOGNITION



**Whereas,** libraries offer the opportunity for everyone to connect with others, learn new skills, and pursue their passions, no matter where they are on life's journey; and

**Whereas,** libraries have long served as trusted institutions, striving to ensure equitable access to information and services for all members of the community regardless of race, ethnicity, creed, ability, sexual orientation, gender identity, or socio-economic status; and

**Whereas,** libraries adapt to the ever-changing needs of their communities, developing and expanding collections, programs, and services that are as diverse as the populations they serve; and

**Whereas,** libraries are accessible and inclusive places that promote a sense of local connection, advancing understanding, civic engagement, and shared community goals; and

**Whereas,** libraries play a pivotal role in economic development by providing resources and support for job seekers, entrepreneurs, and small businesses, thus contributing to local prosperity and growth; and

**Whereas,** libraries are treasured institutions that preserve our collective heritage and knowledge, safeguarding both physical and digital resources for present and future generations; and

**Whereas,** libraries, librarians, and library workers are joining library supporters and advocates across the nation to celebrate National Library Week;

**NOW, THEREFORE,** Washoe County Commissioner Alexis Hill does hereby recognize the week of April 7-13, 2024 as

## National Library Week

Dated this 17th day of April, 2024.

Alexis Hill, Chair  
Washoe County Commission

## Washoe County

# Item 5b Washoe County Library Board of Trustees Bylaws

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# Washoe County Library Board of Trustees

## Bylaws

The Board of Trustees of the Washoe County Library System, pursuant to the authority vested by Nevada Revised Statutes 379.025, hereby establishes the following bylaws:

### I. Purpose

The Washoe County Library Board of Trustees shall, consistent with provisions of applicable state and federal law, exercise the powers and duties granted pursuant to NRS 379.025. The Board shall endeavor to administer and manage the resources of the Washoe County Library System in a manner consistent with the public trust, the Library Mission Statement, and the Library Vision Statement.

### II. Organization and Membership

A. The name of the organization shall be “The Board of Trustees of the Washoe County Library System”

#### B. Membership:

1. The Board of Trustees will be comprised of five (5) members.
2. Trustees will be appointed by the Washoe County Board of Commissioners.
3. Trustees will meet the minimum requirements as determined by the Washoe County Board of Commissioners.
4. Trustees will be appointed to serve a 4-year term, as provided in NRS 379.020.
5. Trustees will be eligible to be appointed for no more than two full consecutive four-year terms. Any appointment for the remainder of a term of less than 2 years will not count toward this limitation. In the event a Trustee’s term expires, the Trustee shall continue to serve as Trustee until such time a replacement is appointed pursuant to NRS 379.020(1). Notwithstanding the term limitation set forth herein, nothing in this provision shall be construed to prohibit the reappointment of a trustee for additional terms to be served after a break of one term of non-service prior to re-appointment.
6. Resignation: If any Trustee resigns at any time, written notice must be provided to the Board of Trustees Chair and the Library Director. Any such resignation shall take effect at the date of receipt of such notice or at any later date specified therein. Unless otherwise specified therein, the acceptance of such resignation shall not be necessary to make it effective.
7. Removal: The board of county commissioners may remove any trustee who fails, without cause, to attend three successive meetings of the trustees.

7

C. Trustees are public officers as defined in NRS 281.005(1) and NRS 281A.160(1). Accordingly, Trustees are subject to the Ethics in Government Provisions codified in NRS 281A.010 et. seq. Trustees shall comply with the Code of Ethical Standards of NRS 281A.400 et. seq.

D. Duties of a Trustee:

1. Regularly attend meetings in person and actively participate in such meetings and actions;
2. Review meeting materials prior to each meeting;
3. Be attentive to the needs and concerns of library patrons, volunteers, library staff, library administration, county staff, county commissioners and the general public;
4. Set policies governing the operation of the library system as appropriate;
5. Hire and evaluate the job performance of the Library Director;
6. Work with the Director, library staff and community members, and political leaders to plan for the future of the library system;
7. Acknowledge the annual budget for the library system, and monitor expenditures;
8. Monitor and evaluate library effectiveness; and
9. Advocate for the Washoe County Library System within the community and political organizations, as appropriate

III. Officers

A. Chair

1. Selection.
  - a. The Chair will be elected by a majority vote of the Board of Trustees who are present at the meeting.
  - b. The term will be for one-year at the pleasure of the Board of Trustees.
  - c. Elections shall be held at the regular Board of Trustees meeting each June.
2. Duties. The chair shall:
  - a. Preside at all meetings of the Board of Trustees;
  - b. Execute all documents and actions authorized by the Board of Trustees;
  - c. Call special meetings as warranted;
  - d. Appoint committees;
  - e. Serve as an ex-officio non-voting member of all committees;

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- f. Work with the Library Director and staff.
- g. Review agendas and assist in scheduling meetings.
- h. Add or remove items on each meeting agenda.
- i. Draft correspondence as directed by the Board of Trustees; and
- j. Perform all duties associated with the office.

B. Vice-Chair

1. Selection

- a. The Vice-Chair will be elected by a majority vote of the Board of Trustees who are present at the meeting.
- b. The term will be for one year, at the pleasure of the Board of Trustees.
- c. Elections shall be held at the regular Board of Trustees meeting each June.
- d. In the event the Vice-Chair must assume the duties of Chair for the one-year term because the Chair is no longer able to serve in that capacity, an election for a new Vice-Chair will be held at the next meeting following the succession.

2. Duties. The Vice-Chair shall:

- a. In the event of the absence or disability of the Chair, or of a vacancy in the office, the Vice-Chair shall assume and perform all duties associated with that office. In the event of an absence or short-term disability of the Chair, the Vice-Chair shall assume the duties of the Chair for the period of his/her absence or disability. In the event the Chair is permanently vacated, the Vice-Chair shall assume the office of the Chair for the remainder of the vacated term.

IV. Meetings

- A. Regular meetings: The Board of Trustees will normally meet ~~monthly~~every other month, on the third Wednesday of each month. The time of the meetings will be set at the discretion of the Chair of the Board of trustees. The Chair shall have the authority to cancel a regularly scheduled meeting in the event it is determined, ~~after consultation with the Library Director,~~ that there is insufficient business to come before the Board or that other good cause exists to cancel the meeting.
- B. Meeting locations: ~~When possible, the Board of Trustees will normally hold regular meetings on a rotational basis at Washoe County Library locations.~~ A calendar of possible meeting locations will be provided annually to the Board of Trustees. Meetings may be held virtually at the Chair's discretion pursuant to the requirements of NRS Chapter 241.

- C. Nevada Open Meeting Law: All meetings of the Board are subject to the provisions of state and federal open meeting laws and shall be conducted in accordance with the applicable laws. The Library Director shall be responsible for ensuring the proper public notice is made for each meeting of the Board. Trustees should endeavor to refrain from discussing agenda items or actions by the Board outside of public meetings in groups that may constitute a quorum.
- D. Agendas: The ~~Director-Chair~~ shall ensure the preparation of the agenda for each Board meeting and the compliance with the applicable open meetings laws as set forth in NRS Chapter 241. An item may be placed on the agenda at the request of any Trustee or by written request by any individual to the ~~Director-Chair~~ 15 days prior to the scheduled meeting. However, whether and/or when the item is actually placed on the agenda remains in the discretion of the Chair.
- E. Pertinent Materials: The Director shall ensure that notices and ~~informational~~supporting materials pertinent to any agenda item for any Board meeting shall be ~~distributed~~made available to Trustees, Board legal counsel, and ~~the public in anyone with a written request of notification on file with the Board no later than 9 a.m. of the third working day before the meeting to ensure adequate time for review. In addition, pertinent materials shall also be posted on the Board of Trustees web site no later than 9 a.m. of the third working day before a scheduled meeting in accordance with the requirements set forth in the applicable open meeting laws (NRS Chapter 241). 241.020 section 3~~
- F. Quorum: A ~~minimum of three Trustees~~simple majority of the membership of the Board of Trustees must be present to have a quorum. If a vacancy occurs in the membership of the Board, the necessary quorum and number of votes necessary to take action on a matter is reduced as though the voting membership does not include the vacancy. A majority vote of those present at the meeting is required on any action items on the agenda for said action to be of any legal effect.
- G. The Director, or his duly appointed representative, shall attend each meeting of the Board.
- H. Special meetings: Special meetings of the Board of Trustees may be called by the Chair or upon the written request of any two Trustees.

I. Order of Business: To the extent possible, the order of business at any regularly scheduled meeting of the Board shall be:

- Call to order
- Roll call
- Public comment
- Review/approval of minutes
- Old business
- New business
- Presentations
- Reports
- Public comment
- Board comment
- Staff Announcements
- Adjournment

J. ~~Where consistent with state law, and not otherwise provided in these Rules of Procedure, the Washoe County Library Board of Trustees may refer to the principles of the most recent edition of Robert's Rules of Order for guidance in conducting its meetings.~~

+

K. Committees: Committees shall be created as needed by the Chair, shall have a specific purpose, shall report regularly as to progress in completing their charge, shall be subject to annual review as needed, and shall automatically dissolve upon the completion of their charge.

L. Annual Bylaws Review: The ~~Bylaws~~ herein can be revised as needed by a majority vote of the Board of Trustees. Any proposed revisions must be placed on an agenda and addressed in a public meeting in accordance with the Nevada Open Meeting Law. The ~~Bylaws~~ shall be reviewed and approved at least once every calendar year annually, ~~at the regular June meeting of the Board of Trustees, or as soon thereafter in the event reasonable grounds exist so that the Bylaws cannot be reviewed during the June meeting.~~

DATED this ~~1<sup>st</sup>~~ 19<sup>th</sup> day of ~~July~~ March 2020~~2024~~

WASHOE COUNTY LIBRARY BOARD OF TRUSTEES

\_\_\_\_ Amy Ghilieri

\_\_\_\_ Frank Perez

\_\_\_\_ Anne Medaille Al Rogers

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Lea Moser  
Al Rogers  
Gianna Jaks  
Ann Silver

These bylaws were presented to the Board on ~~June~~ March 1921, 2024~~3~~ and were adopted.

Amy Ghileri  
Gianna Jaks, Chair

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Item 5c and d

Supporting documents for Drag Queen Story Hour  
Discussion and Budget Analysis

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# WASHOE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM

## DRAG QUEEN STORY TIME



# Origin

## History of Drag

- Goes back to Shakespeare in Western culture when men played the roles for women
- Popular in the United States as far back as 1880s
- William Dorsey Swann known for throwing drag balls in late 1800s



## Modern use of Drag

- Popularity of Ru Paul's Drag Race (started 2009 and now on Season 14 still on the air)
- Drag Queen Story Time founded in 2015
- [The Blue's Clues Pride Parade](#) 🏳️‍🌈 Sing-Along Ft. Nina West! 2021
- New York Times coverage of [Drag Queen Story Time 2017](#)

# Event Process

## Youth Services and Library Events Team

- Program Proposal Form
- Any staff can propose a program, it is reviewed by the team, branch staff decide if they want to hold program
- 2019 Sparks Library Staff proposed Drag Queen Story Time

## Drag Queen Story Time Sparks Library July 20, 2019

- Drag Queens Aspen Meadows and Ginger Devine (the Reno News & Review Drag Queen of the Year in 2015)
- Over 800 patrons in attendance with multiple news crews and a large crowd outside Sparks Library





# 2019 Drag Queen Story Time





# 2019 Drag Queen Story Time





# Drag Queen Storytime 2019

From [The Nevada Independent](#)

“If anything, the calls to cancel the event likely brought more people to it. Lines to enter the story hour stretched past the library entrance and snaked onto the sidewalk. Library staff had to rotate parents and children in and out of the reading. And those who didn’t make it into the event still made a Saturday out of it, sitting at tables across the library, reading books to their children. According to the library’s gate count, about 800 people entered the library during the event.”

Drag Queen Storytime  
Sparks Library July 20, 2019



# Virtual Drag Queen Storytime

2020/2021 Drag Queen Storytime goes Virtual





# 2022 Drag Queen Story Time





# 2022 Drag Queen Story Time

## Librarian Report-Sparks Library

“Sparks Library hosted two successful Drag Queen Story Time Events on Sunday, June 26, 2022, with special guest Miss Ginger Devine. A total of 58 children and adults attended this fun event. Miss Ginger read *My Shadow is Pink* by Scott Stuart, *It's Okay to be a Unicorn* by Jason Tharp, and *Mary had a Little Glam* by Tami Sauer. We danced with bubbles and sang *If You're Fabulous and You Know It* and *The Hips of the Drag Queens go Swish, Swish, Swish*. Everyone had an opportunity to draw outside with chalk, blow bubbles, and color some Pride themed coloring sheets.”





# 2022 Drag Queen Story Time

## Librarian Report-Downtown Reno Library

“On Saturday, June 25, 2022, the Downtown Reno branch hosted Drag Queen Story Time, starring the fabulous Miss Ginger Devine.

There were 52 patrons in attendance, with the youngest being 10 weeks old! Everyone enjoyed Miss Ginger's book selections, her sense of humor, and her ability to give life to the books. She truly shines as an advocate for early literacy.”







# Celebrate Diversity 2023

- Drag Story Hour a huge success at Downtown Reno, Sparks, and North Valleys Libraries
- North Valleys Library - 131 attendees
- Downtown Reno Library - 105 attendees
- Sparks Library - 350 attendees
- We thank our partners at Our Center for their support for this program





## Celebrate Diversity

- Drag Story Hour at Downtown Reno, North Valleys, and Sparks Libraries had heavy attendance and a great deal of support.



# Drag Queen Storytime Cost Analysis

- DQST is planned and marketed consistent with other programs, events, and storytimes at Washoe County Library. No additional funds are spent to market the program or plan the program.
- Six programs in 2023 resulted in 586 attendees
- Average Library Storytime is 30 attendees per program whereas DQST is almost 100 per program.
- Average Library Storytime to market, plan, and provide is \$3 per attendee (cost estimate of \$90 per program). With a higher attendance costs savings are realized that would cost us less than \$1 per person for the same \$90 of planning and marketing.
- Our Center provides volunteer support and coordination as well as amenities. They also paid for the DQST Presenters. Their costs incurred was \$2,620.63.
- Lastly, additional security is required at these events as those who oppose the program attempt to disrupt and intimidate parents and children.

# Drag Queen Story Time Benefits



Five interrelated elements of DQSH that offer early childhood educators a way into a sense of queer imagination:

- Play as Praxis
- Aesthetic Transformation
- Strategic Defiance
- Destigmatization of Shame
- Embodied Kinship

“Ultimately, the authors propose that “drag pedagogy” provides a performative approach to queer pedagogy that is not simply about LGBT lives but *living queerly*.”

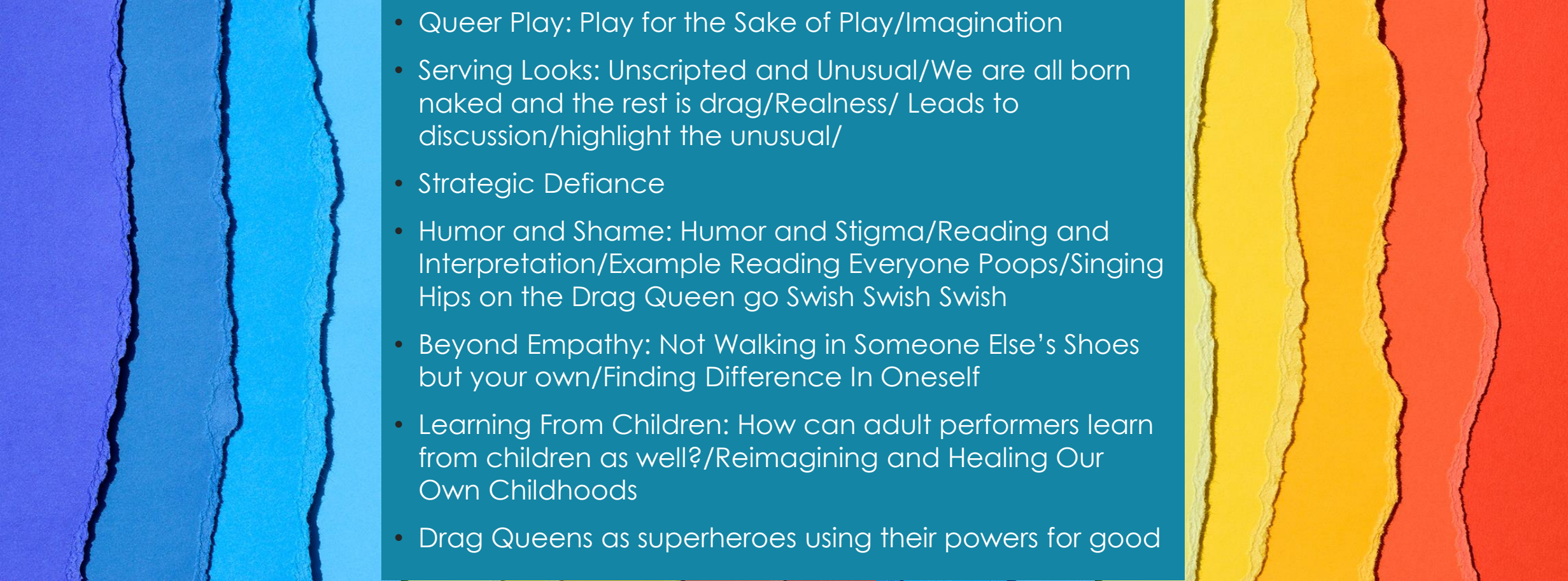
Harper Keenan & Lil Miss Hot Mess (2020) Drag pedagogy: The playful practice of queer imagination in early childhood, *Curriculum Inquiry*, 50:5, 440-461, DOI: 10.1080/03626784.2020.1864621 (Jan 2021)

LINK: <https://doi.org/10.1080/03626784.2020.1864621>

Research: Harper B. Keenan is an Assistant Professor in the Department of Curriculum and Pedagogy at the University of British Columbia.

Harris Kornstein is an assistant professor of Public & Applied Humanities in the College of Humanities at the University of Arizona.

# Drag Queen Story Time Benefits

- 
- Queer Play: Play for the Sake of Play/Imagination
  - Serving Looks: Unscripted and Unusual/We are all born naked and the rest is drag/Realness/ Leads to discussion/highlight the unusual/
  - Strategic Defiance
  - Humor and Shame: Humor and Stigma/Reading and Interpretation/Example Reading Everyone Poops/Singing Hips on the Drag Queen go Swish Swish Swish
  - Beyond Empathy: Not Walking in Someone Else's Shoes but your own/Finding Difference In Oneself
  - Learning From Children: How can adult performers learn from children as well?/Reimagining and Healing Our Own Childhoods
  - Drag Queens as superheroes using their powers for good

Harper Keenan & Lil Miss Hot Mess (2020) Drag pedagogy: The playful practice of queer imagination in early childhood, *Curriculum Inquiry*, 50:5, 440-461, DOI: 10.1080/03626784.2020.1864621 (Jan 2021)

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# Drag Queen Story Hour: A Herstory



DQSH grew from queer author Michelle Tea's personal desire to connect her toddler with queer culture. As the outgoing Executive Director of the San Francisco literary non-profit RADAR Productions, Tea conceived of the programme in 2015, which was launched under the leadership of incoming Executive Director Juli Delgado Lopera and Managing Director Virgie Tovar. Soon after, DQSH was replicated by established organizations and in DIY-style events around the world. Most have taken place in libraries, schools, bookstores, and other community spaces. Readings have happened in dozens of locales, from major cities like New York, Mexico City, and Tokyo, to smaller ones like Cleveland, TN and San Marcos, TX (Drag Queen Story Hour, n.d.-b). Many coordinate under an incorporated non-profit organization, though others operate independently.

Harper Keenan & Lil Miss Hot Mess (2020) Drag pedagogy: The playful practice of queer imagination in early childhood, *Curriculum Inquiry*, 50:5, 440-461, DOI: 10.1080/03626784.2020.1864621 (Jan 2021)

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# Drag Queen Story Time



Our Mission ... is to connect people with information, ideas and experiences to support an enriched and engaged community, one person at a time.

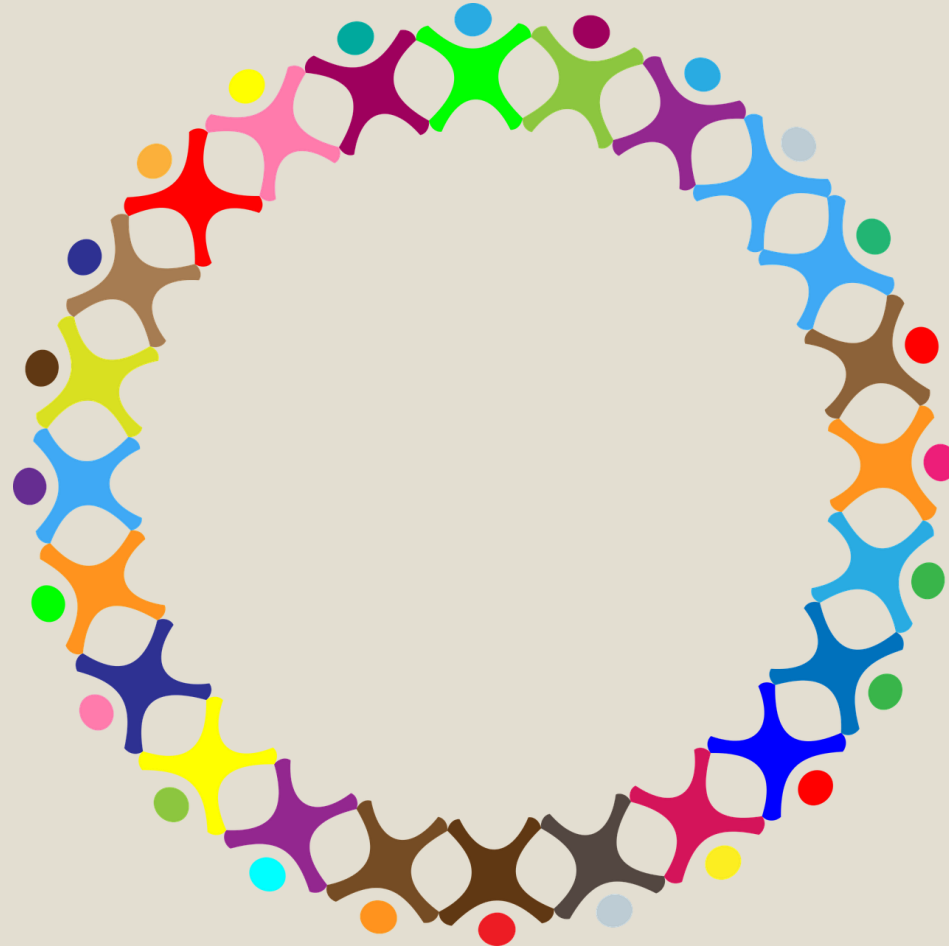
Our Vision ... is that all Washoe County residents benefit from the Library's support of literacy and self-education.

## Equity, Diversity, Inclusion: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights:

- In support of Intellectual Freedom: Ultimately it is each and every parent's/guardian's responsibility whether their child views/attends/reads/engages in a public library experience.
- It is not the responsibility of individual community members to decide what may or may not be appropriate/acceptable for other people's children.
- Public libraries offer/provide the experience for people to engage, it is up individuals whether or not to attend.



# Board Discussion



# Item 5e Book Challenge Appeal

## COVER PAGE

# Appeal of Library Director's Decision Regarding Book Challenges

## Table of Contents

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American Library Association Bill of Rights

American Library Association Freedom to Read Statement

American Library Association Freedom to View Statement

Guidelines on Intellectual Freedom- Intellectual Freedom in Libraries: A Statement of Policy from Nevada Library Association

"Trustee Roles and Responsibilities" provided from Nevada State Library, Archives & Public Records Nevada Library Governance and Public Library Trustees

Sund v. City of Wichita Falls, Tex., 121 F. Supp. 2d 530 (N.D. Tex. 2000) [this is the case law that found it is a suppression of first amendment rights to relocate items from a children's collection to an adult collection

Wake Up Washoe County Cover Letter and Sworn Affidavit

Book Challenge – Sandee Tibbett regarding Gender Queer by Maia Kobabe

Book Challenge – Sandee Tibbett regarding Flamer by Mike Curato

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Book Challenge – Mary Graham regarding Elatsoe by Darcie Little Badger

Book Challenge – Mary Graham regarding Date Me, Bryson Keller by Keven Van Whye

Book Challenge – Bruce Foster regarding All Boys Aren't Blue

Book Challenge – Dawn Cooper regarding Heartstopper Volume 3 by Alice Oserman

# PowerPoint Slides



# Citizen Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials – Appeals

Debi Stears

Collection Development Manager

# Library Board of Trustees Must Weigh

- Did WCLS follow its Collection Development Policy in the acquisition and placement of titles in question?
- Works in question, evaluated as a whole
- Careful review of the objection
- ALA Bill of Rights
- ALA Freedom to Read and Freedom to View Statements
- Guidelines on Intellectual Freedom

# WCLS Collection Development Policy

Contract with  
our community

Adopted 2004  
Revised 2010

- What we add to collection
- Placement of items within collection
- Determining what to withdraw from collection
- Reconsideration of Materials



Meets the informational,  
education, cultural and  
recreational needs of Washoe  
County Library customers

Collection Development  
Foundations





The library supports the individual's right to access ideas and information representing all points of view

Collection Development  
Foundations



The library provides a neutral environment in which individuals and their interests are brought together with the universe of ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions.

## Collection Development Foundations





The library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some. Only the individual can define what materials are consistent with her/his own values. Individuals can apply those values to the use of library materials only for themselves. Parents and legal guardians have the responsibility for monitoring their children's use of library materials.

## Collection Development Foundations



The library supports the individual's right to access ideas and information representing all points of view...it welcomes and solicits suggestions, comments, and ideas about collection.

## Collection Development Foundations



# Seeking Community Input – 14% of purchases

Didn't find it?

Can't find what you are looking for? Try our Materials Request Service.

[Submit Request](#)

- Purchase requests fill any gaps in collection
- More than 600 requests/month
- Interlibrary loan available for titles we don't purchase

# Selection Criteria

- Current and potential relevance to community needs
- Requests by the Public
- Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- Attention by critics and expert reviewers
- Reputation and significance of author
- Cost
- Consideration of work as a whole
- Representation of diverse points of view
- Authenticity of history or social setting



# Placement of Materials Within the Library Collection

- Use Dewey Decimal to divide materials by subject
- Professional catalogers place materials into proper subject areas and assign them to Adult, Juvenile, Young Adult, Reference, and other specific areas
- Reviews by professionals in the field and the librarians' expertise contribute to proper placement
- It is the responsibility of parents to monitor the materials their children borrow or use in the library

# Placement of Materials Within the Library Collection

- Use Dewey Decimal to divide materials by subject
- Professional catalogers place materials into proper subject areas and assign them to Adult, Juvenile, Young Adult, Reference, and other specific areas
- Reviews by professionals in the field and the librarians' expertise contribute to proper placement



# Reconsideration of Library Materials

- User submits form to the library
- Director responds to request in writing
- Library Board of Trustees will hear appeal of Library Director's written response.
- Final decision rests with LBOT

# Reconsideration Process

- Phone challenger to explain process and timeline
- File report to ALA Office of Intellectual Freedom
- Read work in its entirety
- Compile professional reviews
- Conduct review of WCLS holdings in subject area to ensure plurality of viewpoints
- Purchase additional titles to provide additional perspectives on the topic, as available
- Investigate acquisition and circulation history
- Research holdings and placement at other libraries
- Report findings to Library Director

# WCLS – Censorship Watch

- 4/16/23 FOIA request asking for number and titles of books “pulped from WCLS collections in each of the years 2019, 2020, 2021
- 5/17/23 Debi Stears makes presentation to LBOT explaining how we select titles for collection and deselection (weeding) process
- 6/27/23 FOIA request from County Commissioner stating they’d like to know why “inappropriate books” are located in the children’s section of the library
- 6/27/23 FOIA request for a list of all titles purchased for the library in the last year.
- 7/13/23 Request for how many times “Lawn Boy” has been checked out

# WCLS – Censorship Watch...cont.

- 7/14/23 Request for how many copies of “Lawn Boy” the library owns
- 8/14/23 Request for list of every book requested for purchase by patrons for previous 12 months
- 8/15/23 Debi Stears presents to the Board of County Commission explaining how library titles are selected for collection
- August – October 2023 Washoe County Internal Audit on Book Procurement Process, presented to Audit committee 11/13/23
- 10.15/23 Library receives 13 book challenges from single patron in response to Banned Book Display
- 12/20/23 Wake Up Washoe County delivers 14 book challenges from 9 individuals

# Quiet Censorship Trend

“What are your neighbors hiding from you?”



Tracked beginning 9/30/23

- Discovery of books hidden, defaced with hate speech, and damaged throughout library branches
- Targeting LGBTQ, Jewish, African American, and immigrant populations



# Protecting children by relocating library materials to a different area





# Request for Reconsideration

What must Library Trustees take into  
consideration?

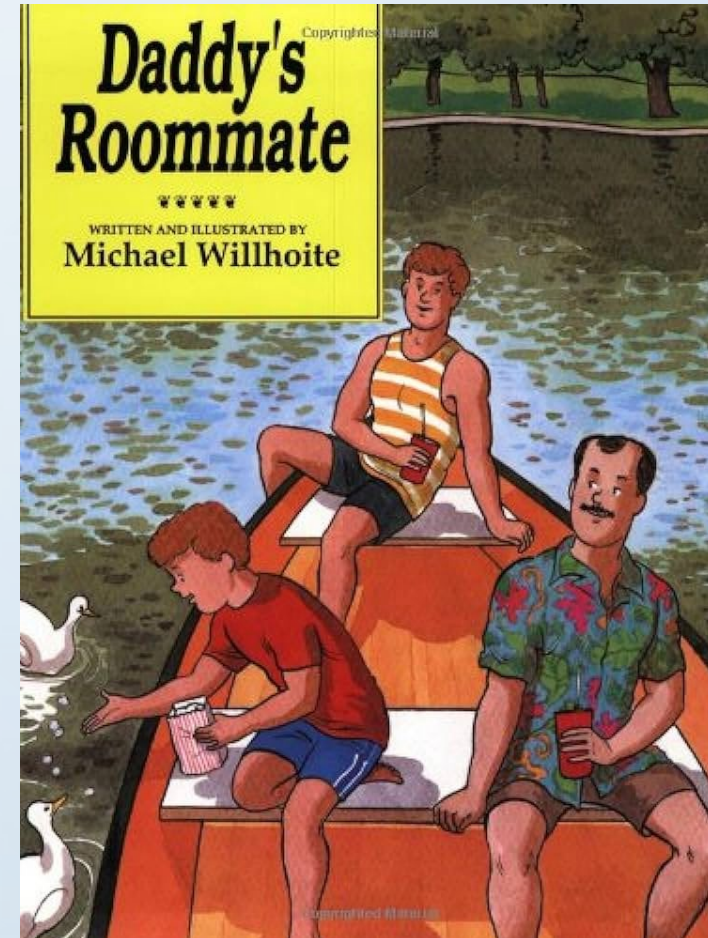




As a trustee advocate, you will be a defender of intellectual freedom, and of an individual's right to information...the response must be unequivocal in defense of intellectual freedom. You must explain that the role of the library is to provide reference materials in response to the needs of all segments of the community and (when available) to provide information on all sides of a given issue.

Nevada Library Governance and  
Public Library Trustees from Nevada State  
Library and Archives

# Sund v. City of Wichita Falls, Tex







# U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas, 2000

Altman Resolution provides that with 300 library cardholder signatures, a title must be removed from the children's collection and placed into the adult collection.

# Court Ruling

If a parent wishes to prevent her child from reading a particular book, that parent can and should accompany the child to the library, and should not prevent all children in the community from gaining access to constitutionally protected materials. Where First Amendment rights are concerned, those seeking to restrict access to information should be forced to take affirmative steps to shield themselves from unwanted materials; the onus should not be on the general public to overcome barriers to their access to fully protected information



Thank you!

# Collection Development and Management Policy





## COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT AND MANAGEMENT POLICY

Collection Development is the ongoing process of assessing the materials available for purchase or licensing and making decisions about their inclusion and retention within the Library.

### Scope of the Collection

The library materials collection, one of Washoe County Library System's (WCLS) major assets, is developed and managed to meet the informational, educational, cultural and recreational needs of Washoe County Library customers. Since library systems cannot possibly acquire all print and non-print materials, they must employ a policy of selectivity in acquisitions. The Library System provides, within its financial limitations, a general collection of materials embracing broad areas of knowledge and literary and cultural genres. Included are works of enduring value and timely materials on current issues. Within the framework of these broad objectives, selection is based on community demographics and evidence of areas of interest.

Collections are reviewed and revised on an ongoing basis to meet contemporary needs. Collections are current and popular, not archival, and materials are not needlessly duplicated. Collections provide general coverage of subjects and reflect the characteristics of the community. Materials are withdrawn from the collection to maintain the collection's usefulness, currency and relevance. Withdrawn materials may be sold or used in collaboration with community agencies.

Other community resources and area library resources are taken into consideration when developing collections. Through Interlibrary Loan, librarians may obtain materials from other institutions for the use of WCLS patrons. Information may also be obtained through electronic access and the internet. Information sources made available electronically will be selected using the same principles that are applied to books and other formats. New formats will be considered when a significant portion of the community creates a demand.

The Library supports the individual's right to access ideas and information representing all points of view. To this end, the Library welcomes and solicits patron suggestions, comments and ideas about the collection and its development. The Washoe County Library Board of Trustees has adopted the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement and Freedom to View Statement. The Library recognizes and respects intellectual property rights and conforms to legislative mandates regarding copyright protections.

### Collection Development and Management Criteria

To build and maintain a collection of merit, materials are evaluated according to one or more of the following criteria. An item need not meet all of these criteria in order to be acceptable.

- Current and potential relevance to community needs
- Suitability of subject and style for intended audience
- Attention by critics and expert reviewers
- Cost
- Requests by the public
- Comprehensiveness
- Skill, competence, purpose of author
- Reputation and significance of author
- Objectivity
- Authenticity of history or social setting
- Consideration of the work as a whole
- Representation of diverse points of view
- Suitability in physical form for library use
- Technical quality

## **Gifts of Library Materials**

WCLS will accept unrestricted, irrevocable gifts of books and other library materials. Gifts and donations are accepted with the understanding that they will be evaluated by the same criteria used to select and purchase materials for addition to the collection. If gifts do not meet these criteria, they may be conveyed to the Friends of Washoe County Library for sales to benefit the Library System, used for Read and Exchange collections, recycled or otherwise disposed of.

## **Collection Structure**

The placement of materials within the libraries is determined by several factors. The Library uses the Dewey Decimal Classification scheme which divides materials by subject. Professional catalogers use Dewey and Library of Congress subject headings to place materials into the proper subject areas and assign them to Adult, Juvenile, Young Adult, Reference or other specific areas of the Library. Reviews by professionals in the field and the librarians' expertise contribute to the proper placement of material.

Washoe County Library respects the rights of children to choose their own materials. It is the responsibility of parents to monitor the materials their children borrow or use in the Library.

## **Collection Responsibilities**

Staff responsibility for the collection rests with the Library Director, who operates within the framework of the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy. The Director delegates to staff members authority to interpret and apply this policy in daily operation.

Staff in a centrally organized collection development unit provides continuity in the collections through an organized structure for planning, selecting, acquiring and managing library materials. All staff contributes to the development of collections driven by customer needs and expectations by:

- Engaging in open, continuous communication with customers
- Handling all requests equitably
- Understanding and responding to continually changing demographics, as well as societal and technological changes
- Recognizing that materials of varying complexity and format are necessary to satisfy diverse needs

## **Intellectual Freedom**

A democracy presupposes an informed citizenry, and the public library has an integral role in achieving that goal. The Library provides a neutral environment in which individuals and their interests are brought together with the universe of ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions. The American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read and Freedom to View statements are cornerstones of this policy and guide the acquisitions and management of the collection.

Collection development and management decisions are based on the merit of the work as it relates to the Library's mission and its ability to meet the needs and interests of the community. Decisions are not made on the basis of any anticipated approval or disapproval of the material. The inclusion of an item in the Library collection is in no way an endorsement of its contents. Materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of the contents.

The Library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some. Only the individual can define what materials are consistent with her/his own values. Individuals can apply those values to the use of library materials only for themselves. Parents and legal guardians have the responsibility for monitoring their children's use of library materials.

## **Reconsideration of Library Materials**

A singular obligation of the public library is to reflect within its collection differing points of view. Individuals may request reconsideration of a selection decision of library materials by submitting a written request for reconsideration to any Washoe County Library using the form appended to this policy. The Library Director will respond in writing to an individual's written request.

The Washoe County Library Board of Trustees, upon written request to the Board Chair, will hear appeals of the Library Director's written response. Decisions on appeals are based on this policy, the material, careful review of the objection and the American Library Association's Bill of Rights, Freedom to Read Statement, Freedom to View Statement and Guidelines on Intellectual Freedom. The final decisions on appeals rest with the Washoe County Library Board of Trustees.

***APPROVED: December 15, 2004***

***REVISED: May 19, 2010***

# CITIZEN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS AND ARTWORK

Author/Artist \_\_\_\_\_

Title \_\_\_\_\_

Book \_\_\_\_\_ Periodical \_\_\_\_\_ Other \_\_\_\_\_ Publisher/Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please state the reason for your request. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you read/viewed/listened to this work/exhibition in its entirety? \_\_\_\_\_

What are the positive points of this material? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

What would you like the Library to do about this work? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Have you read the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you read the Washoe County Library Public Use of Bulletin Boards, Exhibit Spaces and Display Spaces Policy? \_\_\_\_\_

Request initiated by: \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent:  
 Yourself  
 Organization (name) \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Signature of Patron: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Received by Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_



# American Library Association Library Bill of Rights

## Library Bill of Rights

The American Library Association affirms that all libraries are forums for information and ideas, and that the following basic policies should guide their services.

- I. Books and other library resources should be provided for the interest, information, and enlightenment of all people of the community the library serves. Materials should not be excluded because of the origin, background, or views of those contributing to their creation.
- II. Libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Materials should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
- III. Libraries should challenge censorship in the fulfillment of their responsibility to provide information and enlightenment.
- IV. Libraries should cooperate with all persons and groups concerned with resisting abridgment of free expression and free access to ideas.
- V. A person's right to use a library should not be denied or abridged because of origin, age, background, or views.
- VI. Libraries which make exhibit spaces and meeting rooms available to the public they serve should make such facilities available on an equitable basis, regardless of the beliefs or affiliations of individuals or groups requesting their use.
- VII. All people, regardless of origin, age, background, or views, possess a right to privacy and confidentiality in their library use. Libraries should advocate for, educate about, and protect people's privacy, safeguarding all library use data, including personally identifiable information.

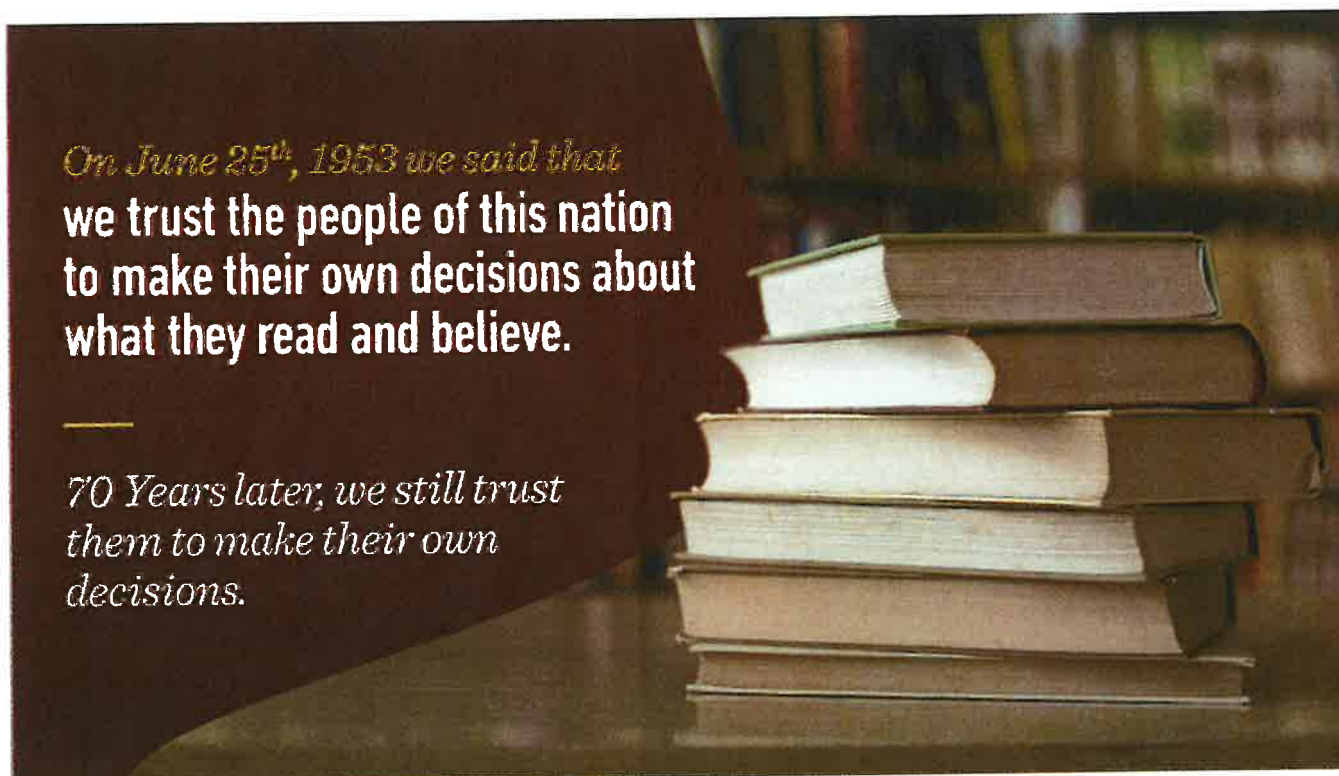
Adopted June 19, 1939, by the ALA Council; amended October 14, 1944; June 18, 1948; February 2, 1961; June 27, 1967; January 23, 1980; January 29, 2019.

Inclusion of "age" reaffirmed January 23, 1996.

Although the Articles of the *Library Bill of Rights* are unambiguous statements of basic principles that should govern the service of all libraries, questions do arise concerning application of these principles to specific library practices. See the documents designated by the Intellectual Freedom Committee as Interpretations of the Library Bill of Rights (<http://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations>).

# American Library Association Freedom to Read Statement

## The Freedom to Read Statement



**On the 70th anniversary of the Freedom to Read Statement, we are asking for individuals, authors, organizations, and associations to sign on to support the freedom to read.**

**TAKE ACTION: SIGN YOUR NAME! (<https://uniteagainstbookbans.org/freedomtoread/>)**

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is continuously under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove or limit access to reading materials, to censor content in schools, to label "controversial" views, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries. These actions apparently rise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to counter threats to safety or national security, as well as to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as individuals devoted to reading and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating ideas, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

Most attempts at suppression rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary individual, by exercising critical judgment, will select the good and reject the bad. We trust Americans to recognize propaganda and misinformation, and to make their own decisions about what they read and believe. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.



These efforts at suppression are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, art and images, films, broadcast media, and the Internet. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy or unwelcome scrutiny by government officials.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of accelerated change. And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with controversy and difference.

Now as always in our history, reading is among our greatest freedoms. The freedom to read and write is almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. The written word is the natural medium for the new idea and the untried voice from which come the original contributions to social growth. It is essential to the extended discussion that serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the readers to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free people will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

We therefore affirm these propositions:

- 1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those that are unorthodox, unpopular, or considered dangerous by the majority.*

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until that idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept that challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would mark the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

- 2. Publishers, librarians, and booksellers do not need to endorse every idea or presentation they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as a standard for determining what should be published or circulated.*

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one can read should be confined to what another thinks proper.

3. *It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to bar access to writings on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.*

No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views or private lives of its creators. No society of free people can flourish that draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. *There is no place in our society for efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.*

To some, much of modern expression is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent writers from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experiences in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not to be discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters values differ, and values cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised that will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others.

5. *It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept the prejudgment of a label characterizing any expression or its author as subversive or dangerous.*

The ideal of labeling presupposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for others. It presupposes that individuals must be directed in making up their minds about the ideas they examine. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large; and by the government whenever it seeks to reduce or deny public access to public information.*

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society individuals are free to determine for themselves what they wish to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concept of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive. Further, democratic societies are more safe, free, and creative when the free flow of public information is not restricted by governmental prerogative or self-censorship.

7. *It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality and diversity of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, they can demonstrate that the answer to a "bad" book is a good one, the answer to a "bad" idea is a good one.*

The freedom to read is of little consequence when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for that reader's purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of the freedom to read requires of all publishers and librarians the utmost of their faculties, and deserves of all Americans the fullest of their support.

We state these propositions neither lightly nor as easy generalizations. We here stake out a lofty claim for the value of the written word. We do so because we believe that it is possessed of enormous variety and usefulness, worthy of cherishing and keeping free. We realize that the application of these propositions may mean the dissemination of ideas and manners of expression that are repugnant to many persons. We do not state these propositions in the comfortable belief that what people read is unimportant. We believe rather that what people read is deeply important; that ideas can be dangerous; but that the suppression of ideas is fatal to a democratic society. Freedom itself is a dangerous way of life, but it is ours.

This statement was originally issued in May of 1953 by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council, which in 1970 consolidated with the American Educational Publishers Institute to become the Association of American Publishers.

Adopted June 25, 1953, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee; amended January 28, 1972; January 16, 1991; July 12, 2000; June 30, 2004.

*A Joint Statement by:*

American Library Association (/)

Association of American Publishers (<http://www.publishers.org/>)

*Subsequently endorsed by:*

American Booksellers for Free Expression (<http://www.bookweb.org/abfe>)

The Association of American University Presses (<http://www.aaupnet.org/>)

The Children's Book Council (<http://www.cbcbooks.org/>)

Freedom to Read Foundation (<http://www.ftrf.org>)

National Association of College Stores (<http://www.nacs.org/>)

National Coalition Against Censorship (<http://www.ncac.org/>)

National Council of Teachers of English (<http://www.ncte.org/>)

The Thomas Jefferson Center for the Protection of Free Expression

# American Library Association Freedom to View Statement

## Freedom to View Statement

The **FREEDOM TO VIEW**, along with the freedom to speak, to hear, and to read, is protected by the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States. In a free society, there is no place for censorship of any medium of expression. Therefore these principles are affirmed:

1. To provide the broadest access to film, video, and other audiovisual materials because they are a means for the communication of ideas. Liberty of circulation is essential to insure the constitutional guarantee of freedom of expression.
2. To protect the confidentiality of all individuals and institutions using film, video, and other audiovisual materials.
3. To provide film, video, and other audiovisual materials which represent a diversity of views and expression. Selection of a work does not constitute or imply agreement with or approval of the content.
4. To provide a diversity of viewpoints without the constraint of labeling or prejudging film, video, or other audiovisual materials on the basis of the moral, religious, or political beliefs of the producer or filmmaker or on the basis of controversial content.
5. To contest vigorously, by all lawful means, every encroachment upon the public's freedom to view.

This statement was originally drafted by the Freedom to View Committee of the American Film and Video Association (formerly the Educational Film Library Association) and was adopted by the AFVA Board of Directors in February 1979. This statement was updated and approved by the AFVA Board of Directors in 1989.

**Endorsed January 10, 1990, by the ALA Council**

**(/offices/oif)**



Guidelines on Intellectual  
Freedom – Intellectual  
Freedom in Libraries: A  
Statement of Policy from  
Nevada Library Association

## INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM IN LIBRARIES A Statement of Policy

### Nevada Library Association

The Nevada Library Association is directly concerned with the freedom and right to privacy of all members of a democratic society to use what materials they will in the course of making the social, educational, and political judgments on which that society is based. We are further agreed that the right to privacy of library patrons is of utmost importance. Without such freedom, the very fabric of democracy is in danger. It is a professional obligation of librarians to give highest priority to the freedom of inquiry and to observe the charges in the Library Bill of Rights and the American Library Association Freedom to Read statement with the utmost integrity.

The Association, as a matter of principle, opposes any legislation at the state, local, and school district levels which might place library collections in jeopardy, restrict, prejudice, or interfere with free and unbiased selection and acquisition of library materials, or which might otherwise restrict the basic concept of the freedom of use or inquiry.

The Association, as a matter of principle and policy, opposes any proposed or actual restrictions imposed on whatever parties or individuals upon the selection, acquisition, maintenance, administration and dissemination of library materials, and with similar restrictions on cultural activities or educational programs in libraries and other institutions.

The Association is concerned with affecting liaison between itself and other organizations which support the Freedom to Read.

The Association is concerned with school librarians and the general public to the philosophy inherent in the Library Bill of Rights and the American Library Association Freedom to Read statement.

The Association supports the concept of the library user's right to privacy, and maintains, as a vital principle, that official or unofficial surveillance, without due process, of library circulation records represents a violation of intellectual freedom and the traditional right of free inquiry.

Adopted 1976

“Trustee Roles and Responsibilities” provided from Nevada State Library, Archives & Public Records Nevada  
Library Governance and Public Library Trustees

## Trustee Roles and Responsibilities

The library board is responsible for the library and all that happens in it. That may be a strong statement, but it is both a legal and practical way of looking at the job you accepted as board member. Even though the board delegates the actual day-to-day operation of the library to professional, paid staff, the board never gives up ultimate bottom-line responsibility for the success or failure of the library. To manage that responsibility, the board has six major duties:

1. Set policies
2. Hire and evaluate the director
3. Plan for the future of the library
4. Submit budgets and monitor finances
5. Monitor and evaluate the overall effectiveness of the library
6. Advocate for the library in the community

See statutory powers and duties of Nevada library trustees in [NRS 379.025](#).

### Library Directors

The director is responsible for administering all functions of the library. Just as there is sometimes confusion about the role of the library board member, there may be confusion about the director's role on the board team. The director is first an employee of the board, but the relationship between the board and the director is not the typical employer/employee relationship. The library board members' job is to make sure the library operates well and in the best interest of those the library serves, not to demonstrate expertise in managing a library. The board must hire a qualified director, who possesses the required professional library education and experience, to manage the day-to-day operations.

### Board Officers

Board leaders facilitate good group decisions. Any group that expects to accomplish anything must have leaders to keep the group organized, help the group discipline itself, prod the group to move ahead, and facilitate the work of the group to make good decisions. That's the function of all board officers.

Boards grow from different traditions and have different ideas about the type and number of officers they need. The job responsibilities of your board's officers may vary.

Someone has to be the board's leader and that person is the board **chairperson**. The job description for the chairperson is relatively simple, but the job can be complex.

First of all the board chairperson must be understood to have no power beyond that of any other board member unless the full board has granted that power to the chairperson. For example, the board may delegate specific powers to the board chairperson, such as managing board meetings, crafting the agenda with the Library Director, speaking to the

public on behalf of the board, or signing contracts or the director's timesheet on behalf of the board.

Any powers exercised by the board chairperson must first be granted by the full board in policy, or in commonly accepted and understood practice of the board. In other words, the board president does not speak for the board unless the full board has formally or informally delegated that privilege to the chairperson.

## Advocacy

An effective trustee promotes the interest of the library at all times. As a trustee, you must have a deep personal commitment to your library and the services it provides. You must have a sense of what you want your library to be in the future, not just what it is today, and you must be willing to work to help move forward to that point. The trustee who has the deep personal commitment to the library is well on the way toward being a good advocate.

As a trustee, you will come to appreciate the concept of libraries as an integral part of our society. Our entire educational process depends, to a great extent, on the quality of information services. Libraries are not only part of our present society; they are a part of our history that has helped move society forward. They are the hope for an informed future. They serve the societal good. When you advocate better public library services, you advocate better quality of life for American citizens today and in the future.

As an advocate for libraries, you must be willing to go out into your community on behalf of the library. All communities served by public libraries consist not only of library users to whom the trustee must respond, but also of citizens who pay taxes to support the library but do not use it. You must recognize the entire community and be prepared to work with groups as well as individuals. This means not just waiting for an invitation, but aggressively pursuing opportunities to speak before various community groups.

You are expected to know enough about your library to be able to respond to queries and to articulate just what the library has to offer. You must have a clear idea of how your library fulfills community expectations and values and be able to "tell the library story" to illustrate this in a meaningful way.

To be an effective advocate you must understand the different roles and responsibilities of librarians and trustees and do everything possible to work together meaningfully to develop and promote a comprehensive library program. For example, at a county commission or city supervisors meeting it is appropriate for you as a trustee to present and support the library's programs and budget, and for the librarian to be there to answer technical questions regarding services. The more you understand your library's roles the better advocate you will be.

A successful advocate can bring new users into the library, bring new revenues into the library, and increase awareness of library services. Legislators have been known to see the public library from a new perspective after speaking to an effective trustee advocate.



Remember, the reason you were appointed to the library board is because you have the ability to help improve the library's services. The people to whom you speak may be motivated to write a bequest to the library in a will, ask a corporate officer to consider a donation to the library, or speak to state or federal legislators on behalf of the library.

Your advocacy for the library will take different forms, including establishing a relationship with the mayor, city manager and supervisors and/or the county manager and county commissioners, and state legislators. You will also be expected to communicate the value of library services to the taxpayer. Your advocacy efforts will generally be part of a planned board effort. The board must speak with one voice. You, as an individual board member, can speak about the board's official position on library-related issues. An effective trustee promotes the interest of the library at all times.

Finally, as a trustee advocate, you will be a defender of intellectual freedom, and of an individual's right to information. That includes, but is not limited to, firm support of the American Library Association's Freedom to Read Statement and Library Bill of Rights. (Both documents are included in the Appendix.) One of the questions frequently asked of library trustees (usually in open forum) is whether a particular book or other item should be in the library's collection.

The response must be unequivocal in defense of intellectual freedom. You must explain that the role of the library is to provide materials in response to the needs of all segments of the community and (when available) to provide information on all sides of a given issue. Communicating to the community about library services and programs is of great importance.

### **Planning for the Future**

The purpose of planning for the library's future is to anticipate both opportunities and problems. Planning involves the following basic questions:

- What is our purpose?
- Where are we now?
- Where do we want to go?
- How will we get there?
- What is the optimum timeframe for achievement?
- How will we know what we accomplished?
- What is our purpose?

The library mission should be expressed in a brief statement of the library's purpose that sets the focus for planning. It is based on, but not limited to, a vision of the library's roles in the community. While somewhat general, the statement should summarize the library's major areas of emphasis.

## **Effective Board Meetings**

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Regular board meetings and committee meetings are where most of the board's work is done. What you do in meetings can make the difference between an effective and an ineffective board. Poor meetings can alienate staff, damage the board team, waste your time and the time of the other board members, cause turmoil in the community, and actually hamper the operation of the library.

Careful preparation is the key to meetings that produce results. Here are a few guidelines for planning and conducting an effective meeting:

- Decide what is to be accomplished
- Define the purpose in clear terms
- Develop a written agenda
- Begin on time, and end on time

You can expect the board chairperson to run the meetings and keep the board moving toward good decisions. However, it is no less each board member's responsibility to:

- Attend all meetings
- Prepare well for meetings
- Take part in all discussions
- Cooperate with fellow board members to make meetings work
- Adhere to parliamentary law and to relevant state laws
- Learn traditional meeting practices of your board and follow them
- Practice the art of compromise with other members of the team
- Practice the art of listening and merging your ideas with those of the others
- Work toward consensus on issues
- Focus all deliberations on the best interests of library users
- Publicly support the board decisions

## Ethics and Liability

As a board member of a public library, you are a public servant. Beyond the strict legal definition of how board members should conduct themselves, there are board member ethics. The public expects that your performance will always be above question and for the public good, not for your own interest or another special interest. Most professional employees are covered by a code of ethics or standards of practice. The following is a suggested code of ethical conduct [ALTA (Homepage of ALA) (12 May 2003) (online), ala.org, date accessed 27 May 2003.] for library trustees:

As a member of the library board I will:

- Promote the highest level of library service while observing ethical standards
- Declare any conflict of interests between my personal life and my position on the library board and avoid voting on issues that appear to be a conflict of interest

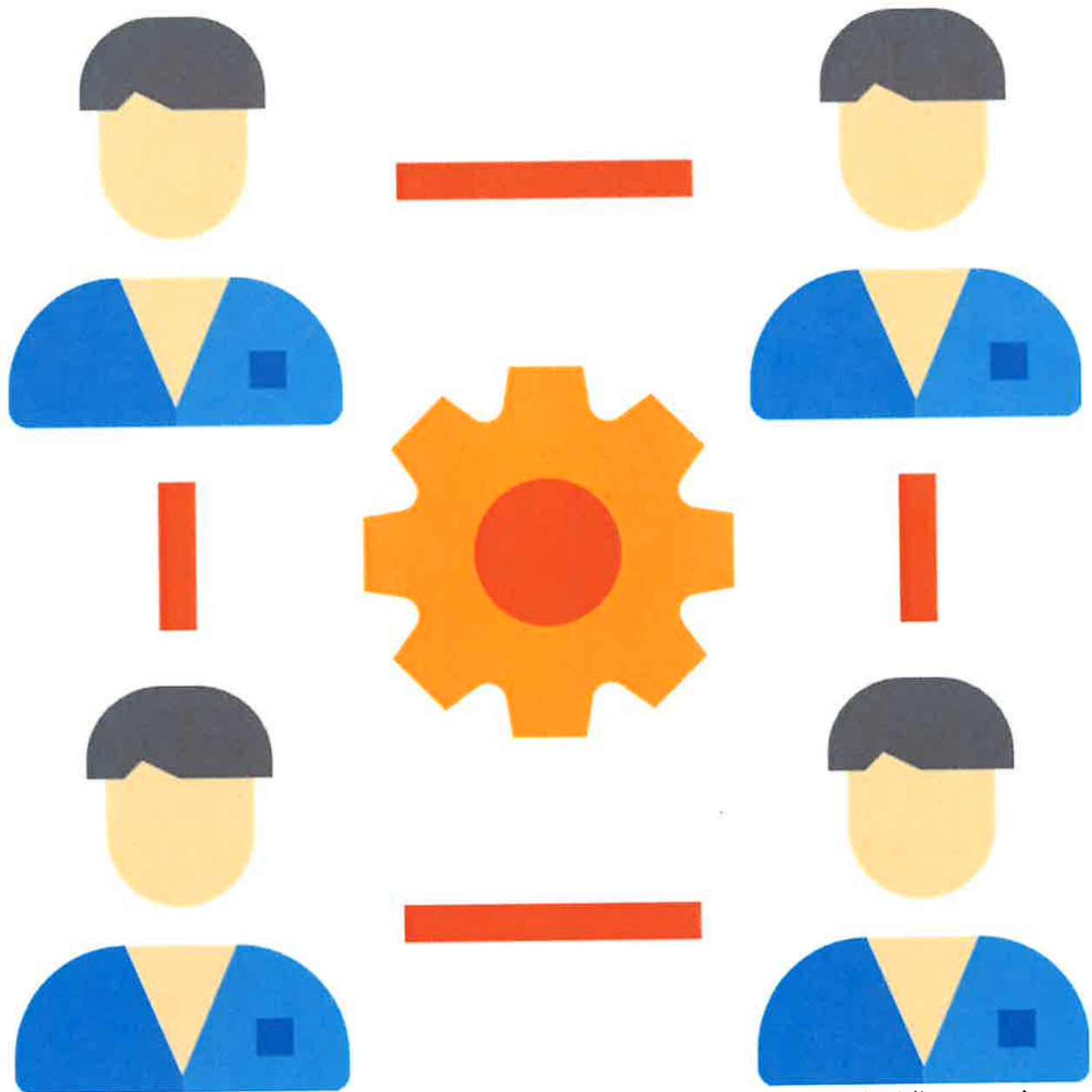
- Avoid situations in which personal interests might be served or financial benefits gained at the expense of library users, colleagues or the institution
- Distinguish clearly in my actions and statements between my personal philosophies and attitudes and those of the institution
- Respect the confidential nature of library business while being aware of, and in compliance with, the Freedom of Information Act
- Be prepared to support to the fullest, the efforts of librarians in resisting censorship of library materials by groups or individuals

Trustees who accept appointment to a library board are expected to perform the duties and responsibilities of Trustee. As a member of the library board I will not:

- Be critical, in or outside of the board meeting, of fellow board members or their opinions
- Use any part of the library for my personal advantage or the personal advantage of my friends or relatives
- Discuss the confidential proceedings of the board outside the board meeting
- Promise prior to a meeting how I will vote on any issue in the meeting
- Interfere with the duties of the director or undermine the director's authority

## Makings Decisions

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Your board team will have to make dozens of decisions, all the way from deciding meeting times to deciding to build a new building. Good decisions are made through a logical, common-sense process that includes plenty of pertinent information, expert advice, experience, vision, and exchange of ideas among members of the board team.

Politics, special interests, and personal bias are realities that always come into play when a board attempts to make a team decision, but with a well-understood and followed decision-making process, those elements can be controlled and the board team can make good decisions.

The following steps will lead to effective board decisions:

**Define the Issue Clearly**

First make sure that all members of the board team are on the same channel. You could deliberate for hours on an issue that deserves only a few minutes if all board members aren't clear about what the issue really is. The best way to avoid that is to get a motion on the table right away, so everyone can focus on that specific motion. The chairperson should make it clear to all what a positive or a negative vote means. If you are not clear about the intent or meaning of the motion, ask the maker of the motion to clarify.

### **Look at the Information**

Good information is the only way a board team can understand enough about the issues to make good decisions. Your experience is a prime source of valuable information. Other board members also will have valuable information and insights.

Board members are not on the front line with the daily business of the library and probably have limited expertise in library management. That means you have to rely on information from a variety of other people. The director and committee reports are standard sources for information about the issues that come before the board. Call on outside experts when necessary. Board members aren't appointed for their expertise and experience in running a library, but rather their ability to ask the right questions, draw upon their experience and leadership skills, and make good, informed decisions for the benefit of the library and community.

### **Consider the Alternatives**

Approach every issue with an open mind, believing that there is more than one side to every issue. What seems obvious at first glance may prove to have serious consequences down the road. Play "devil's advocate," ask tough questions, and encourage other members of the team to voice opinions even though they may not agree with the majority.

Even a strong recommendation from the director or a board committee should not be accepted without a hard look at the possible alternatives. The director and committees should be expected to deliver a list of alternatives they have considered in arriving at their final recommendation.

### **Seek Assistance**

You should expect a recommendation from your director on all issues before the board. Never be afraid to seek help from outside the board from attorneys and other specialists who can help you make the decision. Just remember that no matter who recommends what or who advises you how to vote, the board has the ultimate responsibility and liability for the decisions they make. You can't blame others for your poor decisions.

Keep in mind your mission and goals. All that you do should be in line with the mission of the library. Every decision the board makes should be in line with the five-year master plan of the library and somehow advance the mission. You should also be able to say that every decision is for the greatest good of those who use the library.



## Project the Consequences

This is where the board members vision comes in. A board decision cannot be made in isolation from all other things going on in the library. You must consider how this decision will affect people, programs, and plans. How will the community be affected by your decision? Are there possible legal problems with this decision? Will a decision to spend money in one area mean that less money will be available for other areas?

A decision today could well have consequences for years to come. For example, a decision to build a new building would be very shortsighted if it did not take into consideration the cost of upkeep and maintenance for the life of the building.

## Vote

This is where you put it all together and voice your own individual decision on the issue. Set aside personal bias and emotions, and cast the vote for what you think is the best decision for the library.

## Money Matters

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Trustees have a responsibility to safeguard public funds. To understand the budgeting process and approve an annual budget for the library, board members must know where the money comes from and how much revenue they can expect to build into the budget each year. A good understanding of revenue sources is important as board members must encourage continued funding from those sources and find new sources when needed.

Each board member should:

- Know the library's financial base and background
- Know the governmental unit(s) allocating the local appropriation
- Know the grants available from the state and federal government
- Understand the basics of legal regulations and reporting required for library funding
- Understand the financial needs of library operation and plan for funds needed for growth and expansion
- Investigate other possible sources of funding: a bond issue, endowments, trusts, memorials, dedicated tax revenue, foundation grants, donations, gifts, and fines
- Not wait for a budget presentation to make a case for needed funding or to describe programs and services; this is an ongoing responsibility of all trustees

## Library Associations

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- [American Library Association](#)
- [Nevada Library Association](#)
- [Public Library Association](#)
- [United for Libraries](#)

- [Association of Rural and Small Libraries](#)
- [Mountain Plains Library Association](#)
  - **Last Updated:** Dec 14, 2023 9:14 AM
  - **URL:** <https://nsla.nv.gov/governance-and-trustees>

Sund v. City of Wichita Falls, Tex., 121 F. Supp. 2d 530 (N.D. Tex. 2000) [this is the case law that found it is a suppression of first amendment rights to relocate items from a children's collection to an adult collection.]

# **Sund v. City of Wichita Falls, Tex., 121 F. Supp. 2d 530 (N.D. Tex. 2000)**

U.S. District Court for the Northern District of Texas - 121 F. Supp. 2d 530 (N.D. Tex. 2000)

September 20, 2000

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**121 F. Supp. 2d 530 (2000)**

**Emiley SUND; Andrea Sund, minors, by and through their parent and next friend, Pamela Sund; Pamela Sund, individually; Richard N. Sutton, M.D.; Joseph C. (Jace) Shelton; Lois Gallenberger; Tom Fairclough; Nancy Horvath; Michael Land; Vernon Raschke; La Verna L. Sobiesk; Emory J. Sobiesk, M.D.; Blair P. Coleman; Ann B. Coleman; Mildred Gore Lancaster; Bob G. Baggott, Sr.; Dan Lewandowski; Michael Bauman, a minor, by and through his parent and next friend, Mitch Bauman; Mitch Bauman, individually, Plaintiffs,**

**v.**

**CITY OF WICHITA FALLS, TEXAS; Jim Berzina, in his official capacity as City Manager for the City of Wichita Falls; and Linda Hughes, in her official capacity as Library Administrator of the Wichita Falls Public Library, Defendants.**

No. Civ.A.7:99-CV-155-R.

**United States District Court, N.D. Texas, Wichita Falls Division.**

September 20, 2000.

**\*531** John K. Horany, Law Office of John K. Horany, Dallas, TX, Robert Morgan Hampton, True & Schrandt, Wichita Falls, TX, for plaintiffs.

Mark T. Price, Wichita Falls, TX, for defendants.

**AMENDED MEMORANDUM OPINION**

BUCHMEYER, Chief Judge.

This case involves the censorship of two acclaimed books, *Heather Has two Mommies*, by Leslea Newman (Alyson Wonderland Publications 1989) and *Daddy's \*532 Roommate* by Michael Willhoite (Alyson Wonderland Publications 1990).<sup>[1]</sup> Both are children's picture books. *Heather* is a 46-page black and white book, and *Daddy's Roommate* is 32 pages in color written for very young children about the subject of children who have gay and lesbian parents.

The two Books have been endorsed by educators, psychologists, and librarians. Indeed, Linda Hughes the Library Administrator of the Wichita Falls Public Library feels strongly that *Heather* and *Daddy's Roommate* are "a wonderful way to explain to children that you may live in a different lifestyle, but the important thing is people love you."<sup>[2]</sup>

As discussed below, the City Council of Wichita Falls by a four to three vote passed a Resolution which gave 300 people with library cards the right to censor *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate*, by having these Books removed from the children's section of the Library and placed in the adult book section. This opinion holds that this unique Resolution is unconstitutional under the First and Fourteenth Amendments to the United States Constitution and Article 1, Section 8 of the Texas Constitution.

### ***The Two Books***

In September 1997, the Wichita Falls Public Library purchased two copies of *Heather Has Two Mommies* and two copies of *Daddy's Roommate* ("the Books") in accordance with the Library's Collection Development Policy. That is, the Library's Collection Manager had received more than four requests that the titles be considered for purchase and there had been multiple Inter-Library Loan requests for the Books. Before the purchase, both the Collection Manager and Library Administrator, Linda Hughes, had checked professional reviewing publications and recommended bibliographies of youth materials for titles on the subject of homosexual parents.

*Daddy's Roommate* was the first book written for children of gay men. The full color illustrations depict a boy, his father, and his father's partner "as they take part in activities familiar to all kinds of families: cleaning the house, shopping, playing games, fighting, and making up." A review of the book in *Publishers Weekly* states:



"[The] text is suitably straightforward, and the format is easily accessible to the intended audience. The colorful characters with their contemporary wardrobes and familiar surroundings lend the tale a stabilizing air of warmth and familiarity."<sup>[3]</sup>

*Heather Has Two Mommies* tells the story of the 3-year-old daughter of a lesbian couple, "who sees nothing unusual in having two mommies. When she joins a playgroup and discovers that other children have 'daddies,' her confusion is dispelled by an adult instructor and the other children who describe their own different families," such as Joshua, who has a mommy and stepfather, and David, whose two brothers and sisters are not the same color as he is because they are all adopted. (See Exhibit 1 to Plaintiffs' Amended Complaint.)

Before the library's purchase of *Heather* and *Daddy's Roommate*, the Library collection had no other titles on the subject of children with gay parents for children from preschool to the sixth grade. After two copies of each book were purchased by the Library, they were catalogued one \*533 copy of each in "Youth Picture Books" and the other copies in "Youth Reference" and, on October 4, 1997, they were placed on the library's shelves.

### ***The Initial Attempts to Censor the Books***

Before May of 1998, the Library received only two complaints about *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate*. However, according to Library Administrator Linda Hughes, the Books had been checked out "only two or three times" during this period. However, in May 1998, a number of individuals and special interest groups began attempts to censor the Books which they considered to be offensive and objectionable. These individuals and groups, many of whom objected to the perceived messages of *Heather* and *Daddy's Roommate* on religious grounds, felt as if they were waging a "moral battle" against the Books.

For example, Reverend Robert Jeffress Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Wichita Falls, who first learned of the Books in May of 1998 checked out both copies of the two Books and refused to return them. Reverend Jeffress wanted to keep *Heather* and *Daddy's Roommate* out of the hands of members of his congregation and anyone else in the community because he objected vehemently to the perceived "homosexual message" of the Books. Indeed, Reverend Jeffress destroyed the Books, but later reimbursed the Library \$54.00 for their cost but only with the demand that Linda Hughes, Library Administrator, not purchase any replacement copies.

In response to the controversy surrounding the two Books, the Library Advisory Board a nine-member advisory board that issues non-binding recommendations to the Library on circulation and collection issues agreed to reconsider the appropriateness of the two Books for children. In June 1998, after careful consideration, the Advisory Board recommended that both *Heather* and *Daddy's Roommate* remain in the children's areas of the Library. Then, Library Administrator Linda Hughes placed both Books in the Youth Non-Fiction section of the Library, an area that targets juveniles ages 9 through 13.

### ***The Altman Resolution***

Reverend Jeffress and others who wanted to ban the Books entirely from the Library next turned to the Wichita Falls City Council. At first, the Council rejected their attempts to ban *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate*.

However, the City Council finally gave in to the relentless pressure and, on February 16, 1999, by a four to three vote, passed Resolution 16-99, which became known as the "Altman Resolution."<sup>[4]</sup> This Resolution was, without question, passed with the primary purpose of limiting access to the two Books by patrons of the Library. The Altman Resolution states:

RESOLUTION NO. 16-99

RESOLUTION OF THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WICHITA FALLS, TEXAS, ESTABLISHING A RIGHT OF THE PUBLIC TO PETITION REGARDING THE LOCATION OF CHILDREN'S MATERIALS IN THE WICHITA FALLS PUBLIC LIBRARY; DETERMINING THAT THE MEETING AT WHICH THIS RESOLUTION WAS PASSED WAS OPEN TO THE PUBLIC AS REQUIRED BY LAW.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF WICHITA FALLS, TEXAS, THAT:

*SECTION 1.* There shall be a right to petition with regard to materials placed in the children's areas created in the Wichita Falls Public Library, in **\*534** which books or other publications meeting the criteria set out below shall be removed from the children's areas and placed in the adult areas of the library.

The criteria for removing materials from the children's areas of the library to the adult area shall be as follows:

1. Only materials marketed or designed primarily for children age twelve (12) and under shall be eligible for removal from children's areas;
2. At least three hundred (300) members of the library at least eighteen (18) years of age who hold valid library cards must sign a petition entitled "Petition Concerning a Publication in the Children's Areas of the Wichita Falls Public Library" setting forth substantially the following:
  - a. This petition concerns the following publication: (description of publication);
  - b. By our printing our first name, middle name or initial, and last name, and signing our usual signature on this petition, each of us do certify that we have read the above-referenced publication;
  - c. *We believe that the material contained in such publication to be of a nature that it is most appropriately read with parental approval and/or supervision* (emphasis added);
  - d. *We respectfully request that the above-captioned publication be removed from the children's areas of the library and placed in the adult areas* (emphasis added);
  - e. We live within the city limits of Wichita Falls and have resided here for at least six (6) months. We have a valid library card from the Wichita Falls Public Library.

It is obvious that the Altman Resolution establishes a draconian procedure that permits 300 adults who have library cards out of a total of over 100,000 residents in Wichita Falls to censor any children's books to which they object (like *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate*).

Under the Altman Resolution, a book must be removed from the children's area of the Library to the adult areas if, in the opinion of 300 petitioners who may or may not have minor children the book is "of a nature that it is most appropriately read with parental approval and/or supervision." Once petitions with 300 signatures by Library patrons are filed with the Library Administrator, the Altman Resolution requires her to remove targeted books from the children's area within 24

hours. *Linda Hughes, the Library Administrator, and her staff are not even given time under the Resolution to verify the signatures prior to the removal of the censored Books.*

By authorizing the forced removal of children's books to the adult section of the Library, the Altman Resolution places a significant burden on Library patrons' ability to gain access to those books. Children searching specifically for those Books in the designated children's areas of the Library will be unable to locate them. In addition, youths who simply wish to browse in the children's sections of the Library will never find the censored Books. Moreover, parents browsing the children's areas in search of books for their children will be unable to find the censored Books.

Although the Altman Resolution gives vocal minorities veto power over any children's book with which they disagree, the Resolution provides no recourse to those citizens who might be opposed to the removal petitions. That is, the Altman Resolution provides for no public hearing on a removal petition or the merits of a targeted book; nor does the Resolution allow the Library Advisory Board any role in the removal process.

**\*535** The Altman Resolution effectively contains no right of review or appeal. After receiving a removal petition, the Library Administrator has 30 days to request that the City Manager seek a waiver from the City Council. However, the City Manager has complete discretion to deny the Administrator's request, and there is no right to appeal the City Manager's refusal to submit a waiver request to the City Council. Similarly, the Altman Resolution provides no right to appeal the City Council's rejection of a waiver request.

### ***The Petitions and Removal of the Books***

On July 15, 1999, Linda Hughes, the Library Administrator, received petitions with over 300 signatures for the removal of *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* from the children's areas of the Library. On the same day, Linda Hughes as required by the Altman Resolution removed all copies of the two Books from the Youth Non-Fiction section of the Library, and placed them in the adult section.

After this lawsuit was filed, the Plaintiffs sought a temporary injunction to require the return of the two Books to the children's section where they belonged. The Defendants consented to this injunction, and *Heather* and *Daddy's Roommate* were

returned to their original and proper locations, pending the resolution of this litigation.

### ***FINDINGS OF FACT***

The following are the Court's Findings of Fact and Conclusions of Law.

#### ***The Plaintiffs***

1. Plaintiff Pamela Sund, a resident of Wichita Falls and a part-time merchandiser there, is the mother of Plaintiffs Emiley Sund, age 12, and Andrea Sund, age 8. Both Emiley, an eighth grader, and Andrea, a third grader, have library cards at the Wichita Falls Public Library.
2. Plaintiff Richard N. Sutton, M.D. is a resident of Wichita Falls, where he practices medicine full-time.
3. Plaintiff Joseph C. (Jace) Shelton is a resident of Wichita Falls; he is an automobile mechanic.
4. Plaintiff Lois Gallenberger is a resident of Wichita Falls. She has two adult children and a 9-year-old granddaughter. She is also President of the local chapter of PFLAG (Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays).
5. Plaintiff Tom Fairclough is a resident of Wichita Falls; he is retired.
6. Plaintiff Nancy Horvath is a resident of Wichita Falls. She is a minister in the local Metropolitan Community Church, and has a 7 ½ year old son, Zachary.
7. Plaintiff Michael Land is a resident of Wichita Falls; he is an educator at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls.
8. Plaintiff Vernon Raschke is a resident of Wichita Falls; he is a library card holder at the Wichita Falls Public Library. Reverend Raschke is also an ordained priest who recently served a local Episcopal church in Wichita Falls.



9. Plaintiffs La Verna I. Sobiesk and Emory J. Sobiesk, M.D. are residents of Wichita Falls. Mrs. Sobiesk is retired; her husband is a psychiatrist. Both are library card holders at the Wichita Falls Public Library.

10. Plaintiff Blair P. Coleman is a resident of Wichita Falls. He is a semi-retired physician, and a library card holder.

11. Plaintiff Ann B. Coleman is a resident of Wichita Falls; she is a library card holder and is retired.

12. Plaintiff Mildred Gore Lancaster is a resident of Wichita Falls, and a professor in Teacher's Education at **\*536** Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls.

13. Plaintiff Robert G. Baggott is a Colonel (ret.), U.S. Army, and is a resident of Wichita Falls. He joined this lawsuit because of the experiences of his parents in Nazi Germany. Plaintiff Dan Lewandowski is a resident of Wichita Falls, a library card holder, and a freelance technician.

14. Plaintiff Mitch Bauman is a resident of Wichita Falls; he is the father of an 8-year-old fourth grader at a local elementary school. Mr. Bauman teaches the second grade (7- and 8-year-olds) at a local elementary school.

### ***The Defendants***

15. Defendant City of Wichita Falls, Texas ("Wichita Falls" or the "City"), is a city within Wichita County, Texas. The City owns, controls, and operates the Wichita Falls Public Library (the "Library"). The Wichita Falls City Council (the "Council") is the executive governing body of Wichita Falls, and is comprised of seven members elected by residents of Wichita Falls. The Council is responsible for overseeing the operation and maintenance of the City of Wichita Falls through the exercise of its powers outlined in the City Charter.

16. Defendant Jim Berzina is sued in his official capacity as City Manager of Wichita Falls; he is the chief executive officer of the City. Defendant Linda Hughes is sued in her official capacity as Library Administrator of the Wichita Falls Public Library. She is the highest administrative officer in the Wichita Falls Public Library system, and she testified strongly on behalf of the Plaintiffs in opposition to the censorship of the two Books.

### ***The Witnesses***

17. The witnesses at trial included four of the named Plaintiffs (Mitchell Bauman, Lois Gallenberger, Bob Baggott, and the Reverend Nancy Horvath):

#### *Mitchell Bauman*

18. Mitch Bauman, the father and next friend of minor Plaintiff Mitchell Bauman (age 9) is a second grade teacher, whose students are seven and eight years old. Both he and his son regularly use the Wichita Falls Public Library. Mr. Bauman strongly believes that *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* should be available for his son and for other children when they browse through the children's section to find books of interest to them.

19. Mr. Bauman testified that, in his opinion, both of the Books are "age appropriate" for his son and other children ages four to nine; that he determines what books are suitable for his son; and that he objects to having anyone else make that determination for his son or for other people's children. Finally, Mr. Bauman believes that *Heather* and *Daddy's Roommate* have been censored because he defines "censorship" as "restricting or limiting the access to music, literature, ideas, or artwork because someone [else] deems it objectionable."

#### *Lois Gallenberger*

20. Plaintiff Lois Gallenberger, the mother of two adult children and a nine-year-old granddaughter, is the President of the Wichita Falls chapter of "PFLAG" Parents, Family and Friends of Lesbians \*537 and Gays<sup>[5]</sup> which is primarily a support group for parents and families and friends of lesbians and gays.<sup>[6]</sup> Ms. Gallenberger became a Plaintiff in this case because she feels that there is little material available to children to learn about these topics, and that these Books should be placed where children are not intimidated by having to ask where to find them.

21. Ms. Gallenberger attended meetings of the City Council on both February 2 and February 16, 1999, at which the Council was considering a Resolution to allow 300 Library patrons to remove the Books from the children's section and place them in a restricted area. She spoke in opposition to this proposal on both occasions. (See Plaintiffs' Exhibits 1 and 2). Ms. Gallenberger also strongly believes that the

children's section in the Library should have free, open access to "books about many subjects" on shelves that the children could reach and that it was wrong for *Heather* and *Daddy's Roommate* to be moved to higher shelves in the adult book section where children could not find or reach the Books.

*Bob G. Baggott*

22. Bob Baggott, a retired Army officer, joined this lawsuit as a Plaintiff because he believes "he is defending the Constitution of the United States." He views the situation with the Altman Resolution as being similar to the experiences that his Jewish parents suffered in Nazi Germany before migrating to this country. He strongly objects to the fact that the Resolution "doesn't allow him to have any say in the removal" of books from the children's section and their placement with adult books so long as 300 Library patrons petition for the removal of *Heather Has Two Mommies*, *Daddy's Roommate*, or other children's books.

*Reverend Nancy Horvath*

23. The Plaintiff Reverend Nancy Horvath is the Pastor of the Wichita Falls Metropolitan Community Church<sup>[7]</sup> which has "a particular outreach ministry to gays, lesbians, bisexual, and trans-gender communities." She has been the life partner of Barbara Horvath-Zern for over 12 years. They have a 7 1/2-year-old son, Zachary Horvath-Zern who was conceived in a way similar to that described in *Heather Has Two Mommies* and they have raised Zachary since his birth.

24. Reverend Horvath became a Plaintiff in this lawsuit because "the decision being made with the Altman Resolution" critically affects her child and other children being raised in gay and lesbian homes. There are probably 13-14 children that utilize Reverend Horvath's church who are being raised in homes that are different; she feels that they have a right "to be able to read materials about their coming to be and about their homes and their families."

25. Zachary has been the subject of taunting by other children "because his moms are gay." He has reacted to fears and concerns about **\*538** their safety and, as a result, has required professional counseling. Reverend Horvath knows heterosexual parents who have used *Heather* and *Daddy's Roommate* in explaining Zach's situation to their children. She believes moving the Book to the adult section denies

access to her son because he does not think he can ask for a book in the adult section of the Library because of fear of embarrassment.

### *Expert Witnesses*

26. Two witnesses at trial testified as experts: the Plaintiff Dr. Mildred Gore (Lancaster) and Dr. Barbara Immroth.

#### *Dr. Mildred Gore*

27. Dr. Gore has been on the faculty at Midwestern State University in Wichita Falls for over seven years. She teaches, among other things, special education methods courses, a research course for graduate students in counseling education, and a multi culture education course. Multi cultural education relates to people understanding that various cultures have different values, and deals with the values and the ways of communication that people have within a social group. The purpose of multi cultural education for teachers is to commit these teachers "to advocating for every child for white children, for children of color, from all ethnic groups, all economic groups, wealthy, middle class, and poor, for girls and their particular vulnerabilities, and boys for theirs."

28. Multi cultural educators also advocate for children who are heterosexual, children who are homosexual, and children with all kinds of physical and functional disabilities. Multi cultural educators also advocate for children from all kinds of families traditional, two-parent families, single-parent families, children who live with their grandparents, and for children who do not live with their biological families, for those children who are adopted, for those children in foster care, for those children who are in group homes, and for those children who are from parents who are gay and lesbian.

29. According to Dr. Gore's very credible testimony, children want and need books about children like themselves. It is, therefore, "important that books and libraries validate and speak to life experiences for children, because when children find nothing that speaks to who they are and to validate them, then they have feelings of insignificance and unimportance." This is particularly true of children of gay and lesbian parents because "when children of gay and lesbian relationships go into libraries and look for books that speak about their life experiences and they find

that there are no books about people who are like methen they feel insignificant, unimportant, and a person not of worth."

30. Similarly, Dr. Gore testified about the serious psychological damage that may be done to children of gay and lesbian parents by being told that books like *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* cannot be kept with other children's booksbut "must be segregated and moved away from the books about good families and put with adult material." Dr. Gore also testified that:

The message sent to a child who is told that books concerning other children like himself cannot be kept with the other books about children is that there is something very wrong with you, your family is not good, and that \*539 results in the child developing shame and guilt.

31. Dr. Gore also researched other children's booksbesides *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate*that might be censored under the Altman Resolution because they have been banned in other places on religious grounds. She found that "complaints had been made about books dealing with evolution, cults, witches, witchcraft Weiga, astro-projection, fortune telling, divorce, drug abuse, alcoholism" and sex educationand that books "on just about any religion you could name have been objected to: Christian people have objected to books about Buddhism, and Islam, and people from those and other religions have complained about books about Christianity."

32. Dr. Gore also produced a list from the Freedom Forum on Line of the "top challenged books of 1997" and from the Freedom Foundation of Texas of 55 books pulled from the libraries of schools in Texas (Plaintiffs' Exhibit 6). She testified about efforts made to censor the following books on the following stated grounds:

a. *It's Perfectly Normal* by Robie Harris: challenged because it is a sex-education book;

b. *Goosebumps Series* by R.L. Stine: challenged because its stories are "too scary";

c. *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* by Mark Twain: which has been challenged since its publication, initially because it was "rough, coarse, and inelegant, unsuitable for



respectable people"; ironically, the book today is sometimes challenged as racist even though it was originally attacked for being too anti-racist.<sup>[8]</sup>

d. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou: this autobiographical novel has increasingly been the focus of challenges in school libraries because of the descriptions of a rape she suffered as a child;

e. *The Alice Series* by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor: challenged for being sexually explicit and using offensive language;

f. *Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck: this short work by the Nobel prizewinning author is most often challenged for using offensive language or being unsuited for the age group;

g. *A Day No Pigs Would Die* by Robert Newton Peck: this coming-of-age story of a 13-year-old Shaker farm boy who must deal with the death of his father and his pet, has been challenged for being sexually explicit and using offensive language;

h. *The Giver* by Lois Lowry: a critically-acclaimed novel challenged for being violent and sexually explicit, for using offensive language, and for its treatment of infanticide and euthanasia;

i. *Kaffir Boy* by Mark Mathabane: an autobiographic work related to a black youth's coming of age in South Africa, which has been challenged for homosexuality, offensive language, and being unsuited for the age group.<sup>[9]</sup>

**\*540** 33. It was Dr. Gore's expert<sup>[10]</sup> opinion based on her professional experience, her review of materials in this case, and her education and background that the moving of *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* from the children's section to the adult section constitutes irreparable harm to children "because the child of a family of gay and lesbian parents who goes into the children's library and sees that there are books about children of straight parents, there are books about animals, but there are no books about a kid like me. This experience could and probably would, in fact, lead to damage to a child."

34. Dr. Gore also testified that there are many other children's books in the Wichita Falls Library that would be the target of censorship under the Altman Resolution.

Indeed, from Dr. Gore's interview with Library Administrator Linda Hughes, she learned that Ms. Hughes has already received complaints against other children's books including (a) *Humbug Witch* (child who dresses up as a pretend-witch); (b) *I Wish Daddy Didn't Drink So Much* (little girl dealing with her father's drinking problem); (c) *My Big Sister Takes Drugs* (boy's story who is dealing with his sister's drug use); (d) *Mommy and Me by Ourselves Again* (about divorce); (e) *Bunnies Wedding* (interracial relationship); and (f) *Through My Window* (interracial relationship).

35. It is also Dr. Gore's opinion that there are other children's books in the Library that might be attacked under the Altman Resolution. These include *Mommy, Where Do Babies Come From?*, which deals with sex education for children and which uses actual specific terms in describing human sex organs (i.e., vagina and penis); Joanna Cole's book on evolution called *The Human Body How It Evolved*; and *Viewpoints Equality of the Sexes*, which has raised religious objections.

36. Dr. Gore has, of course, read both *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate*. She believes that they are no more sexually explicit than other books in the children's section of the Library. For example, *Heather* is no more explicit than *Mommy, Where Do Babies Come From?* which has been in the children's section in the Library for over a quarter of a century.

37. In Dr. Gore's opinion, neither *Heather* nor *Daddy's Roommate* are immoral or pornographic, as claimed by Dr. Jeffress and others "who want to censor these two Books by removing them from the children's section of the Library where they belong."

*Dr. Barbara Immroth*

38. Dr. Barbara Immroth is a professor in the Graduate School of Library and Information Science at the University of Texas at Austin. She holds a Ph.D. in library and information science. Dr. Immroth teaches courses in materials and services to children, and management of school and public libraries and she is a past President of the Texas Library Association, the **\*541** largest state association in the country.

39. The expert testimony of Dr. Immroth was very credible.<sup>[11]</sup> It established the following: Libraries in Texas usually have a children's room or area to have an

appropriate, uncensored collection of books that is inviting and accessible for children.

40. Dr. Immroth has reviewed *Daddy's Roommate* and *Heather Has Two Mommies*. In her opinion, the intended audience for these Books is older preschool-aged and early primary-aged children *and these Books are appropriate for those children*. Dr. Immroth agrees that moving these Books from the children's section to the adult section of the Library places a significant burden on the Library patron's ability to gain access to the Books because they would not be in a place that the patron would expect to find such materials.

41. Indeed, it is Dr. Immroth's expert opinion that removing these two Books from the place that it would be appropriate to have them and to find them to put them in another place in the library would be, in effect, hiding them or keeping them out of the reach of the intended user. She feels this is, in effect, the same as banning the Books.

42. It is also Dr. Immroth's opinion that the Altman Resolution which has petitioners state merely that "we believe the material contained in such publication to be of a nature that it is most appropriately read with parental approval and/or supervision" does not identify "what criteria will be used to make the determination as to whether or not the materials in the books are most appropriately read with parental supervision, and nothing in the Resolution tells what the standards are."

***Library Administrator Linda Hughes***

43. Linda Hughes, the Library Administrator of the excellent Library in Wichita Falls, is only named as a nominal Defendant in this case. In fact, she is the real heroine of this unfortunate story of the censorship of two children's Books and the unconstitutional interference with her ability to perform her duties in running the Library as a trained, skilled, and very competent professional. Ms. Hughes has a master's degree in library science, and she follows the code of ethics that governs professional librarians.

44. Under the direction of Linda Hughes, the Wichita Falls Public Library has this mission statement:

Given that access to information is essential to our democracy, the mission of the Wichita Falls Public Library is to act as a public information center for all citizens of Wichita Falls. To the extent that funding is available, acquisition and organization of quality and relevant print and non-print materials and services, either from our collections or through other libraries and information resources, will address education, informational, recreational, and cultural needs in surroundings that are welcoming and efficiently operated.

45. Linda Hughes directs the Wichita Falls Public Library in accordance with the American Library Association's Library Bill of Rights and **\*542** Freedom to Read.<sup>[12]</sup> Exhibit 12 is the American Library Association's policy on free access to libraries for minors; it is an addendum to the library Bill of Rights.<sup>[13]</sup> Exhibit 10 is the welcome statement to the Wichita Falls Public Library from the library's website, which indicates that the Library is the resource center for the city of Wichita Falls.

46. Acting in accordance with this Bill of Rights, its addendum, and her library's welcoming statement, Defendant Linda Hughes admits that moving these two children's Books *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* out of the children's section to the adult section *will, in fact, result in an abridgment of freedom of expression and free access to ideas by limiting access to the Books*. She also admits that children will not be able to access these Books as readily browsing through the collection as they would if the Books were in the target area of access for children.

47. Prior to July 15, 1999, both copies of *Heather Has Two Mommies* and both copies of *Daddy's Roommate* were located as they should have been in the target area of access for children. However, under a policy on "challenged books" adopted by the Library Board<sup>[14]</sup> in 1989, *Heather Has Two Mommies* received two challenges; and *Daddy's Roommate* received one challenge.

48. These challenges were dealt with according to established Library policy. That is, the two Books were considered by a professional review committee and taken before the Library Advisory Board for citizen input. The members of the Library Advisory Board read the Books, allowed public input, and then voted to leave *Daddy's Roommate* in the picture book section and to move *Heather Has Two Mommies* to the juvenile nonfiction area of the children's section.

49. Defendant Linda Hughes then determined that since these two Books had received so much attention she would move both of them and put them together in

the juvenile nonfiction area. However, she testified that it was important that the Books be kept in the juvenile section because the target audience of these two Books is juvenile and that this "was not the same thing as taking the Books out of the children's section and putting them in the adult section."

50. Exhibit 18 is a copy of the holding's record for *Daddy's Roommate* and *Heather Has Two Mommies*. It shows that *Daddy's Roommate* was checked out approximately 120 times, 115 times since the controversy arose; and that *Heather Has Two Mommies* was checked out 117 times, 115 times since the controversy.

51. On February 16, 1999, the Altman Resolution (see page 5-6) was passed by the City Council by a four to three vote. Exhibit 16 contains the signed petitions received on both of the Books. When 300 signatures had been obtained, Linda Hughes was forced to remove both copies of *Heather Has Two Mommies* and both copies of *Daddy's Roommate* and place (really \*543 hide) the Books in the adult section.

52. During a lunch break, Linda Hughes gave the Court and counsel a tour of the Wichita Falls Public Library. Exhibit 14 is a map of the Library which has a circle around the youth desk in the lower, right-hand corner, where the Books were first placed by the Library Administrator, and the area circled titled "Adult Nonfiction" is the location of the Books as mandated by the Altman Resolution.

53. In her experience as a Librarian at the City of Wichita Falls, Linda Hughes knows that there has never been another occasion where the City Council issued a resolution that gave her instructions on how to do her job as a professional librarian. Nor is Linda Hughes familiar with any other situation in other communities in which a city council or governing body directed the librarian to follow a petition process like the Altman Resolution in the removal of books from the children's sections of libraries.

54. The very credible testimony of Library Administrator Linda Hughes who, as a professional, is knowledgeable about the contents of both *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* also established the following facts:



a. It is in the public interest that these Books be kept in the juvenile non-fiction section so they will be available to children who may be browsing and to adults who may be looking for children's books concerning gay and lesbian parents;

b. It is her opinion that placing these Books in the adult section would drastically affect the accessibility of the Books for children<sup>[15]</sup> particularly since, in her experience, children are reluctant to ask for help in finding books.

c. It took Linda Hughes three days to validate 300 signed petitions for removal presented in July 1999 even though, under the Altman Resolution, she had already been forced to place a hold on the two Books.

d. In her professional opinion, there is nothing about either *Heather Has Two Mommies* or *Daddy's Roommate* that is obscene, pornographic, inappropriate, or dangerous for children.

e. She has received oral complaints on books in the Library about evolution and sex education. Indeed, the Wichita Falls Public Library owns the book, *Where Did I Come From?*, by Peter Mayle, introduced as Court's Exhibit 1. *Where Did I Come From?* has nude pictures of mother and father in bed, showing their genitalia, and has not yet been the subject of any complaints. However, *Linda has very real concerns that any book for the target age of 12 and under could be removed from the children's section of the Library under the Altman Resolution.*

*Dr. Robert Jeffress*

55. Dr. Robert Jeffress, who has been the Pastor of the First Baptist Church in Wichita Falls for over seven years, first learned that the Public Library owned *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* in May of 1998. On Mother's Day that year, Dr. Jeffress preached a sermon concerning these two Books in which he stated that "as a culture we cannot condone what God has condemned" and that these two Books were a good illustration of that truth, and **\*544** were objectionable on religious grounds.

56. Dr. Jeffress also stated that "if the City Council did not see that these Books were removed from the Library, *we will hold the City Council responsible for their vote*

come election time." In short, Dr. Jeffress is adamantly opposed to children having free access in the Library to *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate*.

57. After Dr. Jeffress' comments about the Books were printed in the local newspaper, a "firestorm of controversy arose" about the Books. Exhibit 31 is an article from the Wichita Falls Times and Record News from June 24, 1998, concerning the Library Advisory Board hearing concerning *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate*. In this article, Dr. Jeffress stated that, "Although the City Council wants to run away from this issue, we will not allow that" and that Jeffress "intends to ask that the matter be placed on a formal council agenda."

58. Immediately after the heated controversy arose, a Deacon of the First Baptist Church arranged a luncheon between Dr. Robert Jeffress and City Council Member William Altman to talk about *Daddy's Roommate* and *Heather Has Two Mommies*.<sup>[16]</sup> After this luncheon, Dr. Jeffress did have some other contact with Mr. Altman from May 1998 to February 16, 1999, the day the "Altman Resolution" was passed by the City Council's four to three vote.

59. Besides *Heather* and *Daddy's Roommate*, Dr. Jeffress feels there are other books in the Public Library which should also be censored under the Altman Resolution. For example, the Court specifically asked Dr. Jeffress questions about another children's sex education book, *Where Do I Come From?*, by Peter Mayle<sup>[17]</sup> a very colorful cartoon book which shows a husband and wife naked in bed before (and after) their baby daughter is conceived. Although Dr. Jeffress was not asked if this book should be moved to the adult section too, he did testify that he would be uncomfortable with his seven-year-old daughter having access to *Where Do I Come From?*.

(Reverend) Janie Hill

60. The "Reverend" Janie Hill of "God Is Love Ministries, Inc.," is a lay minister who appears to have no church and no congregation. She was one of the leading protestors who wanted to remove *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* from the Wichita Falls Public Library. She believes the two Books are too sexually explicit for children and that they are "supportive of the homosexual agenda across our nation to brainwash our littlest ones into this lifestyle which is a very destructive lifestyle that hurts."

61. She wrote many letters of protest to the newspaper; she authored several "viewpoints articles" that were also published; and in a scene reminiscent of *Inherit the \*545 Wind*<sup>[18]</sup> she appeared in court with a large sign reading "Jesus Loves You" and with a valentineshaped box full of religious tracts that she handed out to the people in the courtroom (and left on the bench for the Court).

62. Janie Hill believes there are many other children's books in the Public Library that should be censored. Exhibit 35 is a letter dated July 2, 1999, written by Janie Hill on the letterhead of God Is Love Ministries, Inc., which details other explicit homosexual books in the Library as well as pornography, books on witchcraft, etc. Exhibit 34 is a packet of religious and antihomosexual material she mailed directly to the Court.

### ***The City Council Members***

63. Four other witnesses at trial were members of the City Council who voted on the Altman Resolution.

#### *Don Johnston*

64. Former Council Member Don Johnston became aware that the Wichita Falls Public Library owned *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* by means of the media coverage of Dr. Jeffress' May, 1998 sermon. During his four years on the City Council, there had never been another occasion where complaints about the placement of materials in the Library was discussed by the City Council.

65. According to Mr. Johnston, despite the fact that *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* are not specifically named in Resolution 16-99, "they are the only two Books ever challenged under that Resolution." He cannot recall any other time when a decision made by the Library Administrator was subject to a separate resolution prior to the Altman Resolution *and to do so would be out of order* in his opinion.

66. Mr. Johnston also feels that what Resolution 16-99 does is to take *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* and "place them in a separate area so that if a child were to be browsing in the children's section, they would not accidentally find the books."

*Bud Beaty*

67. City Council Member Bud Beaty believes the City Council is obligated to censor children's material and he "does not have a problem with censoring children's material." However, Mr. Beaty voted to censor *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* even though he had never read either of the Books!

68. While Council Member Beaty has been on the Wichita Falls City Council, there has never been another instance where a resolution was passed that allowed a group of citizens whether "they be 100, 300, 250, or 1,000 to overrule the decision of a department head of the City of Wichita Falls."

69. Mr. Beaty also testified that although Resolution 16-99 does not mention any specific book title, it is obvious that it was passed as a result of the controversy over *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate*. He does feel that it would be fair to give those opposed to the removal of books a way to challenge the removal of **\*546** books under Resolution 16-99, although he conceded that "citizens who oppose moving books under Resolution 16-99 should have a right to be heard."

*Angus Thompson*

70. Council Member Angus Thompson also believes that access to these two Books, *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* should be restricted even though he has not read either book. He does understand that the Books' purposes are to explain the lesbian and homosexual lifestyles on a level that children can understand and he came to this understanding from reading a newspaper and discussions in the City Council meetings.

*William K. Altman*

71. William Altman is an attorney who serves on the Wichita Falls City Council; he is a member of the First Baptist Church, and the author of the original version of Resolution 16-99. Dr. Jeffress asked Council Member Altman to bring the issue over *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* to the City Council and, in

the week Resolution 16-99 was introduced, Altman saw Dr. Jeffress and said, "I'm going to have a resolution probably at the next council meeting that you might have some interest in."

72. Council Member Altman agrees that a child browsing in the children's section will not likely find a book in that section if the book has been moved to another section. However, he proposed the Altman Resolution because he wanted "to make the Library as comfortable as possible to the entire public as he possibly could without infringing on the rights in any way, *other than perhaps in a minuscule way*, of anybody." His Resolution contained no appeal process for the banned books because "the appeal process was designed to stop the Resolution in working in a way that would be *appalling to everybody*."

73. Mr. Altman also concedes that, if there had not been a controversy over these two Books, *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate*, Resolution 16-99 would never have been passed.

*City Manager Jim Berzina*

74. Defendant Jim Berzina has been the City Manager of Wichita Falls since June 27, 1983. During his tenure as City Manager, he has never seen the City Council enact a resolution that purports to set up a process for petitions to counteract some decision made by the library such as Resolution 16-99.

75. Mr. Berzina believes that the Library Advisory Board is the location for citizen input to the running of the Public Library. In this case, the Library Advisory Board considered the complaints concerning these two Books and their determination was that the Books should have been maintained in the children's section of the library.

76. When interviewed by the newspaper after the Resolution passed, Defendant Berzina stated that he would not submit a request to the City Council to approve a waiver as to *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* owing "to the fact that these two Books had been the source and subject of much controversy and that it had taken a protracted period of time to come to a decision and that to bring a waiver request back to the Council would be insulting to the Council's intelligence."



**\*547** 77. Defendant Berzina admitted that Linda Hughes has received no negative complaints apart from this controversy about *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* and that she is an excellent Library Administrator who knows her subject area and exercises appropriate skills and judgment in carrying out her function as Library Administrator.

### CONCLUSIONS OF LAW

1. This Court considered four factors in issuing the preliminary injunction in this case: (a) the Plaintiffs' likelihood of success on the merits; (b) whether the Plaintiffs were likely to suffer irreparable harm if the injunction is denied; (c) whether threatened injury to the Plaintiffs outweighed any harm that the injunction might cause to others; and (d) the impact of the injunction on the public interest. *Hoover v. Morales*, 164 F.3d 221, 224 (5th Cir. 1998).

2. The issuance of the temporary injunction was proper because Plaintiffs showed a need for immediate relief to avoid irreparable injury and to preserve the status quo pending resolution of the merits of the case. *See State of Texas v. Wellington Resources Corp.*, 706 F.2d 533, 537 (5th Cir.1983); *Merrill Lynch v. Chapman*, No. Civ A 3:98-CV-1965-D, 1998 WL 792501, at \*2 (N.D.Tex. Nov. 3, 1998); Fed. R.Civ.P. 65(b).

3. At the trial on the merits, the Plaintiffs clearly established their right to a permanent injunction against the Defendant, The City of Wichita Falls, the Defendant, Jim Berzina, in his official capacity as City Manager for the City of Wichita Falls, and Linda Hughes, a nominal Defendant in her official capacity as Library Administrator of the Wichita Falls Public Library.

4. The Altman Resolution, both on its face and as applied to the removal of *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* from the children's area of the Library to the adult section, violates Plaintiffs' federal and state constitutional rights to receive information. The Resolution and the Book removals burden fully-protected speech on the basis of content and viewpoint and they therefore cannot stand.

5. The First Amendment to the United States Constitution, and Article I, Section 8 of the Texas Constitution, indisputably protect the right to receive information, *See Reno v. American Civil Liberties Union*, 521 U.S. 844, 117 S. Ct. 2329,

2346, 138 L. Ed. 2d 874 (1997) *a fundamental right that is enjoyed by both adults and children*. See, e.g., *Board of Education v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853, 867-68, 102 S. Ct. 2799, 73 L. Ed. 2d 435 (1982) (plurality opinion) (noting that "the right to receive ideas is a necessary predicate to the recipient's meaningful exercise of his own rights of speech, press, and political freedom," and clarifying that "students too are beneficiaries of this principle"); *Tinker v. Des Moines Indep. Community Sch. Dist.*, 393 U.S. 503, 511, 89 S. Ct. 733, 21 L. Ed. 2d 731 (1969); *Campbell v. St. Tammany Parish Sch. Bd.*, 64 F.3d 184, 190 (5th Cir.1995).

6. The right to receive information is vigorously enforced in the context of a public library, "the quintessential locus of the receipt of information." *Kreimer v. Bureau of Police*, 958 F.2d 1242, 1255 (3d Cir. 1992). See also, e.g., *Pico*, 457 U.S. at 868, 102 S. Ct. 2799, 73 L. Ed. 2d 435 (noting that "public library is `a \*548 place dedicated to quiet, to knowledge, and to beauty'" (quoting *Brown v. Louisiana*, 383 U.S. 131, 142, 86 S. Ct. 719, 15 L. Ed. 2d 637 (1966))); *Minarcini v. Strongsville City Sch. Dist.*, 541 F.2d 577, 582 (6th Cir.1976) ("A library is a mighty resource in the free marketplace of ideas."). In *Pico*, for example, the Supreme Court made clear that government officials may not remove books from school library shelves "simply because they dislike the ideas contained in those books and seek by their removal to `prescribe what shall be orthodox in politics, nationalism, religion, or other matters of opinion.'" *Pico*, 457 U.S. at 872, 102 S. Ct. 2799 (quoting *West Virginia Bd. of Educ. v. Barnette*, 319 U.S. 624, 642, 63 S. Ct. 1178, 87 L. Ed. 1628 (1943)). See also, e.g., *Campbell*, 64 F.3d at 190 (same).

7. The principles set forth in *Pico* a school library case have even greater force when applied to public libraries. Although it confirmed that the state may not "contract the spectrum of available knowledge" by restricting books on the basis of their message or viewpoint, *Pico*, 457 U.S. at 886, 102 S. Ct. 2799, the *Pico* plurality acknowledged that public schools have an "inculcative" function that affords school boards greater discretion in curricular matters. *Id.* at 846, 102 S. Ct. 2799. By contrast, public libraries do not serve the same inculcative functions, and instead are, as even Justice Rehnquist's *Pico* dissent recognized, "designed for freewheeling inquiry." *Id.* at 915, 102 S. Ct. 2799 (Rehnquist, J., dissenting).

8. The Wichita Falls Public Library, like all other public libraries, is a limited public forum for purposes of First Amendment analysis. See *Kreimer*, 958 F.2d at 1259; *Mainstream Loudoun v. Board of Trustees of the Loudoun County Library*, 24 F. Supp. 2d 552, 563 (E.D.Va.1998). This point is conceded by Defendants. In a limited

public forum, the government's ability to restrict patrons' First Amendment rights is extremely narrow. Thus, the City cannot limit access to library materials solely on the basis of the content of those materials, unless the City can demonstrate that the restriction is necessary to achieve a compelling government interest and there are no less restrictive alternatives for achieving that interest. *See, e.g., International Soc'y of Krishna Consciousness, Inc. v. Lee*, 505 U.S. 672, 678, 112 S. Ct. 2701, 120 L. Ed. 2d 541 (1992).

9. Where, as here, a speech regulation targets not only the content of expression, but also its perceived viewpoint, judicial scrutiny is even more exacting. *See, e.g., Rosenberger v. Rector and Visitors of Univ. of Va.*, 515 U.S. 819, 829, 115 S. Ct. 2510, 132 L. Ed. 2d 700 (1995) (noting that "[v]iewpoint discrimination is ... an egregious form of content discrimination").

10. The Altman Resolution, and the City's subsequent removal of the two Books, constitutes impermissible content-based and viewpoint-based discrimination. From a review of the history of the Resolution, it is clear that the ordinance was enacted specifically for the purpose of suppressing *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate*. *See* Amended Complaint, ¶¶ 28-33 (describing earlier attempts to censor the Books). When opponents of the Books failed to censor the Books outright, \*549 they sought to accomplish indirectly what they could not do directly.<sup>[19]</sup>

11. On its face, the Resolution permits any 300 Library card holders to remove a book from the children's area of the Library to the adult section if, in their opinion, the book is "most appropriately read with parental approval and/or supervision." Altman Resolution, § 1(2) (c). Not only does this language allow any special interest group to suppress Library materials on the basis of their content, it actually facilitates an infinite number of content and viewpoint-based speech restrictions. Under the Resolution, any group of patrons with a particular viewpoint or agenda can suppress books with which they disagree, from *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* to, conceivably, the children's Bibles located in the youth areas of the Library.

12. By conferring upon any 300 patrons<sup>[20]</sup> the power to remove from the children's section any books they find objectionable, the Altman Resolution unconstitutionally confers a "heckler's veto" on the complaining patrons, effectively permitting them to veto lawful, fully-protected expression<sup>[21]</sup> simply because of their adverse

reaction to it. The Supreme Court repeatedly has invalidated other "heckler's veto" regulations as antithetical to core First Amendment values. *See, e.g., Reno*, 117 S. Ct. at 2349 (noting that "heckler's veto" gives "broad powers of censorship" to "any opponent of indecent speech"); *Forsyth County v. Nationalist Movement*, 505 U.S. 123, 134-35, 112 S. Ct. 2395, 120 L. Ed. 2d 101 (1992) ("Speech cannot be ... burdened, any more than it can be punished or banned, simply because it might offend a hostile mob."); *Brown v. Louisiana*, 383 U.S. 131, 133 n. 1, 86 S. Ct. 719, 15 L. Ed. 2d 637 (1966) ("Participants in an orderly demonstration in a public place are not chargeable with the danger, unprovoked except by the fact of the constitutionally protected demonstration itself, that their critics might react with disorder or violence."). The Altman Resolution is similarly invalid.

13. The Defendants argue that Plaintiffs' First Amendment rights are not implicated because no book is actually physically removed from the building. Although, under the Altman Resolution, petitioned books are not banned entirely from the Library, *the burdens on Plaintiffs' First Amendment rights imposed by the Resolution are nonetheless constitutionally objectionable. Even where a regulation does not silence speech altogether, the Supreme Court has given "the most exacting scrutiny \*550 to regulations that suppress, disadvantage, or impose differential burdens upon speech because of its content."* *Turner Broadcasting, Inc. v. FCC*, 512 U.S. 622, 641, 114 S. Ct. 2445, 129 L. Ed. 2d 497 (1994) (emphasis added). *See also, e.g., Denver Area Educ. Telecom. Consortium, Inc. v. FCC*, 518 U.S. 727, 116 S. Ct. 2374, 2418, 135 L. Ed. 2d 888 (1996) (Kennedy, J., concurring in part and dissenting in part) ("[T]he possibility the Government could have imposed more draconian limitations on speech never has justified a lesser abridgment. Indeed, such an argument almost always is available; *few of our First Amendment cases involve outright bans on speech.*") (emphasis added); *United States v. National Treasury Employees Union*, 513 U.S. 454, 468, 115 S. Ct. 1003, 130 L. Ed. 2d 964 (1995) (invalidating statute barring receipt of honoraria by government employees, even though statute did not "prohibit any speech"); *Forsyth County v. Nationalist Movement*, 505 U.S. 123, 134, 112 S. Ct. 2395, 120 L. Ed. 2d 101 (1992) (striking down law imposing minimal fee on parade permits); *Simon & Schuster, Inc. v. Members of N.Y. State Crime Victims Bd.*, 502 U.S. 105, 115, 112 S. Ct. 501, 116 L. Ed. 2d 476 (1991) (invalidating statute that imposed financial burden on speech but did not ban any expression).<sup>[22]</sup>

14. By authorizing the forced removal of children's books to the adult section of the Library, the Altman Resolution places a significant burden on Library patrons' ability to gain access to those books. Children searching specifically for those books in the

designated children's areas of the Library will be unable to locate them. In addition, children who simply wish to browse in the children's sections of the Library will never find the censored books. Moreover, parents browsing the children's areas in search of books for their children will be unable to find the censored books.

15. The burden imposed by the Altman Resolution is, therefore, analogous to the restriction struck down by the Supreme Court in *Denver Area Educ. Telecomm. Consortium, Inc. v. FCC*, 518 U.S. 727, 116 S. Ct. 2374, 135 L. Ed. 2d 888 (1996). In *Denver Area*, the Court invalidated a requirement that "patently offensive" cable programming be segregated, blocked, and made unavailable to viewers unless they specifically requested access in advance and in writing. *Id.* at 2394. Although the regulation did not ban the "patently offensive" programming outright, the Court concluded that it had "obvious restrictive effects," noting that "[a] subscriber cannot decide to watch a single program without considerable advance planning...." *Id.* at 2391. Similarly, although the Books censored under the Altman Resolution are available in the adult section of the Library, they can only be located if a patron knows *in advance* that she wants those specific titles or authors. Just as the cable regulation in *Denver Area* impermissibly burdened the rights of television viewers who wished to "channel surf," *see id.* at 2391 ("These restrictions will prevent programmers from \*551 broadcasting to viewers who select programs day by day (or, through 'surfing,' minute by minute)."), the Altman Resolution unconstitutionally burdens the First Amendment rights of browsing Library patrons.<sup>[23]</sup> It would be absurd to conclude that the Altman Resolution imposed no additional burdens on targeted materials for if this was true, then the Resolution would do absolutely nothing to advance the purported interest in having children read these Books "with parental approval and/or supervision."

16. As content- and viewpoint-based restrictions on Plaintiffs' right to receive information, the Resolution and Book removals are constitutionally infirm because they are not narrowly tailored to serve a compelling state interest. *See, e.g., ISKCON*, 505 U.S. at 678, 112 S. Ct. 2701.

17. Defendants also seem to justify the Resolution as a means of supporting some notion of "parents' rights," presumably involving the right to direct the upbringing of one's children. The Altman Resolution, however, permits *any* 18-year-old Library card holder to sign a removal petition and does not limit its scope to offended *parents*. Altman Resolution, § 1(2). Petition signatories can be people who have never used and will never use the children's areas of the Library. In addition,



even where the signatory is a parent, the Resolution allows that parent to mandate what information another parent's children may or may not receive. Thus, the Altman Resolution can hardly be said to support "parent's rights," as it permits a non-parent to dictate what someone else's children may read and allows one parent to suppress material not only for her own children, but for all others in the community.

18. Moreover, if a parent wishes to prevent her child from reading a particular book, that parent can and should accompany the child to the Library, and should not prevent all children in the community from gaining access to constitutionally protected materials. Where First Amendment rights are concerned, those seeking to restrict access to information should be forced to take affirmative steps to shield themselves from unwanted materials; the onus should not be on the general public to overcome barriers to their access to fully-protected information. See, e.g., *Denver Area*, 116 S. Ct. at 2394; *Lamont v. Postmaster General*, 381 U.S. 301, 307, 85 S. Ct. 1493, 14 L. Ed. 2d 398 (1965) (striking requirement that recipients of Communist literature notify the Post Office in advance that they wish to receive those materials). The Altman Resolution, therefore, places an unconstitutional burden on Plaintiffs' right to receive information under the First Amendment and Article 1, Section 8 of the Texas Constitution.

19. The Defendants' extensive reliance on the Second Circuit's 1972 decision \*552 in *Presidents Council, Dist. 25 v. Community School Bd. No. 25*, 457 F.2d 289 (2d Cir.1972) is wholly inexplicable. In support of their *strained argument*, that the First Amendment is not implicated at all in this case, Defendants place great weight on *Presidents Council* a case that was later overruled by the Second Circuit and the Supreme Court in *Pico*. See *Pico v. Board of Educ.*, 638 F.2d 404, 419 (2d Cir.1980) (Mansfield, J., dissenting) (noting that the majority's decision in *Pico* "overrules our ... decision in the indistinguishable case of *President[ ]s Council*"), *aff'd. sub nom Board of Educ. v. Pico*, 457 U.S. 853, 102 S. Ct. 2799, 73 L. Ed. 2d 435 (1982). Indeed, as the Defendants have tried to suggest here, the district court in *Pico* erroneously relied on *Presidents Council* to conclude that "restricted access ... to certain books ... does not constitute a sharp and direct infringement of any First Amendment right." *Pico*, 457 U.S. at 860 & nn. 13-14, 102 S. Ct. 2799 (quoting district court decision, 457 F.Supp. at 397). Both the Second Circuit and the Supreme Court rejected that notion and this Court will do the same.



20. Defendants' claim that the City has a compelling interest in "shielding minors from an influence of literature that is not obscene by adult standards," is similarly off the mark. It is true, as Defendants argue, that states may regulate children's access to materials not deemed obscene for adults; however, such regulation is permissible only where the restricted materials meet the stringent test for obscenity as to children, or "harmful to minors." See *Erznoznik v. City of Jacksonville*, 422 U.S. 205, 213, 95 S. Ct. 2268, 45 L. Ed. 2d 125 ("Clearly all nudity cannot be deemed obscene even as to minors.") See *Ginsberg v. New York*, (390 U.S. 629, 88 S. Ct. 1274, 20 L. Ed. 2d 195 (1968)). Nor can such a broad restriction be justified by any other governmental interest pertaining to minors. "Speech that is neither obscene as to youths nor subject to some other legitimate proscription cannot be suppressed solely to protect the young from ideas or images that a legislative body thinks unsuitable for them." (footnote omitted). Here, the Defendants have not made and, indeed, could not possibly make the suggestion that the targeted Books are "obscene as to children" in the legal sense. There simply is no interest, *let alone a compelling one*, in restricting access to nonobscene, fully-protected library books solely on the basis of the majority's disagreement with their perceived message.

21. It is well-established that "a law fails to meet the requirements of the Due Process Clause if it is so vague and standard less that it leaves the public uncertain" as to what conduct it covers. *City of Chicago v. Morales*, 527 U.S. 41, 119 S. Ct. 1849, 1859, 144 L. Ed. 2d 67 (1999) (plurality opinion) (quoting *Giaccio v. Pennsylvania*, 382 U.S. 399, 402-03, 86 S. Ct. 518, 15 L. Ed. 2d 447 (1966)). The language of the Altman Resolution is so vague that persons "of common intelligence must necessarily guess at its meaning and differ as to its application." *Smith v. Goguen*, 415 U.S. 566, 572 n. 8, 94 S. Ct. 1242, 39 L. Ed. 2d 605 (1974) (citations omitted). The Altman Resolution provides absolutely no standards at all, other than the open-ended language referring to children's books that, in the opinion of petition signatories, are "most appropriately \*553 read with parental approval and/or supervision." Altman Resolution, § 1(c). The Resolution contains no further explanatory language and no limitations on the criteria that may be used to determine a book's "appropriateness." In addition, by granting removal power to any group of Library patrons at any time, the Resolution impermissibly creates a risk of arbitrary and discriminatory application. See, e.g., *Grayned v. City of Rockford*, 408 U.S. 104, 108, 92 S. Ct. 2294, 33 L. Ed. 2d 222 (1972).

22. The Altman Resolution is also flawed in its failure to provide adequate means for timely review and appeal of the removal decisions. After receiving a removal

petition, the Library Administrator has 30 days to request that the City Manager seek a waiver from the City Council. Altman Resolution, § 1(5). However, the City Manager has complete discretion to deny the Administrator's request, and there is no right to appeal the City Manager's refusal to submit a waiver request to the City Council. *Id.* Similarly, the Altman Resolution provides no right to appeal the City Council's rejection of a waiver request. *Id.* As with the Resolution's vagueness problems, these procedural shortcomings make the Resolution unconstitutional. *Cf. FW/ PBS, Inc. v. City of Dallas*, 493 U.S., 215, 227-230, 110 S. Ct. 596, 107 L. Ed. 2d 603 (1990) (requiring speech regulations to contain adequate procedural safeguards); *Wayfield v. Town of Tisbury*, 925 F. Supp. 880, 889 (D.Mass.1996) (holding that town violated library patron's right to due process by suspending library privileges without providing hearing to contest suspension).

23. Under Texas law, "[i]t is generally recognized that governmental or legislative functions of a municipality cannot be delegated to private entities." *Andrews v. Wilson*, 959 S.W.2d 686, 690 (Tex.App. 1998). *See also City of Galveston v. Hill*, 519 S.W.2d 103, 105 (Tex. 1975). "A municipality cannot, by contract or otherwise, transfer control of its governmental functions to another entity, absent specific constitutional authorization." *Andrews*, 959 S.W.2d at 690 (citing *Pittman v. City of Amarillo*, 598 S.W.2d 941, 945 (Tex.Civ.App. 1980); *General Tel. Co. of Southwest v. City of Perryton*, 552 S.W.2d 888, 891 (Tex.Civ.App. 1977)).

24. Through the Altman Resolution, the City Council has unlawfully delegated its proper governmental authority over the selection and removal of Library books to any 300 private citizens who wish to remove a book from the children's area of the Library. Thus, the Altman Resolution constitutes an improper delegation of governmental authority under Texas law.

25. As demonstrated above, the Altman Resolution on its face and as applied to the Defendants' removal of *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* from the children's area of the Library violates Plaintiffs' constitutional right to receive information. It is undisputed that the "[l]oss of First Amendment freedoms, even for minimal periods of time, constitute[s] irreparable injury." *Ingebretsen v. Jackson Public Sch. Dist.*, 88 F.3d 274, 280 (5th Cir. 1996) (citing *Elrod v. Burns*, 427 U.S. 347, 373, 96 S. Ct. 2673, 49 L. Ed. 2d 547 (1976)).

26. The constitutional injury that Plaintiffs will suffer as a result of \*554 the continued enforcement of the Altman Resolution including the continued segregation of the censored Books far outweighs any possible harm to the Defendants if the Resolution is enjoined and the Books remain in the children's section of the Library. Without a permanent injunction, the Plaintiffs will suffer irreparable injury to their constitutional rights.

27. Injunctive relief will serve the public interest because it will protect the constitutional rights of Plaintiffs and other Wichita Falls Library patrons. The public simply has no interest in effectuating an unconstitutional law. *See, e.g., Valley v. Rapides Parish Sch. Bd.*, 118 F.3d 1047, 1056 (5th Cir.1997); *Dayton Area Visually Impaired Persons, Inc. v. Fisher*, 70 F.3d 1474, 1490 (6th Cir.1995); *Hyde Park Partners v. Connolly*, 839 F.2d 837, 854 (1st Cir.1988).

### **FINAL JUDGMENT**

For the reasons stated in this Court's Memorandum Opinion, judgment is entered in favor of the Plaintiffs, enjoining the Defendants from enforcing City Council Resolution No. 16-99 (the "Altman Resolution") because it is unconstitutional. Costs are taxes against the Defendant City of Wichita Falls, Texas.

### **NOTES**

[1] *Daddy's Roommate* was awarded the Lambda Literary Award for children's books aimed at readers ages 2-6. Leslea Newman, the author of *Heather Has Two Mommies*, has received the *Highlights for Children's Fiction Award* (1992) and a creative writing Fellowship from the Massachusetts Arts Foundation (1989).

[2] Plaintiffs' Amended Complaint, p. 6

[3] *See* Exhibit 2 to Plaintiffs' Amended Complaint.

[4] This Resolution was drafted and proposed by City Council Member William Altman, a Wichita Falls attorney.

[5] There are approximately 26 members of the Wichita Falls PFLAG chapter.

[6] Both Bauman and Gallenberger testified to the obvious: that there are children living in gay and lesbian homes in Wichita Falls.

[7] The Wichita Falls Metropolitan Community Church is one of 330 churches that comprise the Universal Fellowship of Metropolitan Community Churches in 15 countries around the world.

[8] Complaints were made that the character Jim was too heroic for a slave.

[9] See also *100 Banned Books* (Censorship Histories of World's Literature) by Nicholas J. Karolides, Margaret Bald, and Dawn B. Sova (Checkmark Books 1999) which discusses the censorship of books on "*political grounds*" (e.g., *Animal Farm* by George Orwell, *Uncle Tom's Cabin* by Harriet Beecher Stow) ... on "*religious grounds*" (e.g., *The Bible*, *Oliver Twist* by Charles Dickens) ... on "*sexual grounds*" (e.g., *The Arabian Nights*, Sir Richard Burton, trans.) ... and on "*social grounds*" (e.g., *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger and *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee).

[10] Dr. Gore did research into literature of the children of gay and lesbian people, including an article called "Children of Gay and Lesbian Parents" by Dr. Charlotte Patterson (Plaintiffs' Exhibit 7).

[11] Dr. Immroth served as an expert witness without compensation because she felt "it was very important to uphold the ideal of [all library patrons] having access to a broad range of information."

[12] See Plaintiffs' Exhibit 11.

[13] Exhibit 13 is the "Freedom to Read" statement, which also applies to the Wichita Falls Public Library.

[14] The Library Advisory Board is appointed by the City Council to give direction and citizen input to the library.

[15] There is a difference in shelving heights in the Wichita Falls Library between adult section shelves, which are 90 inches tall, and children's shelves, which are only 60 inches tall.

[16] Council Member Altman, an attorney, is a member of Dr. Jeffress' congregation at the First Baptist Church.

[17] The Wichita Falls Public Library does have this book; it is located in the juvenile nonfiction section, and is checked out about once every two months. Linda Hughes testified that she had never received any complaints about *Where Do I Come From?*

[18] *Inherit The Wind*, by Jerome Lawrence and Robert E. Lee (Random House Sept. 1955), is (of course) the acclaimed play and movie about the "Scopes Monkey Trial" in Tennessee in which *Clarence Darrow* (Henry Drummond) cross-examines his opposing counsel, *Wm. Jennings Bryan* (Matthew Harrison Brady) about the Bible.

[19] In advancing their overall "moral" agenda, opponents of the Books have made no pretenses about their objectives. For instance, organizers of the removal petition effort have circulated another petition, calling for passage of a federal law that would deprive federal courts of jurisdiction "to make any decision, or issue any order concerning the matter of material *censored* in any ... library." Petition of Committee to Restore Decency to the Library, Mar. 12, 1999 (emphasis added).

[20] Three hundred patrons would be a minuscule proportion (.003%) of the total population of Wichita Falls, which is over 100,000 persons.

[21] The Altman Resolution applies only to materials "marketed or designed primarily for children age twelve and under." Altman Resolution, § 1(1). By definition, those materials must have been previously approved and deemed appropriate for children pursuant to established Library selection policies. In fact, *Heather Has Two Mommies* and *Daddy's Roommate* have been approved under the Library's standard procedures, reevaluated, and approved a second time. See Amended Complaint ¶¶ 28, 32.

[22] See also, e.g., *Arkansas Writers' Project, Inc. v. Ragland*, 481 U.S. 221, 227-31, 107 S. Ct. 1722, 95 L. Ed. 2d 209 (1987); *Minneapolis Star & Tribune Co. v. Minnesota Comm'r of Revenue*, 460 U.S. 575, 103 S. Ct. 1365, 75 L. Ed. 2d 295 (1983); *Lamont v. Postmaster General*, 381 U.S. 301, 85 S. Ct. 1493, 14 L. Ed. 2d 398 (1965); *Bantam Books, Inc. v. Sullivan*, 372 U.S. 58, 83 S. Ct. 631, 9 L. Ed. 2d 584 (1963).

[23] In addition, because the only children's books located in the adult sections of the Library will be those removed under the Altman Resolution, the Resolution attaches an unconstitutional stigma to the receipt of fully-protected expressive materials. See, e.g., *Denver Area*, 116 S. Ct. at 2391 (noting that "written notice" requirement will further restrict viewing by subscribers who fear for their reputations...."); *Lamont v. Postmaster General*, 381 U.S. 301, 307, 85 S. Ct. 1493, 14 L. Ed. 2d 398 (1965) (striking requirement that recipients of Communist literature notify the Post Office that they wish to receive those materials.)

# Wake Up Washoe County Cover Letter and Sworn Affidavit



Nichelle Hull  
Wake Up Washoe County



12.20.2023  
Date

Washoe County Library System  
Collections Development Manager  
Debi Stears



Delivered in Person to:

RE: Book Challenges

Dear Ms. Stears,

Please find attached multiple and varied requests from citizens of Washoe County regarding books located in the collection housed in the Washoe County Libraries. Note that for each book there is a Citizen Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials and Artwork form as well as a more specific and comprehensive form detailing objections for each book.

In accordance with the Washoe County Library System Collections Development and Management Policy, and per the request of the Collection Development Manager in a Reno Gazette Journal article dated 14 July 2023, these requests for location reclassification or removal within the Washoe County Library System are hereby submitted on behalf of citizens of Washoe County.

We require a response be mailed to the above address with a detailed timeline as to when these matters will be addressed. At a minimum until these books and/or items are reviewed and a final decision is made as to how they will be handled, we require they be only available to 18 years or older.

Failure to address the requests within 22 days from the receipt of these documents is considered implied consent with the requests contained in this document. Note the signed affidavit attached as well. If we have not followed the administrative procedures to ensure remedy, we require you to provide the information to have our issues resolved.

Should the request of the citizens of Washoe County be denied, the movement of the requests, escalating them to the next level, is incumbent upon the recipient, Debi Stears.

Sincerely,

Nichelle Hull, Wake Up Washoe County

- cc: Office of the Nevada Governor Joseph Lombardo
- Office of the Attorney General Aaron Ford
- Office of the Washoe County Library System Director Jeff Scott
- Office of the Washoe County Library Board of Directors

**AFFIDAVIT OF NOTICE FOR THE HANDLING OF SPECIFIC BOOKS**  
**LOCATED IN THE WASHOE COUNTY LIBRARY SYSTEM**

On This 19 day of December, 2023, I, Reva Crump, a natural woman with legal capacity of a party to this action, having firsthand knowledge of the material and relevant facts, do hereby state the following is true and accurate to the best of my knowledge and that which I do not know for a fact I believe to be true and accurate to the best of my knowledge. I have made reasonable inquiry into the circumstances and have conducted legal research of factual and legal assertions to support my position. My factual position assertions are supported by evidence and may be further supported upon receipt of discovery materials. I hereby certify that my claim is warranted by existing law and this paperwork is not being filed for a frivolous purpose but has a factual and legal basis for the claim.

**STATEMENT OF FACTS**

1. Hereby, find submitted for consideration are 3 books found unacceptable for children less than 18 years of age to view or check out, either in book or electronic form.
2. Remedy options regarding these books include their relocation to an exclusive, X-rated section(s) in the Washoe County Library System with controls regarding access and check out to adults 18 years of age or older, or removal from the Washoe County Library System.
3. Multiple and varied requests are submitted with this affidavit and cover letter given to me by taxpayers in Washoe County citing why these books are not acceptable for children less than 18 years of age.
4. Several attempts to read out loud at Washoe County Board of County Commissioners Chambers, some of these books were not allowed due to obscenity contained, proving that these books are not aligned with the standards of this community, Washoe County, Nevada.
5. Several attempts to read out load at the Washoe County School Board of Trustees meeting, some of these books were not allowed due to obscenity contained, proving that these books are not aligned with the standards of this community, Washoe County, Nevada.
6. Several attempts to read out load at the Washoe County Library Board of Trustee meeting, some of these books were not allowed due to obscenity contained, proving that these books are not aligned with the standards of this community, Washoe County, Nevada.
7. Books that do not align with the standards of this community, Washoe County, Nevada, should not be available for children less than 18 years of age, and a portion of the attached list of books do not align with the standards of this community as demonstrated by the inability for them to be read out loud at governmental community meetings.
8. A number of books have been found to be unsuitably located within the Washoe County Library system due to inappropriate reading levels or developmental maturity of the age group, and/or content of the book.
9. All books that do not align with the standards of this community, Washoe County, Nevada should also be placed in an area only accessible to 18 years of age or older, until these books can be reviewed and public input given to define suitability of age range. Books unsuitably located should be placed in an area appropriate for the developmental maturity of the reader i.e. child, young adult, adult section, etc., until these books can be reviewed and public input given to define suitability of age range.
10. The *Citizen Request For Reconsideration of Library Materials and Artwork* for each book has hereby been handed to and received by Deb Stears, the Washoe County Library Collection Manager per her request in the Reno Gazette Journal 14 July 2023 article authored by Mike Robison.
11. A more comprehensive, detailed form has also been submitted for each book.

12. I recognize the existence of Nevada Revised Statute (NRS) 201.237, yet find it in conflict with NRS 201.256 – 201.265. The intent of the adoption of NRS 201.237 during the 1970's; was to allow for the teaching sex education without the repercussions for potential violation of the obscenity laws.
13. NRS 201.239 makes clear the state rules do no prevent local communities from adopting their own rules related to obscenity. *NRS 201.239 Power of a county, city or town to regulate obscenity. The provisions of NRS 201.235 to 201.254, inclusive, do not preclude any county, city or town from adopting an ordinance further regulating obscenity if its provisions do not conflict with these statutes.*
14. The Washoe County code of Ordinances, Chapter 50 Minors: Obscene Material 50.90-50.210, which aligns with the U.S. Supreme Court Ruling and definition of the Miller Test. The First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution does not protect works that are judged to be obscene. The U.S. Supreme Court established the test the judges and juries use to determine whether matter is obscene in three major cases: *Miller v. California* 413 U.S. 15, 24-25 (1973), *Smith v. Unites States*, 431 U.S. 291, 300-02, 309 (1977); and *Pope v. Illinois*, 481 U.S. 497, 500-01 (1987). Thus is the development of the three-pronged Miller test<sup>1,2</sup>.
15. Section 1466A of Title 18, United State Code, makes it illegal for any person to knowingly produce, distribute, receive, or possess with intent to transfer or distribute visual representations, such as drawings, cartoons, or paintings that appear to depict minors engaged in sexually explicit conduct and are deemed obscene. This statute<sup>4</sup> offers an alternative 2-pronged test for obscenity with a lower threshold than the *Miller* test.
16. Under Title VII<sup>3</sup>, the library materials requested for removal or relocation and meeting the Miller Test may be considered to create a hostile library environment for the both the library patronage (general public) and the library employees.
17. The American Library Association (ALA) organization ALA organization, being an acknowledged and an avowed Marxist organization, is not recognized as professional library organization; it is NOT a policy making body.
18. No policies, books, accolades, recommendations, etc., from the ALA are recognized as legitimate as it pertains to the Washoe County Library System. Marxism, being in direct contradiction with a constitutional republic, is considered an attack on the Constitutional Republic of the United States.
19. As the ALA is not in alignment with the governing system of the United States of America, the State of Nevada, or Washoe County that represent the United States and are the entities sponsoring the public Washoe County Library System and are the entities to which the Washoe County Library System is accountable.
20. The recipient is hereby noticed that they are personally accountable for the responsibility of a timely response to this request within 22 days or forwarding this to the party(ies) responsible for responding or enacting these requests.
21. Failure to address the requests within a 22 day time frame from the receipt of these documents is considered implied consent with the requests continued in this document. Should the request of the citizens of Washoe County be denied, the movement of the requests, escalating them to the next level, is incumbent upon the recipient.

<sup>1</sup>The standard of what is harmful to minors may differ from the standard applied to adults. To be obscene, the material must depict or describe sex acts in an offensive way; depict or describe masturbation, excretory function, sadism or masochism in an offensive way; or lewdly exhibit the genitals.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.justice.gov/criminal-ceos/citizens-guide-us-federal-law-obscenity>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/title-vii-civil-rights-act-1964>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.justice.gov/criminal-ceos/citizens-guide-us-federal-law-child-pornograph>

Any rebuttal to this notice must be supported by fact, law, and evidence and must be submitted timely. Notification is required of the status of the request each time the requests have been moved to the next level. There is no "grace" period allowed beyond 22 days from this delivery other than reasonable time for mail delivery. Failure to respond in writing within 22 days constitutes full agreement with statements of facts and requests. If you require up to 15 additional days to respond, you may request that in writing prior to default. We will determine if your activities and policies will allow the extension and we will notify you in writing if the extension is granted.

Notice to principal is notice to agent and notice to agent is notice to principal. This is an adhesion contract with power and effect by default.

Notification will be to Debi Stears via handdelivery and U.S. Postal Service

UCC 1-308 All Rights Reserved

By Reva Crump

**NEVADA NOTARIAL CERTIFICATE  
(EXECUTION OF JURAT)**

State of Nevada }

County of Washoe }

Signed and sworn before me on December 19, 2023 by Reva Crump



Tracey R. Thomas

Notary Signature

My commission expires: 12/25/2026

Book Challenge – Sandee Tibbett regarding  
Gender Queer by Maia Kobabe

CITIZEN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS AND ARTWORK

Author/Artist: Kobabe, Maia

Title: Gender Queer

Book  Periodical \_\_\_\_\_ Other  Publisher/Date 5/28/2019

Please state the reason for your request. This material is harmful and unbalanced. It glorifies and romanticizes mutilation of the body and hormone injections as a resolution to gender dysphoria. It never discusses the long-term effects of these procedures.

Have you read/viewed/listened to this work/exhibition in its entirety? Yes

What are the positive points of this material? It affirms a person is a product of their environment. The author never received the proper guidance from her parents while growing up and the result of this type of parenting is a person who is confused with gender dysphoria.

What would you like the Library to do about this work? I would like it relocated to the newly formed section called "Parental Discretion Section" with oversight on who is checking it out from the librarians.

In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject? Gender: A Graphic Novel by Meg-John Barker

Have you read the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy? Yes

Have you read the Washoe County Library Public Use of Bulletin Boards, Exhibit Spaces and Display Spaces Policy? Yes

Request initiated by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent:  
 Yourself  
 Organization (circle) Wake Up Washoe County ~ Nevada Patriot ~ Local Church ~ Other

Date: 11/21/23 Signature of Patron: \_\_\_\_\_  
Date: 12/20/23 Received by Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_



# Washoe County Library Book Removal Request

Title: Gender Queer

Author: Kobabe, Maia

Stated Reading Level/ Interest Level:

Location, Date Book was obtained for reading:

11/2023

Location (Library, Amazon, etc.)

Date 11/21/23

Check all that apply:

1.  Inappropriate for the location in the library/age group:

- reading level
- subject matter
- gender ideology
- portrayal of violence, brutality, or abuse
- vulgar language
- sexual content

2.  Sexually explicit and unsuitable for age group/location:  written and/or  in graphics

- depicts pedophilia
- depicts fellatio or cunnilingus
- depicts the act of sexual intercourse
- depicts masturbation

3.  Appeals to prurient interests (i.e., an erotic, lascivious, unhealthy, degrading, shameful interest in nudity, sex, or excretion)

4.  Lacks serious literary, artistic, political, scientific value for ~~minors~~ all.

5.  This book meets the criteria outlined in the Miller Test for obscenity: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/obscenity>  
(If boxes 2, 3, and 4 are checked, then check box 5.)

6.  Discriminatory, prejudice, derogatory, or demeaning writing based in race, sex, religion, or creed

Attached:

\_\_\_\_\_ number of page(s) with documented objections and/or excerpts from the book.

Verified Reader:

S. Tibbett Sandra Tibbett  
Signature

11/21/23  
Dated

Title : Gender Queer  
Author: Kobabe, Maia  
Page(s):  
Photograph(s) included YES NO

Written description:

"Gender Queer" is a graphic novel that contains explicit illustrations of adolescents performing various sex acts which raises questions about the intended audience and the influence on its vulnerable readers. The author prioritizes shock value over substance to mold the perspectives and attitudes of their readers., The sexual graphics destroys the author's credibility, and it crosses the line into grooming and indoctrination.

One of the major concerns with "Gender Queer" is the lack of responsible parenting depicted in the author's upbringing. The book suggests that the parents failed to provide essential education regarding the basic biological and social differences between males and females. The lack of guidance and neglectful parenting depicted in the book is disturbing because it contributes to the central theme of the author's struggle with gender dysphoria.

The book promotes the ideas of body mutilation and hormone therapy and suggests that altering one's body is a valid and necessary step to resolve issues related to gender dysphoria. The book romanticizes and glorifies the acts, presenting them as a legitimate and empowering expression of gender identity. The author overlooks the serious physical and psychological consequences of these treatments, only presenting them as liberating choices without delving into the possible long-term effects.

The book lacks a balanced discussion on the risks associated with these procedures, especially since there has been an increase in individuals who later regret the irreversible damage to their bodies.

I am fully aware this book is housed in the adult section of our public library. Unfortunately, our library system performs no oversight on who is checking out this book. This book is dangerous and holds a high potential for harm when consumed without proper guidance and supervision. This book needs to be relocated, within the library, to a newly formed section called "Parental Discretion Section" with oversight on who is checking it out from our librarians.

CITIZEN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS AND ARTWORK

Author/Artist: Kobabe, Maia

Title: Gender Queer

Book  Periodical  Other  Publisher/Date 5/28/2019

Please state the reason for your request. This material is harmful and unbalanced. It glorifies and romanticizes mutilation of the body and hormone injections as a resolution to gender dysphoria. It never discusses the long-term effects of these procedures.

Have you read/viewed/listened to this work/exhibition in its entirety? Yes

What are the positive points of this material? It affirms a person is a product of their environment. The author never received the proper guidance from her parents while growing up and the result of this type of parenting is a person who is confused with gender dysphoria.

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Have you read the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy? Yes

Have you read the Washoe County Library Public Use of Bulletin Boards, Exhibit Spaces and Display Spaces Policy? Yes

Request initiated by:   
Address:   
State: 

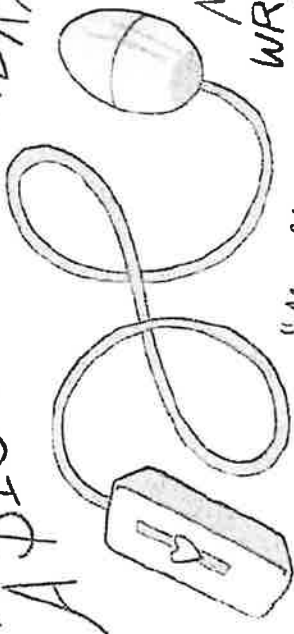
Do you represent:  
 Yourself  
 Organization (circle) Wake Up Washoe County ~ Nevada Patriot ~ Local Church ~ Other

Date: 11/21/23 Signature of Patron: [Signature]

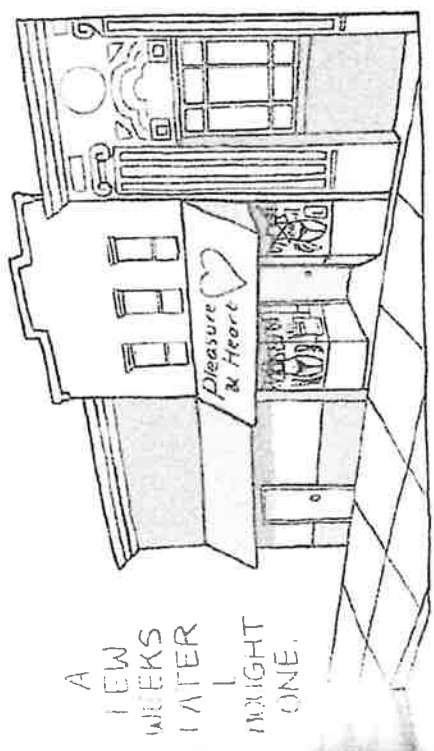
Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Received by Staff Member: \_\_\_\_\_

IN 2013, I DISCOVERED  
 ERIKA MOEN'S WEBCOMIC OH JOE  
SEX TOY. IN A COMIC FROM NOVEMBER  
 OF THAT YEAR SHE TALKS ABOUT THE  
 FIRST SEX TOY SHE EVER PURCHASED

★ A \$10 BULLET VIBRATOR



MOEN  
 WRITES  
 "My first orgasm is still  
 one of my most vivid, lovely experiences.  
 It was the first time I ever loved my body."



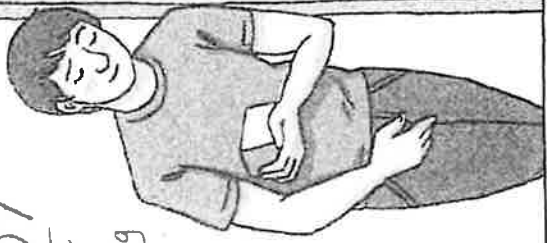
A FEW  
 WEEKS  
 LATER  
 I  
 PAUGHT  
 ONE.

BUT WHEN  
 THE TIME  
 CAME TO  
 ACTUALLY  
 TURN IT  
 ON...

I remember leaning in  
 my bedroom doorway,  
 imagining how good this  
 vibrator was going to  
 make me feel.

J GOT  
 OFF

by pressing  
 the front  
 of my  
 jeans,  
 the  
 unopened  
 box in  
 my  
 hand.



The MAIN TRAIT I'VE ALWAYS BEEN ATTRACTED TO IS

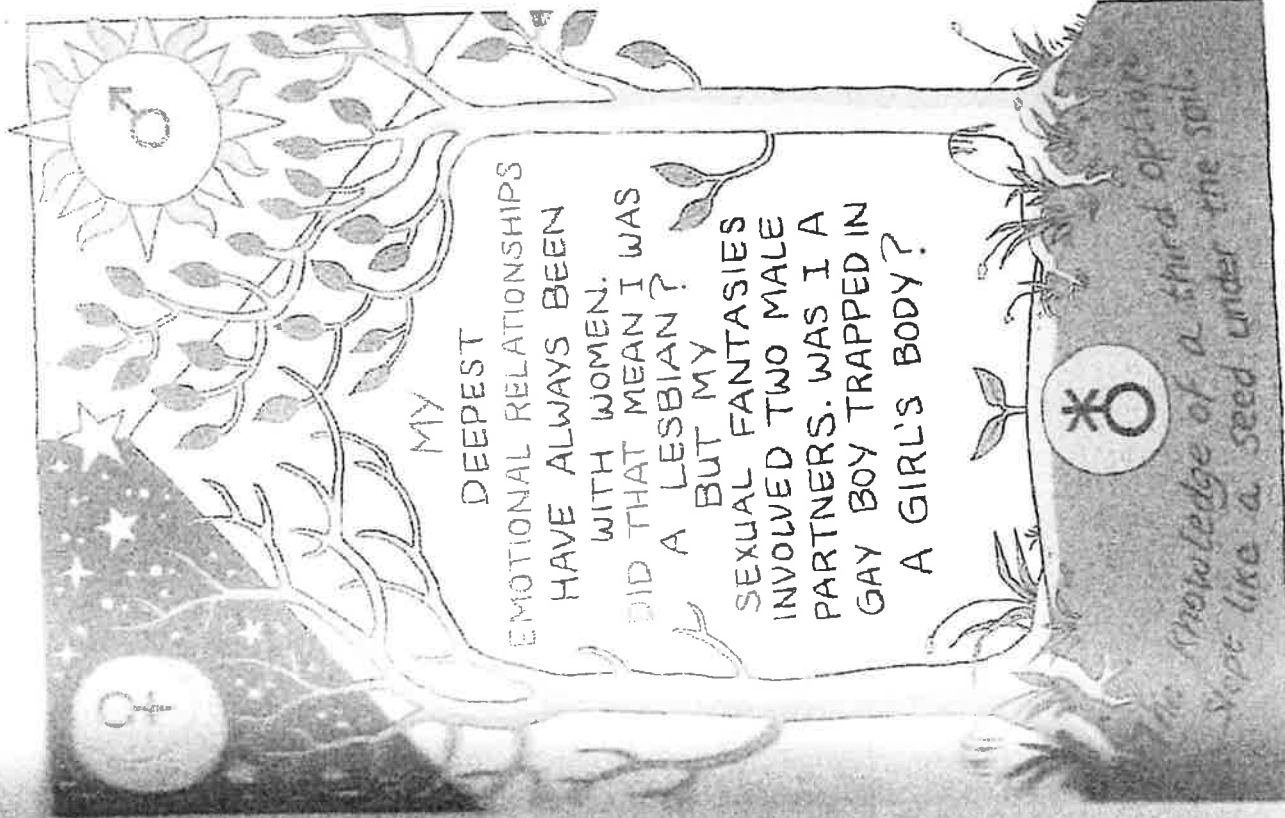
# ANDROGYNY



WHICH MADE MY SEXUAL CATEGORIZATION DIFFICULT

• DID THE GIRL WITH A BUZZ CUT CATCH MY EYE BECAUSE SHE WAS A GIRL OR BECAUSE SHE WAS DRESSED AS A BOY? •

WAS IT HIS SEEMINGLY "FEMININE" OR "MASCULINE" QUALITIES THAT DREW ME TO THE LONG-HAIRED BOY IN CHOIR?



MY DEEPEST EMOTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS HAVE ALWAYS BEEN WITH WOMEN. DID THAT MEAN I WAS A LESBIAN? BUT MY SEXUAL FANTASIES INVOLVED TWO MALE PARTNERS. WAS I A GAY BOY TRAPPED IN A GIRL'S BODY?



Knowledge of a third option  
is like a seed under the soil.

IN SEVENTH GRADE MY MOM BOUGHT ME  
**MY FIRST BRA.**

I liked that it flattened  
my tiny boobs  
into non-  
existence



but I  
hated that  
I needed it  
at all.

I STARTED DAYDREAMING ABOUT GETTING  
BREAST CANCER THINKING IT WOULD  
GIVE ME THE PERFECT EXCUSE  
TO HAVE MY BREASTS REMOVED.

Since then there have been  
several cases of cancer in  
my family, so I know  
how terrible that  
sounds.



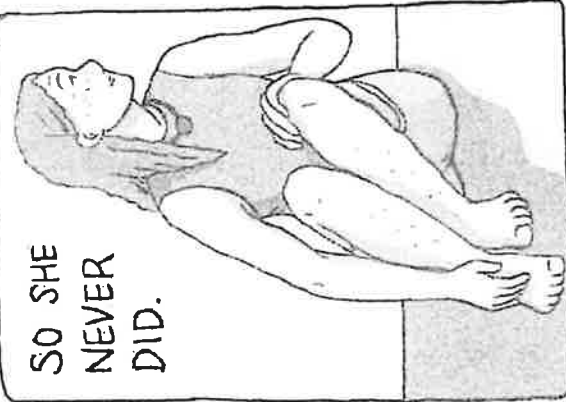
I'd like to say I  
never think about that  
anymore... but that  
would not be true.



THE BOYS AROUND ME SEEMED AS YET UNRAVAGED BY  
PUBERTY. I WISHED I WAS ONE OF THEM.

WHEN MY MOM WAS 13 HER MOM TOLD HER

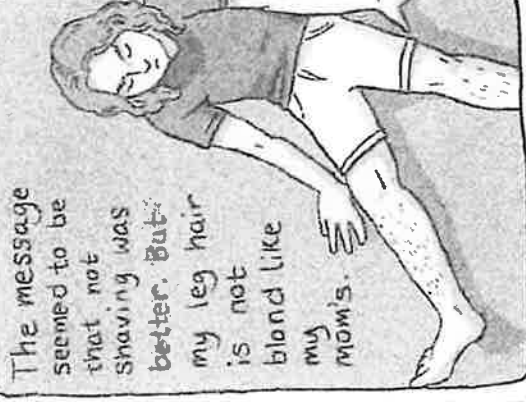
SO SHE  
NEVER  
DID.



"My leg hair is so  
thick, if you never  
shave it, it never  
comes out."

WHEN I WAS 13 ONE OF MY AUNTS TOLD ME

The message  
seemed to be  
that not  
shaving was  
better. But  
my leg hair  
is not  
blond like  
my  
mom's.



As soon as  
you start shaving  
the hair grows  
back much  
darker and  
thicker.

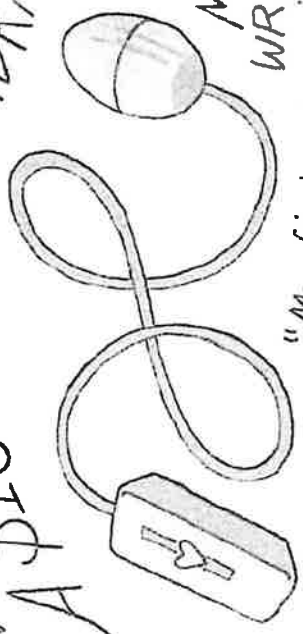


LET SHE  
SHAVE.



IN 2013, I DISCOVERED ERIKA MOEN'S WEBCOMIC OH JO SEX TOY. IN A COMIC FROM NOVEMBER OF THAT YEAR SHE TALKS ABOUT THE FIRST SEX TOY SHE EVER PURCHASED.

★ A \$10 BULLET VIBRATOR



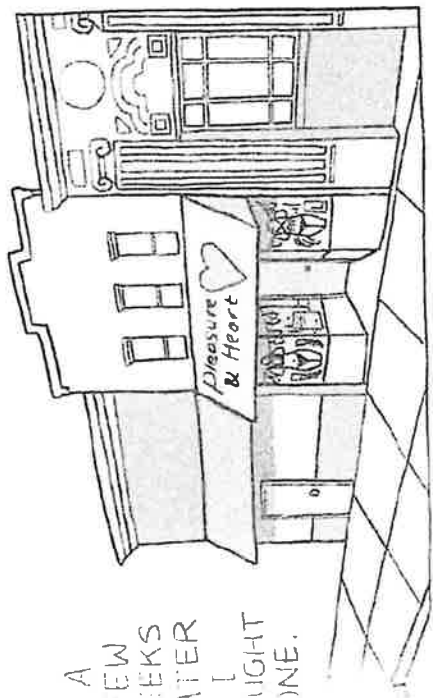
MOEN WRITES

"My first orgasm is still one of my most vivid, lovely experiences. It was the first time I ever loved my body."



The way she talks about orgasms makes me wonder if actually I've... never... had one...?

I guess I should get one of these and try it



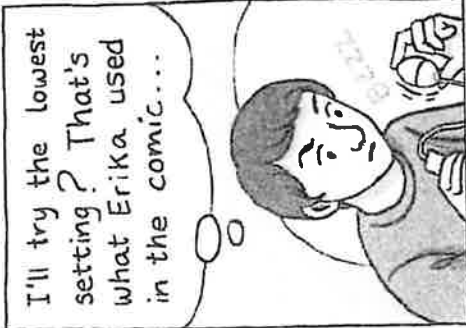
A FEW WEEKS LATER I BOUGHT ONE.

BUT WHEN THE TIME CAME TO ACTUALLY TURN IT ON...

I remember leaning in my bedroom doorway, imagining how good this vibrator was going to make me feel.

I GOT OFF

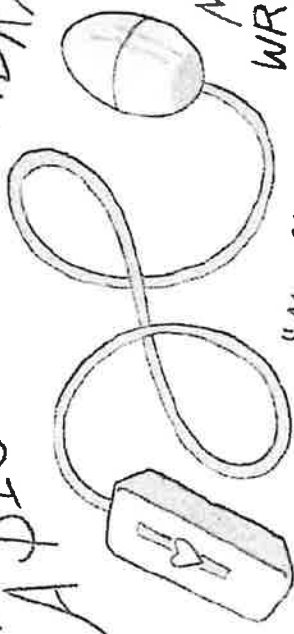
by pressing the front of my pants, the unopened box in my hand.



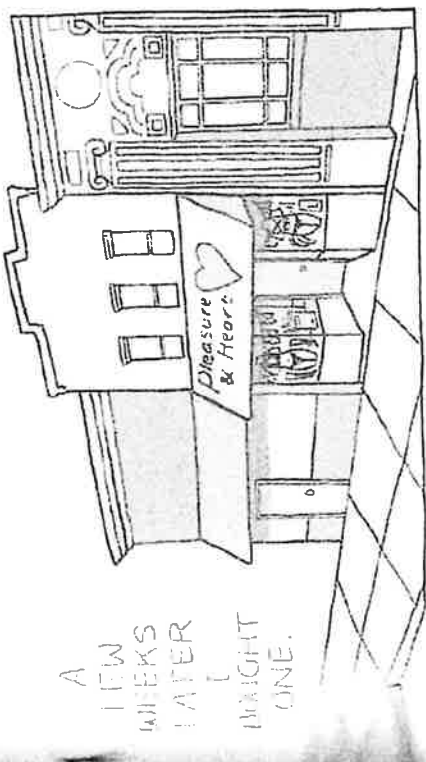
I'll try the lowest setting? That's what Erika used in the comic...

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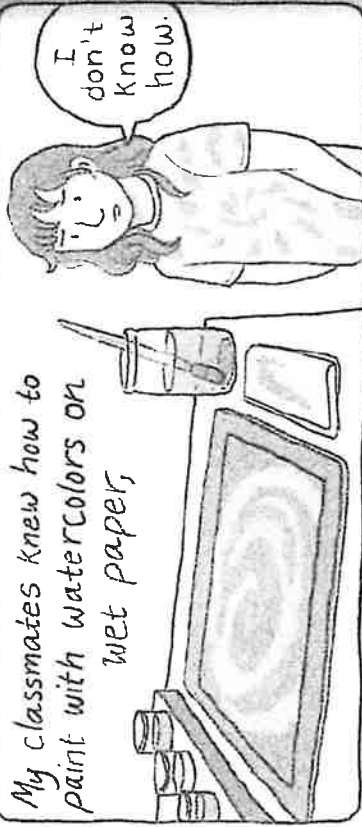


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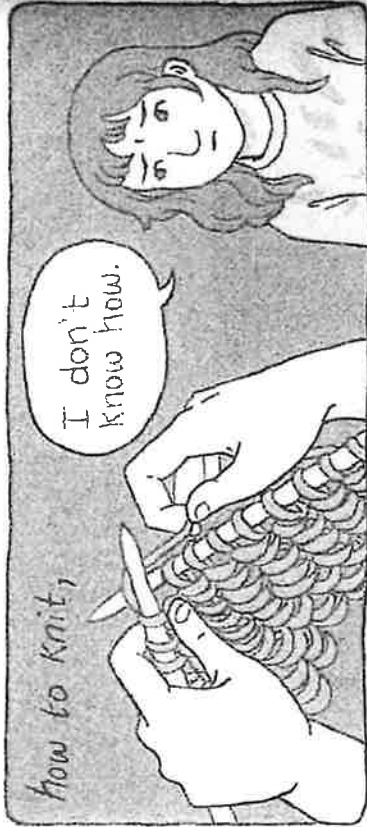
THERE WERE SO MANY THINGS I DIDN'T KNOW.

My classmates knew how to paint with watercolors on wet paper,



How to knit,

I don't know how.



a select few could even read.



MY TEACHERS WERE VERY PATIENT.

AT MY WALDORF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL



IT WASN'T UNUSUAL

FOR BOYS TO

HAVE LONG

HAIR

IN MY CLASS OF

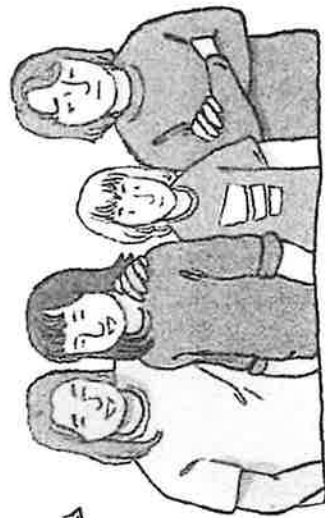
100 STUDENTS

100 BOYS HAD

HAIR THAT

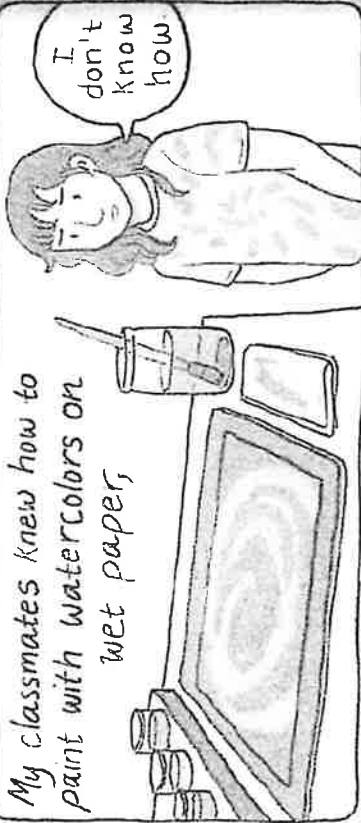
BRUSHED THEIR

SHOULDERS.



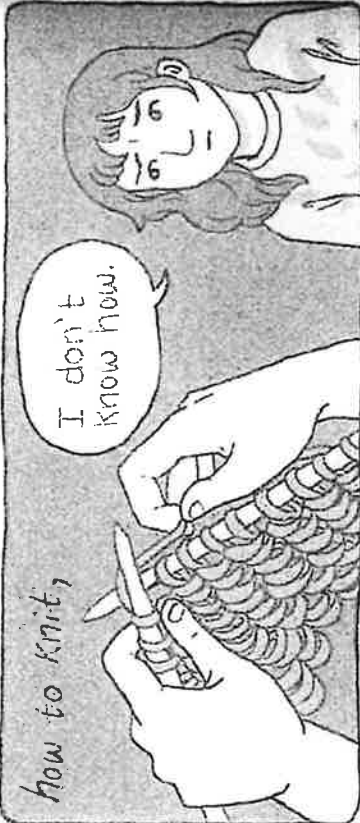
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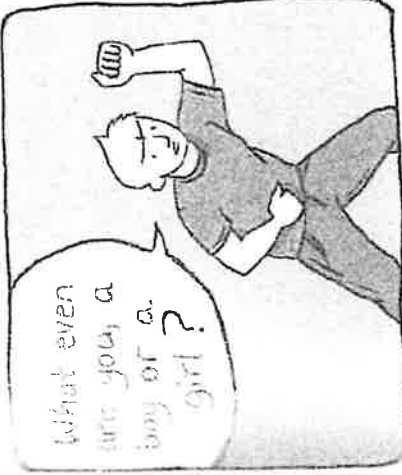


MY TEACHERS WERE VERY PATIENT.

AT MY WALDORF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

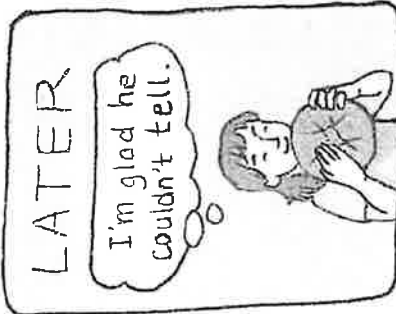


What even are you, a boy or a girl?



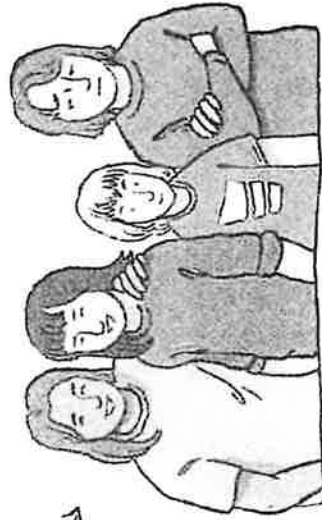
LATER

I'm glad he couldn't tell.



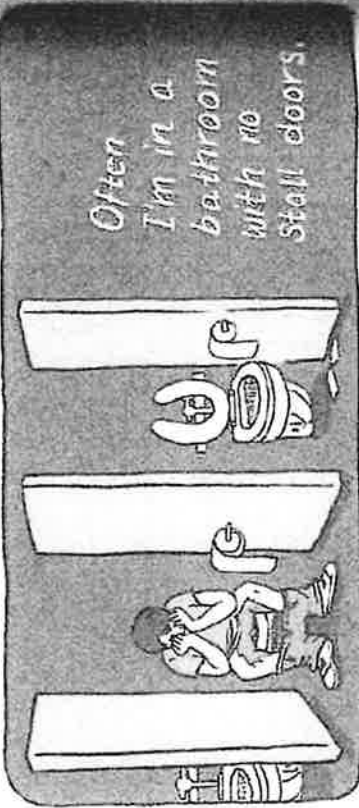
IT WASN'T UNUSUAL FOR BOYS TO HAVE LONG

HAIR IN MY CLASS OF 15 STUDENTS FOUR BOYS HAD HAIR THAT BRUSHED THEIR SHOULDERS.

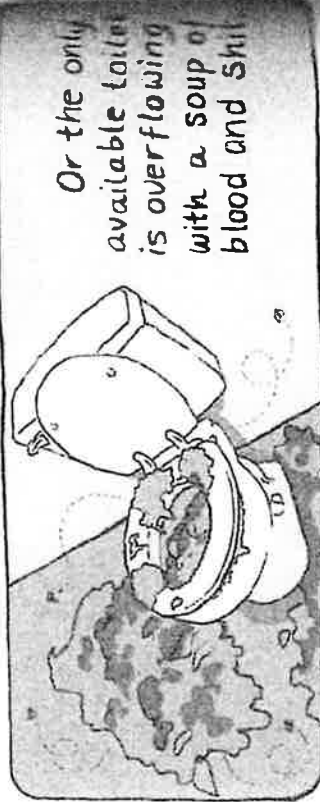




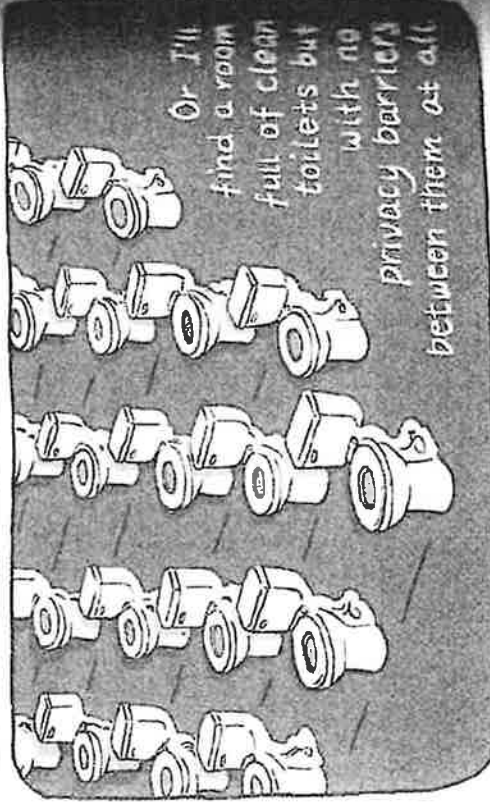
OF COURSE I NEVER HAVE A PAD OR CLEAN CLOTHES



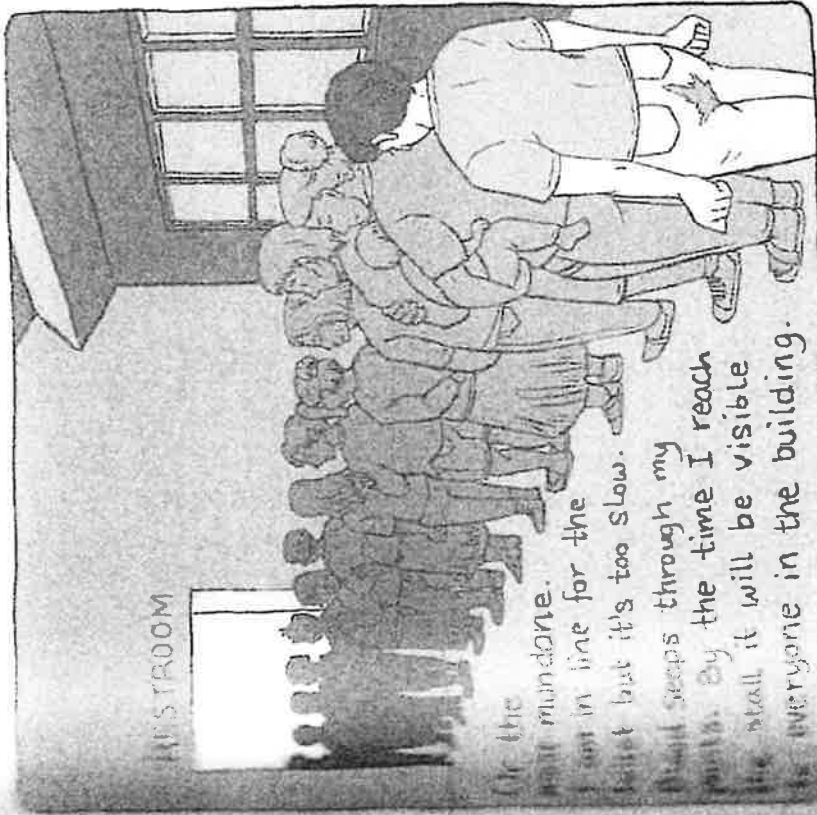
Often  
I'm in a  
bathroom  
with no  
Stall doors.



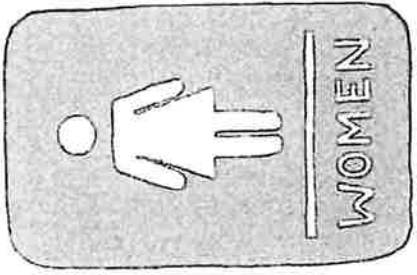
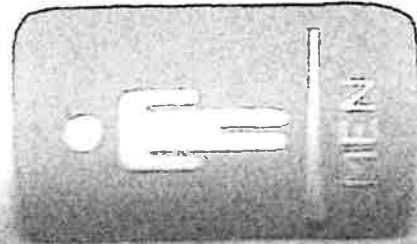
Or the only  
available toilet  
is overflowing  
with a soup of  
blood and shit



Or I'll  
find a room  
full of clean  
toilets but  
with no  
privacy barriers  
between them at all



Or the  
wait is so long  
that I can't  
even go to the  
bathroom.  
By the time  
I reach  
the stall it  
will be visible  
to everyone  
in the building.



IT'S  
AMAZING  
I NEVER  
DEVELOPED  
A URINARY  
TRACT  
INFECTION.

I TRIED TO HIDE IT AS LONG AS POSSIBLE

I lined my underwear with toilet paper, kept quiet about the cramps, and hid my stained shorts in my bed.

This lasted for three days.



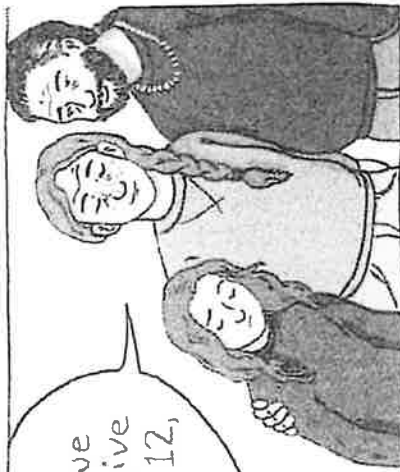
Did this just start?

A few days ago.



THE NEXT DAY

Just love you so much. We have something we were planning to give you when you turned 12, and this seems like a better time.



Mom...

What's up Sweetpea?

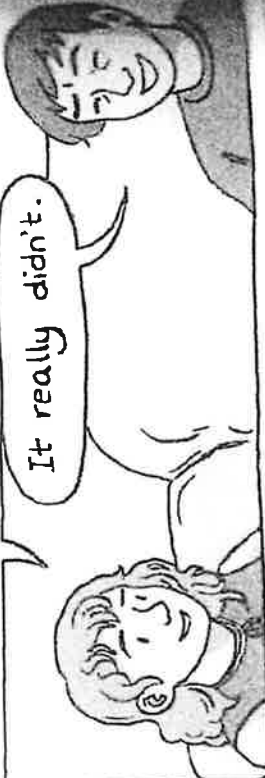


Why are you showing me this...?



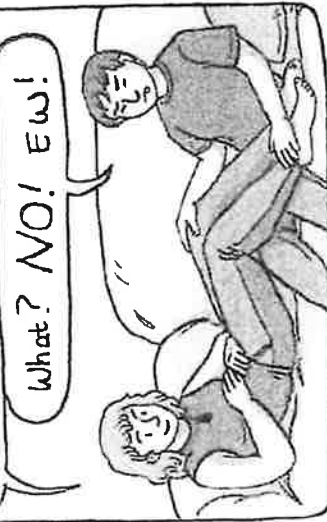
WHEN I FINALLY GOT OLD ENOUGH TO NOT BE EMBARRASSED TALKING ABOUT THIS STUFF WITH MY SISTER

It really never occurred to you to put something into your vagina, not even a finger?



It really didn't.

So you've never tasted yourself?



What? NO! EW!

WAIT you have



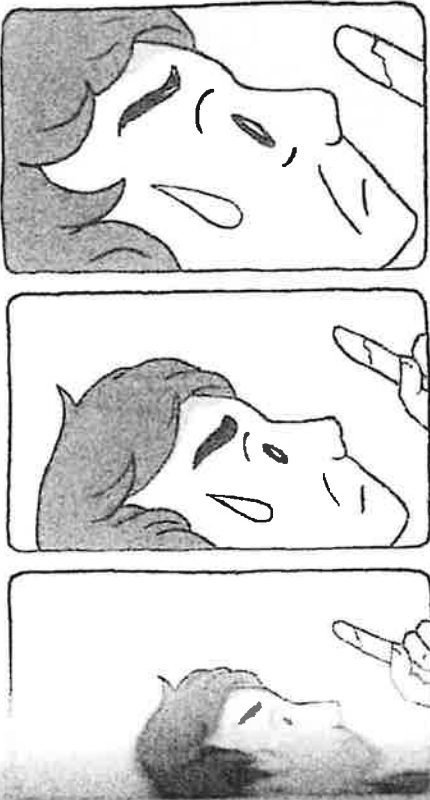
HAHA, of course! you should try.

AND SO:



Vagina

Slit



NOPE! CAN'T DO IT! I REFUSE!



I HAVE AN EXTREMELY LOW SEX DRIVE COMPARED TO OTHER PEOPLE PRETTY MUCH ALL OF MY FRIENDS. AS A TEEN I GOT BORED OF MASTURBATION



SO I QUIT FOR SIX MONTHS.

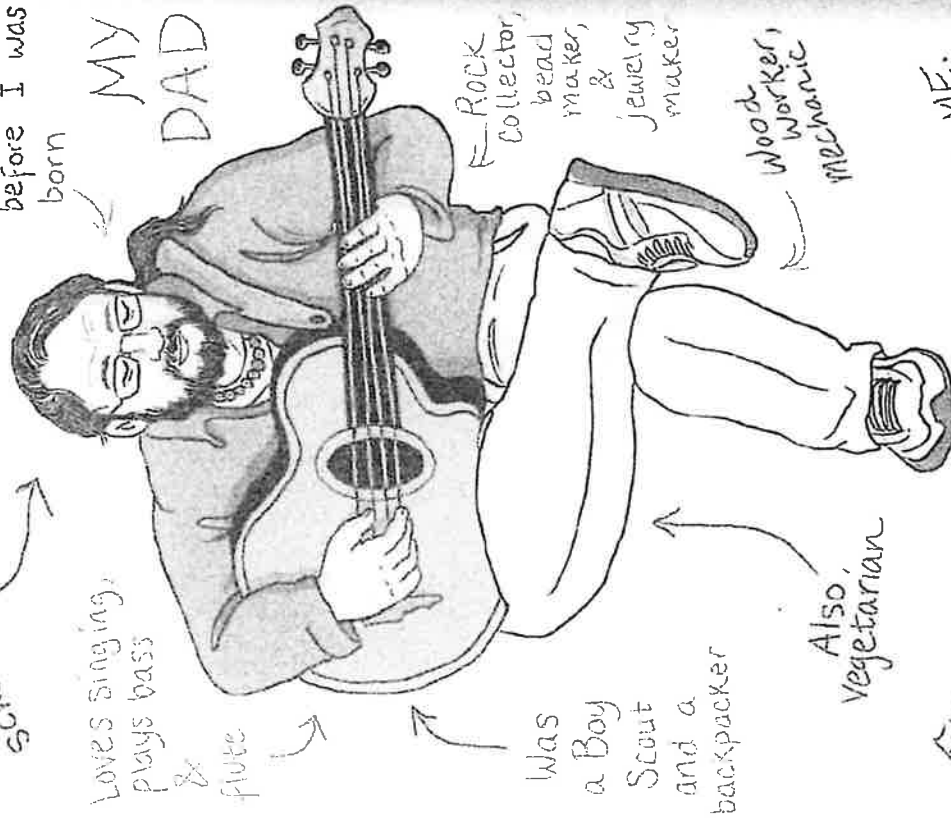
Degree in Physics

Waldorf elementary school teacher

Has had long hair since before I was born

Loves singing, plays bass & flute

MY DAD



Rock collector, bead maker, & jewelry maker

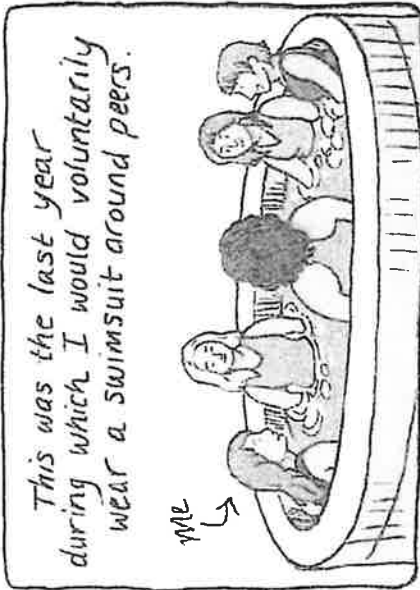
Woodworker, mechanic

Was a Boy Scout and a backpacker

Also, vegetarian

EITHER ON THEMSELVES OR ME.

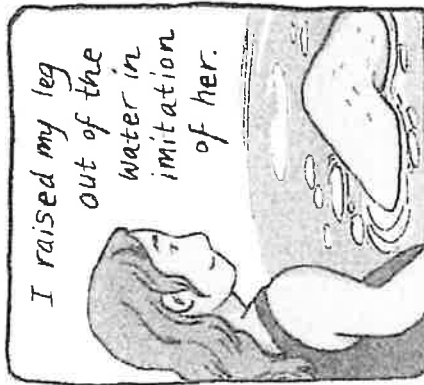
IN FIFTH GRADE I WENT TO A BIRTHDAY PARTY AT A HOUSE WITH A HOT TUB



This was the last year during which I would voluntarily wear a swimsuit around peers.

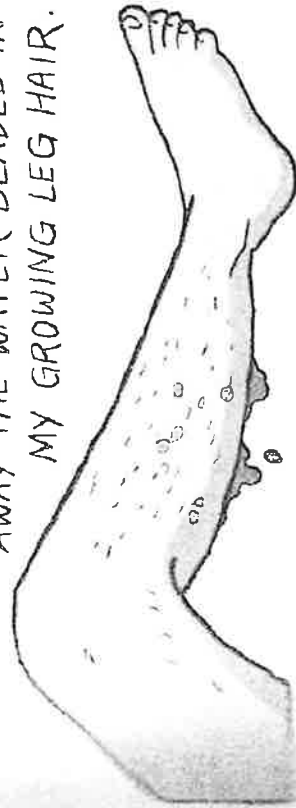


the most feminine and most important girl at the party raised her leg out of the water. Droplets rolled off her skin.



I raised my leg out of the water in imitation of her.

INSTEAD OF ROLLING SMOOTHLY AWAY THE WATER BEADED IN MY GROWING LEG HAIR.

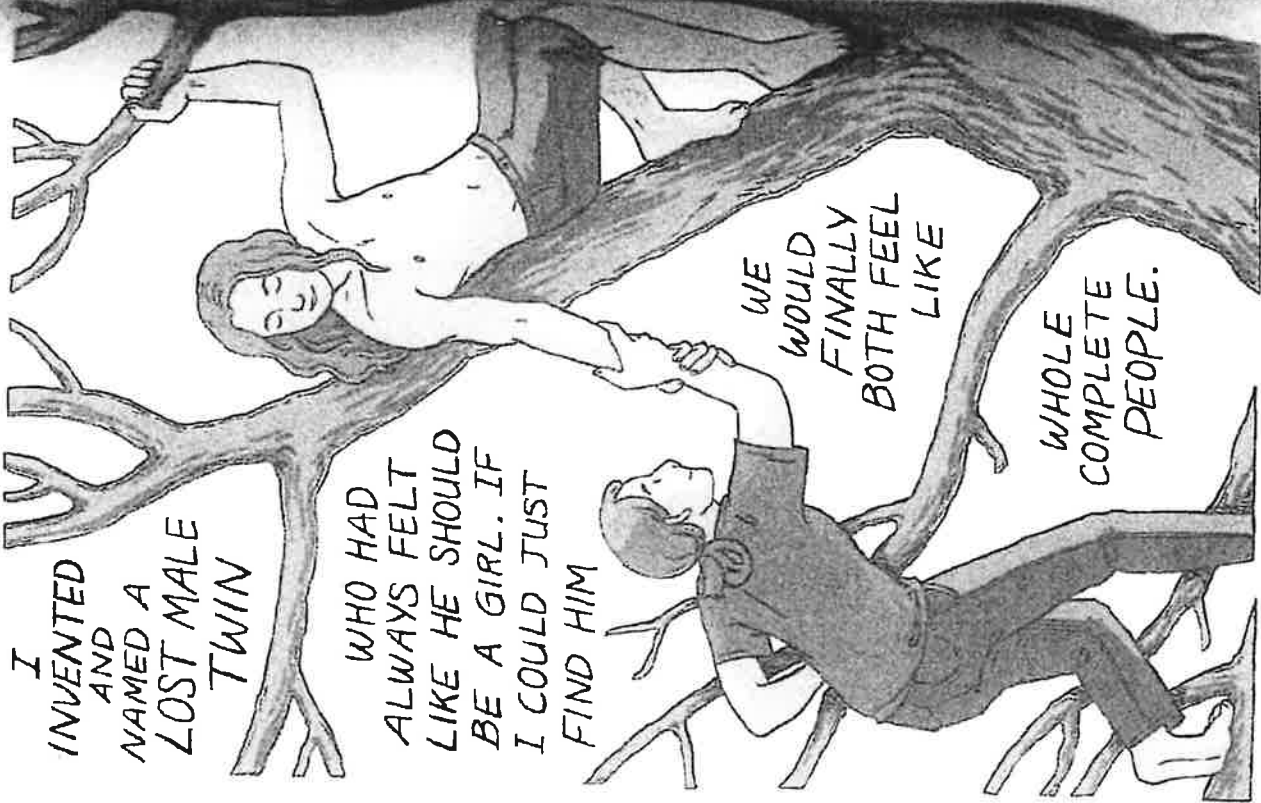


I  
INVENTED  
AND  
NAMED A  
LOST MALE  
TWIN

WHO HAD  
ALWAYS FELT  
LIKE HE SHOULD  
BE A GIRL. IF  
I COULD JUST  
FIND HIM

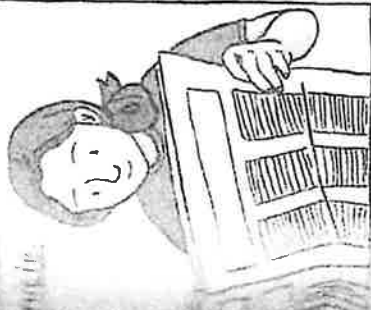
WE  
WOULD  
FINALLY  
BOTH FEEL  
LIKE

WHOLE  
COMPLETE  
PEOPLE.



# THE WORD "TRANSGENDER" ENLARGED MY VOCABULARY THE SUMMER BEFORE HIGH SCHOOL.

I read in a journal  
that on June 9, 2003  
there had been a  
series of articles on gay  
people in the San  
Francisco  
Chronicle.



Including a profile of  
a lesbian whose  
partner was taking  
testosterone and had  
switched to male  
pronouns.



the next year, I  
found articles on  
transgender magic in  
my mom's pagan  
magazines and  
she rants in  
a mix of feminist  
issues given to me  
by a friend.

But where do  
I fit into all  
of this?



The main trait I've always been

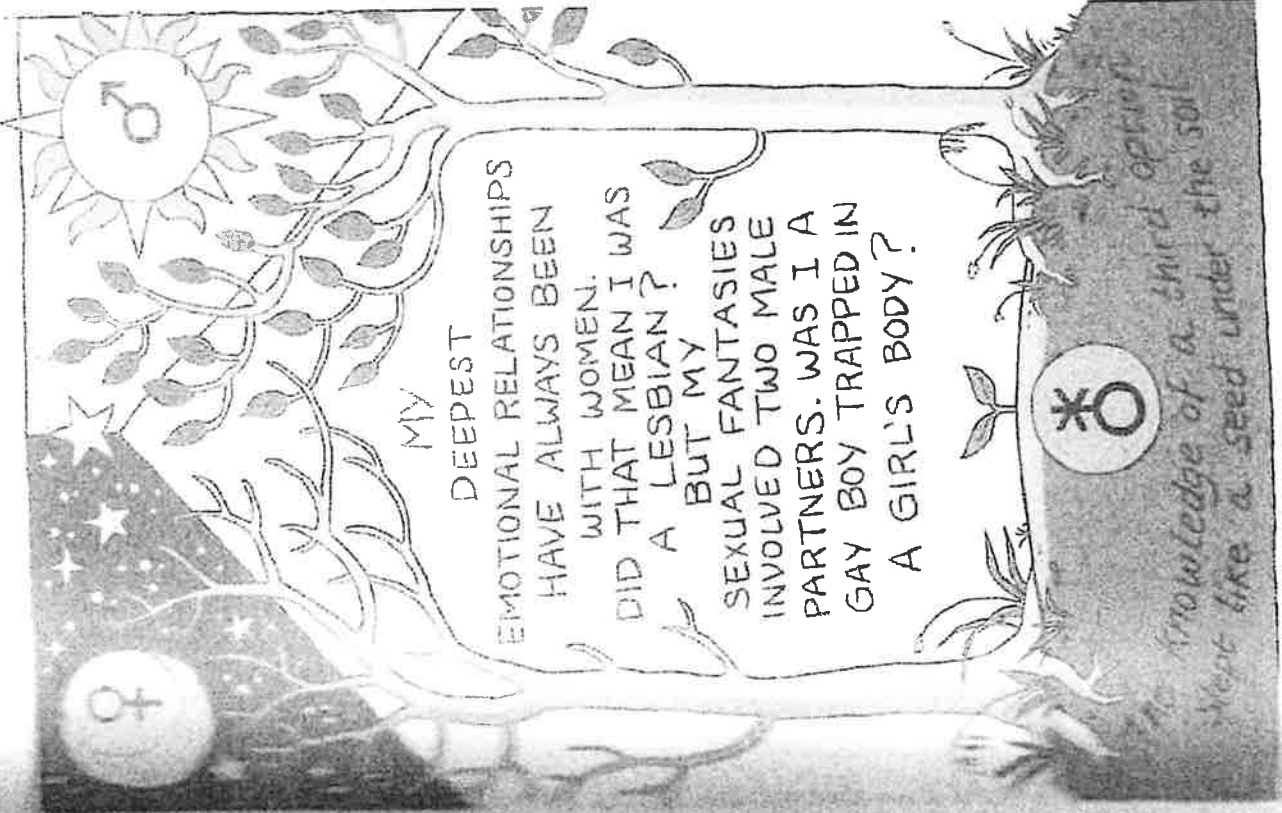
# ATTRACTED TO IS ANDROGYNY



WHICH MADE  
CATEGORIZING  
MY SEXUALITY  
DIFFICULT

•• DID THE  
GIRL WITH  
A BUZZ CUT  
CATCH MY EYE  
BECAUSE SHE  
WAS A GIRL  
OR BECAUSE SHE  
WAS DRESSED  
AS A BOY? •

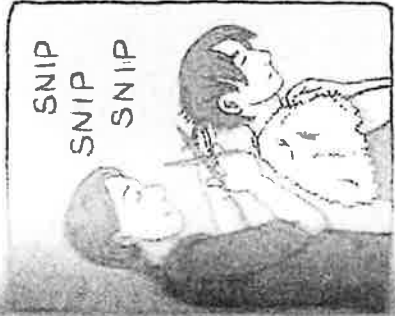
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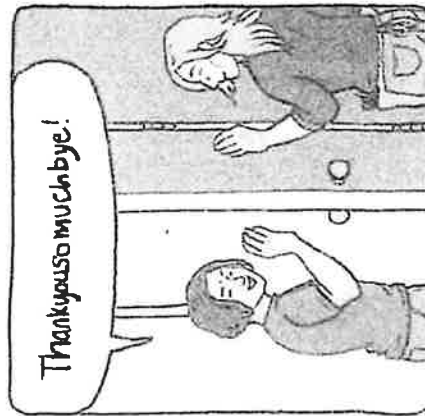
MY  
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EMOTIONAL RELATIONSHIPS  
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DID THAT MEAN I WAS  
A LESBIAN?  
BUT MY  
SEXUAL FANTASIES  
INVOLVED TWO MALE  
PARTNERS. WAS I A  
GAY BOY TRAPPED IN  
A GIRL'S BODY?



Knowledge of a third option  
isn't like a seed under the soil



SHE GAVE ME A BASIC A-LINE BOB. I HATED IT INSTANTLY.



I LOVED IT.



FAST-FORWARD: WE'VE BEEN DATING FOR TWO MONTHS. WE'VE MADE OUT, WE'VE HAD SEX, WE'VE MOVED ON TO SEXTING AT WORK.

I got a new strap-on harness today

I can't wait to put it on you it will fit my favorite dildo perfectly

you are going to look SO HOT

I can't wait to have your cock in my mouth - I'm going to give you the blow job of your life

then I want you inside me

This is the worst turned on I've ever been in my life!

DYING

BZZZ BZZZ



I can't do anything.

It was just better than it was only my imagination.

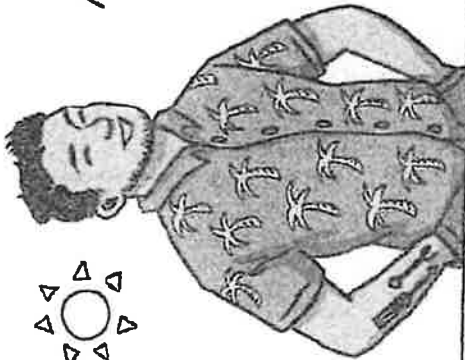
Hey, Z...

Let's try something else.

Of course. ♡



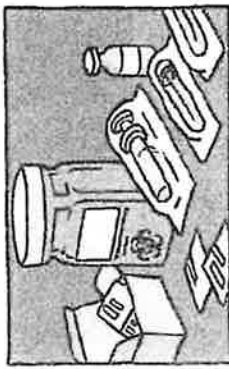
AT THANKSGIVING IN 2015, MY DAD BROUGHT HER NEW BOYFRIEND TO STAY WITH ME AND MY PARENTS FOR THE FIRST TIME



## AMILA COOPER

- An engineer at IBM
- Owner of many Hawaiian shirts
- A lover of camping and dogs

AMILA IS THE FIRST PERSON I'VE WANTED TO TAKE TESTOSTERONE.



So your period stopped—?

Months ago.

Wow. Amazing.

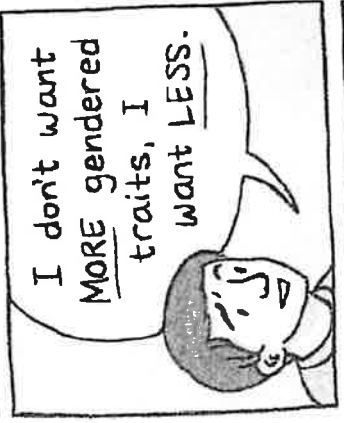


Why do you identify as nonbinary rather than as a trans man?

Because really, I want people to be confused about my gender at all times.



I don't want a beard, and I don't want my voice to change.



I don't want MORE gendered traits, I want LESS.

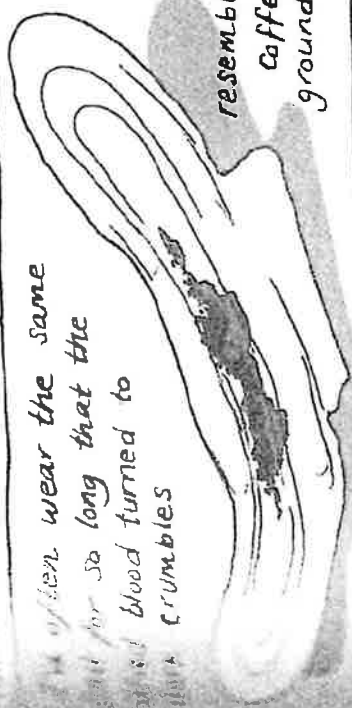


I magically makes you grow a dick though...

I'll let you know!

HIDING MY PERIOD BECAME  
EXTREMELY IMPORTANT TO ME.  
FOR TWO ENTIRE SCHOOL YEARS I SUCCESSFULLY  
WOULD EVER USING A SCHOOL BATHROOM.

I often wear the same  
pair for so long that the  
stained blood turned to  
dark crumbs



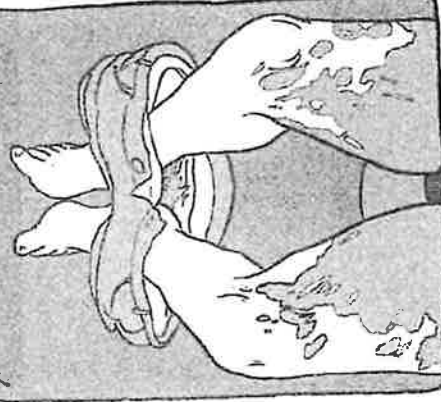
resembling  
coffee  
grounds.

ON THIS DAY A HUGE NUMBER OF MY  
NIGHTMARES INVOLVE MENSTRUAL BLOOD.

I feel the familiar  
sensation of hot blood  
pouring from my body—

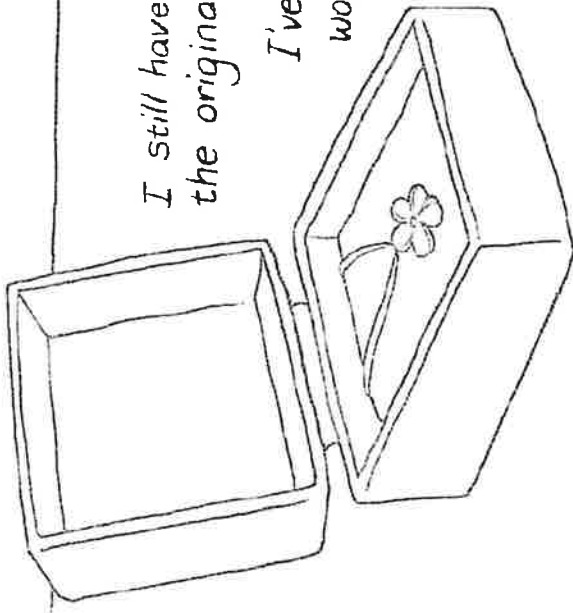


When I make it to the  
bathroom, I'll find my  
legs smeared with blood  
from waist to knees.

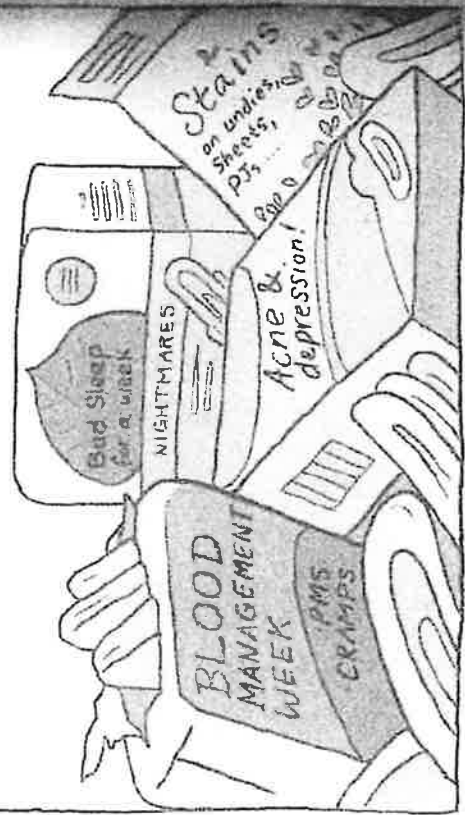


I still have it in  
the original box.

I've never  
worn it.



I couldn't see this new development  
as a reason to celebrate.



I WAS GRUMPY AND EMBARRASSED TO ENCOUNTER YET ANOTHER THING I WAS APPARENTLY SUPPOSED TO KNOW BUT DIDN'T.



This was both emotionally and literally true. AT 11 YEARS OLD I HAD NOT YET LEARNED TO READ.



I STARTED AFTER-SCHOOL TUTORING BUT MY PROGRESS WAS FRUSTRATINGLY SLOW. I HAD TWO CONSOLATIONS:



# LATER, TALKING TO MY BEST FRIEND

I hate it! I hate having boobs and a period. I hate buying bras and underwear.

I hate feeling like I have to shave my armpits and have a perfect tan...

I hate feeling like I'm supposed to wear makeup and like boys and

## ACT GIRLY!

Maia-- you are of the least bit people I know

Even if you did wear a dress and a full makeup-- even then, I don't think people would find you girly

**\*SNIFF\***

Thank you.

# THE DREAMS I HAD IN HIGH SCHOOL

One night after I read Sandman for the first time, I decided to ask Morpheus to send me a good dream...

## IN THE MORNING

I then dreamed about having "massive painful boner that lasted all day."

Huh

Nice!

After time passed of I got up with a groomed

My first beard ever and I'm already going GRAY?!



## Gender Queer Reviews



[Booklist Reviews 2022 June #1](#)

[PW Reviews 2019 February #4](#)

[SLJ Reviews 2019 July](#)

### **Booklist Reviews 2022 June #1**

*\*Starred Review\** Vulnerable and honest, *Gender Queer* grapples with issues of identity and sexuality in ways that highlight how messy and painful but ultimately vindicating the process of understanding and valuing yourself can be. Kobabe shares details of eir childhood, struggling with puberty, crushes, and teen sexual fantasies. Many of the anecdotes resonate with the general experience of uncertainty and experimentation common to kids growing up; other pieces portray the unique experience of knowing you are different but lacking the language to express how and the isolation wrought by an absence of validating representation. Kobabe relates the slow progress of eir nonbinary journey—finding pronouns that fit, worrying about coming out, and generally discovering ways to celebrate eir true self. The art highlights the core internal journey with frequent simple backgrounds centering Kobabe’s avatar as e struggles with relationships, labels, and shopping. This deluxe edition adds a heartfelt intro by She-Ra and *Lumberjanes* creator ND Stevenson and an afterword from the author detailing both eir fear of pushback and the joyful reactions from readers. Also included are numerous process images and text, showing the transition from online single panel comics to detailed, full-color images. Highly recommended reading for those on their own journey of exploration or those supporting the explorers in their own lives. *Gender Queer* exists so a new generation can see the words and experiences to help them feel whole and seen. Grades 9-12. Copyright 2022 Booklist Reviews.

[Go to Top](#)

### **PW Reviews 2019 February #4**

This heartfelt graphic memoir relates, with sometimes painful honesty, the experience of growing up non-gender-conforming. From a very young age, Kobabe is unsure whether to claim a lesbian/gay, bisexual, or even transgender identity: “I don’t want to be a girl. I don’t want to be a boy either. I just want to be myself.” Kobabe comes of age having to navigate expressions of identity such as clothing and haircuts, with fraught attempts at romantic and sexual entanglements. Eventually, Kobabe’s supportive sister concludes: “I think you’re a genderless person.” (Kobabe: “She knew before I did.”) Kobabe continues to explore the challenges of a nonbinary identity, including the use of alternate pronouns (in Kobabe’s case, e/em/eir), the trauma of cervical exams, refuting misplaced concerns from a loving relative who believes “female to male” transgenderism could be rooted in a form of misogyny, and learning that the term autoandrophilia actually applies “for me.” Intermixed are lighthearted episodes relating Kobabe’s devotion to LGBTQ-inspired *Lord of the Rings* fan fiction and hero worship of flamboyant ice-skating champion Johnny Weir. Kobabe is a straightforward cartoonist who uses the medium skillfully (if not particularly stylishly), incorporating ample cheery colors, with a script that’s refreshingly smooth and nondidactic for the topic. This entertaining memoir-as-guide holds crossover appeal for mature teens (with a note there’s some sexually explicit content) and is sure to spark valuable discussions at home and in classrooms. (May.)

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### **SLJ Reviews 2019 July**

Gr 9 Up—Kobabe, who uses the pronouns e, em, and eir, was assigned female at birth but never felt that this designation fit. As e grew up, e learned about the spectrum of gender designations and settled on nonbinary as the best descriptor. E came out to eir family as nonbinary and asexual and found that eir family supported em however e identified. In this memoir, Kobabe chronicles eir life from the time e was

very young through eir coming of age and adulthood. E describes common situations from the perspective of someone who is asexual and nonbinary: starting a new school, getting eir period, dating, attending college. The muted earth tones and calm blues match the hopeful tone and measured pacing. Matter-of-fact descriptions of gynecological exams and the use of sex toys will be enlightening for those who may not have access to this information elsewhere. VERDICT A book to be savored rather than devoured, this memoir will resonate with teens, especially fans of Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home* and Mason Deaver's *I Wish You All the Best*. It's also a great resource for those who identify as nonbinary or asexual as well as for those who know someone who identifies that way and wish to better understand.—Jenni Frencham, Indiana University, Bloomington  
Copyright 2019 School Library Journal.





Ms. Sandee Tibbett

April 1, 2024

Dear Ms. Tibbett,

Thank you for sharing your concerns with us regarding *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe. Per our process for reconsideration requests (described in the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy), I have reviewed your request with Collection Development Manager Debi Stears and am writing to share with you the results of our review:

In your Citizen Request for Reconsideration, you ask us to move *Gender Queer* from its current place in our Adult nonfiction collection and place it "in the newly formed section called 'Parental Discretion Section' with oversight on who is checking it out from the librarians." You raise the concern that "the book promotes the ideas of body mutilation and hormone therapy and suggests that altering one's body is a valid and necessary step to resolve issues related to gender dysphoria" and that it "lacks a balanced discussion on the risks associated with these procedures."

At Washoe County Library it is our goal to offer a plurality of viewpoints in the collection, leaving it to the individual to determine which items best meet their needs. You may find that the following titles from our collection provide the perspective you find lacking in *Gender Queer*:

Miriam Groosman's *Lost in Trans Nation: A Child Psychiatrist's Guide Out of the Madness* "implores parents to reject the advice of gender experts and politicians and trust their guts – their parental instincts in the face of an onslaught of ideologically driven misinformation that steers them and their children toward risky decisions they may end up mourning for the rest of their lives."

Abigail Shrier's *Irreversible Damage: The Transgender Craze Seducing Our Daughters* is described by the publisher as an essential book that "will help you understand what the trans craze is and how you can inoculate your child against it – or how to retrieve her from this dangerous path."

Joyce Helen's *Trans: When Ideology Meets Reality* is described by *Kirkus Reviews* as "offering carefully researched analyses of the scientific view of human sexual dimorphism, the psychology of gender dysphoria, and the medical and personal tolls associated with transitioning" and that a "refusal to acknowledge biology has, among other injustices, caused enormous and unnecessary harm to many children and threatened safe spaces for women."

Preston M. Sprinkle's *Embodied: Transgender Identities, the Church & What the Bible Has to Say*, according to its publisher, "fills the great need for Christians to speak into the confusing and emotionally charged questions surrounding the transgender conversation."

Ryan T. Anderson's *When Harry Became Sally: Responding to the Transgender Moment* is promoted by Encounter Books as offering a "balanced approach to the policy issues, a nuanced vision of human embodiment, and a sober and honest survey of the human costs of getting human nature wrong. He reveals a grim contrast between the media's sunny depiction and the often sad realities of gender-identity struggles. He introduces readers to people who tried to 'transition' but found themselves no better off. Especially troubling is the suffering felt by adults who were encouraged to transition as children but later came to regret it. And there is a reason that many do regret it. As Anderson shows, the most helpful therapies focus not on achieving the impossible changing bodies to conform to thoughts and feelings on helping people accept and even embrace the truth about their bodies and reality."

In your Request for Reconsideration, you suggested the book *Gender: A Graphic Novel* by Meg-John Barker. We always appreciate hearing from our users when they find an area of our collection that could be more inclusive; we've ordered a copy of *Gender: A Graphic Novel* to add to our collection.

The Washoe County Library System's Collection Development and Management Policy describes the library's support of Intellectual Freedom as providing a "neutral environment in which individuals and their interests are brought together with the universe of ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions...The Library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some. Only the individual can define what materials are consistent with her/his own values. Individuals can apply those values to the use of library materials only for themselves. Parents and legal guardians have the responsibility for monitoring their children's use of library materials." Parents who prefer that their children not have access to certain materials should so advise their children.

Librarians do not provide oversight over which materials might be appropriate for a user; we leave that to the individual and in the case of minors, let parents determine for their own children which materials are acceptable. These "parental discretion" principles apply to materials across all collections.

After considering your request, we've concluded that *Gender Queer* meets the requirements of the Collection Development and Management Policy and should be retained in the Adult section of the Washoe County Library System.

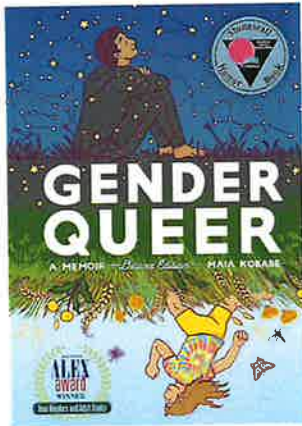
Thank you for your interest in the collections of Washoe County Library System.

Sincerely,



Jeff Scott

Library Director



***Gender Queer: A Memoir* by Maia Kobabe**

Oni Press, 2019

ISBN: 9781549304002 (Graphic Novel)

Grade Range: 9 and Up (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

**BOOK SYNOPSIS**

In 2014, Maia Kobabe, who uses e/em/eir pronouns, thought that a comic of reading statistics would be the last autobiographical comic e would ever write. At the time, it was the only thing e felt comfortable with strangers knowing about em. Now, *Gender Queer* is here. Maia's intensely cathartic autobiography charts eir journey of self-identity, which includes the mortification and confusion of adolescent crushes, grappling with how to come out to family and society, bonding with friends over erotic gay fanfiction, and facing the trauma and fundamental violation of pap smears.

Started as a way to explain to eir family what it means to be nonbinary and asexual, *Gender Queer* is more than a personal story: it is a useful and touching guide on gender identity—what it means and how to think about it—for advocates, friends, and humans everywhere.

**REVIEWS AND PRAISE**

★ "Vulnerable and honest, *Gender Queer* grapples with issues of identity and sexuality in ways that highlight how messy and painful but ultimately vindicating the process of understanding and valuing yourself can be. [...] Highly recommended reading for those on their own journey of exploration or those supporting the explorers in their own lives. *Gender Queer* exists so a new generation can see the words and experiences to help them feel whole and seen." – *Booklist*, **starred review**

★ "A book to be savored rather than devoured, this memoir will resonate with teens, especially fans of Alison Bechdel's *Fun Home* and Mason Deaver's *I Wish You All the Best*. It's also a great resource for those who identify as nonbinary or asexual as well as for those who know someone who identifies that way and wish to better understand." – *School Library Journal*, **starred review**

"This heartfelt graphic memoir relates, with sometimes painful honesty, the experience of growing up non-gender-conforming. From a very young age, Kobabe is unsure whether to claim a lesbian/gay, bisexual, or even transgender identity: 'I don't want to be a girl. I don't want to be a boy either. I just want to be myself.'" – *Publishers Weekly*

"In the gorgeous and candid graphic memoir *Gender Queer*, e illustrates an aching journey toward reconciliation with being nonbinary and asexual." – *Shelf Awareness*

Updated 02/14/2024

Oni Press

UniteAgainstBookBans@ala.org

"Kobabe's drawings, colored by sister Phoebe Kobabe, casts eir life and truths in splendorous, vivid light. And the relationship between the siblings on the page is one of *Gender Queer's* sweetest elements. Often scared of what lies ahead, Maia confides in Phoebe, a lesbian, about eir queer hopes and fears, and is met each time with the gracious enthusiasm of a sister who has eir back: "I lucked out so hard in the sibling lottery." A challenging yet heartwarming memoir, *Gender Queer* succeeds on all fronts." – Dave Wheeler

"More than simply a memoir, the book is designed to explain the very concept of being non-binary, beginning with the author's first memories of gender and ending with the discovery of Spivak pronouns (e, em, eir) and eir first steps towards getting the people around em to accept and understand said pronouns. [...] Kobabe's art is very readable and, above all, accommodating. E lays out eir personal history with an enviable degree of candor. [...] Part of the book details eir sexual history, as well as a series of terrifying and painful trips to the OBGYN, and even in the most sensitive areas Kobabe's art and storytelling remains both personable and clear." – *The Comics Journal*

### AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

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- 2019 Howard County (MD) Public Schools Best of the Year - High School
- 2019 New York Public Library's 50 Best Books for Teens, selection
- 2020 Alex Award
- 2020 Stonewall Award Nonfiction Honor Book
- 2020 ALA Rainbow Project Book List, selection
- 2020 YALSA Best Books List, selection
- 2020 YALSA Great Graphic Novels for Teens, selection
- 2020 Texas Library Association: Maverick Graphic Novel Reading List, selection
- 2021 Garden State Teen Book Award, nominee
- 2021 Chicago Public Schools Great Graphic Novels, selection
- Denver Public Schools Top 100 High School Books, 2020-2021
- 2021 Jefferson County (KY) Public Schools Recommended Reading Grades 9-12, selection
- 2021 School Library Journal's 17 Immersive Graphic Novels for Teens, selection

### MEDIA AND RESOURCES

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- ["Opinion | Schools are banning my book. But queer kids need queer stories."](#) Maia Kobabe, *Washington Post*, October 29, 2021
- ["I Made the Most Banned Book in America"](#) by Maia Kobabe, *The Nib*, September 1, 2023
- ["Access to Library Resources and Services Regardless of Sex, Gender Identity, Gender Expression, or Sexual Orientation: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights."](#) American Library Association
- ["Virginia Judge Rejects Obscenity Proceedings Against Gender Queer and A Court of Mist and Fury."](#) ACLU of Virginia, August 30, 2022
- [Final Order Dismissing Proceedings & Declaring Section 18.2-384 Unconstitutional in re: Gender Queer, a Memoir, Case No. CL22-1985,](#) August 30, 2022

### RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

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- [Review Committee Recommendation - Gender Queer: A Memoir,](#) Fairfax County Public Schools
- [Statement of Support for Gender Queer by Maia Kobabe, Comic Book Legal Defense Fund,](#) October 17, 2021

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Oni Press

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### **AUTHOR STATEMENT**

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“Queer youth are often forced to look outside their own homes, and outside the education system, to find information on who they are. Removing or restricting queer books in libraries and schools is like cutting a lifeline for queer youth, who might not yet even know what terms to ask Google to find out more about their own identities, bodies and health.” – Maia Kobabe

### **\*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES**

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A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book’s intended use.

Updated 02/14/2024

Oni Press

UniteAgainstBookBans@ala.org

Book Challenge – Sandee Tibbett regarding  
Flamer by Mike Curato



**CITIZEN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY  
MATERIALS AND ARTWORK**

Author/Artist: Curato, Mike

Title: Flamer

Book  Periodical  Other  Publisher/Date 9/1/2020 \_\_\_\_\_

Please state the reason for your request. I am grateful this book is located in the adult section of our library. Unfortunately, this is a graphic novel or comic style written in a format to attract the pre-teen and teen audience. The subject matter depicts a young teen boy at Boy Scouts camp who is getting ready to start high school. The book is full of unnecessary sexual references and depicts several sexual and homosexual situations in an attempt to normalize and promote immoral behavior. The material depicts constant bullying with sexual overtones without providing any type of correction or positive alternative to the disgusting behavior. Racism and homophobia is rampant throughout the book with multiple negative references about Asians and faggots. The material depicts a group of boys masturbating together in a tent. Why? This material is pornographic and it teaches hate and division. It degrades girls, Asians, gay people, and religion. This material should not be accessible by a child. It is poison.

Have you read/viewed/listened to this work/exhibition in its entirety? Yes

What are the positive points of this material? It depicts Aiden turning to his faith for help with his questions. It encourages the reader to look deep within their soul and to be honest with themselves, to acknowledge their strengths and to love themselves because they have value and suicide is not the answer.

What would you like the library to do about this work? I would like the access to the book be supervised with either the parent having to be present to check out the book and/or the parent being alerted by an email notification that the book was checked out by their child.

In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject? Either Way: Story of a Gay Kid by Sandra Levins

Have you read the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy? Yes

Have you read the Washoe County Library Public Use of Bulletin Boards, Exhibit Spaces and Display Spaces Policy? Yes

Request initiated by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
State \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent:  
X Yourself  
X Organization (circle) Wake Up Washoe County ~ Nevada Patriot ~ Local Church ~ Other

Date: 11/8/23 Signature of Patron: [Signature]

Date: 12-20-23 Received by Staff Member: [Signature]

# Washoe County School District Library Book Removal Request

Title: Flamer

Author: Curato, Mike

School Location(s)(but not limited to): Damonte Ranch, Galena, Hug, Incline High, McQueen, North Valleys, Reed, Reno, Sparks High, Wooster

Stated Reading Level/ Interest Level :3.2/YA

Location and Date Book was obtained: Washoe County Library

Location (Library, Amazon, etc.)

Date 11/8/2023

Check all that apply:

1.  Inappropriate for the location/age group:
- reading level
  - subject matter
  - gender ideology
  - portrayal of violence, brutality, or abuse
  - vulgar language
  - sexual content

2.  Sexually explicit and unsuitable for age group/location:  written and/or  in graphics
- depicts pedophilia
  - depicts fellatio or cunnilingus
  - depicts the act of sexual intercourse
  - depicts masturbation

3.  Appeals to prurient interests (i.e., an erotic, lascivious, unhealthy, degrading, shameful interest in nudity, sex, or excretion)

4.  Lacks serious literary, artistic, political, scientific value for minors

5.  This book meets the criteria outlined in the Miller Test for obscenity: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/obscenity>  
(If boxes 2, 3, and 4 are checked, then check box 5.)

6.  Discriminatory, prejudice, derogatory, or demeaning writing based in race, sex, religion, or creed

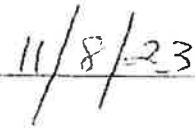
Attached:

54 number of page(s) with documented objections and/or excerpts from the book.

Verified Reader:

  
Signature

Dated



Title: Flamer

Author: Curato, Mike

Page in Book(s):

Photograph(s) included YES NO

Written description:

This is a graphic novel or comic style written in a format to attract the pre-teen and teen audience. The subject matter depicts a young teen boy at Boy Scouts camp who is getting ready to start high school. The book is full of unnecessary sexual references and depicts several sexual and homosexual situations in an attempt to normalize and promote immoral behavior.

The material depicts constant bullying with sexual overtones without providing any type of correction or a positive alternative to the disgusting behavior. Racism and homophobia is rampant throughout the book with multiple negative references about Asians and faggots.

The material depicts a group of boys masturbating together in a tent. How is masturbating as a group considered educational? Is that what is considered male bonding? This material is pornographic and does not belong in the hands of a child or in our schools. It teaches hate and division. It degrades girls, Asians, gay people, and religion. The book constantly talks about hard dicks, so all a kid is thinking about while reading this material is sex. This material is dangerous to young and impressionable minds. It is poison. This is the type of material that warps a child a mind so they think it is okay to molest younger children.

The book introduces the concept of dressing and "feeling" like a girl to confuse the mind and to plant seeds of doubt about their gender. The book uses violence as an answer to stop the bullying. The book suggests that being different is wrong. It depicts the main character being burned at the stake for being different. This is the wrong message to be sending to a developing mind.

There is a good message at the end where the main character turns to his faith and realizes he has value, and is loved but how the message is delivered is not healthy. This book does not belong in our Washoe County schools and needs to be removed immediately.



"THIS BOOK WILL SAVE LIVES."

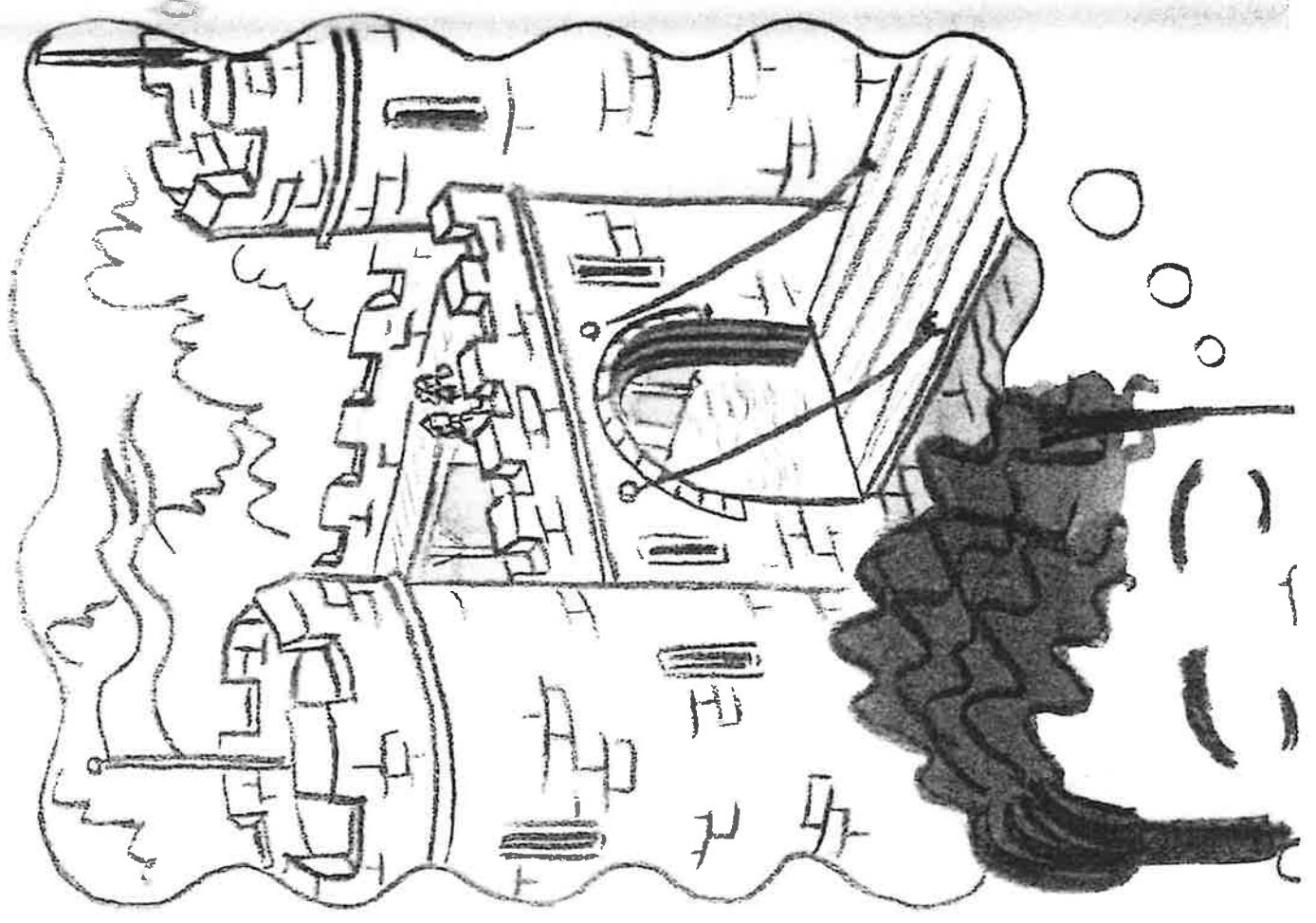
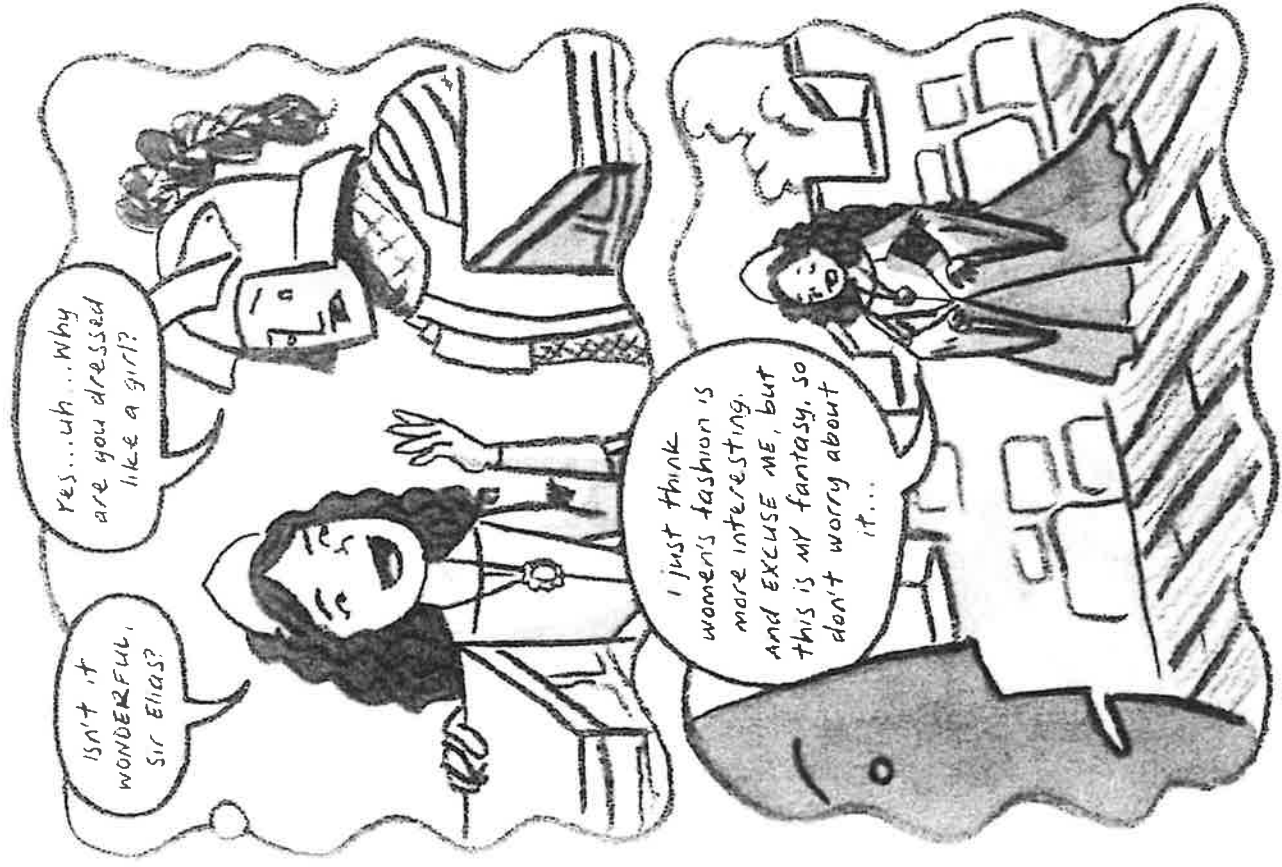
WASHOE COUNTY LIBRARY - NV of National Book Award Finalist *Hey, Kiddo*



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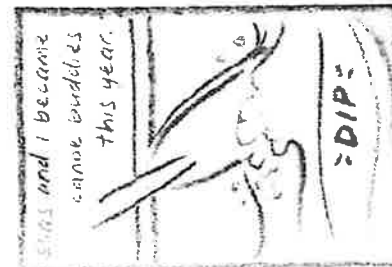
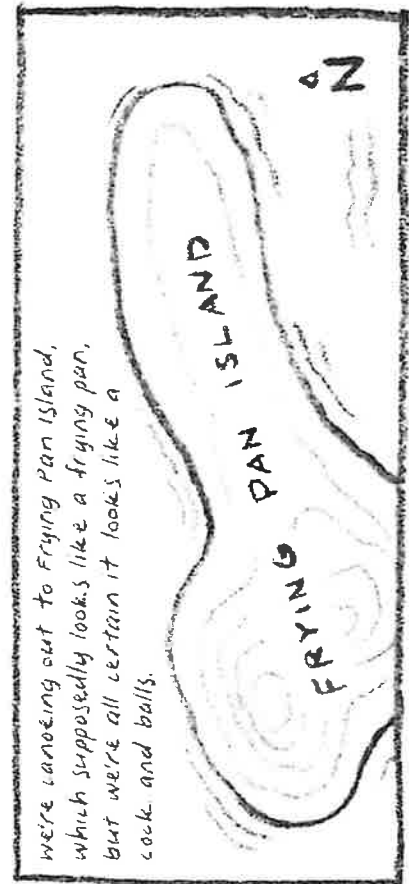
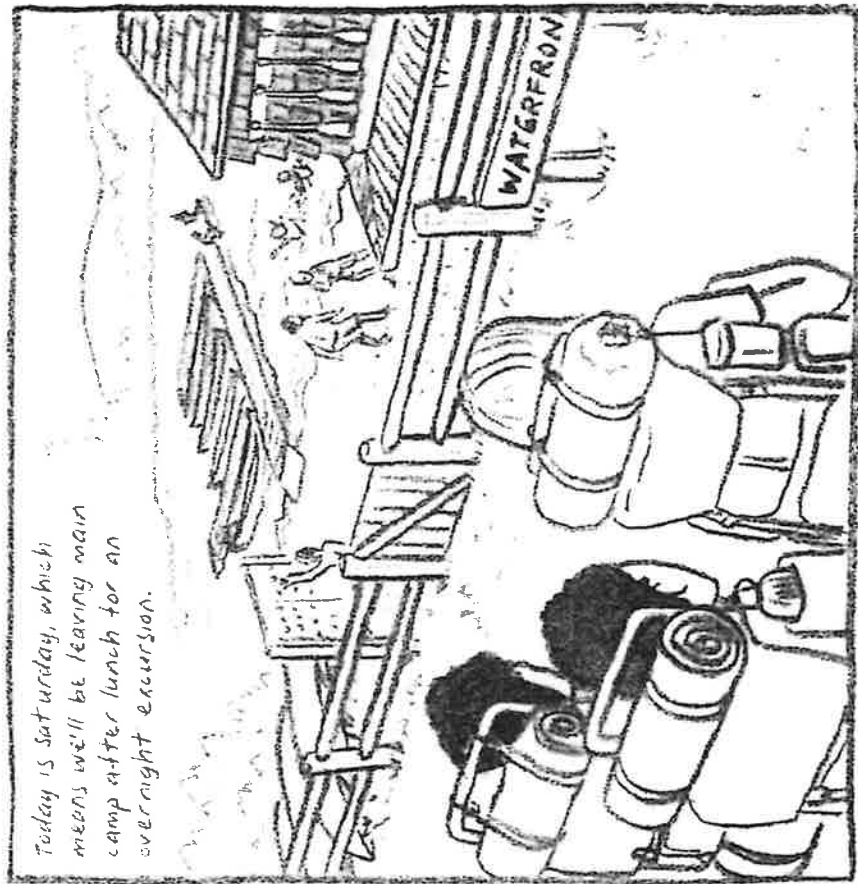


MIKE CURATO









Aug 24, 1995

Dear Aiden:

Well I have had quite a day. I saw Danny & Connor at the mall. He walked past me while I was waving, like as if I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving.

I was waving, I was waving, I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving.

I was waving, I was waving, I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving.

I was waving, I was waving, I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving. I was waving, I was waving, I was waving.

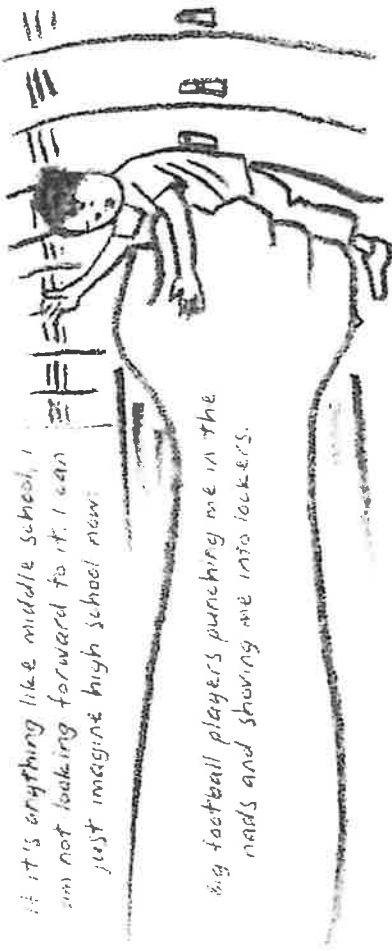
Bye-bye,  
Violet



it is so unfair how quickly the summer went by.



Why did violet have to go and remind me that I start high school in two weeks?

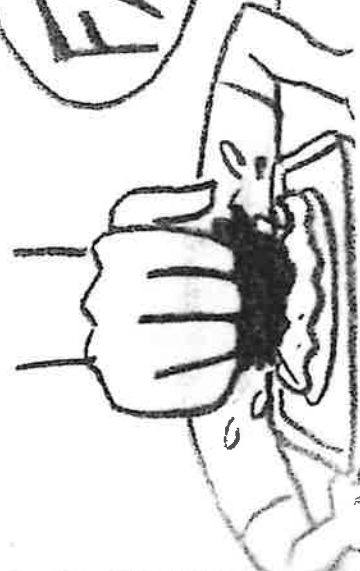


It's anything like middle school, I am not looking forward to it. I can just imagine high school now.

Big football players punching me in the nads and shoving me into lockers.

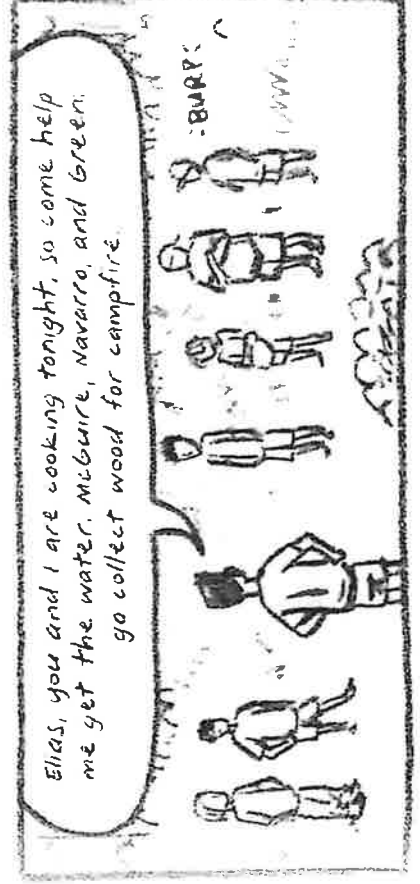
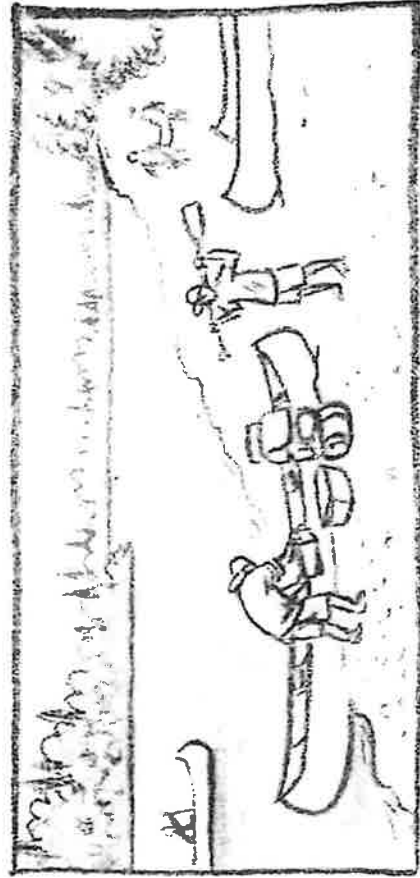
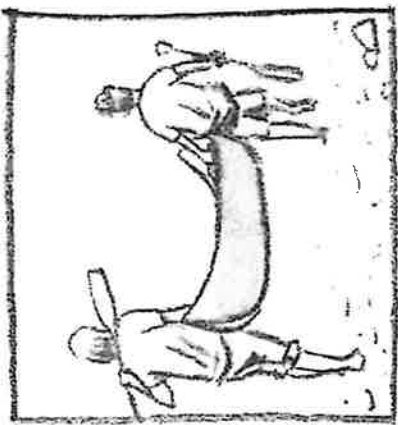
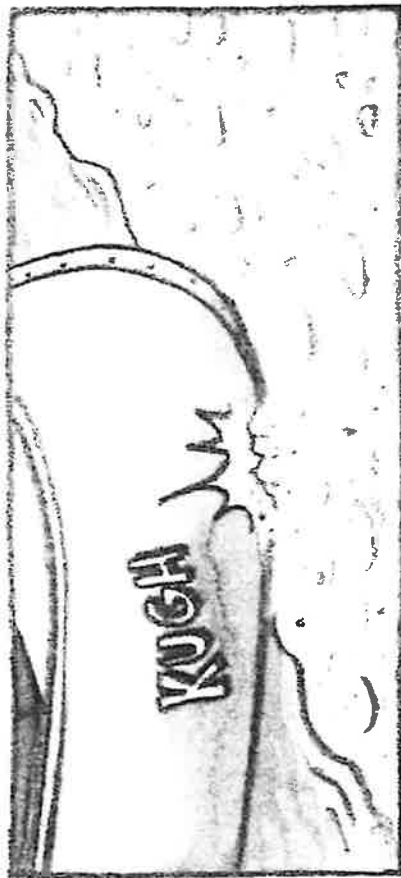
medium-sized football players tripping me in the cafeteria and pushing my face into my lunch.

And that one football player with a size complex calling me a



FAGGOTS!

at every possible turn.





I feel like, if I keep doing this, I'm getting some extra credit.



Catholicism has a lot of rules, it's hard to keep up.



So... I learn about things I've been avoiding. This is a new time and never knew existed.



So it can't hurt to have some brownie points in my back pocket.



Father Danilo said I should consider the priesthood, but I don't think I'm holy enough to be a priest.



Also... I want to have sex, someday, when I'm married. I want to know what it feels like.



I wonder if priests jack off.



Damn! I'm so unholy...



Damn! I'm so unholy...



I've served Mass almost every weekend since I started and lots of wedding, baptisms, I serve at funerals.

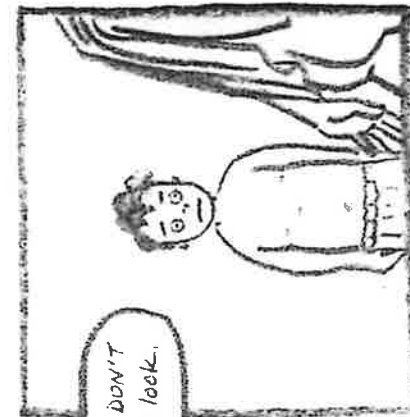
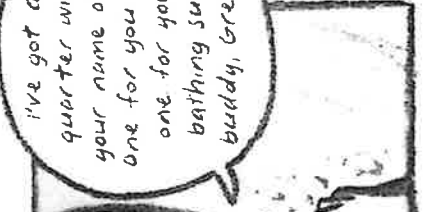
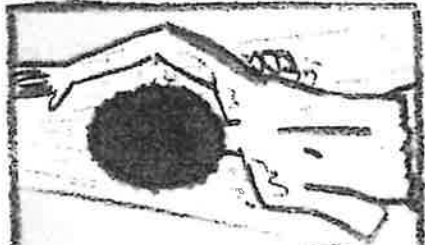


The first time I did, I cried a little.

It's really overwhelming to be in a room with lots of strangers weeping (and the coffin doesn't help).



Last year, my neighbor Carrie died of cancer. She was just ten. The church was packed. Everyone had come to say goodbye. I wondered if she even knew all of them. I've never seen someone so... loved.





## AFTERWORD

In writing a word of thank you to my teacher, I realized that I had not only learned from my personal experiences, but also from the experiences of others. I had learned from my own experiences, but also from the experiences of others. I had learned from my own experiences, but also from the experiences of others. I had learned from my own experiences, but also from the experiences of others.

However, there were other people who had helped me. I had learned from my own experiences, but also from the experiences of others. I had learned from my own experiences, but also from the experiences of others. I had learned from my own experiences, but also from the experiences of others. I had learned from my own experiences, but also from the experiences of others.

There are many other people who had helped me. I had learned from my own experiences, but also from the experiences of others. I had learned from my own experiences, but also from the experiences of others. I had learned from my own experiences, but also from the experiences of others. I had learned from my own experiences, but also from the experiences of others.

Mike Curato

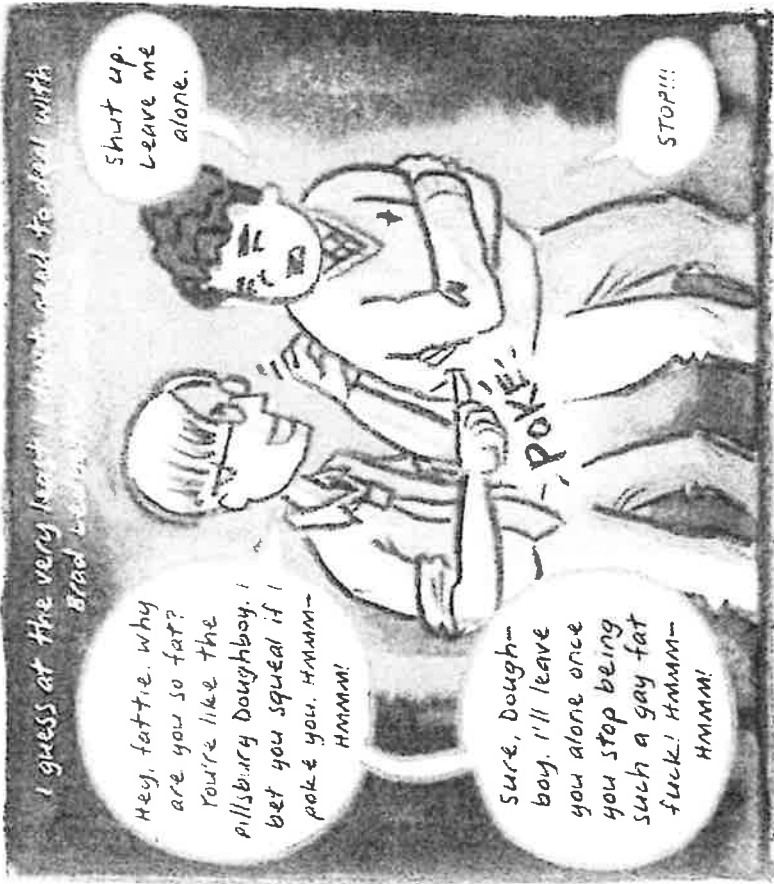
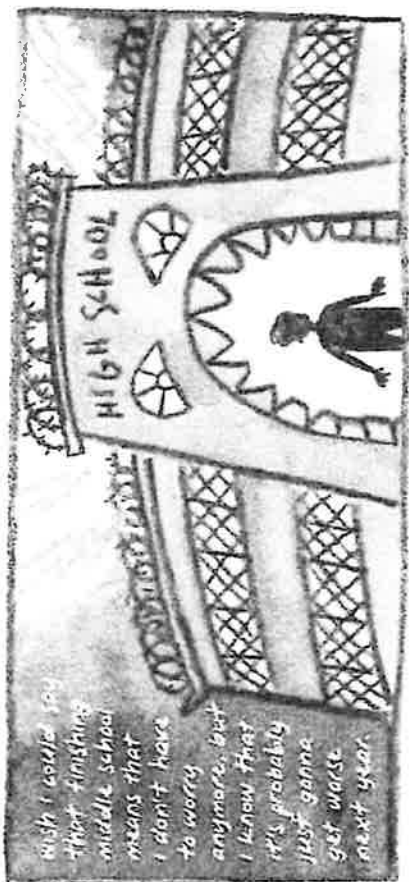
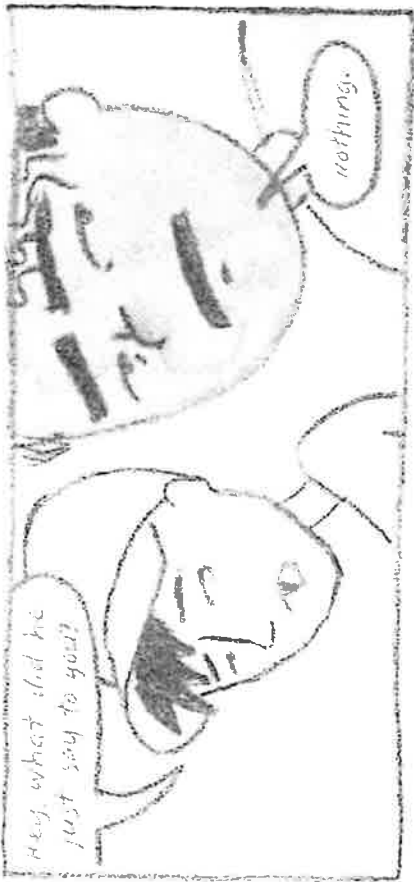
## RESOURCES

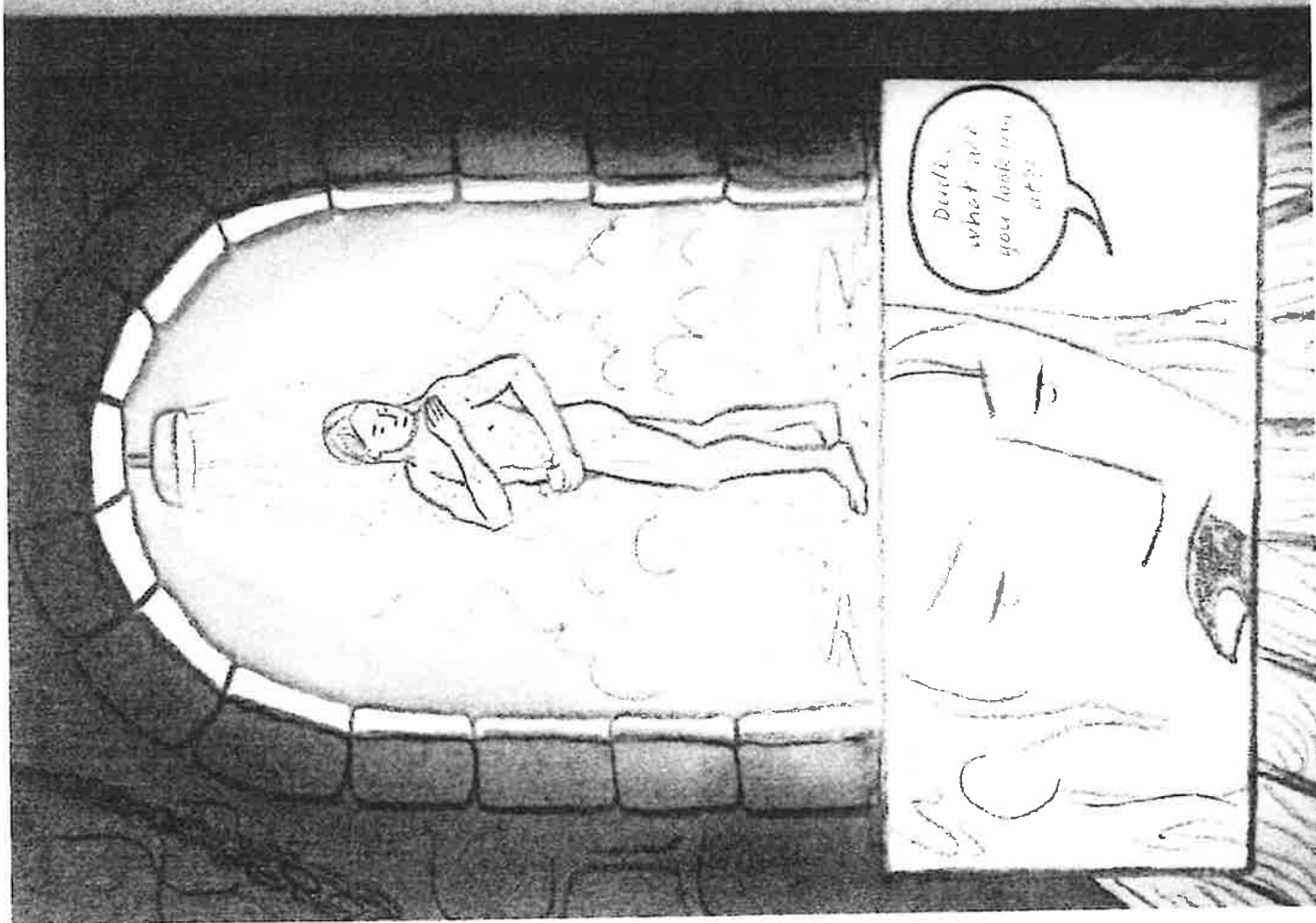
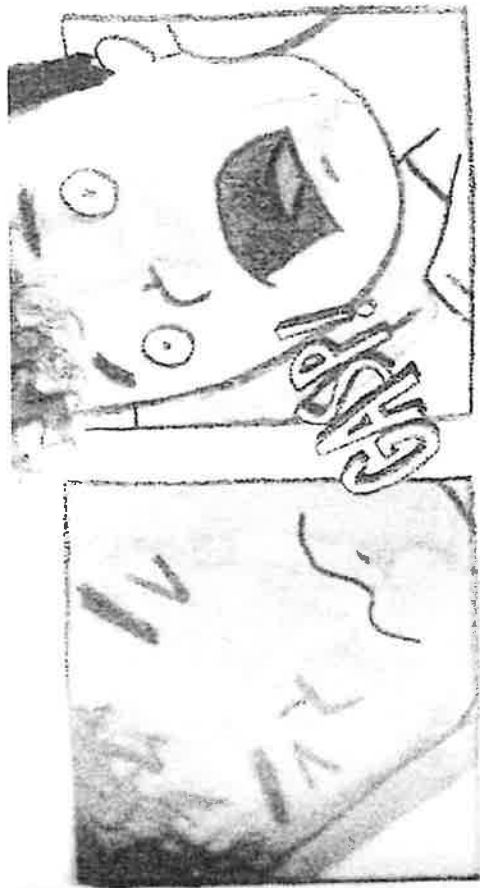
While my names have been included here, they were not created by a list. I have learned from many other people who have helped me. I have learned from my own experiences, but also from the experiences of others. I had learned from my own experiences, but also from the experiences of others.

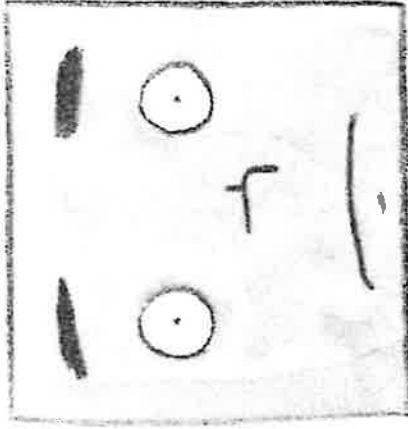
If you or someone you know is experiencing violence, ask for help. Call the National Domestic Prevention League at 800-457-5253.

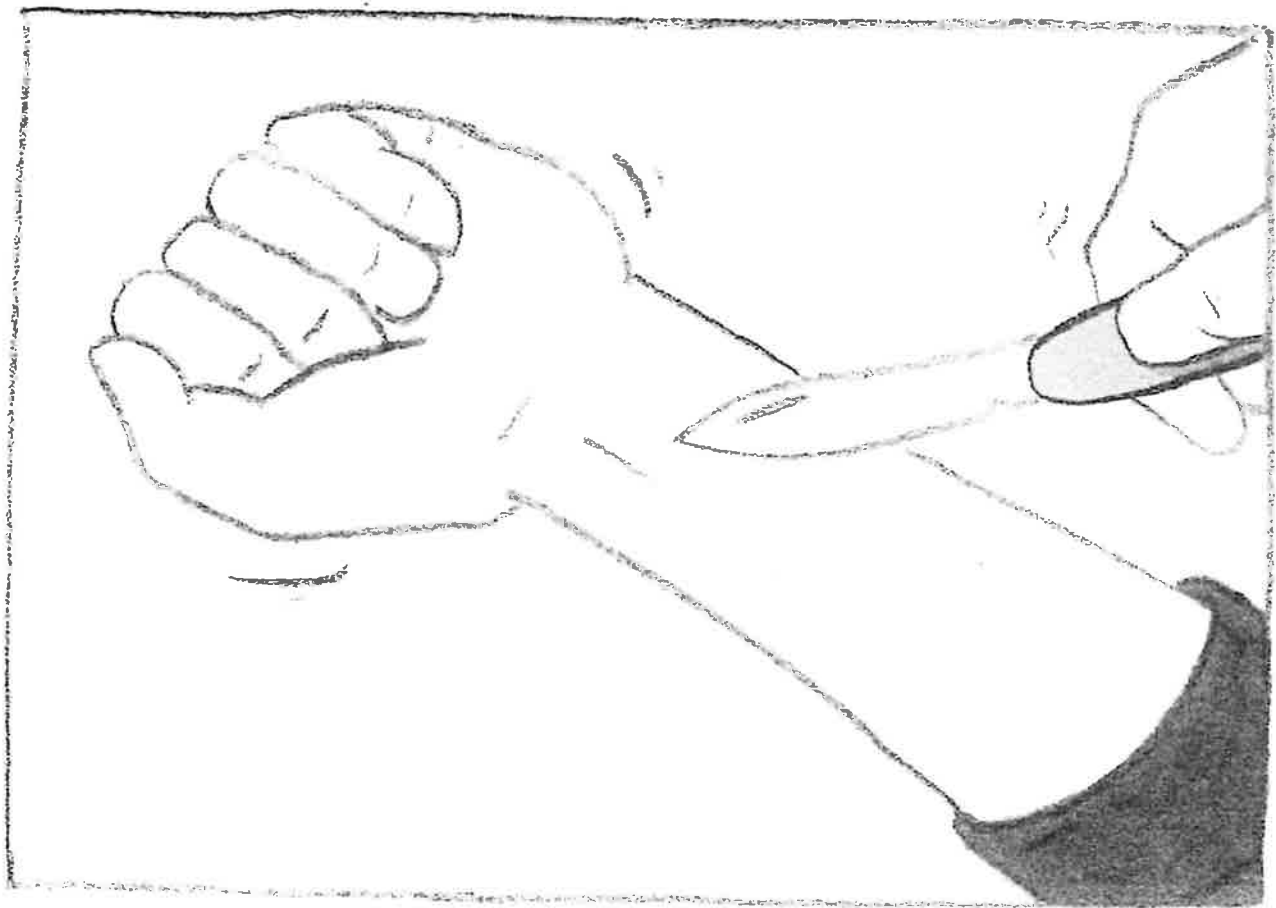
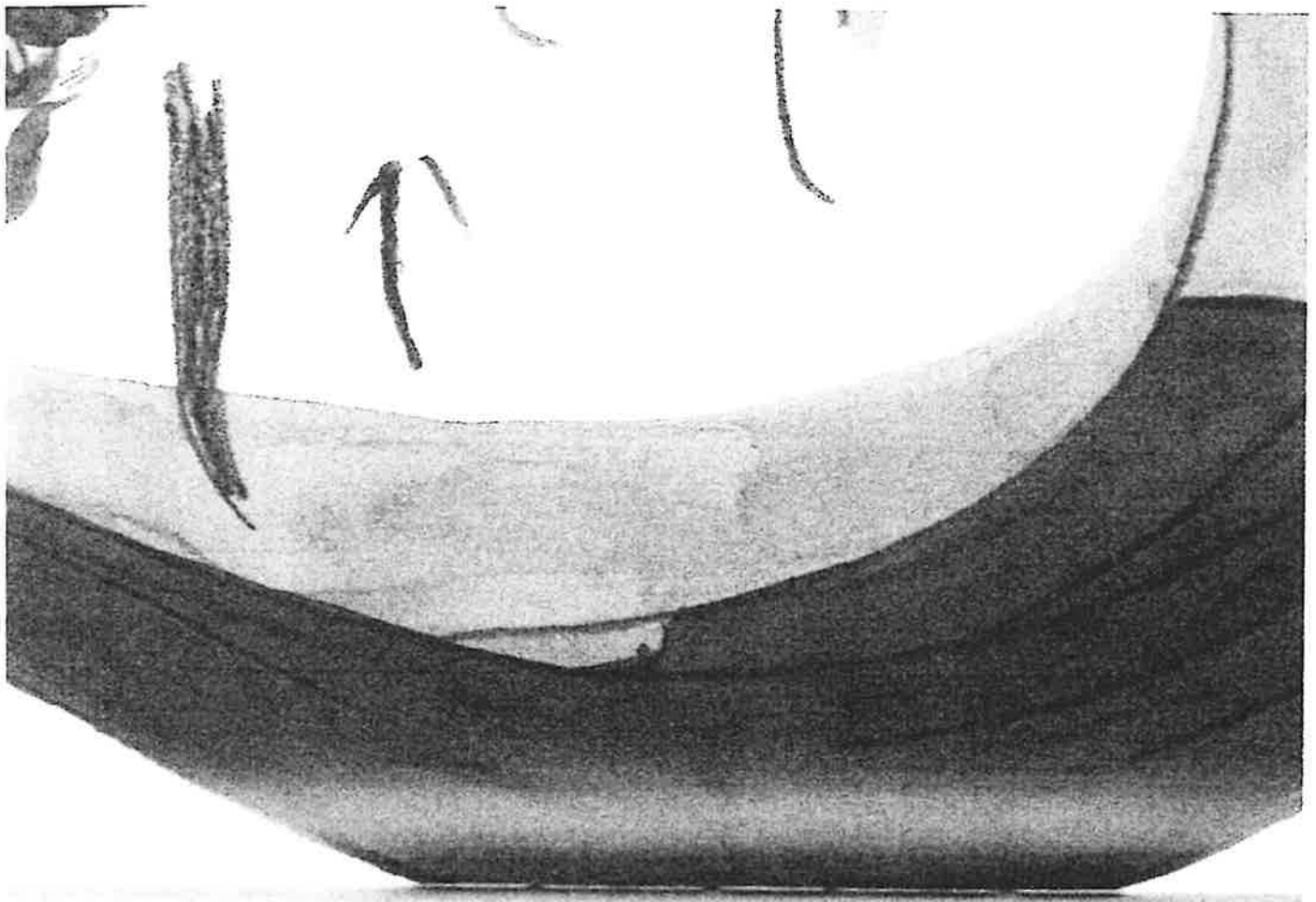
There is also Transcendental Call at 406-738-6666, for immediate LGBT support.

Coming out is hard. If you are looking for support, call or visit your local LGBT center. Go to [www.gaycenter.org](http://www.gaycenter.org) for more information.

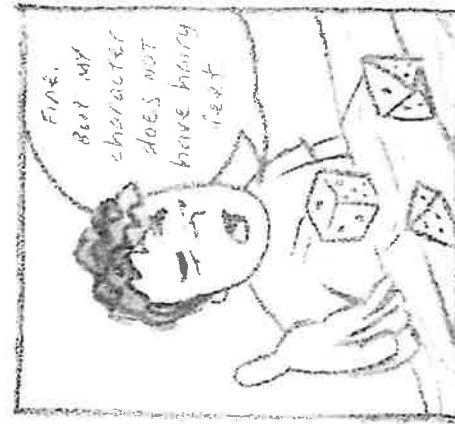
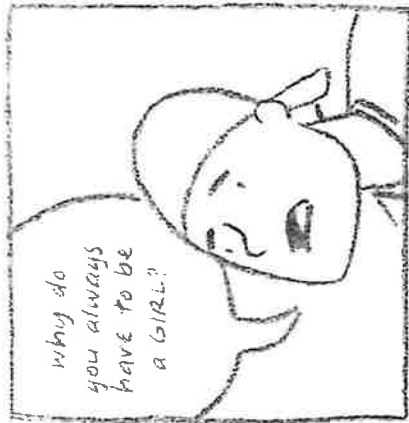














So, I'm just trying to help  
out a little, why you gotta  
get mad... you know you're  
DIFFERENT?

I'm not ACTING  
like anything, I'm just  
doing whatever it is I do. I  
don't know how to be the  
way everyone wants  
me to be.

I mean you talk  
different, you  
walk different,  
I'm just saying, life  
would be a whole  
lot easier for  
you if you were  
just more...

Whenever I try to act "normal"  
everyone just makes fun of me even more,  
'cause they know I CAN'T. I'm screwed either  
way, so I GIVE UP. I can't please ANY of you,  
why can't you GET that? I'm not YOU and  
I can never BE YOU!

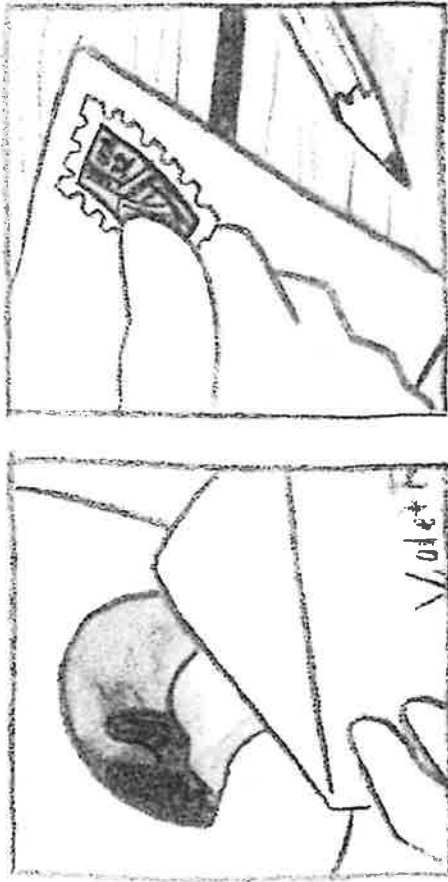
MORE  
WHAT?  
NORMAL?

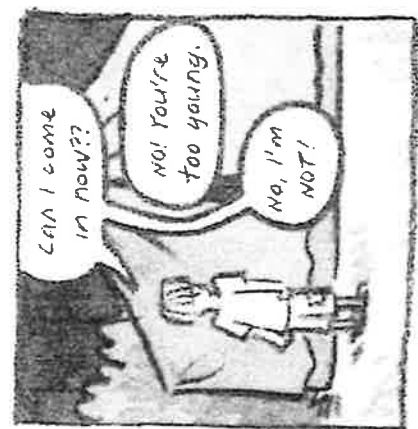
Yeah!  
NORMAL..

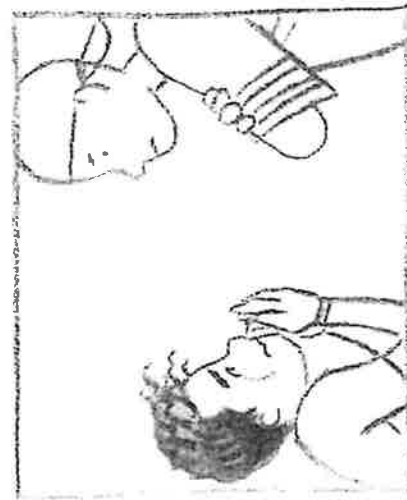
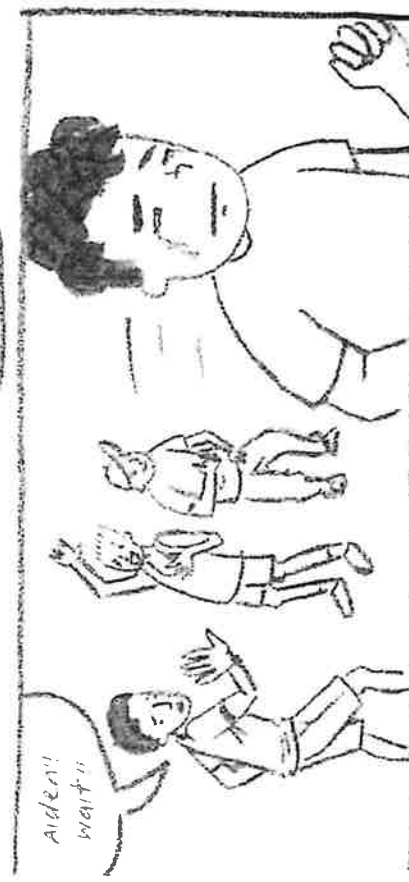
Aug 29, 1995

Dear Violet,

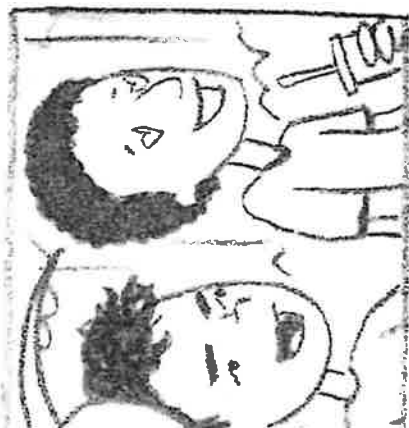
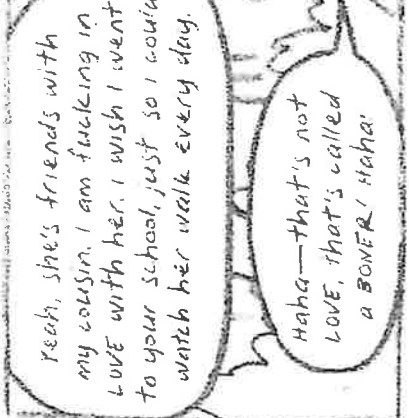
I wish you were here right now. Your best friend is having a crisis! I had this dream. Elias was in it. It had freaked me out. Actually, I've had of freaked dreams. Sometimes while I had several dreams. They're kinda messed up and surreal too. They're kinda wrong that I'm awake too. There's something say that I'm worried there's always say that I'm worried. I know we always were weird, with me. I know we were weird? We're friends because... REALLY weird? but what if I'm like... tell me you'll please write back and tell me if I'm... shall be my friend, even if I'm...  
Lylas  
Aiden  
weird















maybe i just need to update my look.



something bold that says "i'm different AND cool!"



COME HERE!

NO! STOP!



All right, THAT'S ENOUGH. I'm tired of all this faggoty bullshit. TAKE OUT THAT FUCKING ponytail!

Fuck off!



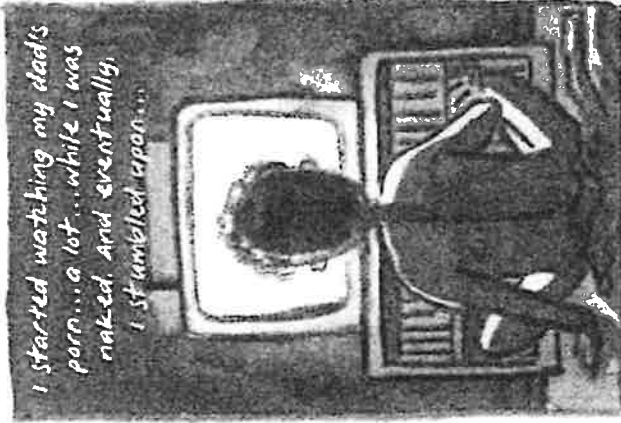
HOLD STILL, GODDAMMIT!

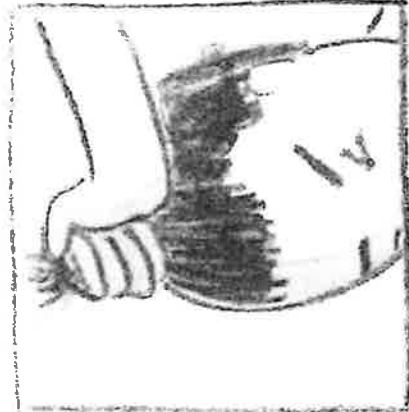
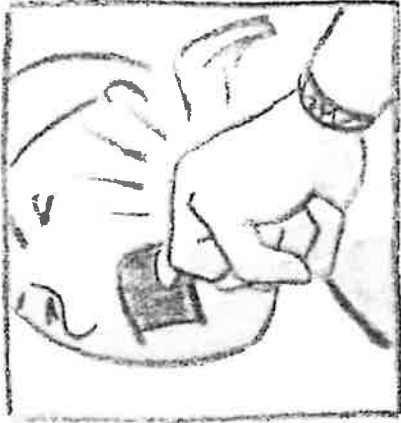


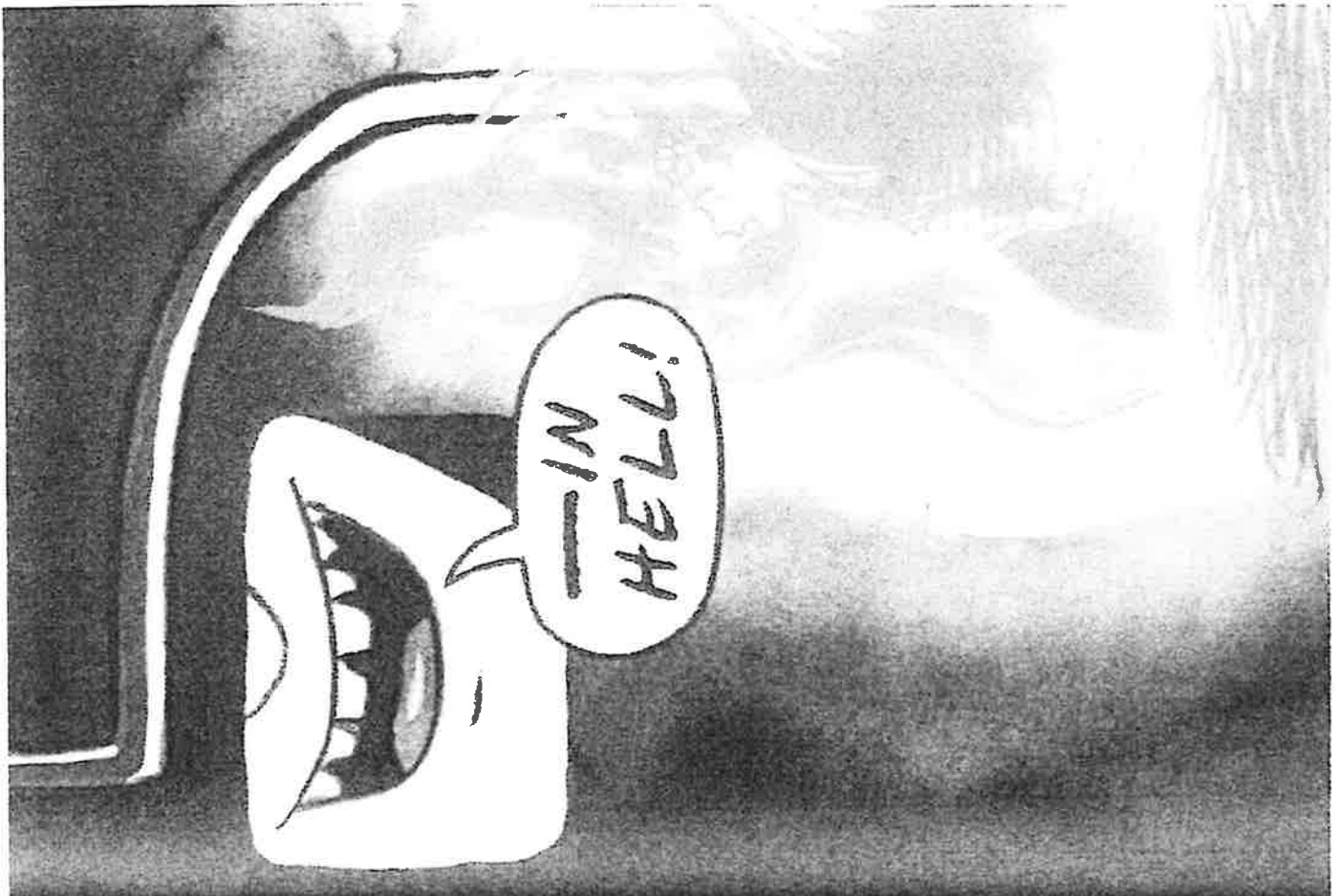
GET... OFF!!!



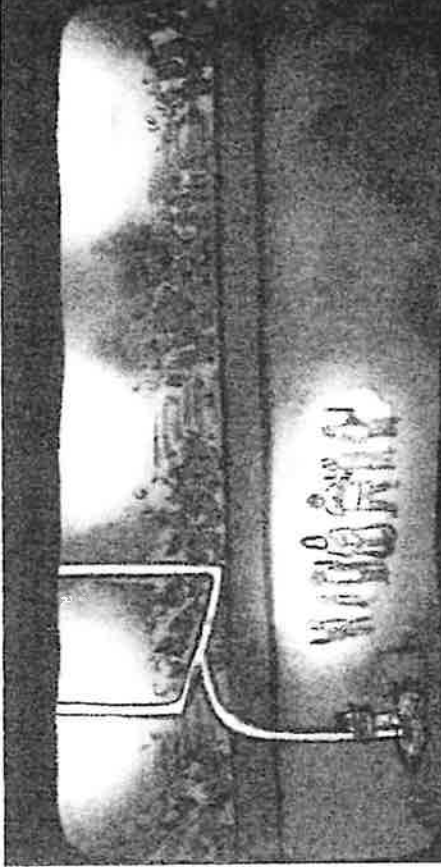
Hey, guys, what's up?







—IN HELL!



WHO COMMITTED THIS FEEL ACT AGAINST YOU?



IT WAS HIM!



AIDEN NAVARRO, FOR ACTS AGAINST GOD AND NATURE...

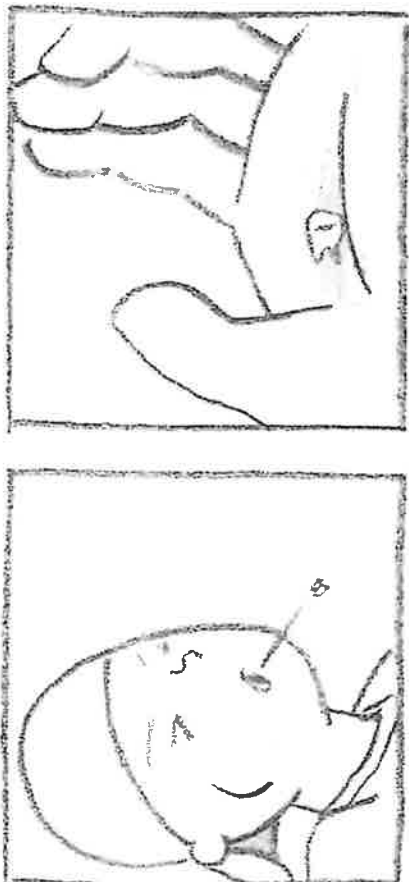
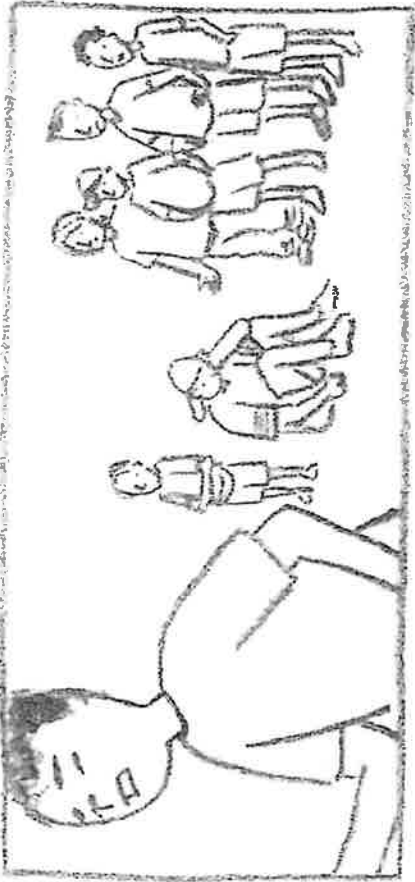


...I CONDEMN YOU TO BURN FOR ALL ETERNITY.

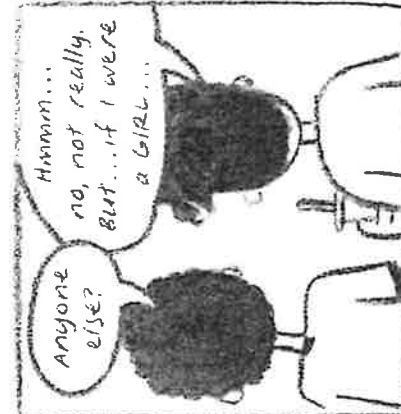
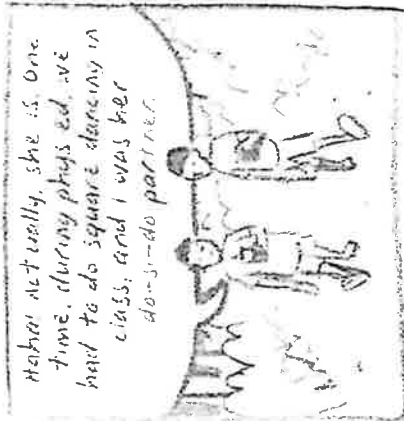
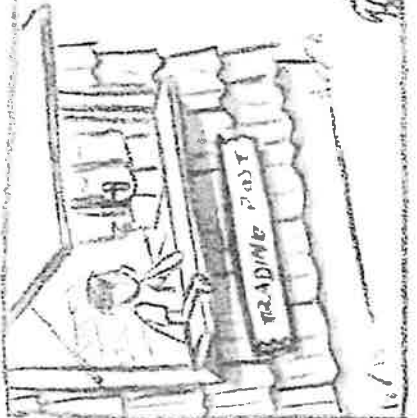


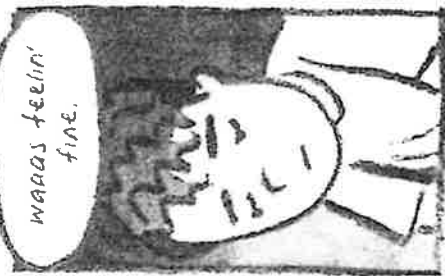
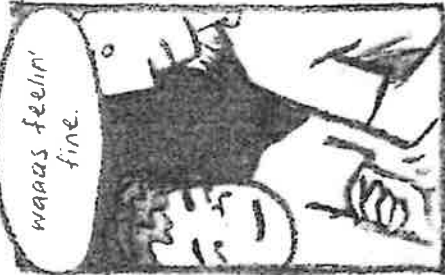
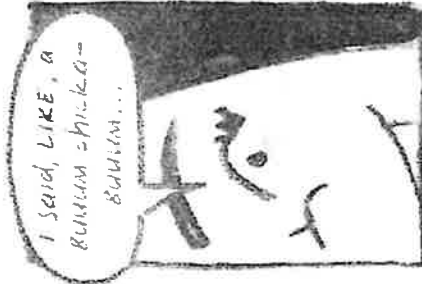
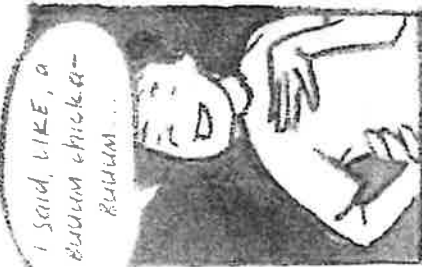
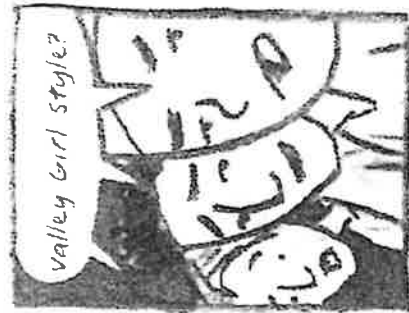
TIME TO MEET YOUR BOYFRIEND TED...

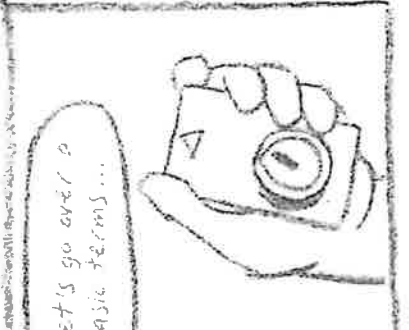
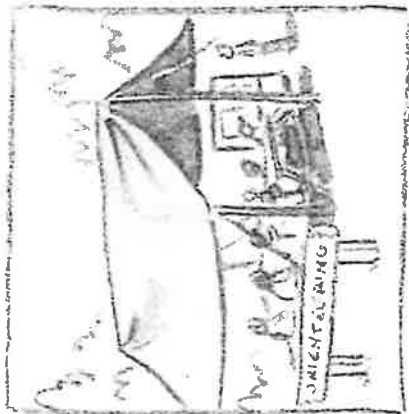


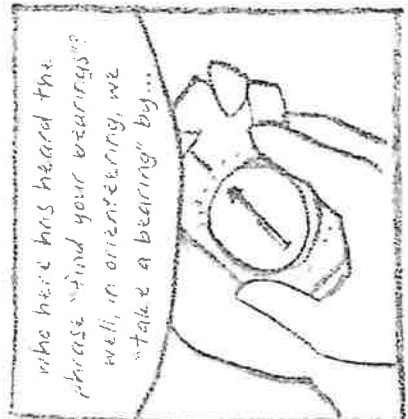




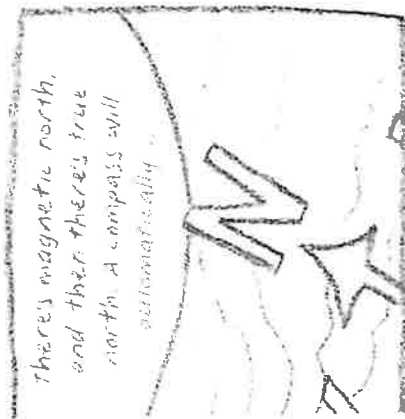




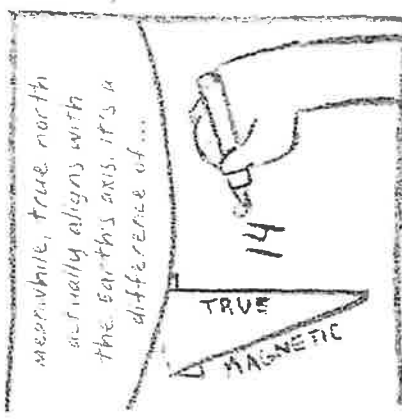




who here has heard the phrase "find your bearings" well, in orienteering, we "take a bearing" by...



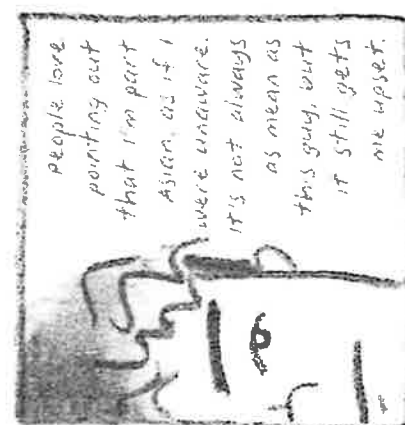
There's magnetic north, and there's true north. A compass will automatically...



meanwhile, true north actually aligns with the Earth's axis. It's a difference of...



I'm trying to focus in on what Ted is talking about, but I'm still pretty pissed about what that loser just said to me.



People love pointing out that I'm part Asian, as if I were unaware. It's not always as mean as this guy, but it still gets me upset.



It's always when I'm not actually thinking about how different I am that someone reminds me I'm totally abnormal.



... otherwise, we'll be heading in a completely different direction than were meant to...



Okay, everyone, time for lunch. Tonight, read chapters one and two of your merit badge book, and tomorrow we'll start a practice course.



I'm always checking the other box, and I'm so over it.



Enjoy eating your hot dog. You probably love eating Dora. Hahaha!



[Booklist Reviews 2020 September #1](#)  
[PW Reviews 2020 July #2](#)  
[Horn Book Guide Reviews 2020 Fall](#)  
[Horn Book Magazine Reviews 2020 #6](#)

### **Booklist Reviews 2020 September #1**

**\*Starred Review\*** In his powerful debut graphic novel, Curato, best known for the Little Elliot picture books, tells the story of one transformative week of Boy Scout camp in 1995, in which chubby, awkward Filipino American Aiden wrestles with the growing realization that he's gay. Spare panels with simplified, black line work and gray ink washes relay the bulk of the story, following Aiden through activity-packed days and the whiplash-inducing highs and lows of summer camp social interactions, not only navigating friendships on the cusp of high school but dealing with aggressive homophobic and racist bullying. Curato carefully and thoughtfully uses fiery orange-and-red ink washes to accent the black-and-white artwork, not only around the ubiquitous campfire but to indicate moments of intense emotion—anger, naturally, but also fear, hope, and ultimately strength. A lot happens to Aiden over the course of the week, including a desperate moment of suicide ideation, and the transformation of the visual metaphor of fire beautifully crystallizes his growth and resilience in that time. Just as his deft artwork meticulously balances between blazing feelings and quiet contemplation of natural beauty, Curato gives Aiden a poignantly well-rounded character: for all the homophobia and racism inherent in institutions like the Boy Scouts and the Catholic church, Aiden still defiantly finds inspiration and strength there. **Masterfully nuanced and stunningly told, this is visual storytelling at its finest.** Grades 9-12. Copyright 2020 Booklist Reviews.

[Go to Top](#)

### **PW Reviews 2020 July #2**

Before transitioning from a private Catholic middle school to a public high school, Aiden Navarro, 14, wants to enjoy Boy Scout summer camp. As in school, however, Aiden can't escape the things he's so often been bullied for: his weight, his Filipino heritage, and his effeminate voice. He endures relentless taunts rooted in toxic masculinity from his camp peers for these things and the way he always seems to act differently than others—in one memorable moment, Aiden spontaneously riffs a Valley girl rendition of a campfire song. As Aiden feels true friendship with pen pal Violet and explores his growing feelings for tentmate Elias ("Gay boys like other boys. I HATE boys. They're mean," Aiden asserts) and his religious upbringing, his sense of isolation compounds. Through straightforward, thick-lined art, Curato interweaves surrealistic, emotionally charged moments, as when Aiden's emotionally abusive father assails his family as a large talking head. Throughout the story, the color red coalesces around fires literal and figurative, as when a camper pushes Aiden to a point of volcanic rage. Emotional and raw, Curato's story plummets Aiden deep into despair, including suicidal ideation, juxtaposing powerful moments of burning, fiery hope. Ages 14–up. Agent: Brenda Bowen, the Book Group. (Sept.) Copyright 2020 Publishers Weekly.

[Go to Top](#)

### **Horn Book Guide Reviews 2020 Fall**

Aiden is not looking forward to starting public high school in the fall; his Catholic schooling heretofore has had its challenges -- jerks -- but at least it had become familiar. A summer at Boy Scout camp provides a break from his squabbling parents and a chance to breathe (Everything is so quiet in the woods) before school starts. Not so fast: camp also has bullies, whose taunts referencing Aiden's presumed sexual orientation are only exacerbated by Aiden's growing love for another camper, the athletic and sweet-natured Elias. **Grownup LGBTs will know exactly what Aiden is going through, but this book speaks so well to those kids currently undergoing the ordeal.** The graphic novel takes its time to fully pull readers into Aiden's psyche and his setting, which provides the pleasures of summer and friendship and nature along with the rewards of Scout activities. (Orienteering!) The drawing is expertly cartooned, and the palette is black and white with occasional, and then increasing, daubs and splashes of red whenever passions -- of many kinds -- ride high. The variation of small, storytelling panels and full-page and double-page spreads for big moments is wonderfully effective, and the climax -- Aiden in a literal dark night of the soul in the outdoor chapel -- is high drama indeed, emotionally powerful, proudly and extravagantly spiritual (and as Catholic as any Graham Greene epiphany). He comes through it to have one perfect day



at camp to sustain him going forward. If you will forgive the editorial intrusion, I wish I had had this book fifty years ago. Copyright 2021 Horn Book Guide Reviews.

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### **Horn Book Magazine Reviews 2020 #6**

Aiden is not looking forward to starting public high school in the fall; his Catholic schooling heretofore has had its challenges -- "jerks" -- but at least it had become familiar. A summer at Boy Scout camp provides a break from his squabbling parents and a chance to breathe ("Everything is so quiet" in the woods) before school starts. Not so fast: camp also has bullies, whose taunts referencing Aiden's presumed sexual orientation are only exacerbated by Aiden's growing love for another camper, the athletic and sweet-natured Elias. Grownup LGBTs will know exactly what Aiden is going through, but this book speaks so well to those kids currently undergoing the ordeal. The graphic novel takes its time to fully pull readers into Aiden's psyche and his setting, which provides the pleasures of summer and friendship and nature along with the rewards of Scout activities. (Orienteering!) The drawing is expertly cartooned, and the palette is black and white with occasional, and then increasing, daubs and splashes of red whenever passions -- of many kinds -- ride high. The variation of small, storytelling panels and full-page and double-page spreads for big moments is wonderfully effective, and the climax -- Aiden in a literal dark night of the soul in the outdoor chapel -- is high drama indeed, emotionally powerful, proudly and extravagantly spiritual (and as Catholic as any Graham Greene epiphany). He comes through it to have one perfect day at camp to sustain him going forward. If you will forgive the editorial intrusion, I wish I had had this book fifty years ago. Roger Sutton November/December 2020 p.97 Copyright 2020 Horn Book Magazine Reviews.

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Ms. Sandee Tibbett

April 1, 2024

Dear Ms. Tibbett,

Thank you for sharing your concerns with us regarding *Flamer* by Mike Curato. Per our process for reconsideration requests (described in the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy), I have reviewed your request with Collection Development Manager Debi Stears and am writing to share with you the results of our review:

In your Citizen Request for Reconsideration of *Flamer*, you ask that "the access to the book be supervised with either the parent having to be present to check out the book and/or the parent being alerted by an email notification that the book was checked out by the child." Noting that *Flamer* is already housed in our Adult collection, you express concern that its "comic style written in a format to attract the pre-teen and teen audience."

*Flamer* has received high praise from multiple review sources. *Booklist Reviews* describes the work as "Masterfully nuanced and stunningly told, this is visual storytelling at its finest." *Horn Book Guide Reviews* says that "Grownup LGVTs will know exactly what Aiden is going through, but this book speaks so well to those kids currently undergoing the ordeal." In its starred review, *Kirkus* writes that "This is a story that will be read and reread, and for some, it will be the defining book of their adolescence."

The Washoe County Library System's Collection Development and Management Policy describes the library's support of Intellectual Freedom as providing a "neutral environment in which individuals and their interests are brought together with the universe of ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions...The Library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some. Only the individual can define what materials are consistent with her/his own values. Individuals can apply those values to the use of library materials only for themselves. Parents and legal guardians have the responsibility for monitoring their children's use of library materials." Parents who prefer that their children not have access to certain materials should so advise their children.

Librarians do not provide oversight over which materials might be appropriate for a user; we leave that to the individual and, in the case of minors, let parents determine for their own children which materials are acceptable. These "parental discretion" principles apply to materials across all collections of the library.

As part of your Request for Reconsideration you recommended the book *Either Way: Story of a Gay Kid* by Sandra Levins. We always appreciate when users can point to titles that would make our collection more inclusive; we have ordered a copy of *Either Way* to add to the collection.

After considering your request, we've concluded that *Flamer* meets the requirements of the Collection Development and Management Policy and should be retained in the Adult section of the Washoe County Library System, without staff limiting access or notifying anyone of the item's use.

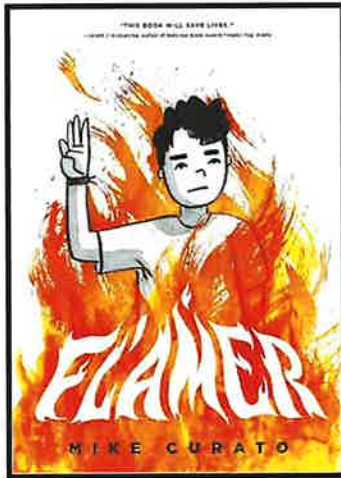
Thank you for your interest in the collections of Washoe County Library System.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Scott', with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Jeff Scott

Library Director



***Flamer* by Mike Curato**

ISBN: 9781250756145 (Trade Paperback)

Godwin Books, an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, 2020

\*Age Range: 14-18 (Suggested by Publisher)

Grade Range: 8+ (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

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**BOOK SYNOPSIS**

Award-winning author and artist Mike Curato draws on his own experiences in *Flamer*, his debut graphic novel, telling a difficult story with humor, compassion, and love.

*I know I'm not gay. Gay boys like other boys. I hate boys. They're mean, and scary, and they're always destroying something or saying something dumb or both.*

*I hate that word. Gay. It makes me feel . . . unsafe.*

It's the summer between middle school and high school, and Aiden Navarro is away at camp. Everyone's going through changes—but for Aiden, the stakes feel higher. As he navigates friendships, deals with bullies, and spends time with Elias (a boy he can't stop thinking about), he finds himself on a path of self-discovery and acceptance.

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**REVIEWS AND PRAISE**

"This book will save lives." —Jarrett J. Krosoczka, author of National Book Award Finalist *Hey, Kiddo*

"[Mike Curato] knows [boys] like Judy Blume knows a teenaged girl, and that's quite a bit." —[NPR](#)

★ "This is a story that will be read and reread, and for some, it will be the defining book of their adolescence." —[Kirkus Reviews](#), **starred review**

★ "Masterfully nuanced and stunningly told, this is visual storytelling at its finest." —[Booklist](#), **starred review**

★ "Curato has created a beautiful story of a teen who must decide if he will force himself into the mold of what he thinks a "normal" boy is, or if he can allow himself to live life on his own terms. An essential book that shows readers that they are never alone in their struggles." —[School Library Journal](#), **starred review**

★ "Cleverly inked and masterfully told . . . Both heartbreaking and joyous, *Flamer* acknowledges the brutal weight of hatred, yet inspires the courage to live." —[Shelf Awareness](#), **starred review**

**Updated 1.10.2024**

Macmillan Children's Publishing Group

Contact [mary.vanakin@macmillan.com](mailto:mary.vanakin@macmillan.com)

★ "I wish I had had this book fifty years ago." —[The Horn Book](#), starred review

"Emotional and raw." —[Publishers Weekly](#)

## AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

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- Lambda Literary Awards - Winner
- YALSA Great Graphic Novels for Teens List
- ALA Rainbow Reading List
- *Kirkus Reviews* Best Books of the Year
- *School Library Journal* Best Books of the Year
- *Horn Book* Fanfare List
- NPR Best Book of the Year
- New York Public Library Best Books of the Year
- Chicago Public Library Best Books of the Year
- New Jersey Library Association Teen Book Award List
- Milwaukee County Teen Book Award Honor Book
- Texas Library Association Maverick Graphic Novel Reading List
- Massachusetts Book Award Winner
- SCBWI Golden Kite Award Honor
- Project Lit Book Club Selection
- U Penn Graduate School of Education Best Books of the Year
- Cooperative Children's Book Center Reading List
- The Bank Street Center for Children's Literature Best Book of the Year
- The Nerdies Honoree
- Connecticut Nutmeg Honoree

## MEDIA AND RESOURCES

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- [Discussion Guide](#)
- [PEN America Author Interview](#)
- [WNYC Author Interview](#)
- [Kirkus Reviews Interview](#)
- [Boston Globe Interview](#)
- [Mike Curato Blog Post](#)

## RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

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[Wentzville School District](#): The book is relatable to many teenagers, the targeted audience, in that many and all go through many of the same struggles that the main character goes through in this book. From self-esteem, sexuality, peer pressure, bullying and issues and at home, we see the struggles he has and can put ourselves in their shoes and relate. Knowing there is a positive outcome in the end shows to others relating to these struggles that there is hope and we can get through it.

Updated 1.10.2024

Macmillan Children's Publishing Group

Contact [mary.vanakin@macmillan.com](mailto:mary.vanakin@macmillan.com)



[Comic Book Legal Defense Fund Statement of Support](#): Flamer is an award-winning graphic novel that tells the story of Aiden Navarro “as he navigates friendships, deals with bullies, and spends time with Elias (a boy he can’t stop thinking about), he finds himself on a path of self-discovery and acceptance.” This graphic novel is just one of many books currently being challenged for relaying a story from one of the LGBTQ+ perspectives.

As with many challenges targeting LGBTQ+ graphic novels, those surrounding Flamer falsely accuse the book of being pornography or containing explicit sexual images. In 2022, a parent from Katy ISD filed a criminal complaint that the district was providing material harmful to minors. Though the claim was found unsubstantiated, the book was removed from the shelves and relocated to the police department, where it could be processed. This challenge demonstrates the growing trend of citizens attempting to ignore the proper review process and intimidate educators, librarians, and administrators. Flamer has been challenged across the country and was included on the “Krause List” as a book to remove.

[Eanes Westlake School District \(Austin, TX\)](#): The decision was made to keep this book in the middle school libraries with a Young Adult (YA) label that will allow 8th grade parents to opt out of the book and 6th and 7th grade parents to opt into the book beginning in the 2023-24 school year. As early as elementary school, some of our students begin to question their sexual orientation. LGBTQ+ students deserve to have access to books about their fears, struggles and inner turmoil about life, friendship, love and identity just like any hetero normative child. Due to some of the content and themes and the fact that the book contains profanity, sexual references and suicidal ideation, it may not be suited or of interest for all middle school students, including younger middle school students.

[Westport Connecticut Rationale](#): Place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice; be appropriate to the varied interests, abilities, and levels of maturity of students in form, structure, and content; be based upon critical review in educational and professional journals, in current periodicals, or through professional analysis.

### **\*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES**

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A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book’s intended use.

**Updated 1.10.2024**

Macmillan Children’s Publishing Group  
Contact [mary.vanakin@macmillan.com](mailto:mary.vanakin@macmillan.com)

Book Challenge – Darla Lee regarding  
Looking for Alaska by John Green

CITIZEN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS AND ARTWORK

Author/Artist: Green, John

Title: Looking for Alaska

Book  Periodical \_\_\_\_\_ Other  Publisher/Date Dutton Books 2005

Please state the reason for your request. I wanted to see if this book was in the appropriate age category

Have you read/viewed/listened to this work/exhibition in its entirety? Yes

What are the positive points of this material? It does show a somewhat redemptive arch for the central character Miles Halter. Unfortunately, this positive point only comes at the end of the book

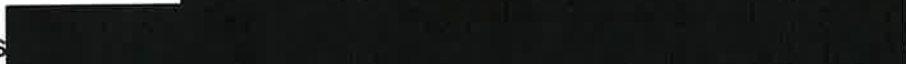
What would you like the Library to do about this work? Please remove this book from Young Adult Fiction to Adult Fiction

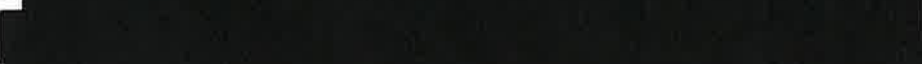
In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject? Something that doesn't extoll underage binge drinking & smoking & sex. Something that elevates respect for authority.

Have you read the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy? Yes

Have you read the Washoe County Library Public Use of Bulletin Boards, Exhibit Spaces and Display Spaces Policy? Yes

Request initiated by: 

Address 

State 

Do you represent:

Yourself

Organization (circle) Wake Up Washoe County ~ Nevada Patriot ~ Local Church ~ Other

Date: 9/25/2023 Signature of Patron: Darla Lee

Date: 12/20/23 Received by Staff Member: [Signature]

# Washoe County Library Book Removal Request

Title: Looking for Alaska

Author: Green, John

Stated Reading Level/ Interest Level: 5.8, YA

Location, Date Book was obtained for reading:

9/15/2023 Sparks Library (From "hold")

Location (Library, Amazon, etc.)

Date

On shelf at Duncan/Tronox Community Library  
& Incline Village Library

Check all that apply:

1.  Inappropriate for the location in the library/age group:
  - reading level
  - subject matter
  - gender ideology
  - portrayal of violence, brutality, or abuse
  - vulgar language
  - sexual content
2.  Sexually explicit and unsuitable for age group/location:  written and/or  in graphics
  - depicts pedophilia
  - depicts fellatio or cunnilingus
  - depicts the act of sexual intercourse
  - depicts masturbation
3.  Appeals to prurient interests (i.e., an erotic, lascivious, unhealthy, degrading, shameful interest in nudity, sex, or excretion)
4.  Lacks serious literary, artistic, political, scientific value for minors
5.  This book meets the criteria outlined in the Miller Test for obscenity: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/obscenity> (If boxes 2, 3, and 4 are checked, then check box 5.)
6.  Discriminatory, prejudice, derogatory, or demeaning writing based in race, sex, religion, or creed

Attached:

\_\_\_\_\_ number of page(s) with documented objections and/or excerpts from the book.

Verified Reader:

Darla A. Lee

Signature

9/25/2023

Dated

Title : Looking for Alaska

Author: Green, John

Page(s): 221

Photograph(s) included YES  NO

Written description:

This book centers around the lives of a group of underage students attending a private school in Alabama. It extolls binge drinking, smoking and sex. Fellatio and other explicit sex acts are described. It also explores the fatal auto accident/suicide of one of the most popular students and the grief this generates for her friends. Respect for school rules and authorities are ignored routinely by these students.

As this book sets such a bad example for minors, it should be removed from the Young Adult Fiction and placed in Adult Fiction.



was cooler!" She laughed and leaned out the window, throwing the empty bottle into the grass.

And we found plenty of porn magazines haphazardly stuffed in between mattresses and box springs. It turns out that Hank Walsten did like something other than basketball and pot: he liked Jugs. But we didn't find a *movie* until Room 32, occupied by a couple of guys from Mississippi named Joe and Marcus. They were in our religion class and sometimes sat with the Colonel and me at lunch, but I didn't know them well.

Alaska read the sticker on the top of the video. "*The Bitches of Madison County*. Well. Ain't that just delightful."

We ran with it to the TV room, closed the blinds, locked the door, and watched the movie. It opened with a woman standing on a bridge with her legs spread while a guy knelt in front of her, giving her oral sex. No time for dialogue, I suppose. By the time they started doing it, Alaska commenced with her righteous indignation. "They just don't make sex look fun for women. The girl is just an object. Look! Look at that!"

I was already looking, needless to say. A woman crouched on her hands and knees while a guy knelt behind her. She kept saying "Give it to me" and moaning, and though her eyes, brown and blank, betrayed her lack of interest, I couldn't help but take mental notes. Hands on her shoulders, I noted. *Fast, but not too fast or it's going to be over, fast. Keep your grunting to a minimum.*

As if reading my mind, she said, "God, Pudge. Never do it that hard. That would hurt. That looks like torture. And all she can do is

Looking for Alaska Page 87

But we made out. She grabbed my butt at one point, and I sort of jumped. I was lying down, but I did the best version of jumping that one can do lying down, and she said, "Sorry," and I said, "No, it's okay. It's just a little sore from the swan."

We walked to the TV room together, and I locked the door. We were watching *The Brady Bunch*, which she had never seen. The episode, where the Bradys visit the gold-mining ghost town and they all get locked up in the one-room jail by some crazy old gold panner with a scraggly white beard, was especially horrible, and gave us a lot to laugh about. Which is good, since we didn't have much to talk about.

Just as the Bradys were getting locked in jail, Lara randomly asked me, "Have you ever gotten a blow job?"

"Um, that's out of the blue," I said.

"The blue?"

"Like, you know, out of left field."

"Left field?"

"Like, in baseball. Like, out of nowhere. I mean, what made you think of that?"

"I've just never gotten one," she answered, her little voice dripping with seductiveness. It was so brazen. I thought I would explode. I never thought. I mean, from Alaska, hearing that stuff was one thing. But to hear her sweet little Romanian voice go so sexy all of the sudden . . .

"No," I said. "I never have."

"Think it would be fun?"

DO HIPPYPIPIPI? "Um, yeah. I mean, you don't have to."

"I think I want to," she said, and we kissed a little, and then. And then with me sitting watching *The Brady Bunch*, watching Marcia Marcia Marcia up to her Brady antics, Lara unbuckled my pants and pulled my boxers down a little and pulled out my penis.

"Wow," she said.

"What?"

She looked up at me, but didn't move, her face nanometers away from my penis. "It's weird."

"What do you mean weird?"

"Just beeg, I guess."

I could live with that kind of weird. And then she wrapped her hand around it and put it into her mouth.

And waited.

We were both very still. She did not move a muscle in her body, and I did not move a muscle in mine. I knew that at this point something else was supposed to happen, but I wasn't quite sure what.

She stayed still. I could feel her nervous breath. For minutes, for as long as it took the Bradys to steal the key and unlock themselves from the ghost-town jail, she lay there, stock-still with my penis in her mouth, and I sat there, waiting.

And then she took it out of her mouth and looked up at me quizzically.

"Should I do something?"

"Um. I don't know," I said. Everything I'd learned from watching porn with Alaska suddenly exited my brain. I thought maybe she should move her head up and down, but wouldn't that choke her? So I just stayed quiet.

"Should I, like, bite?"

"Don't bite! I mean, I don't think I think—I mean, that felt good. That was nice. I don't know if there's something else."

"I mean, you deehn't—"

"Um. Maybe we should ask Alaska."

So we went to her room and asked Alaska. She laughed and laughed. Sitting on her bed, she laughed until she cried. She walked into the bathroom, returned with a tube of toothpaste, and showed us. In detail. Never have I so wanted to be Crest Complete.

[BookPage Reviews 2005 March](#)  
[PW Reviews 2007 January #4](#)  
[PW Reviews 2005 February #1](#)  
[SLJ Reviews 2005 February](#)  
[SLJ Reviews 2015 January](#)  
[Horn Book Guide Reviews 2005 Fall](#)  
[Horn Book Magazine Reviews 2005 #2](#)  
[Kirkus Reviews 2005 March #1](#)  
[Library Media Connection Reviews 2005 November/December](#)  
[VOYA Reviews 2005 April](#)

### **BookPage Reviews 2005 March**

#### **High school triumphs and tragedies**

If there's one time of life when things come into focus—your self-image, your relationships, your beliefs, your fears, your triumphs, your loves—in short, everything that is you, it has to be your high-school years. It is for many the crucible of our personalities, where the "me" of existence is forged for all time. In his first novel, **Looking for Alaska**, John Green captures that feeling with freshness, candor and heart.

Miles Halter is a rising junior in a boarding school in rural Alabama. The Florida teen is used to the sun, but not the stifling, sticky heat of the Deep South. He's also not used to being one of the gang, but at Culver Creek this shy, gangly boy is accepted for what he is, albeit after being wrapped in duct tape and thrown into a lake. Like any school, there are cliques, the biggest two being the rich locals who go home for the weekend and the kids who are there 24/7.

The latter group adopts Miles, and within that group his particular circle of friends is certainly unique: there's The Colonel, his brilliant but slightly insane roommate; Takumi, the Japanese kid with the Southern accent; and Alaska Young, "the hottest girl in all of human history." Apart from a demanding academic load, their main amusements consist of smoking, drinking and the Culver Creek tradition of playing pranks on the other group—all while avoiding the searing gaze of The Eagle, the school's headmaster.

The experiences come fast and furious to Miles, but the center of his universe is definitely Alaska. Alternatively flirty and distant, friendly and angry, unattainable (with a boyfriend in college) and available, and fiercely intelligent, the force of her personality leads Miles and his friends into a labyrinth of emotions that, after a shattering tragedy, leave him wondering if there's any way out.

Green has written an inventive novel, one that will help young readers assess their place in the world and how they deal with one another. **Looking for Alaska** is funny, sad, inspiring and always compelling.

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### **PW Reviews 2007 January #4**

Teenager Miles chronicles his first year at boarding school. According to PW, "The novel's chief appeal lies in Miles's well-articulated lust (for Alaska, the title girl) and his initial excitement about being on his own for the first time." Ages 14-up. (Jan.) Copyright 2007 Reed Business Information.

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### **PW Reviews 2005 February #1**

This ambitious first novel introduces 16-year-old Miles Halter, whose hobby is memorizing famous people's last words. When he chucks his boring existence in Florida to begin this chronicle of his first year at an Alabama boarding school, he recalls the poet Rabelais on his deathbed who said, "I go to seek a Great Perhaps." Miles's roommate, the "Colonel," has an interest in drinking and elaborate pranks—pursuits shared by his best friend, Alaska, a bookworm who is also "the hottest girl in all of human history." Alaska has a boyfriend at Vanderbilt, but Miles falls in love with her anyway. Other than her occasional hollow, feminist diatribes, Alaska is mostly male fantasy—a curvy babe who loves sex and can drink guys under the table. Readers may pick up on clues that she is also doomed. Green replaces conventional chapter headings with a foreboding countdown—"ninety-eight days before," "fifty days before"—and Alaska foreshadows her own death twice ("I may die young," she says, "but at least I'll die smart"). After Alaska drives drunk and plows into a police car, Miles and the Colonel puzzle over whether or not she killed herself. Theological questions from their religion class add some introspective gloss. But



the novel's chief appeal lies in Miles's well-articulated lust and his initial excitement about being on his own for the first time. Readers will only hope that this is not the last word from this promising new author. Ages 14-up. (Mar.) Copyright 2005 Reed Business Information.

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### **SLJ Reviews 2005 February**

Gr 9 Up—Sixteen-year-old Miles Halter's adolescence has been one long nonevent—no challenge, no girls, no mischief, and no real friends. Seeking what Rabelais called the "Great Perhaps," he leaves Florida for a boarding school in Birmingham, AL. His roommate, Chip, is a dirt-poor genius scholarship student with a Napoleon complex who lives to one-up the school's rich preppies. Chip's best friend is Alaska Young, with whom Miles and every other male in her orbit falls instantly in love. She is literate, articulate, and beautiful, and she exhibits a reckless combination of adventurous and self-destructive behavior. She and Chip teach Miles to drink, smoke, and plot elaborate pranks. Alaska's story unfolds in all-night bull sessions, and the depth of her unhappiness becomes obvious. Green's dialogue is crisp, especially between Miles and Chip. His descriptions and Miles's inner monologues can be philosophically dense, but are well within the comprehension of sensitive teen readers. The chapters of the novel are headed by a number of days "before" and "after" what readers surmise is Alaska's suicide. These placeholders sustain the mood of possibility and foreboding, and the story moves methodically to its ambiguous climax. The language and sexual situations are aptly and realistically drawn, but sophisticated in nature. Miles's narration is alive with sweet, self-deprecating humor, and his obvious struggle to tell the story truthfully adds to his believability. Like Phineas in John Knowles's *A Separate Peace* (S & S, 1960), Green draws Alaska so lovingly, in self-loathing darkness as well as energetic light, that readers mourn her loss along with her friends.—Johanna Lewis, New York Public Library Copyright 2005 Reed Business Information.

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### **SLJ Reviews 2015 January**

Gr 10 Up—The **Printz Award-winning** novel that kickstarted John Green's career and introduced a whole generation of teens to a new era of YA literature is turning 10 this year. Though the text itself remains the same, there are many extras included in this edition. There is an introduction by Green himself, a helpful Q & A section, and, perhaps most interesting for scholars, portions of the original manuscript that didn't make it into the final book, along with correspondence between Green and his editor. Purists may gasp to hear that the now-iconic "smoking" cover has been redesigned. But take heart; the new jacket, created by Rodrigo Corral, pays homage to the original with a deep black background and a subtle wisp of smoke. Replace worn copies and introduce a whole new crop of teens to this new classic. [Page 62]. (c) Copyright 2014. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.

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### **Horn Book Guide Reviews 2005 Fall**

At boarding school in Alabama, narrator Miles Halter faces challenging classes, school-wide pranks, and Alaska Young, a sexy, enigmatic girl. After Alaska is killed in a car crash, Miles and his friends question whether it could have been suicide and acknowledge their own survivor guilt. These intelligent characters talk smart, yet don't always behave that way, and are thus **complex and realistically portrayed teenagers**. Copyright 2005 Horn Book Guide Reviews.

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### **Horn Book Magazine Reviews 2005 #2**

A collector of famous last words, teenage Miles Halter uses Rabelais's final quote ("I go to seek a Great Perhaps") to explain why he's chosen to leave public high school for Culver Creek Preparatory School in rural Alabama. In his case, the Great Perhaps includes challenging classes, a hard-drinking roommate, elaborate school-wide pranks, and Alaska Young, the enigmatic girl rooming five doors down. Moody,

sexy, and even a bit mean, Alaska draws Miles into her schemes, defends him when there's trouble, and never stops flirting with the clearly love-struck narrator. A drunken make-out session ends with Alaska's whispered "To be continued?" but within hours she's killed in a car accident. In the following weeks, Miles and his friends investigate Alaska's crash, question the possibility that it could have been suicide, and acknowledge their own survivor guilt. The narrative concludes with an essay Miles writes about this event for his religion class -- an unusually heavy-handed note in an otherwise mature novel, peopled with intelligent characters who talk smart, yet don't always behave that way, and are thus notably complex and realistically portrayed teenagers. Copyright 2005 Horn Book Magazine Reviews.

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### **Kirkus Reviews 2005 March #1**

The Alaska of the title is a maddening, fascinating, vivid girl seen through the eyes of Pudge (Miles only to his parents), who meets Alaska at boarding school in Alabama. Pudge is a skinny ("irony" says his roommate, the Colonel, of the nickname) thoughtful kid who collects and memorizes famous people's last words. The Colonel, Takumi, Alaska and a Romanian girl named Lara are an utterly real gaggle of young persons, full of false starts, school pranks, moments of genuine exhilaration in learning and rather too many cigarettes and cheap bottles of wine. Their engine and center is Alaska, given to moodiness and crying jags but also full of spirit and energy, owner of a roomful of books she says she's going to spend her life reading. Her center is a woeful family tragedy, and when Alaska herself is lost, her friends find their own ways out of the labyrinth, in part by pulling a last, hilarious school prank in her name. **What sings and soars in this gorgeously told tale is Green's mastery of language and the sweet, rough edges of Pudge's voice. Girls will cry and boys will find love, lust, loss and longing in Alaska's vanilla-and-cigarettes scent.** (Fiction. YA) Copyright Kirkus 2005 Kirkus/BPI Communications. All rights reserved.

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### **Library Media Connection Reviews 2005 November/December**

Junior Miles Halter leaves for the Alabama prep school his father attended, searching for a "Great Perhaps" beyond his mundane existence. He meets Chip, a scholarship student with trailer-park roots; Lara, who initiates him into his first sexual experience (oral, fairly explicit, and very funny); Takumi, "the Asian kid" whose real specialty is rap; and, Alaska Young. Alaska is smart, sexy, funny, sometimes inscrutable, and profoundly troubled by childhood mysteries she only hints at to her friends. Their world changes when, after creating some sexual tension with Miles, Alaska gets a telephone call, leaves the campus in the pre-dawn hours, drunk and distraught, and drives her car full-speed into a police cruiser, killing her instantly. Was it suicide or an accident? Where was she driving to, and why? What was the significance of the white tulips in the back seat? Was her kiss with Miles a beginning, or an ending? Had she truly found a way out of the "labyrinth" that was her obsession? By looking death full in the face, the friends Alaska leaves behind also confront life, its pains and its pleasures. **Looking for Alaska will haunt readers with its memorable characters, its literary and philosophical questions about life and death that so fascinate teens, and its ultimate affirmation of a life lived fully.** Highly Recommended. Catherine M. Andronik, Library Media Specialist, Brien McMahon High School, Norwalk, Connecticut © 2005 Linworth Publishing, Inc.

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### **VOYA Reviews 2005 April**

The chapter headings make it clear-Before and After. Something bad is going to happen. Geeky sixteen-year-old Miles Halter counts down the days to tragedy, drawing the reader into his new life at an Alabama boarding school. Miles, who leaves his loving parents and lonely, unchallenging school life in Florida, is a bright, shy, friendless scholar. He devours the biographies of famous writers and has an encyclopedic supply of famous last words. At Culver Creek Preparatory School, Miles is enfolded immediately into the



exciting, edged-up world of his roommate, Chip Martin, and the beautiful, fearless, haunted Alaska, both veteran students of Culver. They coach and enlist Miles in an ever-escalating war of pranks and counter-pranks with a group of rich, cruel youth. The pranks war fills the world of the three friends, but their escalating craving for harmful substances (their smoking habits are nearly as alarming as their alcohol intake) and some sexual experimentation intrudes on their need to work through their academic curiosity about the meaning of life. Miles yearns for Alaska, whose signals to him are maddeningly mixed. Once the tragedy plays out, the last third of this provocative, moving, and sometimes hilarious story counts up slowly from grief as Miles tries to find his way through the fallout of depression and guilt that he suffers. Green, a familiar presence on National Public Radio, has a writer's voice, so self-assured and honest that one is startled to learn that this novel is his first. The anticipated favorable comparisons to Holden Caulfield are richly deserved in this highly recommended addition to young adult literature. -Beth E. Andersen 5Q 4P S Copyright 2005 Voya Reviews.



Ms. Darla Lee

April 1, 2024

Dear Ms. Lee,

Thank you for sharing your concerns with us regarding *Looking for Alaska* by John Green. Per our process for reconsideration requests (described in the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy), I have reviewed your request with Collection Development Manager Debi Stears and am writing to share with you the results of our review:

In your Citizen Request for Reconsideration, you ask us to move *Looking for Alaska* from our Young Adult collection and place in the Adult collection. You state the reason for your request as "I wanted to see if this book was in the appropriate age category...As this book sets such a bad example for minors, it should be moved from the Young Adult Fiction and placed in Adult Fiction."

The publisher-suggested age range *Looking for Alaska* is ages 14 and up. *Looking for Alaska* has received some of the highest accolades of young adult literature, winning the 2000 Michael L. Printz Award, an award given annually by the American Library Association recognizing the "best book written for teens, based entirely on its literary merit." *Looking For Alaska* was also named one of NPR's 100 Best-Ever Teen Novels and *TIME Magazine's* 100 Best YA Books of All Time. *BookPage Reviews* declared that "Green has written an inventive novel, one that will help young readers assess their place in the world and how they deal with one another. *Looking for Alaska* is funny, sad, inspiring, and always compelling." *Kirkus Reviews*, recommending this title for Young Adult fiction collections, proclaimed that "What sings and soars in this gorgeously told tale is Green's mastery of language and the sweet, rough edges of Pudge's voice. Girls will cry and boys will find love, lust, loss and longing in Alaska's vanilla-and-cigarettes scent." *Library Media Connection Reviews* highly recommends *Looking for Alaska* concluding that it "will haunt readers with its memorable characters, its literary and philosophical questions about life and death that so fascinate teens, and its ultimate affirmation of a life lived fully."

It is the policy of Washoe County Library System to place works in their appropriate subject area within their intended audience. Looking at suggested ages given by the publisher, intended by the author, and suggestions in books reviews, *Looking for Alaska* is a book that fits within our Young Adult fiction collection.

The Washoe County Library System's Collection Development and Management Policy describes the library's support of Intellectual Freedom as providing a "neutral environment in which individuals and their interests are brought together with the universe of ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions...The Library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some. Only the individual can define what materials are consistent with her/his own values. Individuals can apply those values to the use of library materials only for themselves.

Parents and legal guardians have the responsibility for monitoring their children's use of library materials." Parents who prefer that their children not have access to certain materials should so advise their children.

After considering your request, we've concluded that *Looking for Alaska* meets the requirements of the Collection Development and Management Policy and should be retained in the Young Adult Fiction section of the Washoe County Library System.

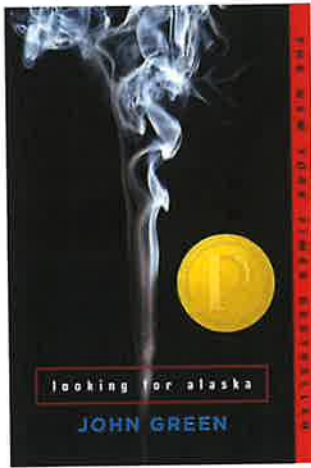
Thank you for your interest in the collections of Washoe County Library System.

Sincerely,



Jeff Scott

Library Director



# BOOK RESUME: LOOKING FOR ALASKA

## BOOK SYNOPSIS

Miles Halter is fascinated by famous last words—and tired of his safe life at home. He leaves for boarding school to seek what the dying poet François Rabelais called the “Great Perhaps.” Much awaits Miles at Culver Creek, including Alaska Young, who will pull Miles into her labyrinth and catapult him into the Great Perhaps.

*Looking for Alaska* brilliantly chronicles the indelible impact one life can have on another. A modern classic, this stunning debut marked #1 bestselling author John Green’s arrival as a groundbreaking new voice in contemporary fiction.

**Title:** Looking for Alaska

**Author:** John Green

**Imprint:** Dutton

**Publisher:** Penguin Young Readers

**On sale date:** March 3, 2005

**ISBN:** 9780525475064 and 9780142402511

**Format:** Hardcover and Paperback

**Age Range\*:** 14 and up

**Grade Range:** Gr 10 Up

## REVIEWS AND PRAISE

**A *New York Times* Bestseller**

“A gem of modern literature.” —*Guardian*

★ “What sings and soars in this gorgeously told tale is Green’s mastery of language and the sweet, rough edges of Pudge’s voice.” —Kirkus

★ “Alive with sweet, self-deprecating humor.” —*SLJ*

“Funny, sad, inspiring, and always compelling.” —*Bookpage*

“The spirit of Holden Caulfield lives on.” —*Kliatt*

“Stunning conclusion . . . one worthy of a book this good.” —*Philadelphia Inquirer*

“What sets this novel apart is the brilliant, insightful, suffering but enduring voice of Miles Halter.” —*Chicago Tribune*

## AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Winner of the Michael L. Printz Award
- A Los Angeles Times Book Prize Finalist
- Pacific Northwest Library Association Young Reader's Choice Award
- Abraham Lincoln High School Book Award
- Eliot Rosewater Indiana High School Book Award
- Iowa High School Book Award
- Garden State Teen Book Award
- Volunteer State Book Award
- Vermont Green Mountain Book Award
- 2006 YALSA Best Fiction for Young Adults Selection
- NPR 100 Best-Ever Teen Novels Selection
- TIME Magazine, 100 Best YA Books of All Time

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\*Publisher suggested age range covers the wide range of readers publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate range for their diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book’s intended use.

- A PBS, The Great American Read Selection
- An ALA Best Book for Young Adults, Top 10
- An ALA Quick Pick for Reluctant Readers
- A *Booklist* Editors' Choice selection
- A *Kirkus* Best Book of the Year
- An *SLJ* Best Book of the Year
- A Chicago Public Library Best of the Best
- A New York Public Library Book for the Teen Age

#### MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [Educator Guide](#)
- [John Green New York Times interview around Banned Books](#)
- [AMERICAN CACOPHONY: LANGUAGES, LITERATURES, AND CENSORSHIP "Literature Is Not a Cold, Dead Place": An Interview with John Green](#)
- ["Author John Green speaks out against school board candidate's push to ban his novel in his hometown," TODAY, September 13, 2022](#)
- ["John Green fights back against banning of Looking for Alaska," The Guardian, April 26, 2016](#)
- ["Looking for Alaska pulled from Sumner Country Classrooms," NCAC.org, May 15, 2012](#)

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\*Publisher suggested age range covers the wide range of readers publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate range for their diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.



Book Challenge - Darla Lee regarding  
Zenobia July by Lisa Bunker

CITIZEN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS AND ARTWORK

Author/Artist: Bunker, Lisa

Title: Zenobia July

Book  Periodical \_\_\_\_\_ Other  Publisher/Date Penguin Random House - Viking  
2019

Please state the reason for your request. Please place this book into Young Adult/Adult category, remove it from Juvenile Fiction. It is blatant propaganda for LGBT + Trans: giving a one-sided picture for pre-puberty children. I consider this book as a grooming tool.  
Have you read/viewed/listened to this work/exhibition in its entirety?

What are the positive points of this material? This book positively promotes "Feeling" over science & biology. It promotes "family" but only if the family agrees with a boy "becoming" a girl. It did show the mental struggles of gender dysphoria.

What would you like the Library to do about this work? Remove from Juvenile Fiction where it is confusing to pre-puberty children, giving only a positive spin on trans-genderism.

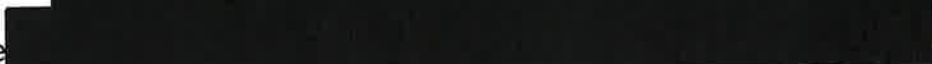
In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject? No specific book, but one that would show a more real picture of the struggle of gender dysphoria where in the child actually gets the help they need to deal with this problem, not just hormone drugs & surgery.

Have you read the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy?

Have you read the Washoe County Library Public Use of Bulletin Boards, Exhibit Spaces and Display Spaces Policy?

Request initiated by: Darla A. Lee

Address 

State 

Do you represent:  
 Yourself  
 Organization (circle) Wake Up Washoe County - Nevada Patriot - Local Church - Other

Date: 11/17/2023 Signature of Patron: Darla A Lee

Date: 12-20-23 Received by Staff Member: 

# Washoe County Library Book Removal Request

Title: Zenobia July

Author: Bunker, Lisa

Stated Reading Level/ Interest Level: Grades 6-9

Location, Date Book was obtained for reading:

Sparks Library

Location (Library, Amazon, etc.)

Date 11/2/2023

Check all that apply:

1.  Inappropriate for the location in the library/age group:
  - reading level
  - subject matter
  - gender ideology
  - portrayal of violence, brutality, or abuse
  - vulgar language
  - sexual content
  
2.  Sexually explicit and unsuitable for age group/location:  written and/or  in graphics
  - depicts pedophilia
  - depicts fellatio or cunnilingus
  - depicts the act of sexual intercourse
  - depicts masturbation
  
3.  Appeals to prurient interests (i.e., an erotic, lascivious, unhealthy, degrading, shameful interest in nudity, sex, or excretion)
  
4.  Lacks serious literary, artistic, political, scientific value for minors
  
5.  This book meets the criteria outlined in the Miller Test for obscenity: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/obscenity>  
(If boxes 2, 3, and 4 are checked, then check box 5.)
  
6.  Discriminatory, prejudice, derogatory, or demeaning writing based in race, sex, religion, or creed

Attached:

\_\_\_\_\_ number of page(s) with documented objections and/or excerpts from the book.

Title: Zenobia July

Author: Bunker, Lisa

Page in Book(s):

Photograph(s) included YES NO

Written description:

Zenobia July is a promotion of feelings over science/biology. A young boy with gender dysphoria is portrayed as mentally struggling, but without any real help for his "feeling" that he is really a girl. His parents are dead, so he lives with his lesbian aunt and her partner, who only affirm his "feeling". No professional help is sought or even mentioned and any "religious" or moral opposition is demeaned. He/she attends a new school where the "cool" but misfit group immediately befriends him and the stereotyped "mean" girls & boys ridicule him for no reason. Zenobia is troubled, but also manages to be a super gamer/hacker, which helps control his darker moments.

This book does not belong in Juvenile Fiction, as it promotes confusion in pre-puberty students, glorifying gender dysphoria. It should be placed in Adult section.

**Page** \_\_\_\_\_



[Booklist Reviews 2019 April #2](#)  
[PW Reviews 2019 April #1](#)  
[Kirkus Reviews 2019 March #2](#)  
[VOYA Reviews 2019 June](#)

### **Booklist Reviews 2019 April #2**

Zenobia July isn't having the easiest time fitting in at her new school. Her mother and father are dead, and she is finally able to live her truth, even though she still has a hard time looking at herself in the mirror without seeing boy all over her face. She now lives with her aunts Phil and Lucy. During the first few weeks of school, Zen is befriended by Arli—a gender nonconforming young person—and an evangelical Christian girl, Melissa. After a series of anti-Muslim and transphobic memes appear on the school website, Zen and her new friends need some serious introspection about their own personal biases. Some stilted dialogue in the form of text exchanges, and over-the-top tech-speak overshadow what could be a nuanced and slightly less didactic exploration of gender and sexuality, which is at the core of Zen's personal story. Aside from these issues, **Bunker's #OwnVoices follow-up to Felix Yz (2017) will be sure to intrigue and entertain young readers from all walks of life. Grades 5-8.** Copyright 2019 Booklist Reviews.

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### **PW Reviews 2019 April #1**

It's a year of big changes for Zenobia July. After her father died in what is being called a hunting accident (her mother passed away when she was small), she has moved from Arizona to Portland, Maine, to live with Aunts Phil and Lucy—a quirky couple with a diverse friend group, including the larger-than-life drag queen "Sprinkles." She's also starting school for the first time as a trans girl. Zen bonds with the middle school's band of "orphan misfits," which includes genderqueer Arli, Congolese immigrant Chantal, and new kid Elijah, who is eventually outed as trans. But even with the support and love of her aunts, she wrestles daily with the person she sees in the mirror. A boost of self-confidence comes when Zen, a talented hacker, uses her skills to help the school discover who is posting anti-Muslim and transphobic smears to the school website. Bunker (Felix Yz) brings considerable empathy and skill to her authentic, nuanced portrayal, balancing Zen's darker moments with humor. Though Zen is haunted by self-doubt and anxiety, she's bolstered by the kindness and acceptance of her friends and new family. Brief interludes by those in Zenobia's orbit add perspective. **An accessible and relatable story for anyone who is struggling to fit in. Ages 10–up.** (May) Copyright 2019 Publishers Weekly.

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### **Kirkus Reviews 2019 March #2**

A young trans girl solves a mystery and finds her people. Zenobia July hasn't had an easy go of it: Her mom died when she was little, and her religious, conservative dad has just died in what might be a hunting accident but was probably suicide. She's shipped off to Portland, Maine, into the loving arms of her aunts Phil and Lu, an eccentric but competent hippie/academic lesbian couple. Zenobia makes friends with a gang of misfits fairly easily, but she still doesn't want anyone to know that she's trans (even after new friend Elijah is outed and her main confidant, Arli, genderqueer with vo/ven/veir pronouns, cringingly tries to convince Zenobia to be a better ally). Zenobia's hacker skills come in handy when a mysterious troll posts transphobic and anti-Muslim memes to the school's website, and her new friendships are put to various tests. Zenobia is an endearing white trans girl heroine, with an accessible amount of angst and anxiety that never tips over into titillating tragedy. **Her community of weirdos and queers (including her aunts' drag-queen friend Sprink) offers desperately needed representation.** Hijab-wearing Congolese immigrant Dyna and Asian Elijah provide some racial diversity, though the default is white. **A fun read that manages to feel solidly traditional while breaking new ground (Fiction. 8-13)** Copyright Kirkus 2019 Kirkus/BPI Communications. All rights reserved.

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### **VOYA Reviews 2019 June**

Zenobia July's life changed radically when she started living with her aunts and going to a new middle school. She is surviving her feelings of alienation and otherness by clinging to the knowledge that only her aunts know she is transgender. Zenobia navigates her changes with grace and humor, and depression and anger. Sometimes she leaves real life altogether, preferring an online world where her considerable skill in programming and hacking offers her a sense of control. Zenobia is a very real girl with very real problems. Luckily, she builds an amazing support system, and her journey is ultimately one of hope and acceptance. Bunker's characters are written with authenticity and heart. Zenobia is a fully realized girl, and her handling of various situations rings with truth. Sometimes she shows maturity and wisdom, sometimes she melts down under the pressures she faces, and sometimes she explodes. The book is told from Zenobia's point of view, with interludes throughout from other characters. This extra glimpse into the thoughts of others is well done and adds to the richness of the story. This book is a testament to true diversity, as the reader encounters Zenobia's lesbian aunts, drag queen uncle, gender nonconforming friend Arli, Muslim friend, conservative Christian friend, and more. Zenobia is also solving a cyber mystery that makes for an enjoyable subplot. The true story here, though, is Zenobia's journey and the gradual building of her sense of acceptance and self and of the stellar network of friends and relatives who love and support her.—Heather Pittman. 4Q 4P M J S Copyright 2019 Voya Reviews.



Ms. Darla Lee



April 1, 2024

Dear Ms. Lee,

Thank you for sharing your concerns with us regarding *Zenobia July* by Lisa Bunker. Per our process for reconsideration requests (described in the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy), I have reviewed your request with Collection Development Manager Debi Stears and am writing to share with you the results of our review:

In your Citizen Request for Reconsideration, you ask us to move *Zenobia July* from our juvenile fiction collection and place in the Young Adult or Adult collection. You state the reason for your request as "it is blatant propaganda for LGBT & trans; giving a one-sided picture for pre-puberty children. I consider this book a grooming tool."

The publisher suggested age range *Zenobia July* is 10 & up. *Booklist Reviews* says that "Bunkers #OwnVoices follow-up to *Feliz Yz* (2017) will be sure to intrigue and entertain young readers from all walks of life and recommends this title for grades 5-8. *Publishers Weekly Reviews* describes *Zenobia July* as "an accessible and relatable story for anyone who is struggling to fit in.", suggesting it appropriate for readers ages 10 and up. *Kirkus Reviews* finds that *Zenobia's* "community of weirdos and queers (including her aunts' drag-queen friend Sprink) offers desperately needed representation...a fun read that manages to feel solidly traditional while breaking new ground", suggesting *Zenobia July* for readers ages 8-13. *VOYA Reviews* praises that "this book is a testament to true diversity, as the reader encounters *Zenobia's* lesbian aunts, drag queen uncle, gender nonconforming friend Arli, Muslim friend, conservative Christian friend, and more...The true story here, though is *Zenobia's* journey and the gradual building of her sense of acceptance and self and the stellar network of friends and relatives who love and support her."

It is the policy of Washoe County Library System to place works in their appropriate subject area within their intended audience. Looking at suggested ages given by the publisher, intended by the author, and suggestions in books reviews, *Zenobia July* is a book that fits within our Children's Fiction collection.

The Washoe County Library System's Collection Development and Management Policy describes the library's support of Intellectual Freedom as providing a "neutral environment in which individuals and their interests are brought together with the universe of ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions...The Library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some. Only the individual can define what materials are consistent with her/his own values. Individuals can apply those values to the use of library materials only for themselves. Parents and legal guardians have the responsibility for monitoring their children's use of library

materials." Parents who prefer that their children not have access to certain materials should so advise their children.

After considering your request, we've concluded that *Zenobia July* meets the requirements of the Collection Development and Management Policy and should be retained in the Children's Fiction section of the Washoe County Library System.

Thank you for your interest in the collections of Washoe County Library System.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff Scott". The signature is stylized with a large loop and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Jeff Scott

Library Director

Book Challenge – Mary Graham regarding  
Elatsoe by Darcie Little Badger



# CITIZEN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS AND ARTWORK

Author/Artist: Badger, Darcie Little

Title: Elatsoe

Book  Periodical \_\_\_\_\_ Other  Publisher/Date Levine Quezico 2020

Please state the reason for your request. This book is not appropriate for as young as 12 years.

Have you read/viewed/listened to this work/exhibition in its entirety?  Yes

What are the positive points of this material? see attachment

What would you like the Library to do about this work? Change the category to "Adult Fiction". NOT APPROPRIATE FOR YOUNG READER.

In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject? A BOOK ABOUT THE HISTORY OF THE LIPAN APACHE TRIBE.

Have you read the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy?  Yes

Have you read the Washoe County Library Public Use of Bulletin Boards, Exhibit Spaces and Display Spaces Policy?  Yes


Request initiated by: MARY GRAHAM

Address   
State 

Do you represent:

Yourself  
 Organization (circle) Wake Up Washoe County ~ Nevada Patriot ~ Local Church ~ Other

Date: 9/23/23 Signature of Patron: Mary P. Graham

Date: 12-20-23 Received by Staff Member: 

# Washoe County Library Book Removal Request

Title: Elatsoe

Author: Badger, Darcie Little

Stated Reading Level/ Interest Level: YA

Location, Date Book was obtained for reading:

LIBRARY H.W. RENO, Aug 17, 23

Location (Library, Amazon, etc.)

Date 9/23/23

Check all that apply:

1.  Inappropriate for the location in the library/age group:

- reading level
- subject matter
- gender ideology
- portrayal of violence, brutality, or abuse
- vulgar language
- sexual content

2.  Sexually explicit and unsuitable for age group/location:  written and/or  in graphics

- depicts pedophilia
- depicts fellatio or cunnilingus
- depicts the act of sexual intercourse
- depicts masturbation

3.  Appeals to prurient Interests (i.e., an erotic, lascivious, unhealthy, degrading, shameful interest in nudity, sex, or excretion)

4.  Lacks serious literary, artistic, political, scientific value for minors

5.  This book meets the criteria outlined in the Miller Test for obscenity: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/obscenity>  
(If boxes 2, 3, and 4 are checked, then check box 5.)

6.  Discriminatory, prejudice, derogatory, or demeaning writing based in race, sex, religion, or creed

It is a Demeaning and Derogatory depiction of the Lipan Apache Tribe, with Fictional accounts of their culture and religious beliefs, not seated in historical reality.

Attached:

6 number of page(s) with documented objections and/or excerpts from the book.

Verified Reader:

Murray J. Gendron  
Signature

9/23/23

Dated

Title :Elatsoe

Author: Badger, Darcie Little

Page(s):

Photograph(s) included YES  NO

Written description:

( see ATTACHMENT )

## ATTACHMENT

ELATSOE

Author: Darcie Badger

There are no positive points in this fictional book.

The overtone of this story is very dark. A 16 year old girl, Ellie, who is a Lipan Apache, plays and talks with her dog who has been dead for 5 years. The dog is the ghost with whom she spends the most time. Her childhood friend, Jay, is from an alternative universe who lives in an underworld with poltergeists, monsters and human ghosts. She travels to southern Texas for her cousin's funeral. She talks with her dead cousin who tells her he was murdered.

Things become darker as she strives to solve the murder mystery. There is continual reference to "goth family" neighbors, people who have the "vampire" curse, blood sucking ancient creatures. There are descriptions of cursed men who drink blood indiscriminately. There is supposed beliefs that people must be murdered in order to steal their health and give it to someone else. There is a belief that they can wake up ghosts of the dead or they can visit the underworld and come back alone, or not at all.

In the final chapters she and her friend, Jay, attend a masquerade ball at the local mayor's mansion.

Things go awry at the party as her cousin's ghost has "gone on a rampage". Descriptions of broken and bloodied bodies, broken body parts sprawled in pieces across the floor, fights between the living and the dead, permeate the story. Ellie gets scraped with a razor sharp shards of glass (pg. 292). There is much discussion of killing people as well as vampires. There are descriptions of thin silver coated metallic stakes which are used to kill people.

The unfortunate waste of this story is that all of these dark beliefs and practices are represented as being the base of traditions and beliefs passed down from Ellie's great grandmother through the Lipan Apache tribe. It puts the Lipan Apache Tribe in a negative and ridiculous light.

Portraying a Native American tribe that dates back to 1400 AD as being this eccentric and unseated in reality has no educational or entertainment value. Though the book is 'fiction' it would be difficult for a person as young as 12 years to separate the final opinion they will have about the Lipan Apache Tribe.

This tribe settled in the Southwest, helped the Texans in their fight for independence from Mexico. They fought in all the US Wars from WWI to Afghanistan and Iraq. They have an interesting and valuable history in this country.

Mary Graham, reader

[Booklist Reviews 2020 July #1](#)  
[BookPage Reviews 2020 September](#)  
[PW Reviews 2020 June #4](#)  
[SLJ Reviews 2020 July](#)  
[Horn Book Guide Reviews 2020 Fall](#)  
[Horn Book Magazine Reviews 2020 #5](#)  
[Kirkus Reviews 2020 June #2](#)

### **Booklist Reviews 2020 July #1**

\*Starred Review\* Ellie Bride is an intelligent, determined, and asexual young Native woman with the ability to bring the dead back to life, as demonstrated through her stalwart companion, Kirby the poltergeist puppy. One rule remains unchanging, though: humans must never be brought back from the underworld. After Ellie's beloved cousin dies and reveals the murderer to her in dreams, she must find a way to unravel the truth behind the eerie town of Willowbee, Texas, and work with her premonitions, her family, and her fae-descended best friend to keep everyone safe from a vengeful ghost. **Little Badger's stunning, haunting debut brings to the fantasy genre a fresh voice and perspective, weaving in folktales, omens, and urban legends of the protagonist's Lipan Apache culture.** Illuminated by Cai's intricately beautiful chapter-opening illustrations and interspersed with Apache terminology and mythology, often presented through stories of Ellie's namesake and ancestor, Six-Great, Little Badger's fast-paced, spine-tingling mystery follows Ellie the aspiring PI (paranormal investigator) and her allies as they battle vampires, spirits, curses, and familial and personal grief to overcome an evil that threatens to end them all. Older readers raised on series like the Spiderwick Chronicles or Artemis Fowl will delight in Ellie's tongue-in-cheek, self-assured voice, as well as her adventures with the mystical and magical elements that run through her lineage. **Grades 9-12.** Copyright 2020 Booklist Reviews.

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### **BookPage Reviews 2020 September**

#### **Elatsoe**

In an alternate Texas where major cities have Fairy Ring Transport Centers and the university offers an invasive monster program, Ellie, a Lipan Apache teenager, just wants to reincarnate prehistoric fossils and teach her ghost dog new tricks. Then her cousin visits her in a dream, says that a man named Abe Allerton murdered him and asks her to protect his family from further harm.

Together with her parents and her friend Jay, Ellie travels to Willowbee to uncover the truth about Abe Allerton, who by all external appearances has led a virtuous life. As Ellie gathers evidence, pieces together clues and retells the myth-tinged adventures of her six-generations-back great-grandmother, whom she calls Six-Great, it becomes clear that the cousin's murder is part of a larger secret. With Willowbee's bicentennial just days away, the time is right to vanquish a horror that's preyed on Native people for far too long.

Darcie Little Badger's **Elatsoe** is a clever mystery narrated by a teen whose voice radiates with wonderful self-confidence. Six-Great's stories highlight the importance of storytelling in Ellie's world, and observant readers will delight in the setting's sociopolitical details: Same-sex marriage is unremarkable, as is Ellie's asexuality, and the villain is marked in part by his environmentally unfriendly overuse of disposable eating utensils.

Like the self-published comics Ellie regularly devours, **Elatsoe presents readers with a strong heroine, a supernatural mystery and a unique and powerful Native American voice.**

Copyright 2020 BookPage Reviews.

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### **PW Reviews 2020 June #4**

**Indigenous myths, modern-day technology, and the supernatural successfully blend to build a fast-paced murder mystery in Little Badger's intriguing solo debut.** After 17-year-old, asexual Ellie's older cousin Trevor is fatally injured in an apparent car accident, he comes to her in a dream, identifying his killer and begging her to protect his family. Lipan Apache Ellie, named for her "heroic ancestor"—her maternal sixth-great-grandmother, Elatsoe, now known as "Six-Great"—has inherited from her the gift of waking



and training ghosts, and sets out to reveal the accident as a crime and unmask the killer. Accompanied by her faithful sidekick, the ghost of her dead dog Kirby, her loyal friend, “white Celtic-and-Nordic-American” cheerleader Jay, and actively supported by her understanding parents, Ellie battles with ghosts, vampires, and exorcists in a series of suspenseful confrontations—including a descent into an underworld of trilobite fossils—that increase in intensity and eventually solidify her place in her strong maternal lineage of Native protectors. Cai’s grayscale spot illustrations imbue the book with shadowy breath and movement, bringing a lyrical undertone to the energetic plot and multifaceted, refreshing voice. **Ages 12–up.** Author’s agent: Michael Curry, Donald Maass Literary. (Aug.) Copyright 2020 Publishers Weekly.

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### **SLJ Reviews 2020 July**

**Gr 5 Up**—Elatsoe (Ellie) is a Lipan Apache teen who lives in Texas, where bizarre supernatural occurrences are the norm and people encounter magic, monsters, shape-shifters, and various supernatural events beyond reason. Ellie has inherited the spiritual skills of her people and has raised the ghost of her dog Kirby. A shimmering mass, Kirby is a loyal companion who alerts Ellie to danger and has the ability to move through walls. Ellie uses her supernatural abilities and keen observation skills to investigate the gruesome, suspicious death of her cousin Trevor. The story opens deceptively slow with abundant character introduction, but the turning point arrives when Ellie dreams about Trevor and he reveals the murderer’s identity. Ellie and her friend Jay visit a library to research the paranormal history of the Texas town where her cousin was killed. They discover that the blood of vulnerable people is a key to one doctor’s cures. In a time-bending web of travel between past, present, and the underworld, Ellie confronts the killer. The dramatic ending will engage readers, and is a worthy payoff for the somewhat slow introductory pace. **VERDICT** Ellie’s family’s cultural beliefs and status as Indigenous people are presented well in the context of this supernatural fantasy. Recommended for fans of the genre.—Naomi Caldwell, Alabama State Univ., Montgomery  
Copyright 2020 School Library Journal.

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### **Horn Book Guide Reviews 2020 Fall**

This absorbing and haunting speculative fiction debut challenges expectations at every turn. Ellie (short for Elatsoe) is seventeen years old, Lipan Apache, and an aspiring paranormal investigator. She has inherited her Six-Great-Grandmother’s ability to awaken the spirits of the dead, a talent she regularly employs (notably, the ghost of Kirby, her beloved English springer spaniel). When Ellie’s cousin Trevor dies suddenly, his spirit appears in a dream, revealing that he was murdered and pleading for help. This leads Ellie, her family, and her best friend to the (fictional) southern Texas town of Willowbee, a disturbing setting with a pristine facade and dark secrets. Little Badger effectively weaves stories within stories in this multilayered, metaphorical, and magical mystery. Plot, setting, and dialogue are eerily and compellingly delineated; reflections on counternarratives and colonialism are woven seamlessly alongside subplots containing fairy rings, vampires, evil wizard doctors, and the underworld. As Ellie uncovers more about what happened to her cousin, she also develops deeper understandings about herself and about history: History is intrinsically malleable. Even without magic. It’s carried in our minds, our records. Cai’s grayscale chapter illustrations reinforce mood as well as broader themes of identity, history, and family.  
Copyright 2021 Horn Book Guide Reviews.

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### **Horn Book Magazine Reviews 2020 #5**

This absorbing and haunting speculative fiction debut challenges expectations at every turn. Ellie (short for Elatsoe) is seventeen years old, Lipan Apache, and an aspiring paranormal investigator. She has inherited her Six-Great-Grandmother’s ability to awaken the spirits of the dead, a talent she regularly

employs (notably, the ghost of Kirby, her beloved English springer spaniel). When Ellie's cousin Trevor dies suddenly, his spirit appears in a dream, revealing that he was murdered and pleading for help. This leads Ellie, her family, and her best friend to the (fictional) southern Texas town of Willowbee, a disturbing setting with a pristine facade and dark secrets. Little Badger effectively weaves stories within stories in this multilayered, metaphorical, and magical mystery. Plot, setting, and dialogue are eerily and compellingly delineated; reflections on counternarratives and colonialism are woven seamlessly alongside subplots containing fairy rings, vampires, evil wizard doctors, and the underworld. As Ellie uncovers more about what happened to her cousin, she also develops deeper understandings about herself and about history: "History is intrinsically malleable. Even without magic. It's carried in our minds, our records." Cai's grayscale chapter illustrations reinforce mood as well as broader themes of identity, history, and family. Elisa Gall September/October 2020 p.98 Copyright 2020 Horn Book Magazine Reviews.

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### **Kirkus Reviews 2020 June #2**

A teenager with supernatural gifts must solve her cousin's murder before it's too late. Aside from the fact that she owns a ghost dog named Kirby, Ellie is like any other comic book-loving, ice cream-eating Lipan Apache teenager. Her non-Native friends include her childhood buddy Jay, who is white, and her cousin Trevor's Latinx wife, Lenore. Yet Ellie does have traits that set her apart: She has inherited the talents of Six-Great-Grandmother, her powerful Lipan Apache forebear, and plans to skip college to work as a paranormal investigator. When Trevor dies in what appears to be a car accident, his ghost appears to her briefly, begging that she protect his wife and child. Ellie must call upon her strong lineage to rid her ancestral land of an ancient curse. Even as she discovers some of her own tribal relatives have been complicit in historic wrongdoing, she must save her family, animals, and community from destructive forces and restore balance to the world. A fast-paced whodunit set in a contemporary world like our own, this is a creative fusion of Indigenous cultural influences and supernatural fantasy. A brilliant, engaging debut written by a talented author, it seamlessly blends cyberstalking with Vampire Citizen Centers and Lipan Apache stories. This groundbreaking introduction to the fantasy genre remains relevant to Native histories even as it imaginatively looks to the future. Educates about settler colonialism while also entertaining with paranormal twists. (Speculative fiction. 13-18) Copyright Kirkus 2020 Kirkus/BPI Communications. All rights reserved.



Ms. Mary Graham

April 1, 2024

Dear Ms. Graham,

Thank you for sharing your concerns with us regarding *Elatsoe* by Darcie Little Badger. Per our process for reconsideration requests (described in the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy), I have reviewed your request with Collection Development Manager Debi Stears and am writing to share with you the results of our review:

In your Citizen Request for Reconsideration, you ask us to move *Elatsoe* from our Young Adult collection and place in the Adult collection. You state the reason for your request as "this book is not appropriate for as young as 12 years." You describe the book as "a demeaning and derogatory depiction of the Lipan Apache Tribe, with fictional accounts of their culture and religious beliefs, not seated in historical reality" and that the book offers no positive points.

*Elatsoe* received high praise from critics. In their starred review, recommending this as a title for readers in grades 9-12, *Booklist Reviews* says, "Little Badger's stunning, haunting debut brings to the fantasy genre a fresh voice and perspective, weaving in folktales, omens, and urban legends of the protagonist's Lipan Apache culture." *Publishers Weekly*, recommending the title for ages 12 and up, decides that "Indigenous myths, modern-day technology, and the supernatural successfully blend to build a fast-paced murder mystery in Little Badger's intriguing solo debut." *School Library Journal's* verdict is that "Ellie's family's cultural beliefs and status as indigenous people are presented well in the context of this supernatural fantasy" and recommends *Elatsoe* to readers in grades 5 and up. *Kirkus Reviews* asserts that "this groundbreaking introduction to the fantasy genre remains relevant to Native histories, even as it imaginatively looks to the future. Educates about settler colonialism while also entertaining with paranormal twists." *Elatsoe* was named to many lists including TIME's Best 100 Fantasy Books of All Time, *Publishers Weekly* Best of the Year, *Kirkus* Best YA of the Year, NPR Best of the Year, Chicago Public Library's "Best of the Best" and *Booklists's* Top 10 First Novels for Youth.

It is the policy of Washoe County Library System to place works in their appropriate subject area within their intended audience. Looking at suggested ages given by the publisher, intended by the author, and suggestions in books reviews, *Elatsoe* is a book that fits within our Young Adult fiction collection.

In your Request for Reconsideration, you stated that you would prefer to see a book about the history of the Lipan Apache Tribe. The only book we currently have available is *The Apache Wars: The Hunt for Geronimo, the Apache Kid, and the Captive Boy Who Started the Longest War in American History*. I have forwarded a request to our non-fiction selector to investigate the availability of additional titles about the history of the Lipan/Apache people.

The Washoe County Library System's Collection Development and Management Policy describes the library's support of Intellectual Freedom as "providing a "neutral environment in which individuals and their interests are brought together with the universe of ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions...The Library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some. Only the individual can define what materials are consistent with her/his own values. Individuals can apply those values to the use of library materials only for themselves. Parents and legal guardians have the responsibility for monitoring their children's use of library materials." Parents who prefer that their children not have access to certain materials should so advise their children.

After considering your request, we've concluded that *Elatsoe* meets the requirements of the Collection Development and Management Policy and should be retained in the Young Adult section of the Washoe County Library System.

Thank you for your interest in the collections of Washoe County Library System.

Sincerely,



Jeff Scott

Library Director

Book Challenge – Mary Graham regarding  
Date Me, Bryson Keller by Keven Van Whye



CITIZEN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS AND ARTWORK

Author/Artist: Van Whye, Kevin

Title: Date Me, Bryson Keller

Book  Periodical  Other  Publisher/Date 2020 Random House Children's Books

Please state the reason for your request. \_\_\_\_\_

Have you read/viewed/listened to this work/exhibition in its entirety?  Yes

What are the positive points of this material? NONE

What would you like the Library to do about this work? CHANGE FROM YOUNG ADULT FICTION SECTION TO ADULT FICTION SECTION.

In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject? \_\_\_\_\_

Have you read the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy?  Yes

Have you read the Washoe County Library Public Use of Bulletin Boards, Exhibit Spaces and Display Spaces Policy?  Yes

Request initiated by: MARY GRAHAM

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent:

Yourself  
 Organization (circle) Wake Up Washoe County ~ Nevada Patriot ~ Local Church ~ Other

Date: 11-2-23 Signature of Patron: Mary B. Graham

Date: 12-20-23 Received by Staff Member: [Signature]

# Washoe County Library Book Removal Request

Title: Date Me, Bryson Keller

Author: Van Whye, Kevin

Stated Reading Level/ Interest Level: 8TH-12TH

Location, Date Book was obtained for reading: \_\_\_\_\_

LIBRARY, NW RENO

Location (Library, Amazon, etc.)

Date 9/21/23

Check all that apply:

1.  Inappropriate for the location in the library/age group:
  - reading level
  - subject matter
  - gender ideology
  - portrayal of violence, brutality, or abuse
  - vulgar language
  - sexual content
  
2.  Sexually explicit and unsuitable for age group/location:  written and/or  in graphics
  - depicts pedophilia
  - depicts fellatio or cunnilingus
  - depicts the act of sexual intercourse
  - depicts masturbation
  
3.  Appeals to prurient interests (i.e., an erotic, lascivious, unhealthy, degrading, shameful interest in nudity, sex, or excretion)
  
4.  Lacks serious literary, artistic, political, scientific value for minors
  
5.  This book meets the criteria outlined in the Miller Test for obscenity: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/obscenity> (if boxes 2, 3, and 4 are checked, then check box 5.)
  
6.  Discriminatory, prejudice, derogatory, or demeaning writing based in race, sex, religion, or creed

Attached:

6 number of page(s) with documented objections and/or excerpts from the book.

Verified Reader:

Wm. S. Glaser  
Signature

11-2-23

Dated

Title :Date Me, Bryson Keller

Author: Van Whye, Kevin

Page(s):

Photograph(s) included YES  NO

Written description:

This is a fictional story of two high school seniors, one is a closet gay (Kai) and one is an athletic jock (Bryson).

On a dare, Kai asks Bryson to date him for 5 days. They date secretly for the week, at the end of which Bryson decides that he might be gay also.

By the evening of day 4 they become physically intimate in the local park, kissing for hours.

The following day a friend photographs them kissing on the beach and threatens to post it on social media if they don't stop.

Tempers flare and a fist fight ensues. The following day an article in the High School newspaper exposes both of the boys.

Both families find out, the entire school finds out and people start "taking sides". Many relationships among friends are destroyed.

Although the book lightly addresses the trials and tribulations faced by gay and lesbian relationships, it completely downplays the extent of the cruelty of confrontational battles and the permanent dissolution of previous friendships. Instead it leads to a "Cinderella" ending where everyone lives happily ever after.

The inappropriate matter in this book, categorized in "Young Adult" section (down to age 12) is:

1. The continual description of intimate touching and kissing
2. The school counselor giving Kai handfuls of condoms and encouraging him to have safe sex with "his boyfriend"

There is no educational or entertainment value for a 12 year old in this book.

"I just broke all my rules." He sighs.

"Sorry." My voice is breathless and not even a little apologetic. My heart hammers in my chest. I'm barely keeping myself standing upright.

"Don't. Don't apologize," Bryson says. "Not for that kiss, never for that kiss."

"Really?" I feel my face reddening. "This was my first kiss . . . like, ever."

"Well, this feels like my first real kiss, too," Bryson says. "I feel like everything finally makes sense now. You. Me. Us."

We stare at each other, and I can tell that neither of us is really looking at the other's eyes. We're looking at each other's lips.

"Should we?" Bryson asks.

"Yes," I say again, this time on a groan.

Bryson leans his head down. It's slower this time. His lips touch mine once more, and I feel like they belong there. There is no hesitation. Bryson Keller is sure. I feel braver, too. I reach for him. My fingers run through his hair. Bryson pulls me closer, and I moan into his mouth. This is what I've been waiting for my whole damn life.

On this Friday night, we are just two boys kissing because we want to, because we like each other.

And there is nothing at all wrong with that.

Because love is love is love.

# SATURDAY

It's evening. The sky is stained the colors of sunset. Food boxes lie at our feet. We got drive-through burgers and returned to the beach. I pick up a fry and chew.

Sitting with Bryson watching the sun go down is one of the most romantic things I've ever done in my life. The thought has me smiling.

"What?" Bryson asks when he catches me.

"Nothing."

"Tell me." He pokes at my ribs with his finger. "Tell me, tell me, tell me."

"Just" — I shrug — "this is kind of romantic."

Bryson sprawls across the sand and rests his head in my lap. "It is."

I reach out and trace his features. This time I'm brave enough to do so. I move my finger across his thick brows and down his straight nose. I hover above his lips, where just last night my own were. Our eyes lock, and electricity sparks between us.

Bryson reaches for my outstretched hand and pulls me forward. He brings our faces together. His lips find mine again. I moan into his mouth as he deepens the kiss.

We stay connected until we're both out of breath. I pull back slightly and hover there, our faces mere inches apart.

"I'm really glad you said yes," I admit.

"And I'm really glad you asked me out in the first place."

Bryson smiles. "When I think back to how you were at the start of this week, I can't believe it."

"Why?"

"You're so open now. So confident."

"Not really," I say. "I'm just comfortable with you. And because of that I'm able to be more myself than before."

"Well, I'm glad I got to see this side of you," Bryson says. "I'm all for it, as long as you never stop blushing. I'd be too sad if that were to stop."

"Just for you, I won't."

We fall into a comfortable silence. Bryson closes his eyes and starts to hum a song by the Graces. I eat the rest of my fries and listen to not only the sound of the ocean, but also my boyfriend's incredibly bad humming.

"Are we dating?" I ask.

Bryson stops humming and his eyes open. "What?"

"Uh . . . we haven't really spoken about it."

"I didn't think we needed to," Bryson says. "I figured I lost the dare when I kissed you."

"So today was our first day as a couple?"

"Yes." Bryson sits up and looks at me. "You, Kai Sheridan, are my boyfriend for real."

I lean in and kiss him. Bryson laughs against my lips, and I try to catch that sound with my mouth. By the time we pull apart, I am breathless and perfectly content.

"We should go home," I say, now that the sun has set completely.



She offers me a warm smile and points at the empty chair opposite her.

"Have a seat, Kai."

I do.

Ms. Coleman hands me some pamphlets. I read the first one: *It's Okay to Be Gay*. Then the next: *My Sexuality and Me*. And the final, and maybe my favorite, one: *Gay Means Happy, Too*.

I flip them to the back to see who wrote them and try to hide my surprise when I read *Denise Coleman*.

"Uh, thanks," I say awkwardly.

"Of course," she says. "If you have any questions or need anything else, my door is always open." Ms. Coleman reaches into her drawer and places a handful of condoms before me. My eyes widen in horror.

"Always practice safe sex," Ms. Coleman says. "Gay or straight, remember there should always be no love without a glove."

I want to hide my face in shame. I want to evaporate and be reborn as rain falling two weeks from now. I want this torture to end.

"Be sure to share those with your boyfriend, if you have one," Ms. Coleman adds. I'd be surprised if it's possible for my face to get any redder than it is right now. "Is there anything else you wanted to talk to me about?"

I shake my head.

"Well, as I told your parents on Monday, Fairvale Academy

does not tolerate such nonsense," Ms. Coleman says. "This matter will be dealt with severely, and the *Fairvale Academy Herald* is under review. We're questioning the editor and have called in her parents, but she refuses to reveal if she had any help with the article. She claims she's protecting her source." Ms. Coleman clicks her tongue. "I can't believe stuff like this is still happening."

And that's the truth of the matter. A lot of people believe that this stuff doesn't still happen . . . but it does. There are still people who have to fight just to exist, just to love. Just as there are still people who will go out of their way to make that very simple human right something unattainable.

"Dustin Smith sent her one of the photos. I'm not sure about the other, but I think that was her doing," I say. I don't feel bad about "outing" Dustin. Fair is fair, after all.

"Hmmm. He's already been suspended for fighting," Ms. Coleman makes a note. "But I'll pass that along to Vice Principal Ferguson. We'll talk to him and his parents when he gets back." She looks up. "Hang in there."

Feeling exactly the same as I first did when I walked into her office—if not more embarrassed now that I have a pocket full of condoms—I leave. It's ten minutes to lunch, so I decide to waste time while I wait for the bell to ring. So far, I haven't encountered anyone, but I know what awaits me in the cafeteria.

I pull out my phone and open my group chat.

*I'm at school. Meet me at Big Bertha.*

I head toward the vending machine. I kick Big Bertha and

"Please don't embarrass me," I whine. "I've been through enough this week."

"We would never do such a thing," Donny says.

"Never," Priya adds.

I laugh and turn away. I'm relieved when I spot Bryson's Jeep in the parking lot.

I approach but find it empty. He isn't at the basketball court, either.

In the distance I spot him. Bryson's standing near the surf with his back to me, staring out at the setting sun.

He hasn't noticed me yet. When I near, I reach for his hand, a balled fist at his side. Bryson startles at my touch and turns to me. He looks from my face to the hand that I'm holding. This is the first time I've reached for him.

"Am I dreaming?" Bryson asks. The sea air has playfully tousled his hair. He has a slight five-o'clock shadow, as though he couldn't be bothered to shave. I want to run my finger along his jawline.

Instead, I draw him close and pinch him. "To prove it's real," His lips twitch. "What are you doing here?"

"I came to see you."

"Why?"

"Because I need to tell you that I've been an idiot."

"What do you mean?" His blue eyes darken with confusion.

"I'm sorry I asked for time. I was only doing it because I didn't want you to get hurt because of me."

"You should let me decide that," Bryson says. He smiles and his dimple shows. "I already have."

"I know," I say. "I saw." I can't help but smile, too. Even so, I ask, "Are you sure?"

Bryson lightly grips my chin. "Yes." He rests his forehead against mine. "This was my choice. I know what I want, and I want to be with you," Bryson says, "regardless of what anyone else has to say. I like you, Kai Sheridan. I like you a lot."

I didn't think I could cry anymore after this week, and yet here I am crying again. It's totally embarrassing. Bryson laughs, and I smack him on the chest.

"Shut up," I say. "That was sweet."

"I know," Bryson winks. He reaches up to wipe away my tears with his thumbs. "You're lucky you have such a sweet boyfriend."

"Yes, I am."

Bryson kisses me then, and I deepen it. Just like I wanted to before, I trace his jawline. Bryson bites at my bottom lip and I moan. Our mouths move against each other, and that becomes the only thing that matters.

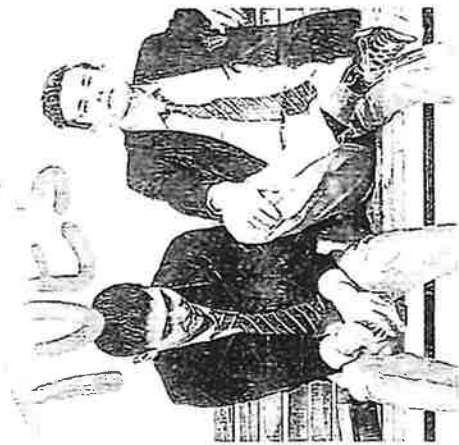
I don't know how long this will last, but I choose to focus on the here and now.

I choose to be happy.

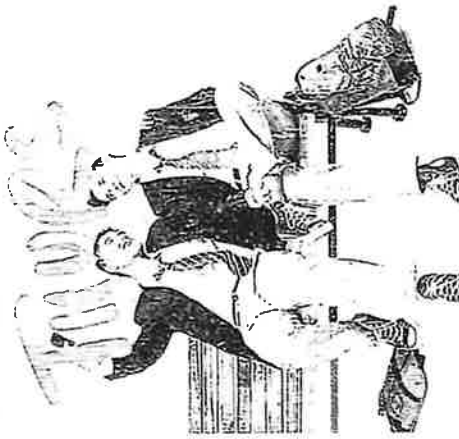
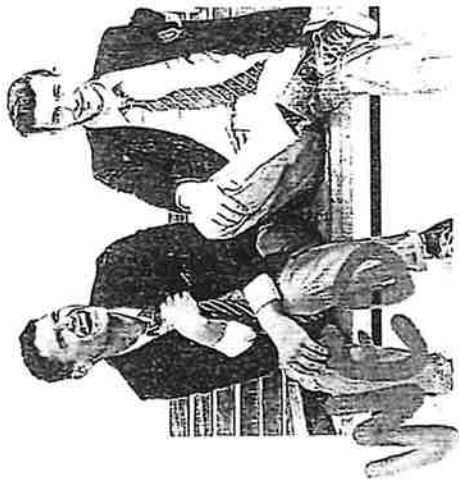
Because I can be.

Because I deserve to be.

Gay means *happy*, too, you know.



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[Booklist Reviews 2020 April #1](#)  
[PW Reviews 2020 March #4](#)  
[SLJ Reviews 2020 April](#)  
[Kirkus Reviews 2020 April #2](#)  
[VOYA Reviews 2020 June](#)

### **Booklist Reviews 2020 April #1**

It starts as a dare. Bryson Keller, the most popular boy at Fairvale Academy, is challenged to date, for a week, the first person who asks him out each Monday. If someone fails to ask him out, he must ride the (ugh!) school bus for the rest of the year. Let the competition begin. It goes swimmingly at first; the girls line up for the opportunity to date Bryson. But then something unexpected happens. Our gay, deeply closeted protagonist, Kai, who is biracial, improbably decides to be the one to do the asking, and a puzzled Bryson says yes. But it must, the boys agree, remain secret. Funny how things can change. Within a few days of dating, Bryson realizes he's probably gay himself, and the two boys begin a tentative relationship. Can it flower? Can they keep it a secret? The author, who is himself gay and biracial, writes a coming out story with authority and empathy; the situation is familiar, but the execution is appealing, and readers, too, will want to date Bryson. Grades 9-12. Copyright 2020 Booklist Reviews.

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### **PW Reviews 2020 March #4**

Handsome, athletic senior Bryson Keller, who is white, is the king of Fairvale Academy, while classmate Kai Sheridan gets invited to parties only as his popular friends' plus-one. Kai is gay, closeted, and lonely, but he avoids coming out; he already stands out because he's biracial (his American mother is white, his South African father is "mixed race"), and he's reluctant to be reduced to "the gay one," too. Still, there's a dare on that says Bryson has to date, for a week, whomever asks him each Monday, so when Bryson indirectly causes Kai to get detention, Kai impulsively asks Bryson out. Broad-minded and friendly, Bryson agrees to go out with Kai and keep his secret, but by Wednesday, Kai can't stop thinking that maybe Bryson is gay, too. And if having a fake boyfriend is this good, what would having a real one be like? Debut author van Whye uses the dare to set up a book filled with good-natured sweetness: even when bad things happen (Bryson's jock friends are homophobes, Kai's parents struggle with his news), the boys' growing affection and trust, and the support they receive from Kai's little sister and Bryson's family, are heartwarming. Ages 14–up. Agent: Robert Guinsler, Sterling Lord Literistic. (May) Copyright 2020 Publishers Weekly.

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### **SLJ Reviews 2020 April**

**Gr 9 Up**—The "Me" of the title is Kai Sheridan, a closeted gay teen and droll narrator. Certain he could have any girl he wanted, popular Bryson Keller doesn't care all that much about dating in high school. Then he accepts a dare to date a different person every week for the rest of the school year. The catch? Bryson has to go out with the first person who asks him every Monday morning. The challenge is going exceptionally well until Kai makes a risky move, upending everything Bryson knows about himself. This incredibly bold move also inadvertently outs Kai even as his secret becomes fodder for the school paper. Thanks to two supportive best friends and a sister who is wise beyond her years, Kai is able to realize happiness as his true self. Van Whye does a wonderful job tackling multiple relevant topics for high schoolers; through Kai's first-person narration, readers glimpse his struggles of being mixed race and gay. **VERDICT** A fun, feel-good story that shows the importance of having a strong support system, that love is love, and that everyone deserves to love and be loved. With wide appeal for those who favor stories tackling teen struggles of identity.—David Roberts, Salem Public Library, OH  
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## Kirkus Reviews 2020 April #2

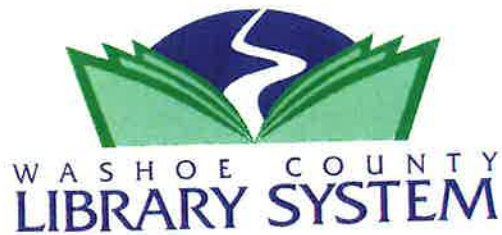
A dare sets up a gay teen with his school's star athlete. Kai never intended to come out of the closet—at least not until going off to college. But when detention presents a surprising opportunity, Kai kicks "the closet door open" and asks his classmate Bryson out. Because of a dare, Bryson must date a new person each week. He says yes to Kai. The catch? Each relationship only lasts from Monday until the final bell on Friday. Kai decides to keep everything a secret—even from his best friends, Priya and Donny. The more time Kai and Bryson spend together—rehearsing their drama scene, seeing their favorite band in LA—the more the boys' fake relationship starts to feel very real. But will it last after Friday? Or will Bryson move on to the next dare date? Like Jenny Han's *To All the Boys I've Loved Before* (2014), this #ownvoices debut is scrupulously romantic. The plot is deliciously heavy on fluff, but it also delves into more complex subjects like faith, racism, and homophobia. Kai's lighthearted first-person narration and the lovable cast of characters keep the momentum going. Kai is mixed race, with a white mother and a biracial (black/white) South African dad who occasionally slips in Afrikaans phrases. Bryson, who is white, may be the poster child, but his questioning sexuality and family troubles add dimension. **A solid blend of swoonworthy moments and minor injustices.** (author's note) (Fiction. 14-18) Copyright Kirkus 2020 Kirkus/BPI Communications. All rights reserved.

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## VOYA Reviews 2020 June

It started as a dare that increasingly gathered momentum: Fairvale Academy's golden boy, Bryson Keller, must agree to date a different person each week. The first person to state, "Date me, Bryson Keller," each Monday morning wins five full days of Bryson's charm. No one said that person must be female. Therefore, high school senior Kai Sheridan shocks even himself when he utters those fateful words to Bryson, especially since Kai has worked meticulously to stay in the closet. His perfectly constructed life might dissipate if anyone finds out he asked Bryson to date—even as a dare. Shockingly, Bryson readily agrees to make Kai the final contestant in the weekly Fairvale Academy dare, and Kai quickly learns that he is not the only one with secrets. Debut author van Whye uses an affluent, private high school as the backdrop for exploring the universal theme of acceptance, stemming predominantly from covert acts of racism and homophobia. While Bryson's life symbolizes the stereotypical, Kai is a bi-racial gay teen with devout Christian parents who disagree with homosexuality. The novel maintains a lighthearted and witty tone as Bryson helps Kai find the courage to navigate the internal and external conflicts of living a lie for self-preservation, such as guilt, isolation, and bullying. **The novel provides hope to struggling teens, showing that a close network of accepting friends and family can help overcome problems. Teachers and librarians seeking LGBTQ+ novels that promote acceptance will want to add this title to their collection.**—Courtney Munday. 4Q 3P J S Copyright 2020 Voya Reviews.





Ms. Mary Graham  
[REDACTED]

April 1, 2024

Dear Ms. Graham,

Thank you for sharing your concerns with us regarding *Date Me, Bryson Keller* by Kevin Van Whye. Per our process for reconsideration requests (described in the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy), I have reviewed your request with Collection Development Manager Debi Stears and am writing to share with you the results of our review:

In your Citizen Request for Reconsideration, you ask us to move *Date Me, Bryson Keller* from our Young Adult collection and place it in the Adult collection. Your request indicates that you object to "the continual description of intimate touching and kissing", the school counselor giving Kai condoms and encouraging him to have safe sex, and that you feel there is no educational or entertainment value for a 12-year-old in this book.

In searching editorial reviews of *Date Me, Bryson Keller* we didn't find any reviewers recommending this as a book for 12-year-olds. Instead, reviewers consistently recommended this as a title for high school students. The reviewers did have significant praise for *Date Me, Bryson Keller*, with *Booklist* describing it "a coming out story with authority and empathy; the situation is familiar, but the execution is appealing and readers too, will want to date Bryson." *School Library Journal* wrote that it's a "fun, feel-good story that shows the importance of having a strong support system, that love is love, and that everyone deserves to love and be loved. With wide appeal for those who favor stories tackling teen struggles of identity." *VOYA Reviews* states the "novel provides hope to struggling teens showing that a close network of accepting friends and family can help overcome problems."

It is the policy of Washoe County Library System to place works in their appropriate subject area within their intended audience. Looking at suggested ages given by the publisher, intended by the author, and suggestions in books reviews, *Date Me, Bryson Keller* is a book that fits within our Young Adult fiction collection.

The Washoe County Library System's Collection Development and Management Policy describes the library's support of Intellectual Freedom as providing a "neutral environment in which individuals and their interests are brought together with the universe of ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions...The Library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some. Only the individual can define what materials are consistent with her/his own values. Individuals can apply those values to the use of library materials only for themselves. Parents and legal guardians have the responsibility for monitoring their children's use of library materials." Parents who prefer that their children not have access to certain materials should so advise their children.

---

Administration  
301 South Center Street  
P.O. Box 2151, Reno, Nevada 89505  
(775) 327-8341  
[www.washoecountylibrary.us](http://www.washoecountylibrary.us)

After considering your request, we've concluded that *Date Me, Bryson Keller* meets the requirements of the Collection Development and Management Policy and should be retained in the Young Adult section of the Washoe County Library System.

Thank you for your interest in the collections of Washoe County Library System.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Jeff Scott". The signature is stylized with a large loop at the beginning and a long, sweeping tail that extends to the right.

Jeff Scott

Library Director

# Book Challenge – Bruce Foster regarding All Boys Aren't Blue

CITIZEN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY MATERIALS AND ARTWORK

Author/Artist: Johnson, George

Title: All Boys Aren't Blue

Book  Periodical \_\_\_\_\_ Other

Fewer Straws for Books for Young Readers

Publisher/Date - Macmillan Publishing - 2020

Please state the reason for your request. - Book promotes and celebrates the homosexual lifestyle in teenage - young adults with no self control. (no redeeming value)

Have you read/viewed/listened to this work/exhibition in its entirety?  Yes

What are the positive points of this material? The author points out that he was raised in a very loving and supportive family.

What would you like the Library to do about this work? Remove book, as it promotes a victim mentality, the glorification of all sexual inhibitions and glorifies graphic sexual behavior between two male individuals.

In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject? "Blackout" - Candace Owens  
"Dad, White and Black" - Robert Woodson, Sr.  
"Lessons from the Heart of the Matter: The Woodson Principles"

Have you read the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy?  Yes

Have you read the Washoe County Library Public Use of Bulletin Boards, Exhibit Spaces and Display Spaces Policy?  Yes

Request initiated by: Bruce Foster

Address [Redacted]  
State [Redacted]

Do you represent:  
 Yourself  
 Organization (circle) Wake Up Washoe County ~ Nevada Patriot ~ Local Church ~ Other

Date: 8/29/2023 Signature of Patron: [Signature]

Date: 12-20-23 Received by Staff Member: [Signature]

# Washoe County Library Book Removal Request

Title: All Boys Aren't Blue

Author: Johnson, George

Stated Reading Level/ Interest Level: YA/9th-12th

Location, Date Book was obtained for reading:

8/9/2023

Spanish Springs Library

Location (Library, Amazon, etc.)

Date

Check all that apply:

1.  Inappropriate for the location in the library/age group:
  - reading level
  - subject matter
  - gender ideology
  - portrayal of violence, brutality, or abuse
  - vulgar language
  - sexual content
  
2.  Sexually explicit and unsuitable for age group/location:  written and/or  in graphics
  - depicts pedophilia
  - depicts fellatio or cunnilingus
  - depicts the act of sexual intercourse
  - depicts masturbation
  
3.  Appeals to prurient interests (i.e., an erotic, lascivious, unhealthy, degrading, shameful interest in nudity, sex, or excretion)
  
4.  Lacks serious literary, artistic, political, scientific value for minors - Promotes O.G. Hukood  
Twisting of American History. Promotes mental health of minors
5.  This book meets the criteria outlined in the Miller Test for obscenity: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/obscenity> *Search*  
(If boxes 2, 3, and 4 are checked, then check box 5.)
  
6.  Discriminatory, prejudice, derogatory, or demeaning writing based in race, sex, religion, or creed

Attached:

\_\_\_\_\_ number of page(s) with documented objections and/or excerpts from the book.



Verified Reader: \_\_\_\_\_

Grace Foster  
Signature

8/24/23  
Dated

Title :All Boys Aren't Blue

Author: Johnson, George

Page(s):

Photograph(s) included  YES  NO

Written description:

" A groundbreaking young adult memoir, prominent writer and LGBTQIA+ activist George Johnson shares both glorious and gut wrenching memories of growing up Black and queer in America. "

Washoe County is inviting you to **Speak Up** by making public participation easier and more convenient for our residents. Citizens can learn about ongoing projects and programs by accessing meeting agenda items and sharing comments on topics they care about.



*All Together Now*, our 2023 Summer Reading Challenge, has ended. But never fear! You can still redeem prizes at any Washoe County Library location through August 31. Visit [washoecountylibrary.us/summerreading](http://washoecountylibrary.us/summerreading) for more information.

[Home](#) Browse » [Catalog Search Results](#) » All boys aren't blue: a memoir-manifesto

[Return to Search Results](#)

[Next](#) ▶

# All boys aren't blue: a memoir-manifesto



Average Rating

## Author

Johnson, George M

## Publisher

Varies, see individual formats and editions

## Publication Date

2020.

## Language

English

## Accelerated Reader

IL: UG - BL: 6.4 - AR Pts: 9

## Appears on these lists

All Together Now - Ages 12-18

Banned Books Week

LGBTQIA+ Nonfiction

Book

Show Edition

On Shelf

Downtown Reno Library - Adult Nonfiction

BIO JOHNSON 2020

1 available

North Valleys Library - Adult Nonfiction -

Biography Shelf

BIO JOHNSON 2020

2 available

Spanish Springs Library - Adult Nonfiction -

Biography Shelf

BIO JOHNSON 2020

1 available

[Booklist Reviews 2020 March #1](#)

[PW Annex Reviews](#)

[SLJ Reviews 2020 May](#)

[Kirkus Reviews 2020 February #2](#)

### **Booklist Reviews 2020 March #1**

With this title, Johnson offers his memoir-manifesto of growing up queer before he had the language to know exactly what that meant. Split into three parts, Johnson's book shares intimate stories of his childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood as he navigates family, friends, and the performance of masculinity. Discussion of his stories includes theory and statistical information that tie his ideas and struggles in with a larger intersectional identity. Johnson struggles with finding his YA voice. Though it's clear that his stories and experiences are formative to his identity as a Black queer boy (now man), they pour out with an intensity that may lead readers to feelings of confusion about the main point of the book. The severe lack of #OwnVoices books from Black queer men makes this title an absolute necessity, but it may fall to the wayside for cultural outsiders. Nevertheless, the personal stories and the healing and reconciliation of self in this title are all undeniably honest and relatable—a reminder of our shared imperfection and humanity. Grades 9-12. Copyright 2020 Booklist Reviews.

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### **PW Annex Reviews**

Billed as a "memoir-manifesto," Johnson's debut is a collection of heartfelt personal essays revolving around themes of identity and family. Growing up black and queer in New Jersey and Virginia, Johnson feels a tension between these two identities, even before he's fully conceptualized what makes him stand out from others in his close-knit family. The loving Elder/Johnson clan, led by witty matriarch Nanny (whose take on familial loyalty and intimacy is "You might have to wipe my ass one day"), includes Johnson's cousin Hope, a trans woman who models pride and self-determination. Johnson makes impassioned declarations about the importance of community and inclusive sex education, and the freedom to define oneself outside of society's conditioning. Though at first glance the book lacks the synthesizing call to action that "manifesto" would imply, its "be yourself" message remains a radical stance for doubly marginalized individuals. Johnson's writing is a stylistic hodgepodge of anecdotes ("story time," he periodically declares) and letters to relatives. In a publishing landscape in need of queer black voices, readers who are sorting through similar concepts will be grateful to join him on the journey. 14–up. (Apr.)

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### **SLJ Reviews 2020 May**

Gr 9 Up—Journalist and activist Johnson takes readers through his life from childhood through young adulthood, reflecting on how his identity as a queer Black boy was shaped, refracted, and often suppressed for his own safety. Growing up in New Jersey, Johnson recounts becoming aware of his "difference" and how it necessitated choices between who he was and who he felt pressured to be. Part memoir and part manifesto, the text infuses personal reflections with observations about white supremacy, toxic masculinity, homophobia, and how these concepts affected him, whether as a boy forced to choose football over double dutch at recess or as a fraternity pledge struggling to come out on campus. Separated into acts, the book describes different members of his community (family, teenagers, friends)—a stylistic demonstration of his valuable support system that occasionally makes the narrative choppy. Still, the various tangents don't detract from the book's power, and the conversational tone will leave readers feeling like they are sitting with an insightful friend. There are a few detailed depictions of sexual situations and an incident of sexual abuse by a family member. Johnson handles the painful, complicated feelings around this experience with an honesty and tone appropriate for the intended audience. VERDICT This young adult memoir is a contemporary hallmark of the blossoming genre. Johnson anchors the text with encouragement and realistic guidance for queer Black youth.

Recommended for YA nonfiction collections where autobiographical and social justice titles are popular.—Ashleigh Williams, School Library Journal  
Copyright 2020 School Library Journal.

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### **Kirkus Reviews 2020 February #2**

Centers the experiences, desires, and agency of a queer black boy navigating his evolving selfhood and the challenges of society's conditional love for his truthful existence. Queer black existence has been here forever, and yet rarely has that experience been spotlighted within literature aimed at black boyhood. This is the context in which this "memoir-manifesto" begins, as Johnson, a still relatively young 33-year-old journalist and activist, debuts his unfolding life story within a vacuum of representation. These stories wrestle with "joy and pain...triumph and tragedy" across many heavy topics—gender policing, sexual abuse, institutional violence—but with a view to freedom on the horizon. Through the witnessing of Johnson's intimate accounts, beginning with his middle-class New Jersey childhood and continuing through his attendance at a historically black university in Virginia, readers are invited on their own paths to healing, self-care, and living one's truth. Those who see themselves outside the standpoint of being black and queer are called in toward accountability, clarifying an understanding of the history, language, and actions needed to transform the world—not in pity for the oppressed but in the liberation of themselves. This title opens new doors, as the author insists that we don't have to anchor stories such as his to tragic ends: "Many of us are still here. Still living and waiting for our stories to be told—to tell them ourselves." A critical, captivating, merciful mirror for growing up black and queer today. (Memoir. 14-adult)  
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Mr. Bruce Foster

April 1, 2024

Dear Mr. Foster

Thank you for sharing your concerns with us regarding *All Boys Aren't Blue* by George M. Johnson. Per our process for reconsideration requests (described in the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy), I have reviewed your request with Collection Development Manager Debi Stears and am writing to share with you the results of our review:

In your Citizen Request for Reconsideration, you ask us to remove *All Boys Aren't Blue* from our library collection. You state the reason for your request as "Book promotes and celebrates the homosexual lifestyle to teenagers – young adults with no self control (no redeeming value)." You further object to *All Boys Aren't Blue* because you found that it "promotes a victim mentality, the pleasing of all sexual inhibitions, and glorifies graphic sexual behavior between two male individuals."

*All Boys Aren't Blue* has received high praise from multiple reviewers. In its starred review, *Kirkus Reviews* trumpets "This title opens new doors, as the author insists that we don't have to anchor stories such as his to tragic ends: 'Many of us are still here. Still living and waiting for our stories to be told - to tell them ourselves.' A critical, captivating, merciful mirror for growing up Black and queer today." *Booklist* describes the work as "an absolute necessity...the personal stories and the healing and reconciliation of self in this title are all undeniably honest and relatable – a reminder of our shared imperfection and humanity." *Publishers Weekly* points to the gap *All Boys Aren't Blue* fills in the genre by declaring that "In a publishing landscape in need of queer black voices, readers who are sorting through similar concepts will be grateful to join him on the journey."

*All Boys Aren't Blue* has received many accolades and awards including People Magazine Best Book of the Summer, *Kirkus Reviews* Best Book of 2020, *Publishers Weekly* Anti-Racist Reading List Pick, Kids' Book Choice Award Finalist, and the #1 YALSA Teens Top Ten List Winner.

In your request you do recommend some titles you feel would convey as valuable a picture and perspective on the subject. I've checked our holdings of these titles and find that we do already have two of your recommended titles, Candace Owens' *Blackout: How Black American Can Make its Second Escape from the Democratic Plantation* and Gary B. Nash's *Red, White, and Black: The Peoples of Early North America*, in our holdings. We do not have *Lessons from the Least of These: The Woodson Principles* in our collection. I've forwarded that title to our adult non-fiction selector, asking her to investigate purchasing it for our collection. We always appreciate hearing from users when they feel that the library is lacking a desired perspective. Thank you for suggesting titles that you feel would provide a more inclusive collection.



The Washoe County Library System's Collection Development and Management Policy describes the library's support of Intellectual Freedom as providing a neutral environment in which individuals and their interests are brought together with the universe of ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions...The Library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some. Only the individual can define what materials are consistent with her/his own values. Individuals can apply those values to the use of library materials only for themselves. Parents and legal guardians have the responsibility for monitoring their children's use of library materials." Parents who prefer that their children not have access to certain materials should so advise their children.

After considering your request, we've concluded that *All Boys Aren't Blue* meets the requirements of the Collection Development and Management Policy and should be retained in the Washoe County Library System.

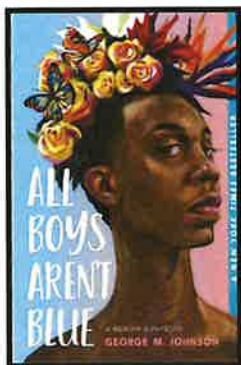
Thank you for your interest in the collections of Washoe County Library System.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Jeff Scott', with a stylized, looping flourish.

Jeff Scott

Library Director



**ALL BOYS AREN'T BLUE: A MEMOIR-MANIFESTO by George M. Johnson**

Farrar, Straus and Giroux (BYR), an imprint of Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, 2020  
ISBN: 9780374312718 (Hardcover); 9781250895561 (Paperback)

\*Age Range: 14-18

Grade Range: Grades 8 and Up (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

## BOOK SYNOPSIS

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In a series of personal essays, prominent journalist and LGBTQIA+ activist George M. Johnson's *All Boys Aren't Blue* explores his childhood, adolescence, and college years in New Jersey and Virginia.

From the memories of getting his teeth kicked out by bullies at age five, to flea marketing with his loving grandmother, to his first sexual relationships, this young-adult memoir weaves together the trials and triumphs faced by Black queer boys.

Both a primer for teens eager to be allies as well as a reassuring testimony for young queer men of color, *All Boys Aren't Blue* covers topics such as gender identity, toxic masculinity, brotherhood, family, structural marginalization, consent, and Black joy. Johnson's emotionally frank style of writing will appeal directly to young adults.

## REVIEWS AND PRAISE

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★ "This title opens new doors, as the author insists that we don't have to anchor stories such as his to tragic ends: 'Many of us are still here. Still living and waiting for our stories to be told—to tell them ourselves.' A critical, captivating, merciful mirror for growing up Black and queer today." —*Kirkus Reviews*, **starred review**

"An exuberant, unapologetic memoir infused with a deep but cleareyed love for its subjects." —*The New York Times*

"An absolute necessity . . . the personal stories and the healing and reconciliation of self in this title are all undeniably honest and relatable—a reminder of our shared imperfection and humanity." —*Booklist*

"The conversational tone will leave readers feeling like they are sitting with an insightful friend . . . This young adult memoir is a contemporary hallmark of the blossoming genre. Johnson anchors the text with encouragement and realistic guidance for queer Black youth." —*School Library Journal*

"Johnson's debut is a collection of heartfelt personal essays revolving around themes of identity and family... In a publishing landscape in need of queer black voices, readers who are sorting through similar concepts will be grateful to join him on the journey." —*Publishers Weekly*

**Updated 1/10/2024**

Macmillan Children's Publishing Group  
Contact Mary Van Akin [mary.vanakin@macmillan.com](mailto:mary.vanakin@macmillan.com)

"Powerful . . . Johnson's book is geared toward young adults—a market that needs this level of realness about everything from finding and harboring joy to bullying to navigating queerness. All Boys Aren't Blue is a game changer." —*Bitch Magazine*

"A personal examination of what it's like to grow up as a black and queer young man . . . a can't-miss collection."  
—POPSUGAR

## AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

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- A NEW YORK TIMES BESTSELLER
- Optioned for television by Gabrielle Union
- Featured on Good Morning America, NBC Nightly News, Today Show, MSNBC and Fox Soul
- Velshi Banned Book Club
- Amazon Best Book of the Year
- CNN Summer Read Pick
- Teen Vogue Recommended Read
- BuzzFeed Recommended Read
- People Magazine Best Book of the Summer
- An Indie Bestseller
- An ALA Rainbow List Pick
- A New York Library Best Book of 2020
- A Chicago Public Library Best Book of 2020
- A Kirkus Reviews Best Book of 2020
- Publishers Weekly Anti-Racist Reading List Pick
- 2021 Texas Topaz Nonfiction Reading List Pick
- A Kids' Book Choice Award Finalist
- #1 YALSA Teens Top Ten List Winner
- A Texas TAYSHAS Reading List Title

## MEDIA AND RESOURCES

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- [Discussion Guide](#)
- [CBSN Interview with George Matthew Johnson](#)
- [Short film trailer](#)
- [MacKids School & Library Interview](#)
- [The New York Times Review](#)
- [Shondaland Interview](#)
- [NPR Interview](#)
- [Publishers Weekly Interview](#)
- [Los Angeles Times Interview](#)
- [The Griot Interview](#)
- [ABC News Interview on Censorship](#)
- [TIME Magazine Interview on Censorship](#)
- [WNYC Interview on Censorship](#)
- [NPR Morning Edition Interview on Censorship](#)

Updated 1/10/2024

Macmillan Children's Publishing Group  
Contact Mary Van Akin [mary.vanakin@macmillan.com](mailto:mary.vanakin@macmillan.com)

- [Yahoo Entertainment Interview on Censorship](#)
- [Buzzfeed.com Story on Retaining \*All Boys Aren't Blue\*](#)

## RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

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Review successful defenses of *All Boys Aren't Blue* online [here](#).

### \*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES

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A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

Updated 1/10/2024

Macmillan Children's Publishing Group  
Contact Mary Van Akin [mary.vanakin@macmillan.com](mailto:mary.vanakin@macmillan.com)

Book Challenge – Dawn Cooper regarding  
Heartstopper Volume 3 by Alice Oserman



**CITIZEN REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF LIBRARY  
MATERIALS AND ARTWORK**

Author/Artist: Oseman, Alice

Title: HeartStopper Volume 3

Book  Periodical \_\_\_\_\_ Other  Publisher/Date \_\_\_\_\_

Please state the reason for your request: This book is not appropriate for the emotional maturity level of children under the age of 16.

Have you read/viewed/listened to this work/exhibition in its entirety?  Yes

What are the positive points of this material? ∅

What would you like the Library to do about this work? move it to the adult section

In its place, what work would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of the subject? ∅

Have you read the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy?  Yes

Have you read the Washoe County Library Public Use of Bulletin Boards, Exhibit Spaces and Display Spaces Policy?  Yes

Request initiated by: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
State: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you represent:  
 Yourself  
 Organization (circle) Wake Up Washoe County ~ Nevada Patriot ~ Local Church ~ Other

Date: 12/07/27 Signature of Patron: Dawn Cooper

Date: 12/20/23 Received by Staff Member: [Signature]

# Washoe County Library Book Removal Request

Title: HeartStopper Volume 3

Author: Oseman, Alice

Stated Reading Level/ Interest Level: YA

Location, Date Book was obtained for reading:

South Valley Library

9/18/23

Location (Library, Amazon, etc.)

Date

Check all that apply:

1.  Inappropriate for the location in the library/age group:

- reading level
- subject matter
- gender ideology
- portrayal of violence, brutality, or abuse
- vulgar language
- sexual content

2.  Sexually explicit and unsuitable for age group/location:  written and/or  in graphics

- depicts pedophilia
- depicts fellatio or cunnilingus
- depicts the act of sexual intercourse
- depicts masturbation

3.  Appeals to prurient interests (i.e., an erotic, lascivious, unhealthy, degrading, shameful interest in nudity, sex, or excretion)

4.  Lacks serious literary, artistic, political, scientific value for minors

5.  This book meets the criteria outlined in the Miller Test for obscenity: <https://www.law.cornell.edu/wex/obscenity>  
(If boxes 2, 3, and 4 are checked, then check box 5.)

6.  Discriminatory, prejudice, derogatory, or demeaning writing based in race, sex, religion, or creed

Attached:

\_\_\_\_\_ number of page(s) with documented objections and/or excerpts from the book.

Verified Reader:

Dawn Cooper  
Signature

12/7/23  
Dated

Title :HeartStopper Volume 3

Author: Oseman, Alice

Page(s):

Photograph(s) included YES  NO

Written description:

This book is not appropriate for middle school children. The content is not appropriate for their emotional maturity level. It should be moved to the adult section

[Booklist Reviews 2020 April #2](#)  
[PW Annex Reviews](#)  
[SLJ Reviews 2020 February](#)  
[Kirkus Reviews 2020 March #1](#)

### **Booklist Reviews 2020 April #2**

The first volume of this new series tells the story of Nick and Charlie, two characters first seen in Oseman's prose debut, *Solitaire* (2014). Here we meet openly gay Charlie and straight rugby player Nick, who become fast friends at school and then, possibly, something more. Charlie knows he's falling hard, but it's the first time Nick has ever been attracted to a boy, and he's not sure what that means for him. This volume focuses mostly on their blossoming romance, incorporating other issues such as bullying and sexual harassment as Charlie tries to extricate himself from a previous relationship. Oseman's style is heavily influenced by manga in both story and illustration style. While working primarily through dialogue and texts, she also uses many wordless panels depicting small actions and gestures, capturing the emotional state of the characters; with all the blushing and awkward glances, it's difficult not to be charmed. While the drawings—originally published as a web comic—can be inconsistent, the romance and realistic fiction will draw readers in to this sweet story. **Grades 7-10**. Copyright 2020 Booklist Reviews.

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### **PW Annex Reviews**

When lanky, openly gay Charlie Spring, 14, is seated next to burly rugby lad Nick Nelson, 16, in a new "vertical class group" at their English all-boys school, they form a friendship that appears unlikely to those around them, quickly becoming a central part of each other's lives. Charlie, having recently realized that the boy he thought might be his boyfriend is just using him for casual make-out sessions, starts falling for Nick, though it's presumed that Nick is straight. Nick, meanwhile, starts to examine how he feels about Charlie, and what that means about how he sees himself. A leisurely pace and focus on everyday events—school, sports, hangouts—allows the characters' relationship to develop in a natural, relatable way. Art by Oseman (*I Was Born for This*) is loosely drawn in black, white, and a cool gray-green that fits the story's quiet, casual vibe; facial expressions, particularly Nick's, effectively communicate what the characters find difficult to say. While the familiar-feeling school romance doesn't break new ground, it does deliver a warm, comfortable story of fledgling love starring two shippable leads who will be familiar to Oseman fans. Final art not seen by PW. **Ages 12-up**. (May)  
Copyright 2020 Publishers Weekly Annex.

[Go to Top](#)

### **SLJ Reviews 2020 February**

**Gr 8 Up—Young love—with all its awkwardness, tenderness, and raw emotions—blossoms between two teenagers who appear to be worlds apart.** The only openly gay boy in his British all-boys grammar school, sensitive Charlie was bullied when he came out, but things have settled down, and he is seeing someone: Ben, who hooks up with Charlie but isn't out and won't tell anyone about their relationship. When Charlie is assigned to sit next to Nick, he begins falling for the older boy. He's sure it's hopeless—popular "rugby lad" Nick seems to have more in common with Charlie's tormentors. But Nick, who has always assumed he was straight, begins to question his identity—and to realize how bewildering and wonderful love can be. Based on a webcomic, this graphic novel centers on two secondary characters from Oseman's debut prose novel, *Solitaire*, set before the events of this story. The sweet, two-color, manga-inspired art seems simplistic at first glance, but detailed expressions convey the boys' longing, uncertainty, and joy. Quirky dialogue (with some profanity) and a font that mimics handwriting add to the adorkability factor. **VERDICT** Realistic yet uplifting, this tale of self-discovery will make readers' hearts skip a beat as they root for Charlie and Nick.—Kelley Gile, Cheshire Public Library, CT  
Copyright 2020 School Library Journal.

[Go to Top](#)

### **Kirkus Reviews 2020 March #1**

Mismatched British schoolboys fumble their way toward romance. Charlie is a waifish year 10 (equivalent to ninth grade) who is popular despite some taunting and social backlash for coming out at Truham Grammar School for Boys. Year 11 schoolmate Nick is a red-blooded rugby player with a warm demeanor and hunky exterior. When the two are paired in a vertical classroom experiment, Charlie develops an immediate crush on presumably straight Nick, and Nick craves more and more time with Charlie both on campus and off. As the two veer toward a mutual romance, they individually struggle through wondering how to make it come to fruition, questioning if it's even possible, and deciding whether a first boy-boy crush is a definite proclamation of gayness. Organic frame borders and fragmented panels underscore the respective action on the spreads (sweet and tender moments, run-ins with homophobic jerks) and prevent the visual graphics from going aesthetically stale. Handwritten text reinforces the lens of humanity through which Oseman spins this to-be-continued story. Crisp, clear-cut font is reserved for tech moments when back-and-forth texting is the storytelling vehicle. Charlie and Nick appear white, and there is ethnic diversity in the supporting cast. Fans of Oseman's debut, *Solitaire* (2015), will enjoy this story that centers on protagonist Tori's younger brother, Charlie; however, this volume stands alone and will engage readers new to her work. An adorable diary of love's gut punches. (Graphic novel. 12-16)  
Copyright Kirkus 2020 Kirkus/BPI Communications. All rights reserved.

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Ms. Dawn Cooper

April 1, 2024

Dear Ms. Cooper

Thank you for sharing your concerns with us regarding *Heartstopper Volume 3* by Alice Oserman. Per our process for reconsideration requests (described in the Washoe County Library Collection Development and Management Policy), I have reviewed your request with Collection Development Manager Debi Stears and am writing to share with you the results of our review:

In your Citizen Request for Reconsideration, you ask us to move *Heartstopper Volume 3* from our Young Adult collection and place it in the Adult collection. You state the reason for your request as "This book is not appropriate for the emotional maturity level of children under the age of 16." You also note that it's inappropriate for the location due to the subject matter.

While Washoe County Library System does have a Young Adult Fiction collection, there is not a separate classification in our libraries for nonfiction titles written for young adults. Instead, those titles are interfiled with the adult nonfiction collection, giving users access to the breadth of material written on the topic. *Heartstopper Volume 3* is already shelved in the adult collection.

The Washoe County Library System's Collection Development and Management Policy describes the library's support of Intellectual Freedom as providing a "neutral environment in which individuals and their interests are brought together with the universe of ideas and information spanning the spectrum of knowledge and opinions...The Library recognizes that some materials may be controversial and that any given item may offend some. Only the individual can define what materials are consistent with her/his own values. Individuals can apply those values to the use of library materials only for themselves. Parents and legal guardians have the responsibility for monitoring their children's use of library materials." Parents who prefer that their children not have access to certain materials should so advise their children.

After considering your request, we've concluded that *Heartstopper Volume 3* meets the requirements of the Collection Development and Management Policy and should be retained in the Washoe County Library System.

Thank you for your interest in the collections of Washoe County Library System.

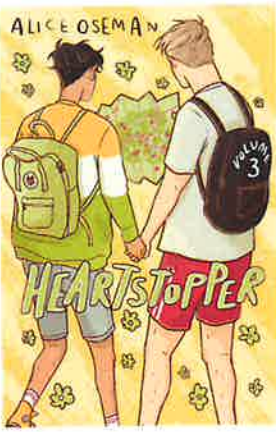
Sincerely,



Jeff Scott

Library Director

*[Faint, illegible handwritten notes or markings]*



**Heartstopper #3 by Alice Oseman**

Graphix, an imprint of Scholastic Inc., 2021

ISBN: 9781338617528 (Trade Paperback), 9781338617535 (Hardcover)

\*Age Range: 14 And Up (Suggested by Publisher)

Grade Range: N/A (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

**BOOK SYNOPSIS**

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The third volume in the poignant and sweet Heartstopper series, featuring beautiful two-color artwork!

Now streaming on Netflix!

Charlie didn't think Nick could ever like him back, but now they're officially boyfriends. Nick has even found the courage to come out to his mom. But coming out isn't something that happens just once, and Nick and Charlie try to figure out when to tell their friends that they're dating. Not being out to their classmates gets even harder during a school trip to Paris. As Nick and Charlie's feelings get more serious, they'll need each other more than ever.

**REVIEWS AND PRAISE**

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★ "Nick and Charlie's lighthearted and tender romance is delightful... Incredibly lovable from start to finish."  
—*Kirkus Reviews*, **starred review**

"[*Heartstopper*] reminded me that a good love story doesn't have to have bells and whistles and a high concept. It just has to feel true." — Rainbow Rowell in *Bustle*

"With all the blushing and awkward glances, it's difficult not to be charmed.... The romance and realistic fiction will draw readers in to this sweet story." — *Booklist*

"Realistic yet uplifting, this tale of self-discovery will make readers' hearts skip a beat as they root for Charlie and Nick." — *School Library Journal*

"[*Heartstopper*] will win readers with its sweet romance, its queer-friendly storyline, and its light-touch relationship drama... this graphic novel lives up to its heart-stopper title" — *The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

"[Delivers] a warm, comfortable story of fledgling love starring two shippable leads who will be familiar to Oseman fans." — *Publishers Weekly*

**Updated 4/01/2024**

Scholastic Inc.

SchoolLibraryTeam@Scholastic.com

“Nick and Charlie’s story is really beautiful. Whilst an LGBT+ romance story like this is usually presented in a novel, I found the graphic novel format a refreshing change.” —*The Nerd Daily*

“A sweet story about teen friendship and love that will melt your heart the same way *Simon vs. the Homo Sapiens Agenda* did.” —Melissa Oates, Fiction Addiction, Greenville, S.C.

“Sweet and charming, *Heartstopper* is a warm blanket... falling in love doesn’t get more charming than this.”  
—Ngozi Ukazu, New York Times bestselling author of *Check, Please!*

“A must-read for fans of slice-of-life high-school manga” —*Booklist*

“[T]he perfect bridge story, full of heartfelt sweetness that will have readers ready and waiting for the final volume.” —*The Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books*

## AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

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- *New York Times* Bestseller
- ALA Rainbow Book List: Graphic Fiction
- 2022 YALSA Great Graphic Novels List
- Bisexual Book Awards Finalist: Graphic Novel/Memoir
- Bisexual Book Awards Finalist: Teen/Young Adult

## MEDIA AND RESOURCES

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- [Read with Pride Resource Guide](#)
- [New York Times](#), interactive *Heartstopper* adaptation author interview
- [Newsweek](#), adaptation comparison
- [Buzzfeed](#), “40 Contemporary Books We’re Looking Forward To Reading In 2021”
- [B&N Reads](#), “Our Most Anticipated New Kids’ & YA Book Releases of May 2021”
- [The New York Times](#), “5 Y.A. Graphic Novels to Dive Into This Summer”
- [Kids’ Book Buzz](#), review
- [Geeks Out](#), author interview
- [Geek Dad](#), author interview
- [Bustle](#), “6 Graphic Novels You Should Read According to Rainbow Rowell”
- [Buzzfeed](#), “21 Exceptional And Unputdownable YA Books To Read During Pride”
- [Fuzzable](#), “5 Graphic Novels Featuring LGBTQIAP+ Community”
- [Buzzfeed](#), “20 YA Graphic Novels And Nonfiction We’re Loving This Year”
- [Dallas Voice](#), “Mother meets trans daughter; boy meets boy”
- [Washington Blade](#), “A sweet book about first love”
- [School Library Journal](#), “16 YA Romances To Warm Winter Hearts”
- [Business Insider](#), “The 27 most breathtaking graphic novels and memoirs to read in 2021”
- [Girl’s Life](#), “Add these 10 books to your TBR list for Pride Month”

## RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

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Updated 4/01/2024

Scholastic Inc.

SchoolLibraryTeam@Scholastic.com

[PEN America Statement of Support](#): The literary and free speech organization PEN America is raising the alarm about Tennessee’s Collierville school district removing 327 books from library shelves that feature LGBTQ+ characters and themes, in spite of there being no policy or restriction requiring their removal.

In total, 327 previously approved books from notable authors including Rick Riordan and Audre Lorde – along with Alice Oseman’s *Heartstopper* series, the subject of a show on Netflix – were removed from district libraries. Administrators sorted them into tiers based on how much the books focus on LGBTQ+ characters or storylines. Tier 3, for instance, where *Heartstopper* was categorized, reflected that “The main character of the book is part of the LGBTQ community, and their sexual identity forms a key component of the plot. The book may contain suggestive language and/or implied sexual interactions.” If a book reached Tier 5, according to the sorting guidelines, “The books are being pulled.” According to reports, nearly a dozen books were also flagged as “Black Lives Matter” materials and removed from shelves.

Their removal was spurred not by any law, but rather by three proposed bills which did not pass, but which had sought to restrict the discussion of LGBTQ+ themes in schools. The removals were also reportedly motivated by the state’s 2021 educational gag order, which does not specifically target books relating to LGBTQ+ identities and only applies to curricula, not to school libraries. Some of the books may have since been returned to library shelves, but they were removed for at least two months; others, according to the district’s library catalog, may have been reassigned to a restricted access section; the whereabouts of others are unknown.

Jeremy C. Young, senior manager of free expression and education programs at PEN America, said in response to the news: “This is a heartbreaking case of administrative censorship and a perfect demonstration of the chilling effect that even proposed restrictions can impose on the freedom to read. No school should ever ban books based on the people and stories they depict. And no legislator should ever propose a bill that encourages a school to do so.”

[PEN America Statement of Support](#): In a sweeping removal, many books by bestselling authors, representing critical stories, themes, identities, and histories, are suddenly inaccessible to students across the Rockingham County Public School district. Stand with authors in urging school board members from Rockingham County to return over 50 books banned from library shelves.

See the letter signed by published authors below and sign the form on this page to send a copy of the letter signed by you to the board members of Rockingham County Public Schools.

We, the undersigned, are writing in conjunction with PEN America to protest [the removal of over 50 books](#) from Rockingham County Schools in January 2024.

While the removal of these books may be “temporary” we are aware of many [districts](#), like [Beaufort County, South Carolina public schools](#), where “temporary” bans of books have stretched to over a year.

We write as creators of some of the very books that have been subjects of this directive and others across the country as well as creators that understand the power of the word. These bans represent a grave threat to the freedom to read, much to the detriment of students in your district.

A school library offers students an opportunity to explore the world around them - through literature curated by professional librarians. Diverse books are critical in engaging students, encouraging empathy, and creating the kind

**Updated 4/01/2024**

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of just and pluralist society that an environment of open exchange promises. Students deserve to see themselves in books, and they deserve to learn how to see others, too.

We stand with the students who spoke directly for their right to read and learn on January 24th. As one student was [quoted](#) saying: “Taking away the ability to access knowledge puts you in the dark, and takes away your power.”

We encourage you in the strongest of terms to listen to the students and parents who have [protested](#) and [testified](#) against this harmful decision.

We urge the school district to reverse these bans, return to your policies and procedures that have served you as recently as the September 2023’s challenge, review, and retention of Heartstopper. Put books back on shelves where students can regain access to them.

### **\*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES**

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A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book’s intended use.

Item 6 a b

Library Director Update

Renew Washoe County Libraries Update

COVER PAGE

## Library Director Update for April 2024

### Library in the News

#### CELEBRATE NATIONAL LIBRARY WEEK APRIL 7-13, 2024

<https://washoelife.washoecounty.gov/library-system/celebrate-national-library-week-april-7-13-2024/>

#### KTVN: Celebrate National Library Worker Day

[https://www.2news.com/video/national-library-worker-day/video\\_a50ec1c4-4c59-5169-900c-364061b3eeb7.html](https://www.2news.com/video/national-library-worker-day/video_a50ec1c4-4c59-5169-900c-364061b3eeb7.html)

**American Heart Association Press Release: Blood pressure cuffs available through the Washoe County Library System: New program helps combat hypertension in Washoe County (blood pressure cuffs now available for checkout at all libraries)**

<https://newsroom.heart.org/local-news/blood-pressure-cuffs-available-through-the-washoe-county-library-system>

#### WASHOE COUNTY LIBRARY AND THE AMERICAN HEART ASSOCIATION PARTNER TO PROMOTE LIBRARIES WITH HEART PROGRAM IN WASHOE COUNTY

<https://washoelife.washoecounty.gov/library-system/washoe-county-library-and-the-american-heart-association-partner-to-promote-libraries-with-heart-program-in-washoe-county/>

#### KTVN: Libraries With Heart Program

[https://www.2news.com/news/libraries-with-heart-program/video\\_dac2a3ee-eaa9-5000-9c52-0fb1d906479c.html](https://www.2news.com/news/libraries-with-heart-program/video_dac2a3ee-eaa9-5000-9c52-0fb1d906479c.html)

**RGJ: Washoe County Commission names former school librarian to library board: Tami Ruf one of 87 who applied to be on board**

<https://www.rgj.com/story/news/government/2024/03/22/washoe-county-commission-names-former-school-librarian-to-library-board/73035264007/>

#### KOLO TV: Washoe County Library's New Explorer Brochures

<https://www.kolotv.com/video/2024/03/20/washoe-county-librarys-new-explorer/>

**The Road Ahead Script: Library Transit (Featuring Vice Chair Lea Moser) (Brochures now available at libraries)**

<https://www.kolotv.com/2024/02/07/road-ahead-script-library-transit/>

**Librarian Superstar Mychal Threets stopped by to chat with our librarians at the Public Library Association Conference and say a few nice words about Washoe County Library System.**

<https://x.com/WashoeLibrary/status/1777380948453249487>

**United Way of Northern Nevada and the Sierras with United Readers stopped by the Washoe County Library System to drop off cards of support for all of our Washoe Librarians!**

[https://www.linkedin.com/posts/uwnns\\_american-corporation-northernnevada-library-ugcPost-7180681978122285056-FoPQ?utm\\_source=share&utm\\_medium=member\\_desktop](https://www.linkedin.com/posts/uwnns_american-corporation-northernnevada-library-ugcPost-7180681978122285056-FoPQ?utm_source=share&utm_medium=member_desktop)

**KOLO Reporter Rebecca Kitchen shared photos of her new baby. She is one of our first patrons to participate in the My First Library Card program partnership with Washoe County Library and Renown.**

<https://www.washoecountylibrary.us/services/babycard.php>  
<https://x.com/WashoeLibrary/status/1773440212632269095>

**KOLO: Food Bank of Northern Nevada announces spring break kids cafe schedule**

<https://www.kolotv.com/2024/03/19/food-bank-northern-nevada-announces-spring-break-kids-cafe-schedule/>

**KOLO 8 Book Club: Women's History Month Book Selections**

<https://www.kolotv.com/video/2024/03/13/kolo-8-book-club-womens-history/>

## Washoe County Leadership Academy Tour

On March 22, Library Director Jeff Scott led the Washoe County Leadership Academy on a tour of the library bookmobile, Downtown Reno Library, and gave a brief presentation on how the library serves our community.

Library Director @jdscott50 met with the @washoecounty Leadership Academy today. Participants in the program were given a tour of the new bookmobile, the Quad makerspace, and the historic #DowntownRenoLibrary. Thanks for stopping by to learn more about library services!



Washoe County

4:07 PM · Mar 22, 2024 · 196 Views

## Bookmobile on Tour

North Valleys Library Branch Manager Jonnica Bowen and Librarian Pam Larsen have taken the library bookmobile on tour with stop at Cold Springs, Sun Valley, North Valleys, South Valleys as well as local County Advisory Boards. We will have stops in Gerlach and at the County Complex in April.





## **Renew Washoe County Libraries Executive Summary for Phase II**

### **Tax Override Summary**

On November 5th, 2024, Washoe County voters will decide whether to extend a 30-year tax dedicated to acquiring, constructing, improving, maintaining, and operating the Washoe County Library System. This is a renewal of a 30-year tax override, not a new tax. An allotment of 2 cents for every \$100 of assessed property value goes directly to Washoe Libraries. This is not an additional tax on Washoe County citizens. Our goal is to maintain the award-winning, outstanding library service Washoe County residents have come to enjoy.

### **Progress on Renewal**

In November, the Washoe County Library Board of Trustees received a Tax Override Plan entitled Renew Washoe County Libraries. This plan detailed the history of the override tax, what has been achieved so far, and plans for renewal by Washoe County Voters. During Phase I, we planned to emerge with information for the general public.

#### **Here are our accomplishments in Phase I:**

- Asked for \$50,000 for support from Friends of Washoe County Library and they agreed to keep that amount in reserve for the purposes of the Renew Washoe County Libraries Initiative.
- Friends of Washoe County Library contracted with Riley Sutton of Changing Dynamics. Changing Dynamics is a company with over 15 years of experience in Nevada politics and was vital in getting Washoe County School District WC-1 passed in 2016.  
<https://www.changingdynamics.net/who-we-are/>
- Friends of Washoe County Library Contracted with This is Reno for paid advertising from June to October 2024 to promote the library.
- Created Library Expansion Tax website:  
<https://washoecountylibrary.us/about/expansionfund.php>
- Library Support Group Established
- In conversation with PBS Reno for promotional spots for the library from June to October 2024.
- Weekly meetings with the Library Marketing Team to discuss the plan's progress and next steps.

#### **We are now in Phase II. Here are our accomplishments and plans for this phase:**

In assessing our media reach, we are getting the word out about how wonderful our libraries are and this results in media expenditures on behalf of the library. In December we received \$36,000 worth of air time from various outlets as well as \$18,000 in January. We have also received coverage in the Reno Gazette Journal, This Is Reno, Reno News and Review and other outlets. We also have 16 appearances a month on KUNR for the On the Shelf and On the Kids Shelf book talks. We also receive attention for our

regular newsletters and social media. It is likely to receive over \$60,000 of media coverage so far this year.

We are currently filming B-Roll footage for our advertisements through This Is Reno, PBS Reno, and social media outreach. Friends of Washoe County Library have paid This is Reno for their marketing support. PBS Reno is an In-Kind donation and will run our advertisements from May through October at no additional cost.

I will attend upcoming branch level meetings to go over talking points and answer questions from the staff so that we can put our best foot forward and practice what we can say and what we cannot say (Yes there is a Library Tax Override Renewal upcoming in June, no we can't tell you to vote for it).

We are taking advantage of Bookmobile stops around the County and at CAB meetings. We introduce the Bookmobile and our plans and then talk about the upcoming Override Renewal. That has been received well by the community. We will expand our conversations at local service clubs and ask local movers and shakers for letters on what our local library means to them.

### **Washoe County Library Question**

Shall the Board of County Commissioners of Washoe County be allowed to levy an ad valorem tax in the amount of up to \$0.02 per \$100 assess valuation for a period of 30 years to raise approximately \$3,000,000 in fiscal year 2025-2026 and thereafter the amount generated by a levy of up to \$0.02 per \$100 assessed valuation against the then applicable assessed value of property in the County for the purpose of acquiring, constructing, improving, equipping, operating, and maintaining library facilities for the County?

Explanation: A "yes" vote would permit Washoe County to levy up to \$0.02 per \$100 assessed valuation for 30 years for the purpose of acquiring, constructing, improving, equipping, operating, and maintaining library facilities for the county.

# Item 6c Spanish Springs Library Report

## COVER PAGE





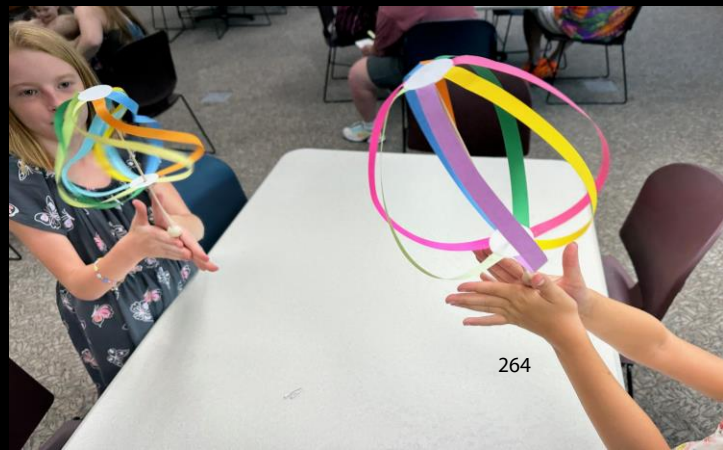
# SPANISH SPRINGS LIBRARY















♥ THANK YOU! ♥