

St. Tammany Parish Library
Board of Control Meeting
June 28th, 2023
St. Tammany Parish Council Chambers
21490 Koop Dr.,
Mandeville, LA 70471
9:30 A.M.

Public Comment: A three (3) minute time limit is established for each member of the public wishing to speak (for or against) an item on the Agenda. In the case of a Statement of Concern decision, the person who filed the Statement of Concern is given 5 minutes to speak. **Please note, all comments must pertain to the agenda item announced, there is no general public comment at the end of the meeting.** Any person wishing to comment on a topic not listed on the agenda may do so by e-mailing lboc@stpl.us by 8:00am on Wednesday June 28th.

AGENDA

Call to order by President and Roll Call by Director

1. NEW BUSINESS

A. Statement of Concern Decision – *Flamer*

- Public Comment
- Discussion
- Vote

B. Statement of Concern Decision – *Frankie and Bug*

- Public Comment
- Discussion
- Vote

C. Statement of Concern Decision – *Fred Gets Dressed*

- Public Comment
- Discussion
- Vote

D. Statement of Concern Decision – *Pink is for Boys*

- Public Comment
- Discussion
- Vote

E. Resolution regarding extension of time to allow for procedural due process of Statements of Concern received since March 2023.

- Discussion
- Public Comment
- Vote

2. Adjournment



Statement of Concern about Library Resources

Intellectual freedom in a public library necessitates selecting some materials that may be considered controversial by some individuals or groups. Reasons often cited for materials considered offensive include use of profanity, divergent viewpoints, controversial authors, sexual content, and depictions of violence and criminal acts. The acquisition of such materials does not imply approval or endorsement of their contents. The selection criteria used by the St. Tammany Parish Library must remain broad and flexible in order to provide a collection that supports the broad range of interests and diverse backgrounds of the citizens of St. Tammany Parish.

Date 11-19-2022

Name Connie Phillips

Address [REDACTED]

City Mandeville State LA Zip 70471

Telephone [REDACTED]

Representing (self) St. Tammany Parish Library Accountability Project (organization)

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

book Book Newspaper Other
 Magazine Content of Library Program
 Audiovisual Electronic Resource

2. Title Flamer

Author/Producer Mike Curato

3. What brought this title to your attention?

Content violates the state obscenity statues
2021 Louisiana Laws
Revised Statutes
Title 14 - Criminal Law

4. Did you review the entire item? If not, what sections did you review?

yes

5. What course of action do you recommend in regard to this resource?

Restrict access to minors as outlined in statute above. Require parent to check out for minor. The book should be shelved in a section where minors do not have access. A separate place in the library. A room or some section where minors do not have entry without parent and minors cannot check out.

6. Please state your reasons for making this recommendation. To what in the resource do you object? Please be specific: cite pages, scenes or sections. Consider commenting on the resource as a whole, as well as being specific on the matters which concern you.

Violates Content violates the state obscenity statues
2021 Louisiana Laws
Revised Statutes
Title 14 - Criminal Law

See attached summary

Book Summary

7. In its place, what materials would you recommend on this topic?

Something that does not violate the state obscenity statues for minors.

NOTE:

This statement will be referred to a Library Resource Review Committee. You will be advised in writing of the committee's decision. Thank you for your concern and input.

3. What brought this title to your attention?

Content violates the state obscenity statutes

2021 Louisiana Laws

Revised Statutes

Title 14 - Criminal Law

§91.11.

2) "Material harmful to minors" is defined as any paper, magazine, book, newspaper, periodical, pamphlet, composition, publication, photograph, drawing, picture, poster, motion picture film, video tape, video game, figure, phonograph record, album, cassette, compact disc, wire or tape recording, or other similar tangible work or thing which exploits, is devoted to or principally consists of, descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality for commercial gain, and when the trier of fact determines that each of the following applies:

(a) The material incites or appeals to or is designed to incite or appeal to the prurient, shameful, or morbid interest of minors.

(b) The material is offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors.

(c) The material taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors.

(3) For the purpose of this Section "descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality" includes the depiction, display, description, exhibition or representation of:

(a) Ultimate sexual acts, normal or perverted, actual, simulated, or animated, whether between human beings, animals, or an animal and a human being;

(b) Masturbation, excretory functions, or exhibition, actual, simulated, or animated, of the genitals, pubic hair, anus, vulva, or female breast nipples;

(c) Sadoomasochistic abuse, meaning actual, simulated, or animated, flagellation or torture by or upon a person who is nude or clad in undergarments or in a costume which reveals the pubic hair, anus, vulva,

genitals, or female breast nipples, or the condition of being fettered, bound, or otherwise physically restrained, on the part of one so clothed;

(d) Actual, simulated, or animated, touching, caressing, or fondling of, or other similar physical contact with, a pubic area, anus, female breast nipple, covered or exposed, whether alone or between human*, animals or a human and an animal, of the same or opposite sex, in an act of apparent sexual stimulation or gratification; or

(e) Actual, simulated, or animated, stimulation of the human genital organs by any device whether or not the device is designed, manufactured, and marketed for such purpose.

(4) "Minor" means any person under the age of eighteen years.

6. Please state your reasons for making this recommendation. To what in the resource do you object? Please be specific: cite pages, scenes or sections. Consider commenting on the resource as a whole, as well as being specific on the matters which concern you.

Violates Content violates the state obscenity statutes

2021 Louisiana Laws

Revised Statutes

Title 14 - Criminal Law

See attached summary

Book Summary:

A young teenage Boy Scout is bullied while coming to grips with his homosexuality and its religious implications.

Summary of Concerns:

This book contains alternate sexualities; sexual activities; sexual nudity; profanity and derogatory term; violence including

self-harm; and controversial religious
commentary.

FLAMER



Young Adult Graphic Novel

By Mike Curato

ISBN: 978-1-62779-641-5

CONTENT WARNING

You are about to access material that may contain content of an ADULT nature. These files may include pictures and materials that some viewers may find offensive. If you are under the age of 18, or if such material offends you or if it is illegal for you to view these materials, please exit now.

Book Summary:

A young teenage Boy Scout is bullied while coming to grips with his homosexuality and its religious implications.

Summary of Concerns:

This book contains alternate sexualities; sexual activities; sexual nudity; profanity and derogatory term; violence including self-harm; and controversial religious commentary.

3 /5

Minor Restricted
BookLooks Review Rating

Page	Content
14	"Hey, Navarro, suck any good dicks lately? Hahahahaha"
22	<p>"What's wrong, Navarro? I thought you like a big sausage in your mouth! Haha!"</p> <p>The illustration on the middle of the page depicts a young teenage boy with a hotdog on a stick balanced between his legs. Three other boys are watching him, laughing.</p>
23	<p>The illustration on this page depicts the young teenager described above, standing behind another young teenage boy whom is bent over with a hot dog bun opened behind his buttocks.</p> <p>The teenage standing up with the hotdog on a stick is saying, "Okay, who wants my hot weiner?"</p> <p>The other boy is saying, "Oh, yeah, baby, slide it right into my buns."</p> <p><i>See Figure 1.</i></p>
26	<p>Usually his bark is worse than his bite, but one time he was so mad at my little brother, he went to hit him...</p> <p>...but mom stepped in between them.</p>
40	We're canoeing out to Frying Pan Island, which supposedly looks like a frying pan, but we're all certain it looks like a cock and balls.
45	<p>"Okay, Flaming Arrows, let's set up camp. Everyone pitch your tents."</p> <p>"You're making me pitch one right now, hot stuff."</p> <p>"Why, thank you, Jones. Just for that, your sweet ass is on K.P. tonight."</p>
69	<p>"Yes...uh...why are you dressed like a girl?"</p> <p>"I just think women's fashion is more interesting. And EXCUSE ME, but this is my fantasy, so don't worry about it..."</p> <p>The illustration on this page depicts the main character, whom is a male, dressed in a princess outfit with a tiara and ball gown, speaking to a knight in armor.</p>
74	<p>And what if someone thinks my penis is small? I mean, it's not microscopic, but there's the age-old shrinkage dilemma...</p> <p>Even worse than someone seeing me naked is me seeing others naked. It's so...scary.</p>
75	The illustration on this page depicts several men showering along side one another. The main character is in the background with his underpants on, looking toward the other young men showering.
76	<p>The illustration on the top-left-side of the page depicts the main character, a young man, standing in a frontal view in his boxer shorts. There is an older naked male walking in a profile view.</p> <p>The illustration on the top-right-side of the page depicts the same individuals described above. The male walking is shown in profile with his buttocks exposed.</p> <p>The illustration on the bottom-left-side of the page depicts the main character standing behind a naked young man. The main character has his hands up near his face as the young man in front of him is bent over saying, "oooooops! I dropped the soap. Don't get any ideas, boys!"</p>

Page	Content
77	<p>"What, are you trying to get Jones pregnant?" ..."Hey, Navaro, when are you gonna strut your stuff? You've been teasing us for weeks! Haha!" "what is this, a peep show?" ..."I don't want you homos lookin' at my ass."</p>
80	<p>The illustration on this page depicts the main character kneeling in a profile view with "x's" over his eyes and his hands clasped together. He is kneeling in front of another young man whom is naked in the shower.</p>
81	<p>oh no!!! I'm getting a...boner!?!?</p> <p>The illustration on the middle of the page depicts the main characts bent over holding his back with a mortified look on his face. He is walking away from another young man whom is depicted from the backside and is nude in the shower. Part of the young man's exposed buttocks is depicted.</p>
86	<p>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 jerk off.</p>
96	<p>The illustration on this page depicts a young man taking a shower in a three-quarters view.</p>
105	<p>"Enjoy eating your hot dog. You probably love eating dog. Hahaha!"</p>
106	<p>"Hey, FATASS, pack any fudge lately?"</p>
107	<p>"Sure, Doughboy. I'll leave you alone once you stop being such a gay fat fuck! HMMM-HMMM!"</p>
118	<p>"Oh, yeah? She have a nice ass?" ..."Okay. How's her rack? Is she stacked?"</p>
119	<p>"Hmmm...no, not really. But...if I were a girl..." "I would like Elias."</p>
120	<p>"Haha- that's not LOVE, that's called a BONER! Haha!"</p>
121	<p>"Hahaha- it's true. My dick gets so hard thinking about her sometimes that I think it's gonna rip right through my jeans..."</p>
122	<p>"Oh, sorry, I didn't know that you and mister Miyagi were an item. Have fun suckin' each other's dicks, ladies."</p>
125	<p>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. We learned at school how bad homosexuality is. It's a sin. Gay people do bad things. And I'm not a bad person. I try to do good. All the time. So I couldn't be gay.</p>
131	<p>The illustration on the top of the page depicts the main character sitting on the floor of a tent. There are two pairs of legs hanging off the edge of beds on either side of him. The legs are bare and one pair of legs has a pair of pants pooled on the floor around their ankles. The text on the image reads: Uh-Oh...I think I figured out what "takin' care of</p>

Page	Content
	<p>business" means.</p> <p>"We're each busting a load into this bottle. If you don't cum, you have to drink it! Hahahaha!"</p> <p>"Gimme that! I'll show you."</p> <p>The illustration on the bottom-right-side of the page depicts the main character, wide-eyed, sitting on the floor with his knees to his chest and his arms crossed over them. In the foreground, there is part of an exposed buttock as the boy is pulling his pants down while facing the main character.</p> <p><i>See Figure 2.</i></p>
132	<p>I learned about masturbation two years ago. Kind of by accident. Nobody ever told me what it was. One day when everyone was out of the house, I came across a video tape hidden behind the TV. My dad had hidden movies before with dirty scenes, like fatal attraction. It was exciting to see boobs and butts. But this time, it was different. I could see...everything. People were doing things that I didn't even know were possible, or even...allowed?</p> <p>"Why is there so much hair?"</p> <p>"Those dicks are so...BIG."</p> <p>The illustration on this page depicts the main character facing a small TV set with a remote control in his hand.</p>
133	<p>I started watching my dad's porn...a lot...while I was naked. And eventually, I stumbled upon... ...a surprise sensation.</p> <p>It felt good, but then I felt really guilty about it. I knew watching porn was against the rules, so this new feeling had to be a sin. And now here I am in this tent full of people jerking off, and I feel like I'm in moral danger.</p>
135	<p>The illustration on the bottom-left-side of the page depicts a boy laying in bed in a zoomed in view of his waist. His left hand is lifting up the blanket covering his bottom-half. His right hand is under the covers near his groin.</p> <p>The text on the image reads: But I feel so...excited...</p> <p><i>See Figure 3.</i></p>
150	<p>"What are you looking at queerbo?"</p>
151	<p>Pecs. Shoulders. Calves. Biceps. Abs.</p> <p>The illustration on the bottom-right-side of the page depicts a zoomed in view of a boys waist and thighs.</p> <p>The text on the image reads: And..."Lunch!!!"</p>
174	<p>"Why do you always have to be a GIRL?"</p> <p>..."I HAVE, TOO! Which is more than I can say for you, BALD-NUTS."</p>
207	<p>"YOU'RE THE FAGGOT!!! YOU'RE THE FUDGE-PACKING FAIRY COCKSUCKING QUEER PANSY FAGGOT!!!"</p>

Page	Content
252	The illustration on the middle-right-side of the page depicts a young man from the chest upward. His arms are bound with rope and he has blood and tears running down his face.
281	Too short. Too fat. Not MAN enough. Not WHITE enough. Not STRAIGHT enough. I'll never be safe ANYWHERE.
306	The illustration on this page depicts an arm and hand with the fist clenched with the bottom facing upward. There is another hand lightly pressing a knife to the wrist. <i>See Figure 4.</i>
364	However, there were experiences I had during my time in the Boy Scouts that were very hard as a closeted kid. Over the years, the Boy Scouts have become more inclusive of sexual orientation and gender thanks to people in and out of scouting who made their voices heard. But when I was a kid, it was not okay to be gay. ...Though scout bylaws have become more inclusive, homophobia still exists in many troops today, because homophobia is nationally and internationally a systemic issue. ...Also like Aiden, I once kneeled in a camp chapel with a knife against my wrist.

Profanity/Derogatory	Count
Ass	14
Bitch	3
Cock	2
Dick	5
Faggot/Fag	14
Fuck	15
Piss	1
Prick	1
Queer	2
Shit	13



Figure 1



Figure 2



Figure 3



Figure 4

FLAMER by Mike Curato

Henry Holt & Company, 2020

PUBLISHER'S SUMMARY

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.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS SUBJECT HEADINGS

Gay teenagers
Camps
Gays
Comics (Graphic works)
Infatuation
Coming out (Sexual orientation)
Bullying
Cartoons and comics
Gay comics
Boy Scouts of America

RECOMMENDED AGE GROUP: 14 to 17

HOLDINGS AND CIRCULATION

- 4 print copies at Admin, Covington, Mandeville, and Slidell/ Shelved in Young Adult Non-fiction. Call number 741.5973 Cur YA.

Purchased in August 2020. Available on shelf September 2020.

Total circulation on all print copies: 23

OTHER LIBRARY HOLDINGS

Held in 1126 libraries.

Jefferson Parish Library – Young Adult Graphic Novel

East Baton Rouge Parish Library – Young Adult Graphic Novel

Mobile Public Library- Youth Graphic Novel

PATRON REQUEST/SUGGEST A PURCHASE: N/A

REVIEWS

Kirkus Reviews (07/01/2020):

The last week at Scouting camp highlights accomplishments and humiliations that last a lifetime. Aiden, a fat, biracial (Filipino and white), soon-to-be high schooler, is in his last week of Boy Scout camp in 1995. Each day documents events, from bonding over fireside songs and

learning important skills to the micro- and macroaggressions that follow an adolescent boy of color who presents as effeminate and is queer. As the week moves on, readers learn more about Aiden and his life, from his stressful home with an emotionally abusive father to his love of Catholicism and being an altar server. The stress of a new school, bullies who are ever present, and struggles with identity drive Aiden to a breaking point, one that's familiar to many young people. The monochromatic illustrations, sometimes highlighted with red, orange, and yellow, are timeless moments of a remembered childhood. The use of red to highlight the tangible (firelight, a Swiss Army knife) and represent the intangible (passion, sorrow, and hope) is a master class in simplicity. But the true star of this book is the writing, which describes a boy who could live in any decade on his journey of self-discovery. This is a story that will be read and reread, and for some, it will be the defining book of their adolescence. Buy it. Read it. Share it. (afterword, resources) (Graphic fiction. 12-18) COPYRIGHT (2020) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Bulletin of Ctr for Child Bks (09/01/2020):

Boy Scout camp has long been the highlight of Aiden Navarro's year, a respite from classroom bullying and Dad's rages. This summer of 1995, though, finds fourteen-year-old Aiden dragging a load of emotional baggage with him to camp—the looming transition from Catholic grade school to public high school, obsession with body image, and an epic struggle to reconcile urgent questions about his sexual identity with religious tenets that suggest he's bound for hell. Bullying has followed him to camp as well, and it's not just his imagination that every stray remark brewed into a sexual (and usually homophobic) joke seems directed at him. Add in the impetuous kiss he plants on the cheek of straight arrow Elias, which imperils his only genuine friendship at camp, and the dismissal of a well-liked camp counselor who was accidentally outed, and Aiden sees no way forward; he hikes to the empty chapel with his folding knife, ready to end his life. The beneficent fiery vision that plucks Aiden from the precipice and gives him hope is a style of deliverance that few similarly pressed adolescents can expect, but the rest of the portrait of deeply imbedded sexualized and homophobic bullying in this autobiographically grounded tale rings true. The restrained harmony between Aiden's fraught narration and the black linework accented in incendiary red and orange packs an emotional wallop, making this an accessible choice not just for questioning kids but for their more confident friends who could use an empathy jumpstart. EB

School Library Journal (08/28/2020):

Gr 8 Up--As Boy Scout camp draws to a close and high school looms, 14-year-old Aiden Navarro, who is biracial (white and Filipino), is on high alert. Feeling self-conscious about his weight, dealing with racism from other campers, and wondering about his sexuality, he often takes preemptive action to appear unimpeachably heterosexual and unconvincingly attempts to imitate the homophobic, macho behavior of other campers--though his thoughtfulness usually wins out. Aiden's precarious balancing of identities pushed upon him and those he tries to hide starts to crumble when he begins to fantasize romantically about his tentmate Elias, a steadfast summer friend who has been unfazed by other campers' gossip about Aiden being gay. As Aiden heads into the last days of camp, his desire, self-loathing, and uncertainty come to a boiling point. Curato's incredible art conveys Aiden's point of view, his thoughts, and his

reimaginings of his physical form with compelling beauty and empathy. The drawing style feels specific to a teen's world, spare yet filled with distinct characters and an idyllic camp setting. Most images are in shades of black and gray, which makes the appearance of fire in Aiden's dreams and fantasies--in hues of red, yellow, and orange, signifying his passion, rage, desire, and shame--even more poignant as more light is shed on his true self. VERDICT 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. --Jennie Law, Georgia State Univ., Atlanta Copyright 2020 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Shelf Awareness (09/04/2020):

Cleverly inked and masterfully told, *Flamer* by Mike Curato is a life-affirming story about finding the power within. It's the summer of 1995. Fourteen-year-old Aiden Navarro is at boy scout camp, dreading the start of public high school. He fears he'll be bullied for being Filipino, fat and gay, as he was in Catholic school. He's been told to "man up," that his voice is effeminate. He's called a drama queen, a "Chinese faggot," "not normal." Yet, despite his confusing feelings for Elias, a fellow troop member, Aiden tells himself he isn't gay: "It's a sin. Gay people do bad things. And I'm not a bad person." Aiden bonds with Elias, with whom being himself seems possible. But when Elias rebuffs his advance, Aiden thinks everything is crashing down around him. Feeling lost, alone and unsafe, he struggles to see a way forward. By carefully weaving in Aiden's religiosity and the intolerance within the scouting community, Curato reveals how dangerous internalized homophobia is. Aiden, who hopes altar serving will earn him extra credit (with God, of course), dreams he's going to hell. Yet it's with the scouts that Aiden begins expressing himself--sashaying "Valley Girl style" around a campfire or asking to create a female *Dungeons & Dragons* character. Curato (Little Elliot, Big City) illustrates Aiden's inextinguishable personality by depicting him with long eyelashes and flowing hair in scenes that otherwise reflect reality, thereby outwardly representing his nonconforming spirit. Drawing primarily in black and white, Curato reserves color for emotionally heated scenes, using flickering flames as a poignant metaphor as Aiden works to understand his inner fire. Both heartbreaking and joyous, *Flamer* acknowledges the brutal weight of hatred, yet inspires the courage to live. COPYRIGHT (2020) Shelf Awareness, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Booklist (09/01/2020):

Grades 9-12 *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. (Reprinted with permission of Booklist, copyright 2020, American Library Association.)

Hornbook Guide to Children (07/01/2020):

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 2020 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Mike Curato is the award-winning author and illustrator of the Little Elliot series and the graphic novel *Flamer*, and has illustrated a number of other books for children, including *What If...* (by Samantha Berger), *Worm Loves Worm*, and *All the Way to Havana*.

AWARDS & LISTS

2021 Lambda Literary Award LGBTQ Young Adult
EBSCO Core Collections Essential (Graphic Novels Core Collection)
EBSCO Core Collections Recommended (Middle and Junior High Core Collection)
EBSCO Core Collections Essential (Senior High Core Collection)

RESOURCES

Ingram Content Group, LLC
EBSCO Core Collections Database
Books in Print 2.0

Worldcat

Individual library websites (for holdings info)



June 9th 2023

Ms. Connie Phillips

██████████
Mandeville, LA 70471

Dear Connie Phillips,

Thank you for submitting your Statement of Concern regarding *Flamer* by Mike Curato. Per the St. Tammany Library Board of Control's policies and procedures, this correspondence is to notify you of the recommendation of the library staff committee regarding the material referenced in your Statement of Concern.

Pursuant to La. R.S. § 14:91.11, it is unlawful for any St. Tammany Library to display, exhibit, disseminate, check-out, or otherwise provide any minor anything that constitutes material harmful to minors by law. However, materials are only deemed harmful to minors if **all** four (4) of the following apply beyond a reasonable doubt:

1. First, the material must exploit, be devoted to, or principally consist of "descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality." To be "descriptions or depictions of illicit or sexual immorality," the material must convey ultimate sex acts, masturbation or excretory functions, lewd exhibition of private areas, sadomasochistic abuse, sexual intimacy via physical acts of private areas, or stimulation of human genitalia.
2. Second, the material must incite, appeal to, or be designed to incite or appeal to "the prurient, shameful, or morbid interest of minors," i.e., a sexual response over and beyond those that would be characterized as normal for a minor.
3. Third, the material must be "offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors." These standards are not defined or limited by any specific geographic area.
4. Fourth, the material, when considered in its entirety (including both objectionable and nonobjectionable parts), must lack any "literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors."

If any of the foregoing requirements are not met, the material is not unlawful under La. R.S. §14:91.11.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
1112 WEST 21ST AVENUE COVINGTON, LA 70433
PH: (985) 871-1219 FAX: (985) 871-1224

ABITA SPRINGS (985) 893-6285

BUSH (985) 886-3588

CAUSEWAY (985) 626-9779

COVINGTON (985) 893-6280

FOLSOM (985) 796-9728

LACOMBE (985) 882-7858

LEE RD (985) 893-6284

MADISONVILLE (985) 845-4819

MANDEVILLE (985) 626-4293

PEARL RIVER (985) 863-5518

SLIDELL (985) 646-6470

SOUTH SLIDELL (985) 781-0099



Importantly, the statute defines “minor” as “any person under the age of eighteen years.” Thus, the last three (3) elements above must be considered in that context, e.g., “The material taken as a whole [must] lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for [any person under the age of eighteen years].” Additionally, if materials that qualify as harmful to minors are not sold, distributed, advertised, or otherwise distributed to minors, it is permissible under the law to have them available for adults to do so, as long as the minors are unable to see, “as displayed,” descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality.”

Under this analysis, the staff committee determined that the material at issue in your Statement of Concern does not qualify as unlawfully harmful to minors.

1. The book does not primarily consist of or is devoted to the sexual acts described in in the law. Male nipples and buttocks are shown. Sexual acts are implied but not are not drawn explicitly. The scenes with sexual activity illustrate the character’s fear, confusion, and disgust. Self-harm is considered but not acted upon. The scene leads to the character’s self-realization. While pornography is mentioned, it is part of the backstory of the character to show the character’s mental state.
2. The committee found that the text and images did not incite or appeal to the prurient interests of minors. The behavior and interests described in the book are typical for teen boys. The story describes a young man coming to terms with himself and his family. It deals with bullying, race, and religion. Some scenes show immaturity but not obscenity.
3. The committee did not find the material to be offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors. The book is intended for older teens. Young children would not understand the story or the emotional journey that the main character takes. There are words used that are inappropriate in polite company but are normal for situations of teen boys together unsupervised. The curse words and slurs used reflect and fuel the emotions of the characters. The main character says “I hate those words.” Overall, the committee thought the tone of the book was similar to a PG-13 rated movie or television show.
4. The committee believes the material taken as a whole does not lack serious literary or artistic value for minors. The story is well told, imaginative, and has emotional impact. The book illustrates complex emotions of teen boys and also the hypocrisy of teen boys. The book is rife with symbolism- flames, the phoenix, and imagery from the X Men comic books and movies. Teens relate to the pop culture references and inspiration.

ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE
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FOLSOM (985) 796-9728

MANDEVILLE (985) 626-4293

BUSH (985) 886-3588

LACOMBE (985) 882-7858

PEARL RIVER (985) 863-5518

CAUSEWAY (985) 626-9779

LEE RD (985) 893-6284

SLIDELL (985) 646-6470

COVINGTON (985) 893-6280

MADISONVILLE (985) 845-4819

SOUTH SLIDELL (985) 781-0099



You asked that this book be restricted and require a parent to check out for a minor. When we purchased this book, we recognized that it was most appropriate for older teens or even young adults and placed the book in the adult non-fiction section of the library. After the passage of the graphic novel resolution in February 2023, it was more permanently located behind the circulation desk requiring an adult or juvenile unrestricted card for access. The committee is recommending to the Board that the book remain where it is behind the circulation desk and not restrict it further by requiring only an adult to check it out.

While we recognize that some may find the material in question not suitable for their family, that alone does not render it unlawful and does not warrant censoring the public at large from accessing and/or checking out the material. Parents are the ultimate deciders of which books and media their children will consume. At the same time, we do acknowledge that this book may not be in line with the values of all families in the Parish. The purchase of any item by the St. Tammany Parish Library is not an affirmation of the content of the item, and each family in our Parish has the right and responsibility to make decisions regarding what their own children will read or hear.

The committee's report and recommendation will be made available to the St. Tammany Library Control Board, which shall make the ultimate determination based thereupon at a special meeting on June 28th 2023, at 9:30 am where it will be on the agenda. At that meeting, you will have an opportunity to address the Board for 5 minutes.

Regardless of the outcome, we hope you will recognize the important role that a public library plays in a free and open democratic society as a neutral resource for everyone.

Respectfully,



Kelly LaRocca, Director

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Statement of Concern about Library Resources

Intellectual freedom in a public library necessitates selecting some materials that may be considered controversial by some individuals or groups. Reasons often cited for materials considered offensive include use of profanity, divergent viewpoints, controversial authors, sexual content, and depictions of violence and criminal acts. The acquisition of such materials does not imply approval or endorsement of their contents. The selection criteria used by the St. Tammany Parish Library must remain broad and flexible in order to provide a collection that supports the broad range of interests and diverse backgrounds of the citizens of St. Tammany Parish.

Date 11-22-2022

Name Rosalind Murr

Address [REDACTED]

City Covington State La Zip 70433

Telephone [REDACTED]

Representing _____ (self) _____ (organization)

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

Book _____ Newspaper _____ Other
_____ Magazine _____ Content of Library Program
_____ Audiovisual _____ Electronic Resource

2. Title Flamer

Author/Producer Mike Curato

3. What brought this title to your attention?

I heard it had questionable material and upon reading was horrified!

4. Did you review the entire item? If not, what sections did you review?

I read the book in its entirety.

5. What course of action do you recommend in regard to this resource?

Remove it from any children's sections, ask for ID to check out and not allowable for a minor to download.

6. Please state your reasons for making this recommendation. To what in the resource do you object? Please be specific: cite pages, scenes or sections. Consider commenting on the resource as a whole, as well as being specific on the matters which concern you.

This is breaking child

7. In its place, what materials would you recommend on this topic?

Something that does not break state obscenity laws for children.

NOTE:

This statement will be referred to a Library Resource Review Committee. You will be advised in writing of the committee's decision. Thank you for your concern and input.



June 9th 2023

Ms. Rosalind Murr
[REDACTED]
Covington, LA 70433

Dear Ms. Murr,

Thank you for submitting your Statement of Concern regarding *Flamer* by Mike Curato. Per the St. Tammany Library Board of Control's policies and procedures, this correspondence is to notify you of the recommendation of the library staff committee regarding the material referenced in your Statement of Concern.

The author is a well-known illustrator and the book was reviewed positively. *Flamer* has circulated 23 times since the library has owned it. It is held in 1,126 other public libraries across the country. The library recognized the mature subject matter and content of this book and, upon purchase, placed it into the Adult Non-Fiction collection.

You asked specifically that this item would be "removed from any children's sections, ask for an ID for check out, and not allowable for a child to download." This book was never shelved in the children's section. It is a graphic novel that does illustrate some sexual conduct and is therefore housed behind the circulation desk per the Library Board's resolution on February 28th 2023. This book does not require an ID to check out but does require an unrestricted juvenile card that a parent must select for their child or adult card to check it out. The downloadable copy of this book similarly requires an unrestricted juvenile card or adult card to download it. It is the recommendation of this committee that although we feel the book is appropriate in the adult non-fiction collection that the book remain where it is behind the circulation desk, and not require any further restrictions on the circulation of the book.

While we recognize that some may find the material in question not suitable for themselves or their family, that alone does not warrant censoring the public at large from accessing and/or checking out the material. Parents are the ultimate deciders of which books and media their children will consume. At the same time, we do acknowledge that this book may not be in line with the values of all families in the Parish. The purchase of any item by the St. Tammany Parish Library is not an affirmation of the content of the item and each family in our Parish has the right and responsibility to make decisions regarding what they and their own children will read or hear.

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SLIDELL (985) 646-6470

SOUTH SLIDELL (985) 781-0099



The committee's report and recommendation will be made available to the St. Tammany Library Control Board, which shall make the ultimate determination based thereupon at the next regularly scheduled meeting on June 28th 2023, at 9:30 am where it will be on the agenda. At that meeting, you will have an opportunity to address the Board for 5 minutes.

Regardless of the outcome, we hope you will recognize the important role that a public library plays in a free and open democratic society as a neutral resource for everyone.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kelly LaRocca".

Kelly LaRocca, Director

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Statement of Concern about Library Resources



Intellectual freedom in a public library necessitates selecting some materials that may be considered controversial by some individuals or groups. Reasons often cited for materials considered offensive include use of profanity, divergent viewpoints, controversial authors, sexual content, and depictions of violence and criminal acts. The acquisition of such materials does not imply approval or endorsement of their contents. The selection criteria used by the St. Tammany Parish Library must remain broad and flexible in order to provide a collection that supports the broad range of interests and diverse backgrounds of the citizens of St. Tammany Parish.

Date Nov 22, 2022

Name Jacki Schneider

Address [REDACTED]

City Lacombe State LA Zip 70445

Telephone [REDACTED]

Representing (self) _____ (organization)

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

- Book _____ Newspaper _____ Other
- _____ Magazine _____ Content of Library Program
- _____ Audiovisual _____ Electronic Resource

2. Title Flamer

Author/Producer Mike Curato

3. What brought this title to your attention?

The book is in violation of state Obscenity Laws.
Content violates the state obscenity statutes
2021 Louisiana Laws
Revised Statutes
Title 14 - Criminal Law

4. Did you review the entire item? If not, what sections did you review?

Yes

5. What course of action do you recommend in regard to this resource?

I suggest that a separate board be formed comprised of parents and teachers to review these books prior to purchase.

6. Please state your reasons for making this recommendation. To what in the resource do you object? Please be specific: cite pages, scenes or sections. Consider commenting on the resource as a whole, as well as being specific on the matters which concern you.
It promotes sexual activities and violence to our young people. It's contents are pornographic.

7. In its place, what materials would you recommend on this topic?

Nothing pornographic.

NOTE:

This statement will be referred to a Library Resource Review Committee. You will be advised in writing of the committee's decision. Thank you for your concern and input.

Form 12-190

Rev 01/17



June 9th 2023

Ms. Jacki Schneider

██████████
Lacombe, LA 70445

Dear Ms. Schneider,

Thank you for submitting your Statement of Concern regarding *Flamer* by Mike Curato. Per the St. Tammany Library Board of Control's policies and procedures, this correspondence is to notify you of the recommendation of the library staff committee regarding the material referenced in your Statement of Concern.

Pursuant to La. R.S. § 14:91.11, it is unlawful for any St. Tammany Library to display, exhibit, disseminate, check-out, or otherwise provide any minor anything that constitutes material harmful to minors by law. However, materials are only deemed harmful to minors if all four (4) of the following apply beyond a reasonable doubt:

1. First, the material must exploit, be devoted to, or principally consist of "descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality." To be "descriptions or depictions of illicit or sexual immorality," the material must convey ultimate sex acts, masturbation or excretory functions, lewd exhibition of private areas, sadomasochistic abuse, sexual intimacy via physical acts of private areas, or stimulation of human genitalia.
2. Second, the material must incite, appeal to, or be designed to incite or appeal to "the prurient, shameful, or morbid interest of minors," i.e., a sexual response over and beyond those that would be characterized as normal for a minor.
3. Third, the material must be "offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors." These standards are not defined or limited by any specific geographic area.
4. Fourth, the material, when considered in its entirety (including both objectionable and nonobjectionable parts), must lack any "literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors."

If any of the foregoing requirements are not met, the material is not unlawful under La. R.S. §14:91.11.

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SOUTH SLIDELL (985) 781-0099



Importantly, the statute defines “minor” as “any person under the age of eighteen years.” Thus, the last three (3) elements above must be considered in that context, e.g., “The material taken as a whole [must] lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for [any person under the age of eighteen years].” Additionally, if materials that qualify as harmful to minors are not sold, distributed, advertised, or otherwise distributed to minors, it is permissible under the law to have them available for adults to do so, as long as the minors are unable to see, “as displayed,” descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality.”

Under this analysis, the staff committee determined that the material at issue in your Statement of Concern does not qualify as unlawfully harmful to minors.

1. The book does not primarily consist of or is devoted to the sexual acts described in in the law. Male nipples and buttocks are shown. Sexual acts are implied but not are not drawn explicitly. The scenes with sexual activity illustrate the character’s fear, confusion, and disgust. Self-harm is considered but not acted upon. The scene leads to the character’s self-realization. While pornography is mentioned, it is part of the backstory of the character to show the character’s mental state.

2. The committee found that the text and images did not incite or appeal to the prurient interests of minors. The behavior and interests described in the book are typical for teen boys. The story describes a young man coming to terms with himself and his family. It deals with bullying, race, and religion. Some scenes show immaturity but not obscenity.

3. The committee did not find the material to be offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors. The book is intended for older teens. Young children would not understand the story or the emotional journey that the main character takes. There are words used that are inappropriate in polite company but are normal for situations of teen boys together unsupervised. The curse words and slurs used reflect and fuel the emotions of the characters. The main character says “I hate those words.” Overall, the committee thought the tone of the book was similar to a PG-13 rated movie or television show.

4. The committee believes the material taken as a whole does not lack serious literary or artistic value for minors. The story is well told, imaginative, and has emotional impact. The book illustrates complex emotions of teen boys and also the hypocrisy of teen boys. The book is rife with symbolism- flames, the phoenix, and imagery from the X Men comic books and movies. Teens relate to the pop culture references and inspiration.

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You specifically commented that the book's content was "pornographic." And promoted "sexual activities and violence to our young people." After reviewing the book and discussion, it was determined that, in the opinion of the committee members, the book is not pornography. This book was never shelved in the children's section and it was not shelved in the teen section. Upon purchase the library recognized it might be more appropriate for older teens and young adults and located it in adult non-fiction.

Flamer is a graphic (art) novel that does illustrate some sexual conduct and is therefore housed behind the circulation desk per the Library Board's resolution on February 28th 2023. This book does not require an ID to check out but does require an unrestricted juvenile card that a parent must select for their child or adult card to check it out. The downloadable copy of this book similarly requires an unrestricted juvenile card or adult card to download it. It is the recommendation of this committee that although we feel the book is appropriate in the adult non-fiction collection that the book remain where it is behind the circulation desk, and not require any further restrictions on the circulation of the book.

You also specifically asked "that a separate board be formed comprised of parents and teachers to review these books prior to purchase." Books and other materials are purchased by trained professionals using a variety of tools and who are themselves members of the St. Tammany community. In order to increase transparency, the LBOC - who are members of the St. Tammany community, appointed by the Parish President and Parish Council, and currently includes parents and educators - will be reviewing and making decisions about all challenged materials.

While we recognize that some may find the material in question not suitable for their family, that alone does not render it unlawful and does not warrant censoring the public at large from accessing and/or checking out the material. Parents are the ultimate deciders of which books and media their children will consume. At the same time, we do acknowledge that this book may not be in line with the values of all families in the Parish. The purchase of any item by the St. Tammany Parish Library is not an affirmation of the content of the item, and each family in our Parish has the right and responsibility to make decisions regarding what their own children will read or hear.

The committee's report and recommendation will be made available to the St. Tammany Library Control Board, which shall make the ultimate determination based thereupon at the next regularly scheduled meeting on June 28th 2023, at 9:30 am where it will be on the agenda. At that meeting, you will have an opportunity to address the Board for 5 minutes.

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Discover what's inside 

Regardless of the outcome, we hope you will recognize the important role that a public library plays in a free and open democratic society as a neutral resource for everyone.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Kelly LaRocca".

Kelly LaRocca, Director

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Statement of Concern about Library Resources

Intellectual freedom in a public library necessitates selecting some materials that may be considered controversial by some individuals or groups. Reasons often cited for materials considered offensive include use of profanity, divergent viewpoints, controversial authors, sexual content, and depictions of violence and criminal acts. The acquisition of such materials does not imply approval or endorsement of their contents. The selection criteria used by the St. Tammany Parish Library must remain broad and flexible in order to provide a collection that supports the broad range of interests and diverse backgrounds of the citizens of St. Tammany Parish.

Date 12/9/2022

Name frances smith

Address [REDACTED]

City slidell State la Zip 70461

Telephone [REDACTED]

Representing (self) _____ (organization)

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

Book _____ Newspaper _____ Other
 Magazine _____ Content of Library Program
 Audiovisual _____ Electronic Resource

2. Title Flamer

Author/Producer Mike curato

3. What brought this title to your attention?

I really don't know

4. Did you review the entire item? If not, what sections did you review?

76, 132

5. What course of action do you recommend in regard to this resource?
take it out of the library

6. Please state your reasons for making this recommendation. To what in the resource do you object? Please be specific: cite pages, scenes or sections. Consider commenting on the resource as a whole, as well as being specific on the matters which concern you.

This is not for children to read. 76, 132. I couldn't read it myself. It has no use in the public library and certainly cannot help our children prepare themselves for a happy normal life.

7. In its place, what materials would you recommend on this topic?
Books on how Pedophilia is against the law!

NOTE:

This statement will be referred to a Library Resource Review Committee. You will be advised in writing of the committee's decision. Thank you for your concern and input.



June 9th 2023

Ms. Fran Smith


Slidell, LA 70461

Dear Ms. Smith,

Thank you for submitting your Statement of Concern regarding *Flamer* by Mike Curato. Per the St. Tammany Library Board of Control's policies and procedures, this correspondence is to notify you of the recommendation of the library staff committee regarding the material referenced in your Statement of Concern.

The author is a well-known illustrator and the book was reviewed positively. *Flamer* has circulated 23 times since the library has owned it. It is held in 1,126 other public libraries across the country. The library recognized the mature subject matter and content of this book and, upon purchase, placed it into the Adult Non-Fiction collection.

You asked specifically that we "take it out of the library" and that it was "not for Children to read." This book was never shelved in the children's section. It is a graphic (art) novel that does illustrate some sexual conduct and is therefore housed behind the circulation desk per the Library Board's resolution on February 28th 2023. This book does not require an ID to check out but does require an unrestricted juvenile card that a parent must select for their child or adult card to check it out. The downloadable copy of this book similarly requires an unrestricted juvenile card or adult card to download it. It is the recommendation of this committee that we retain this book. Although we feel the book is appropriate in the adult non-fiction collection we are also recommending that the book remain where it is behind the circulation desk per the Library Board's February 28th 2023 graphic novel resolution, and not require any further restrictions on the circulation of the book.

While we recognize that some may find the material in question not suitable for themselves or their family, that alone does not warrant censoring the public at large from accessing and/or checking out the material. Parents are the ultimate deciders of which books and media their children will consume. At the same time, we do acknowledge that this book may not be in line with the values of all families in the Parish. The purchase of any item by the St. Tammany Parish Library is not an affirmation of the content of the item and each family in our Parish has the right and responsibility to make decisions regarding what they and their own children will read or hear.

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SOUTH SLIDELL (985) 781-0099



The committee's report and recommendation will be made available to the St. Tammany Library Control Board, which shall make the ultimate determination based thereupon at a special meeting on June 28th 2023, at 9:30 am where it will be on the agenda. At that meeting, you will have an opportunity to address the Board for 5 minutes.

Regardless of the outcome, we hope you will recognize the important role that a public library plays in a free and open democratic society as a neutral resource for everyone.

Respectfully,



Kelly LaRocca, Director

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Statement of Concern about Library Resources

Intellectual freedom in a public library necessitates selecting some materials that may be considered controversial by some individuals or groups. Reasons often cited for materials considered offensive include use of profanity, divergent viewpoints, controversial authors, sexual content, and depictions of violence and criminal acts. The acquisition of such materials does not imply approval or endorsement of their contents. The selection criteria used by the St. Tammany Parish Library must remain broad and flexible in order to provide a collection that supports the broad range of interests and diverse backgrounds of the citizens of St. Tammany Parish.

Date _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State ____ Zip _____

Telephone _____

Representing _____ (self) _____ (organization)

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

____ Book ____ Newspaper ____ Other
____ Magazine ____ Content of Library Program
____ Audiovisual ____ Electronic Resource

2. Title _____

Author/Producer _____

3. What brought this title to your attention?

4. Did you review the entire item? If not, what sections did you review?

5. What course of action do you recommend in regard to this resource?

6. Please state your reasons for making this recommendation. To what in the resource do you object? Please be specific: cite pages, scenes or sections. Consider commenting on the resource as a whole, as well as being specific on the matters which concern you.

7. In its place, what materials would you recommend on this topic?

NOTE:

This statement will be referred to a Library Resource Review Committee. You will be advised in writing of the committee's decision. Thank you for your concern and input.

Frankie and Bug – addendum. Phillips, C.

4. Did you review the entire item? If not, what sections did you review?

From your website confirming topic: 1. Rule Number Four Rule Number Four TEN DAYS BEFORE SCHOOL let out, Mama announced that summer was canceled. She didn't say it straight out like that. But she might as well have. What she did say to Bug was: "What would you like to do this summer?" This was a dumb question. Mama knew what Bug wanted to do this summer. The same thing she'd done for the last two summers, ever since Danny had persuaded Mama that there was no need to spend good money on the Y camp (which they both hated, Danny quietly so, and Bug noisily) now that he was old enough to watch them both all summer. For free. "You can buy a new car instead," Danny had said. Clever of him, Bug thought, because Mama was always complaining about the Datsun and its busted air conditioner. So, after very elaborate negotiations with Phillip and Hedvig, their upstairs and downstairs neighbors who each sometimes watched Danny and Bug, and yet another consultation with Kip, the always-sunburned lifeguard who manned Tower 19, Mama had agreed to let them spend the summers alone. "With conditions," she said. Conditions, Bug had soon discovered, was another name for rules. But conditions sounded nicer. Mama typed the "conditions" onto a piece of thick, fancy paper she used at her job at the mayor's office. Then she made Danny and Bug both sign it. This, she explained, turned conditions into a contract. The contract promised that Bug and Danny would: Always go to Tower 19 and check in with Kip. Always swim together if they went in past their knees. Never touch so much as a toe in the water if the riptide flag was up. Always stay together. Rule number four was typed up in just the same way as the others, but Mama repeated its importance so often that Bug understood it was the most important one of all. Bug was not generally fond of rules, even when they were called conditions, but this one, the idea that she and Danny must always, always stay together, well, she liked that one just fine. It made her feel safe. The list had been taped to the refrigerator that first beach summer, and all that following fall and winter. In the spring, when Mama was doing her big cleaning, she had taken it down. But Bug had retrieved the paper from the trash and hung it back up. She'd told Mama it was because she might forget the rules this coming summer, but the truth was, the list had become a promise. The promise of summer. For almost three years, the list had stayed on the fridge, fastened into place with a ladybug magnet. So when in the waning days of fourth grade, Mama asked what Bug wanted to do for the upcoming summer, the answer was obvious: "I want to go to the beach," Bug told Mama. Mama got a funny look on her face, which in turn gave Bug a funny tickling in her stomach. Mama called this the Gut Voice and told Danny and Bug to listen to it. But Bug didn't want to listen to her Gut Voice, because what it was saying--even before Mama said, "I think we might need to change it up this summer"--was that summer was about to be canceled. "Why do we have to change it up?" Bug wasn't entirely sure what "changing it up" meant, but she didn't want to ask, lest she look babyish. That was Danny's favorite insult as of late. And there was no way she would prove it true. "It's just that Danny..." Mama stopped herself. "Daniel." Daniel. That was what Danny wanted to be called now. "Needs a bit of space this summer." Bug had been hearing a lot about Daniel's need for space these past few months. First, early in the spring, Danny had told Mama that he didn't want to go to the magnet school he and Bug had both attended since kindergarten. This coming fall, he would be attending Venice High School. A few weeks after that, Mama had taken Bug out for ice cream on the Santa Monica Pier and told Bug she was getting her own room. For a brief second, Bug had thought they were moving to one of those big houses with wall-to-wall carpeting and grassy backyards with pools, like the one her

friend Beth Ann lived in. But then why would Mama be taking her out for ice cream to deliver good news? Ice cream was for bad news. The bad news was this: Bug was being moved out of the biggest bedroom she and Danny had always shared and into a tiny alcove next to the bathroom that Mama had sometimes used as an office. It was too small to fit a bed and a dresser and desk, so with Hedvig's blessing--she was their landlady as well as their downstairs neighbor--Mama and Phillip built Bug a sleeping loft. Bug did like the loft. It had a wooden ladder and her window looked out onto a big magnolia that made it feel like she was sleeping in a tree house. But even if she liked the room okay, that didn't mean she wanted it. No one had asked if she wanted it. And worse, Danny got to keep the biggest room, instead of switching with Mama, who had the medium-sized room. It just wasn't fair! Bug had complained to Mama about this. Which was a big mistake. One thing about Mama was that she didn't give two hoots about fair. And now, Daniel's need for space meant that Bug's summer was canceled. "It's just that Daniel," Mama was explaining, "has babysat you for the past few summers...." "Babysat?" Bug was offended. "Danny doesn't babysit me. In summer, we go to the beach. It's what we do." "Well, this summer, we're going to have to figure out something else for you to do." School had yet to let out, but Bug could feel the summer slipping through her fingers like sand at the beach, which she would not be going to. She wanted to cry. Bug loved the beach. And the three months she got to spend there made all the bad parts of living in Venice--like her pretend bedroom and hearing gunshots at night and having to sit on a bus two hours a day to go to a good school and never having friends sleep over because nobody's parents wanted them to sleep in a place where gunshots went off at night--worth it. Bug loved everything about the beach: the way the brisk water made her toes go numb, the way the drying salt made her skin feel tight, the way tropical tanning oil smelled, and the way the sand sounded when you laid your head against it. She even loved things about the beach other people hated, like how saltwater stung her scratched mosquito bites, or how the sand got everywhere--and she meant everywhere, in her sheets, her shoes, in the crack of her butt. Mama couldn't take that away from her. She just couldn't! "I don't want to figure something else out!" Bug cried. "I want it to be like the other summers." Mama shook her head. "Daniel is fourteen. He wants to hang out with friends his own age. I think that's fair." "Fair?" Bug scoffed, feeling the heat in her earlobes, which was how she knew she was about to lose her temper. "What do you care about fair?" Because wasn't Mama the one who always told Bug, "Life isn't fair--the most you can hope for is that it's just"? Mama put a hand on Bug's shoulder. "I understand you're disappointed." But Bug was more than disappointed. Because in that moment, she suddenly understood what Daniel's need for space really meant. It meant space away from Bug. The realization made tears spring to her eyes. She blinked them back. She wasn't a baby. She was ten! But Mama saw. She stroked Bug's cheek, a gesture that made her feel even sadder, which in turn made her madder. She stomped her feet, and balled her fists, not even caring how immature this made her look. "I know you're upset. I promise you'll have a fun summer." Mama took a breath. "At camp." "No way. Nohow. I'm not going back to the Y camp." Y camp was the worst! You spent days inside in a moldy-smelling gymnasium, making lanyards or shaping clay into pots that never kept their shape. When you did go swimming, which was only twice a week, it was at an indoor pool. The ocean was just blocks away, but you had to swim in an indoor pool. It was the kind of thing Phillip would call a travesty. "I'd rather stay with Hedvig!" Bug said, not because she wanted to spend the summer in their landlady's apartment, but just to show just how little she wanted to attend the Y camp. Mama put on her thinking face. "If that's what you want, I'll ask." She paused. "Maybe you can stay some afternoons with her and others with Phillip when he's not working." That wasn't what Bug wanted. Hedvig was okay, but her apartment, which took up the ground floor of their building, was full of junk, and all Hedvig did all day

was watch soap operas. Phillip's apartment, which took up the top floor of their triplex, was much neater, and Phillip, when he was home, did much more interesting things, like make collages out of old Time magazines with Bug, or play songs on his baby grand piano. But neither Phillip nor Hedvig would take Bug to the beach. And the beach was the only place she wanted to spend her summer. "Can't I go to the beach by myself??" Bug asked. "I'd check in with Kip. And only go up to my knees." The thought of not being able to dive headfirst into the waves made Bug sad, but not as sad as sitting home all summer. She would show Mama she could compromise. "I'm afraid not." "But you let Danny go alone with me." "Daniel's a boy," Mama said. "What's that got to do with it?" Bug could swim just as strong as Danny. She could stand the cold water just as long as Danny. She wasn't one of those girls who was scared of sand crabs or attacking seagulls. "A lot," Mama said. "And you're only ten." "I'll be eleven soon. And Danny was only twelve when we started going to the beach ourselves." "You'll be eleven in February," Mama reminded her. "And I know two years doesn't seem like much, but there's a world of difference between ten and twelve." Mama shook her head. "I'm sorry, Bug. You can't go alone." "I won't be alone. I'll have Bian and Duane and Randy and Zeus." These were Bug's summer friends, people she didn't see too much during the regular year when school kept her too busy to spend much time on the boardwalk but whom she saw every day as part of her and Danny's beach routine. "I'm sorry," Mama repeated. "No, you're not," Bug shot back. "Because if you were, you wouldn't be ruining my summer!" And then she could hold it in no longer. She burst into blubbing, babyish tears. "I'm sorry, sweetie," Mama repeated. "I'll try to redeem your summer." Bug thought these were just empty words, but a week later, when Mama told her that some nephew of Phillip's was coming to spend the entire summer in Venice, Bug understood, for better or for worse, whether she liked it or not, that this was her summer's redemption. Excerpted from Frankie and Bug by Gayle Forman St. Tammany Parish Library.

Frankie and Bug by Gayle Forman

Aladdin, 2021 (imprint of Simon & Schuster)

Publisher's summary: In the summer of 1987 in Venice, California, ten-year-old Bug and her new friend Frankie learn important lessons about life, family, being your true self, and how to navigate in a world that is not always just or fair.

Library of Congress Subject headings:

Friendship. Juvenile fiction.
Families, Juvenile fiction.
Transgender people, Juvenile fiction.
Salvadoran Americans, Juvenile fiction.
Children's stories.
Fiction.

STPL owns three copies at Covington, Mandeville, and Slidell.

Purchased in June 2022. Available on shelf in August 2022.

Shelved in Juvenile Fiction collection. Call number J Form

Total Circulation of all book copies: 3

OTHER LIBRARIES

WorldCat shows 901 public libraries

East Baton Rouge Parish Public Library 5 copies in Juvenile Fiction

Jefferson Parish Library 14 copies in Juvenile Fiction

Livingston Parish Library 3 copies Juvenile Fiction

Baldwin County Library Cooperative, AL 4 copies in Juvenile Fiction

Calcasieu Parish Public Library 1 copy Juvenile Fiction

Beaumont Public Library 2 copies in Juvenile Fiction

REVIEWS

Publishers Weekly (08/16/2021):

It's 1987 in Venice, Calif., and 10-year-old Beatrice "Bug" Contreras, who is of Salvadoran descent, is certain that her summer has been ruined when her older brother Danny suddenly insists on being called Daniel and needs space from Bug and their beach-going routine. Stuck at home with their downstairs landlady and their upstairs neighbor Phillip's nephew Frankie, a white 11-year-old visiting from Ohio, Bug is at first reluctant to befriend the newcomer. But the mystery of the Midnight Marauder, a serial killer at large in their community, draws them together as they create a map to root out the murderer. Their focus shifts, however, when Phillip is physically attacked and the details of the incident don't add up. During a summer of change and big realizations, Bug learns vital and sometimes painful lessons about the power of embracing her true self and meeting people where they are. Forman (*We Are Inevitable*)

tenderly depicts a girl whose understanding--of identity, sexuality, and prejudice--is rapidly expanding, and whose chosen family provides a safe, loving space in which to navigate her experiences and learn to show up as an ally. Ages 8-12. *Agent: Michael Bourret, Dystel, Goderich, & Bourret. (Oct.)* Copyright 2021 Publishers Weekly, LLC Used with permission.

Booklist (08/01/2021):

Grades 4-7 **Starred Review** In 1987 Venice Beach, 10-year-old Bug's (Beatrice) summer excitement gets squashed when her brother, Danny, decides he wants to spend his time with his friends, not his kid sister. Now she's stuck hanging with her neighbor's nephew, Frankie, who's visiting from the Midwest. Bug hates being treated like a baby and dealing with a kid who doesn't even want to go to the beach! As the summer wears on, she deals with challenging but eye-opening situations, such as understanding that Frankie is a boy even though his family says he's a girl, learning that her neighbor has been attacked because he is gay, and accepting that her grandparents disowned her mother for loving Bug's Salvadoran father. Forman has skillfully and sensitively moved into the middle-grade arena, crafting a picture of a time when being oneself was not always simple or easily defined and when, as now, the presence of good friends and allies could make or break you. Through Bug's innocent perspective, Forman illuminates the pains and injustices suffered by so many, and readers will avidly watch this young girl stand up to skinheads and relatives, discovering that "family" are those who have your back, love you without conditions, and allow you to be who you are. The characterizations, setting, and messaging are genuine and heart-tugging, making this a must-read. HIGH-DEMAND BACKSTORY: Best-seller Forman's first foray into middle-grade fiction is buzzing, ensuring it has a sizable audience before the inevitable second wave of new young fans rushes the circ desk. COPYRIGHT(2021) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Kirkus Reviews (09/01/2021):

When Bug's traditional summer routine is shaken up, her entire life changes. It's 1987, and 10-year-old Beatrice "Bug" Contreras has a plan: spend her summer months with her brother, Danny, on Venice Beach as she has for the past two years. But when 14-year-old Danny--who has matured into the name Daniel--wants more time to himself, Bug learns she will be instead hanging out with 11-year-old Frankie, the nephew of Phillip, her mother's best friend and their upstairs neighbor. Frankie, who is visiting from Ohio, is trans at a time before this identity was well understood and has not been treated with kindness or acceptance by his parents. Frankie and Bug become fascinated with trying to solve the case of the Midnight Marauder, a serial killer who has been striking in the area. When Phillip is attacked, ending up in the hospital, their investigation swivels, and the titular characters uncover a few untold family tales. Bug and Daniel's late father was a professor from El Salvador with Indigenous ancestry who spoke Nahuatl as well as Spanish and English. Biracial identity is explored in part through the differences in the siblings' physical appearances: Their mother is implied to be White, and Daniel--who resembles their father more than Bug does--experiences more overt racism and dives into an exploration of his Salvadoran heritage. Readers interested in complex emotional development and relationships will appreciate each character's subtle nuances. Superb storytelling. (resources, author's note) (Fiction. 9-11) COPYRIGHT(2021) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Bulletin of Ctr for Child Bks (10/01/2021):

Bug's older brother, Daniel, has convinced their single mother that he should have a break from playing companion and protector to his sister the whole time Mama's at work. A solution arrives in the guise of Frankie, nephew to family friend and neighbor Phillip, who's hosting him for the summer. Frankie's not great pal potential, refusing at first to go in the ocean, eat the delicious local food, or stray too far from his uncle. However, he is as fascinated as Bug by efforts to catch the Midnight Marauder, a serial killer who's at large in the greater L.A. area. Two odd duck tweens making the best of a messy 1980s summer by pursuing over imaginative leads on a murderer (particularly one based so obviously and closely on the real-life Night Stalker) easily sustain middle-grade interest, and the addition of menacing skinheads popping up on the streets pumps up tension. The friends-in-the-making story gets swamped by waves of problem novel plots that accrue, from the skinheads' assault on gay Uncle Phillip, to the arrival of Bug's bigoted maternal aunt, to Mama's revelation of a family secret concerning Daniel and Bug's Salvadorean-American ancestry. Each subplot is worthy of more development than it gets, and Forman's series of reveals mostly fall flat as readers anticipate them and the characters themselves are not particularly nonplussed. The crime story and the kids on the loose still have appeal, but for historical fiction about summer antics, you still can't beat Rita Garcia-Williams *One Crazy Summer* (BCCB 2/10) and its sequels. EB COPYRIGHT(2021) Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

School Library Journal (10/01/2021):

Gr 5 Up--A heartwarming tale of friendship set in 1987. Beatrice, Bug for short, is devastated to find out her summer won't go as planned. Instead of going to the beach with her brother Danny, Bug must be babysat by her upstairs neighbors, Phillip and Hedvig. Her mother's promise that she will redeem her summer comes in the form of Phillip's nephew, Frankie, coming to visit. Bug thinks she'll finally have someone to go to the beach with, but she quickly realizes Frankie doesn't enjoy the same things she does and has his own interests, such as the Midnight Marauder, a serial killer on the loose in Los Angeles. To Bug's surprise, she enjoys helping Frankie with the hunt for the Midnight Marauder, and they grow close enough for Frankie to reveal his secret--he was born a girl, even though he has always felt like a boy. In the beginning of the story Bug is self-centered and whiny, which may lead readers to dislike her, but Frankie brings about a positive change in her behavior that makes her character more enjoyable to follow. Difficult themes such as racism and homophobia are included in the narrative, and how Bug comes to realize these things exist in the world is realistic and heartbreaking. Bug and her brother are Salvadoran and Hedvig is Hungarian. VERDICT Forman has crafted a beautiful and important coming-of-age tale with just a bit of mystery thrown in. A must-have for middle grade libraries.--*Lisa Buffi, Sterling M.S., VA*

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE:

Gayle Forman is an award-winning author and journalist whose articles have appeared in numerous publications, including *Seventeen*, *Cosmopolitan*, and *Elle* in the US. Gayle Forman's novel, *If I Stay*, was released as a blockbuster movie starring Chloë Grace Moretz in 2014. Her most recent YA novel is *We Are Inevitable*. Gayle lives in Brooklyn, New York, with her family.

AWARDS AND LISTS:

John and Patricia Beatty Award (California Library Association, honors the author of a distinguished book for children and young adults that best promotes an awareness of California and its people.)



June 9th 2023

Ms. Connie Phillips

██████████
Mandeville, LA 70471

Dear Connie Phillips,

Thank you for submitting your Statement of Concern regarding *Frankie and Bug* by Gayle Forman. Per the St. Tammany Library Board of Control's policies and procedures, this correspondence is to notify you of the recommendation of the library staff committee regarding the material referenced in your Statement of Concern.

Pursuant to La. R.S. § 14:91.11, it is unlawful for any St. Tammany Library to display, exhibit, disseminate, check-out, or otherwise provide any minor anything that constitutes material harmful to minors by law. However, materials are only deemed harmful to minors if **all** four (4) of the following apply beyond a reasonable doubt:

1. First, the material must exploit, be devoted to, or principally consist of "descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality." To be "descriptions or depictions of illicit or sexual immorality," the material must convey ultimate sex acts, masturbation or excretory functions, lewd exhibition of private areas, sadomasochistic abuse, sexual intimacy via physical acts of private areas, or stimulation of human genitalia.
2. Second, the material must incite, appeal to, or be designed to incite or appeal to "the prurient, shameful, or morbid interest of minors," i.e., a sexual response over and beyond those that would be characterized as normal for a minor.
3. Third, the material must be "offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors." These standards are not defined or limited by any specific geographic area.
4. Fourth, the material, when considered in its entirety (including both objectionable and nonobjectionable parts), must lack any "literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors."

If any of the foregoing requirements are not met, the material is not unlawful under La. R.S. §14:91.11.

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1112 WEST 21ST AVENUE COVINGTON, LA 70433
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Importantly, the statute defines “minor” as “any person under the age of eighteen years.” Thus, the last three (3) elements above must be considered in that context, e.g., “The material taken as a whole [must] lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for [any person under the age of eighteen years].” Additionally, if materials that qualify as harmful to minors are not sold, distributed, advertised, or otherwise distributed to minors, it is permissible under the law to have them available for adults to do so, as long as the minors are unable to see, “as displayed,” descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality.”

Under this analysis, the staff committee determined that the material at issue in your Statement of Concern does not qualify as unlawfully harmful to minors.

1. There was no sexual content in the book. Private parts are mentioned in a passing and matter of fact way, but they are described as such, “private parts.” There are no erotic scenes.
2. The committee found that the text and images did not incite or appeal to the prurient interests of minors. The teenage couple hold hands and sit close together on a surf board. The mention of the word “gay” does not reference sex and is not explained in detail. The mention of the word “harem” in context of the tour of Hollywood homes is dismissed by the child characters as an “adult thing” and not defined.
3. The committee did not find the material to be offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors. The book circulated right away when it was first shelved. Many of our peer library systems own this book and place it in the same section of the library.
4. The committee believes the material taken as a whole does not lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors. The committee thought the book had great literary value as realistic and historical fiction. The subject of the book is not sexuality but a window into another time. The book holds lessons on empathy, fairness, and some challenges that other people go through. The author shows how siblings can have different experiences while growing up in the same family. The theme of the book is the transition from childhood to teenage in an age appropriate way. Bug begins to be aware and understand the world around her in a realistic way. Bug, and the reader, learn some hard, but good, lessons about tolerance.

You asked that this book be shelved in a “upon request” section of the library. This book was located in the juvenile fiction collection. After reviewing the book and discussion, it was determined that, in the opinion of the committee members, the book does not violate the statute, and the book was shelved in the appropriate section of the library.

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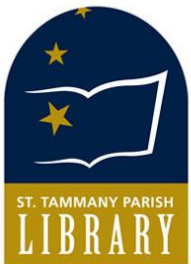
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While we recognize that some may find the material in question not suitable for their family, that alone does not render it unlawful and does not warrant censoring the public at large from accessing and/or checking out the material. Parents are the ultimate deciders of which books and media their children will consume. At the same time, we do acknowledge that this book may not be in line with the values of all families in the Parish. The purchase of any item by the St. Tammany Parish Library is not an affirmation of the content of the item, and each family in our Parish has the right and responsibility to make decisions regarding what their own children will read or hear.

The committee's report and recommendation will be made available to the St. Tammany Library Control Board, which shall make the ultimate determination based thereupon at a special meeting on June 28th, 2023, at 9:30 am where it will be on the agenda. At that meeting, you will have an opportunity to address the Board for 5 minutes.

Regardless of the outcome, we hope you will recognize the important role that a public library plays in a free and open democratic society as a neutral resource for everyone.

Respectfully,



Kelly LaRocca, Director

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5. What course of action do you recommend in regard to this resource?

Restrict access to minors as outlined in statute above. Require parent to check out for minor. The book should be shelved in a section where minors do not have access. A separate place in the library. A room or some section where minors do not have entry without parent and minors cannot check out. D.A. Warren Montgomery has instructed you to have a separate place where minors cannot go so shelve it in this section.

6. Please state your reasons for making this recommendation. To what in the resource do you object? Please be specific: cite pages, scenes or sections. Consider commenting on the resource as a whole, as well as being specific on the matters which concern you.

Violates Content violates the state obscenity statues
2021 Louisiana Laws - offensive to the average adult applying St. Tammany Parish community standards.

Stop sexualization of our kids.

7. In its place, what materials would you recommend on this topic?

Something that does not promote the grooming of children. Stop talking to our children about what sex they might be. leave our kids alone.

NOTE:

This statement will be referred to a Library Resource Review Committee. You will be advised in writing of the committee's decision. Thank you for your concern and input.

4. Did you review the entire item? If not, what sections did you review

yes

9 Fred might never get dressed! The illustration on this page depicts a nude cartoonish boy in a posterior view as he stands in front of a mirror. His buttocks is exposed. See Figure 1.

17 It might be fun to dress like Mom. So Fred carefully picks out a blouse and a scarf and a pair of shoes.

18 He has no trouble putting them on, but he is not finished yet.

37 Now Fred is dressed.

38 The illustration on this page depicts Fred dressed as a girl standing in front of his mother, father, and dog. See Figure 2.

39 Well, mostly dressed. The illustration on this page depicts Fred running in a dress from a posterior view. His buttocks is shown underneath the dress he's wearing. See Figure 3.

FRED GETS DRESSED by Peter Brown

Little, Brown Books for Young Readers, 2021

PUBLISHER'S SUMMARY

The boy loves to be naked. He romps around his house naked and wild and free. Until he romps into his parents' closet and is inspired to get dressed. First he tries on his dad's clothes, but they don't fit well. Then he tries on his mom's clothes, and wow! The boy looks great. He looks through his mom's jewelry and makeup and tries that on, too. When he's discovered by his mother and father, the whole family (including the dog!) get in on the fun, and they all get dressed together. This charming and humorous story was inspired by bestselling and award-winning author Peter Brown's own childhood, and highlights nontraditional gender roles and self-expression.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS SUBJECT HEADINGS

Clothing and dress

Parent and child

RECOMMENDED AGE GROUP: 3 to 6

HOLDINGS AND CIRCULATION

- 6 print copies at Causeway, Covington, Madisonville, Mandeville, Slidell, and South Slidell/ Shelved in Juvenile Picture Books/ Call number E Bro

Purchased in June 2022. Available on shelf July 2022.

Total circulation on all print copies: 9

OTHER LIBRARY HOLDINGS

Held in 1102 libraries.

Hancock County Library System – Easy Books

Calcasieu Parish Public Library – Easy Books

East Baton Rouge Parish Library – Juvenile Picture Books

PATRON REQUEST/SUGGEST A PURCHASE: N/A

REVIEWS

Booklist (03/15/2021):

Preschool-Grade 1 *Starred Review* Fred is a little white boy with brown hair, an electric glow to his hot pink aura, and an undeniable joie de vivre. One way he expresses the latter is by cavorting in the nude. Smiling, he streaks across the living room as his parents read on the sofa. Brown's no slouch when it comes to letting loose (Mr. Tiger Goes Wild, 2013), but this story takes an interesting turn--into Fred's parents' closet. Of his own volition, Fred wanders in and looks over his dad's side of the closet (boring) and then his mom's (much more exciting), ultimately trying on one outfit from each. When Fred's happily wearing his mom's pink blouse as a dress and exploring his makeup and jewelry options, his parents walk in. Brown draws out

this tense moment with a wordless two-page spread, but their surprise gives way to smiles, with a truly delightful sequence of them all doing their hair and makeup together. There is no discussion here of gender identity or expectation; it simply shows parents following their child's lead and offering him love and the space to explore and be himself. This largely comes through in Brown's marvelous illustrations, which favor purples, greens, and hot pink hues, thick line work, and a hipster aesthetic. A wonderful celebration of self that joins titles like Christine Baldacchino's *Morris Micklewhite and the Tangerine Dress* (2014) and Rowboat Watkins' *Pete with No Pants* (2017). COPYRIGHT(2021) Booklist, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Publishers Weekly (03/15/2021):

First establishing his protagonist's delight in zooming around the house "naked and wild and free," Brown (*The Wild Robot*) shows white-skinned, brown-haired Fred striking one joyful pose after another. But when Fred ends up in a magical place--his parents' closet--getting dressed becomes irresistible. He has trouble donning his father's shirt and tie, but Mom's clothes are a different story. The book's limited palette of olive, brown, and bright pink combines to form a wardrobe that, to Fred's eyes, is razzle-dazzle--and his mother's makeup and jewelry only add to the allure. When Mom and Dad discover Fred, now dressed in a blouse-and-scarf turned frock, heels, and a dash of lipstick, Brown draws the scene as a parent-child stand-off, an ominous beat that seems to suggest potential conflict. But a page turn reveals smiles and everyone--down to the family dog--getting into the dress-up game: Mom gives makeup lessons, and Dad dons blush and jewelry. With nonjudgmental parents who appreciate their son however he dresses, Fred really has it all. Well, almost--as the final cheeky image shows, he could use a pair of underpants. Ages 3-6. Agent: Paul Rodeen, Rodeen Literary. (May) Copyright 2021 Publishers Weekly, LLC Used with permission.

Kirkus Reviews (04/01/2021):

Deciding what to wear becomes an adventure for a small boy. Fred likes to "[romp] through the house naked and wild and free." His romping takes him into his parents' bedroom closet, where Fred initially checks out Dad's clothing. Thinking it would be fun to dress like Dad, Fred selects a shirt, tie, and shoes, but he struggles with them. Moving onto Mom's side of the closet, Fred opts for a blouse, scarf, and shoes, all of which easily slip on. Dressed in Mom's clothes and huge shoes, Fred explores her jewelry box and makeup drawer, adding a necklace to his ensemble, but his attempt to apply lipstick ends in a smear. When Mom and Dad see Fred in his chosen apparel, they smile, and soon Mom shows Fred how to apply makeup and style his hair while Dad and the dog join the fun. Rendered in strong, black outlines, simple shapes, and complementary pinks and greens, the memorable illustrations portray Fred as a rosy, free-spirited tot unabashedly streaking through the house as his parents calmly read. Fred's unsuccessful experiment with Dad's drab male wardrobe and subsequent exploration of Mom's more exciting female attire, jewelry, and makeup are presented as an unremarkable occurrence for young Fred. The text-free close-up of Mom's and Dad's reactions to Fred in Mom's clothing sends just the right message of parental acceptance, support, and love. All three have pale skin and straight hair, Fred's and Dad's darker than Mom's. Positive, powerful, and affirming. (Picture book. 3-6) COPYRIGHT(2021) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Horn Book Magazine (05/01/2021):

Young Fred parades around the house in pure joy wearing nothing but his birthday suit. He jumps off furniture, cartwheels down the hall, and finds himself in front of his parents' closet door. Maybe he will get dressed today after all. Fred considers the way his father dresses and extracts a shirt, tie, and dress shoes from the closet, only to find these items are far too large and complicated. Next he turns to Mom's wardrobe. A sharp pink dress, green sash cleverly assembled into a belt, and heels are just what Fred was looking for. Fred carefully maneuvers his way (in Mom's too-large shoes) over to the vanity so he can complete his look. Just as Fred attempts to apply lipstick (to his cheek), Mom and Dad walk in, catching Fred in his game of dress-up. At this point in the story, some readers might expect parental disapproval of Fred's self-expression, but no such reaction occurs. Instead, the whole family finds their own funky, fabulous outfits, and the fun continues. The witty, straightforward text enhances the tale's warmth and humor. Brown's digital illustrations take on a 1970s neon glow, best seen in Fred's rosy cheeks and Mom's bright red hair. And Fred's bare bottom will have readers giggling from the first page to the last. Hill Saxton(Copyright 2021 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

School Library Journal (08/01/2021):

PreS-Gr 1--In this delightful look at kids, clothes, and imagination, a white child named Fred starts out wearing nothing: "He romps through the house naked and wild and free." Appealing illustrations capture the child's carefree joy as he dances, jumps, and plays without a trace of self-consciousness. The naked playtime shifts, though, when he enters his parents' bedroom. In the closet, he looks at his father's clothes, but they don't fit. On his mother's side, however, he finds a blouse that fits like a dress on him, and shoes that are wobbly, but wearable. Then he decides to accessorize. The sequence of illustrations neatly supports the boy's thought processes, with varied layouts that compare his evaluations of what each parent's clothing has to offer. Fred's choice of clothing is both practical (they fit better) and preferential (they seem more fun). When the climactic scene of his parents' entry arrives, Fred has added jewelry and messily applied lipstick. Consecutive wordless spreads capture the moment perfectly: blank looks from the adults that quickly turn to smiles as the mother offers grooming techniques and even the dog is playfully adorned. The closing image shows that Fred is finally "mostly dressed" though bare from the waist down. Themes of acceptance, family love, and gender nonconformity resonate without overwhelming the simple story. **VERDICT** A fun, funny, and insightful look at accepting kids just as they are.--*Steven Engelfried, Wilsonville P.L., OR* Copyright 2021 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Peter Brown is the author and illustrator of many bestselling children's books, including *Children Make Terrible Pets*, *Mr. Tiger Goes Wild*, and *The Curious Garden*. He is also the author of the bestselling middle-grade duology *The Wild Robot* and *The Wild Robot Escapes*. He is the recipient of a Caldecott Honor for *Creepy Carrots!*, two E.B. White Read Aloud Awards, a *New York Times* Best Illustrated Children's Book award, and a Children's Choice Award for Illustrator of the Year. Peter's website is www.peterbrownstudio.com.

AWARDS & LISTS

N/A

RESOURCES

Ingram Content Group, LLC

Books in Print 2.0

Worldcat

Individual library websites (for holdings info)



June 9th 2023

Ms. Connie Phillips

██████████
Mandeville, LA 70471

Dear Connie Phillips,

Thank you for submitting your Statement of Concern regarding *Fred Gets Dressed* by Peter Brown. Per the St. Tammany Library Board of Control's policies and procedures, this correspondence is to notify you of the recommendation of the library staff committee regarding the material referenced in your Statement of Concern.

Pursuant to La. R.S. § 14:91.11, it is unlawful for any St. Tammany Library to display, exhibit, disseminate, check-out, or otherwise provide any minor anything that constitutes material harmful to minors by law. However, materials are only deemed harmful to minors if **all** four (4) of the following apply beyond a reasonable doubt:

1. First, the material must exploit, be devoted to, or principally consist of "descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality." To be "descriptions or depictions of illicit or sexual immorality," the material must convey ultimate sex acts, masturbation or excretory functions, lewd exhibition of private areas, sadomasochistic abuse, sexual intimacy via physical acts of private areas, or stimulation of human genitalia.
2. Second, the material must incite, appeal to, or be designed to incite or appeal to "the prurient, shameful, or morbid interest of minors," i.e., a sexual response over and beyond those that would be characterized as normal for a minor.
3. Third, the material must be "offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors." These standards are not defined or limited by any specific geographic area.
4. Fourth, the material, when considered in its entirety (including both objectionable and nonobjectionable parts), must lack any "literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors."

If any of the foregoing requirements are not met, the material is not unlawful under La. R.S. §14:91.11.

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Importantly, the statute defines “minor” as “any person under the age of eighteen years.” Thus, the last three (3) elements above must be considered in that context, e.g., “The material taken as a whole [must] lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for [any person under the age of eighteen years].” Additionally, if materials that qualify as harmful to minors are not sold, distributed, advertised, or otherwise distributed to minors, it is permissible under the law to have them available for adults to do so, as long as the minors are unable to see, “as displayed,” descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality.”

Under this analysis, the staff committee determined that the material at issue in your Statement of Concern does not qualify as unlawfully harmful to minors.

1. The book contains no mention of sexuality. Simply drawn buttocks are portrayed but not in a sexual context. No genitals are shown. The illustrations purposefully hide Fred’s genitals.
2. The committee found that the text and images did not incite or appeal to the prurient interests of minors. Not wanting to wear clothes is age appropriate behavior for preschool children. Young children will find Fred not wearing clothes amusing, not sexual. Young children enjoy playing dress up with their parents’ clothing. It is not uncommon for boys at that age to play dress up with mother’s clothing and to play with makeup. This behavior is not sexual.
3. The committee did not find the material to be offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors. The committee discussed how anyone with children or anyone who has babysat young children has experienced children’s enjoyment of running through the house before or after bath time with no clothes on. Young children find it humorous, not sexual. The book is not persuasive and does not straightforwardly address gender identity. For the few months the book was available on the shelf it had good circulation.
4. The committee believes the material taken as a whole does not lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors. The book has educational (scientific) value as the text gives parents opportunities for dialogic reading or asking open ended questions with their children. The story shows a positive family dynamic where the parents play with their child. It also shows that it is fun to play dress up. The committee felt the book has artistic merit as the color scheme is beautiful.

The book was shelved in the children’s picture book collection. After reviewing the book and discussion, it was determined that, in the opinion of the committee members, the book

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does not violate the statute, does not need to be restricted, and the book was shelved in the appropriate section of the library.

While we recognize that some may find the material in question not suitable for their family, that alone does not render it unlawful and does not warrant censoring the public at large from accessing and/or checking out the material. Parents are the ultimate deciders of which books and media their children will consume. At the same time, we do acknowledge that this book may not be in line with the values of all families in the Parish. The purchase of any item by the St. Tammany Parish Library is not an affirmation of the content of the item, and each family in our Parish has the right and responsibility to make decisions regarding what their own children will read or hear.

The committee's report and recommendation will be made available to the St. Tammany Library Control Board, which shall make the ultimate determination based thereupon at the next regularly scheduled meeting on June 28th 2023, at 9:30 am where it will be on the agenda. At that meeting, you will have an opportunity to address the Board for 5 minutes.

Regardless of the outcome, we hope you will recognize the important role that a public library plays in a free and open democratic society as a neutral resource for everyone.

Respectfully,



Kelly LaRocca, Director

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Statement of Concern about Library Resources

Intellectual freedom in a public library necessitates selecting some materials that may be considered controversial by some individuals or groups. Reasons often cited for materials considered offensive include use of profanity, divergent viewpoints, controversial authors, sexual content, and depictions of violence and criminal acts. The acquisition of such materials does not imply approval or endorsement of their contents. The selection criteria used by the St. Tammany Parish Library must remain broad and flexible in order to provide a collection that supports the broad range of interests and diverse backgrounds of the citizens of St. Tammany Parish.

Date 12-23-2022

Name Connie Phillips

[Redacted]

City Mandeville State LA Zip 70471

[Redacted]

Representing _____ (self) St. Tammany Parish LAP (organization)

1. Resource on which you are commenting:

- Book
- Magazine
- Audiovisual
- Newspaper
- Content of Library Program
- Audio Book Electronic Resource
- Other

2. Title Pink is for Boys

Author/Producer Robb Pearlman

3. What brought this title to your attention?

Gender Identity - Is a mature subject. The content in this book which violates stature La. R.S. 14:91.11 Guidelines

(1) Sale, exhibition, or distribution of material harmful to minors, La. R.S. 14:91.11, pertains to:

- “[T]he intentional sale, allocation, distribution, advertisement, dissemination, exhibition, or display of

4. Did you review the entire item? If not, what sections did you review?

Summary of Concerns:

The book contains sexuality alternate genders ideologies. Parents should check out these books about sexual preference; This book should not be shelved in the children's section of the library. Small children should not be exposed to sexual material. The verv pretext of this book relates to sexualitv. The citizens of St. Tammanv Parish do

5. What course of action do you recommend in regard to this resource?

Move to minor restricted area of the library. Where kids cannot have access without an adult checking out the material.

6. Please state your reasons for making this recommendation. To what in the resource do you object? Please be specific: cite pages, scenes or sections. Consider commenting on the resource as a whole, as well as being specific on the matters which concern you.

Not suitable for children in St. Tammany Parish See La. R.S. 14:91:11

The material is offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors."

46 Right now, I'm dressed as a dude. ... "This fluid thing you have going is a thing of substance." 63 "You want me to find a country girl to have sex with?" 79 Out there, I might be straight or gay or bi or anything. Out there I choose. No one cares whether

7. In its place, what materials would you recommend on this topic?

Anything that does not violate the state Harmful to Minors Statute

La. R.S. 14:91.11 Guidelines

(1) Sale, exhibition, or distribution of material harmful to minors, La. R.S. 14:91.11, pertains to:

- "[T]he intentional sale, allocation, distribution, advertisement, dissemination, exhibition, or display of material harmful to minors ... to any unmarried person under the age of eighteen years"

NOTE:

This statement will be referred to a Library Resource Review Committee. You will be advised in writing of the committee's decision. Thank you for your concern and input.

3. What brought this title to your attention?

Gender Identity - Is a mature subject. The content in this book which violates stature

La. R.S. 14:91.11 Guidelines

(1) Sale, exhibition, or distribution of material harmful to minors, La. R.S. 14:91.11, pertains to:

- “[T]he intentional sale, allocation, distribution, advertisement, dissemination, exhibition, or display of material harmful to minors ... to any unmarried person under the age of eighteen years”
- “[T]he possession of material harmful to minors with the intent to sell, allocate, advertise, disseminate, exhibit, or display such material ... at a newsstand or any other commercial establishment¹ which is open to persons under the age of eighteen years.”

(2) These provisions do not apply to “the spouse, parent, or legal guardian of the minor”

(3) “Material harmful to minors” is defined as material “which exploits, is devoted to or principally consists of, descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality for commercial gain, and when the trier of fact determines that each of the following applies:”

- “The material incites or appeals to or is designed to incite or appeal to the prurient, shameful, or morbid interest of minors.”
- “The material is offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors.”
- “The material taken as a whole lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors.”

(4) Commercial establishments² “shall require the individual purchasing the material harmful to minors to provide a driver's license, selective service card, military identification card, birth certificate, or other official form of

4. Did you review the entire item? If not, what sections did you review?

Summary of Concerns:

The book contains sexuality alternate genders ideologies. Parents should check out these books about sexual preference; This book should not be shelved in the children's section of the library. Small children should not be exposed to sexual material. The very pretext of this book relates to sexuality. The citizens of St. Tammany Parish do not subscribe to the AIA Bill of rights. We do not believe that children are sexual from birth. We believe that they are innocent and should be protected from confusion and predators. Therefore, if you think your child needs this book to understand themselves then find it in the adult section and check it out there.

6. Please state your reasons for making this recommendation. To what in the resource do you object? Please be specific: cite pages, scenes or sections. Consider commenting on the resource as a whole, as well as being specific on the matters which concern you.

The material is offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors.”

46 Right now, I'm dressed as a dude. ..."This fluid thing you have going is a thing of substance." 63 "You want me to find a country girl to have sex with?" 79 Out there, I might be straight or gay or bi...or anything. Out there, I choose. No one cares whether I wear jeans or dresses. It'll feel like jumping in a coffee shop to a song called "I Cannot Be Contained." 122 ...and both of them missed my sexuality or gender or both by a mile. 131 ...I was thinking the same thing when you let Woods put me on the guy's side... 152 Daddy, I'm Atreyu. Those words are hazy, but I do remember the words that followed: "Elizabeth, Atreyu is a boy. You are a girl." 163 But I am the girl-who-isn't-a-guy who lives perpetually on the guy's side. A brother, a dude, a... 172 "No," Dad asserts. "I'm asking if Davey Winters is sexually fluid." ...Sexually fluid? ..."...they all say your generation doesn't care to define sexuality." ..."There's a whole alphabet of letters. L-G-B-T-Q-I-A-B-C-D-" 178 That sex dream. My first sex dream. My first sex anything. And...I was a guy. And...I was with Janie Lee. ...Morning doesn't care about my sexuality. 179 According to "experts" I am starved for intimacy and have a "masculine mind-set." 180 ...had a sex dream where I was a guy. 184 "Thinking of yourself as boyish is one thing, but your friends assigned you a gender- without asking- and that flayed you. If I had to speculate, you're actually upset because you believe they should know you well enough to avoid such an error. Which isn't totally fair to you or them. Gender, sexuality, fluidity: those areas require stumbling around in the dark, feeling, and bumping into things..." 185 Maybe, when it comes to sexuality, my foregone conclusions are not all that foregone. Sometimes tomboys are gay. Sometimes they're not. I wonder which kind of tomboy I am or if there is room to not know until later. 186 "And do you think you're not overly excited about the Corn Dolly because you're wrestling with what it means to be a girl?" 277 "... 'Hey homos,' I heard them, but I knew I wasn't gay. I'd...well, I'd given it my best go, and I still liked girls. He liked girls too. And boys. And anyone who made him feel deeply..." 284 "Are you straight, B?" "I'm complicated," I answer 326 Two boys dancing. Two girls dancing. No one cares.

Profanity Count

Bitch

4

Fuck

4

Piss

3

Shit

11

***PINK IS FOR BOYS* by Robb Pearlman**

Running Press Kids, 2018

PUBLISHER'S SUMMARY

Pink is for boys . . . and girls . . . and everyone! This timely and beautiful picture book rethinks and reframes the stereotypical blue/pink gender binary and empowers kids-and their grown-ups-to express themselves in every color of the rainbow. Featuring a diverse group of relatable characters, *Pink Is for Boys* invites and encourages girls and boys to enjoy what they love to do, whether it's racing cars and playing baseball, or loving unicorns and dressing up. Vibrant illustrations help children learn and identify the myriad colors that surround them every day, from the orange of a popsicle, to the green of a grassy field, all the way up to the wonder of a multicolored rainbow. Parents and kids will delight in Robb Pearlman's sweet, simple script, as well as its powerful message: life is not color-coded.

LIBRARY OF CONGRESS SUBJECT HEADINGS

Pink
Colors
Color
Blue
Sex role

RECOMMENDED AGE GROUP: 4 to 8

HOLDINGS AND CIRCULATION

- 2 print copies at Madisonville and Mandeville/ Shelved in Juvenile Picture Books/ Call number E Pea

Purchased in October 2020. Available on shelf October 2020.

Total circulation on all print copies: 28

OTHER LIBRARY HOLDINGS

Held in 1050 libraries.

Jefferson Parish Library – Easy Books

Hancock County Library – Easy Readers

PATRON REQUEST/SUGGEST A PURCHASE: YES

REVIEWS

Kirkus Reviews (03/15/2018):

Pink, blue, yellow, and orange--all colors that are for boys, girls, popsicles, and unicorns. With simple text and vibrant illustrations of racially diverse children playing together, this book introduces 10 colors "for boys. And girls." For each new color, Pearlman shares an example of where to find the color: on sports uniforms, crowns, race cars, and teddy bears. Each color is presented in simple, repetitive text on verso (alternating which gender as specified first) with a vignette on recto and then on the next, full-bleed double-page spread. Kaban's illustrations of

children dancing, running, and flying on winged unicorns add an element of liveliness to keep the repetition from turning stale. Colored type that corresponds with the name of each introduced color encourages young readers to participate in the story. Although the book shares the message that "all colors are for everyone," the lead-up to this conclusion perpetuates the notion that gender is binary. The statement that "PINK [or blue, yellow, etc.] is for boys. And girls" leaves out anyone who might not fit those categories until the end. Even the examples for pink and blue reinforce stereotypical associations for the colors, since pink is for "bows on fancy clothes" and blue is for "uniforms on a team." For a book that aims at inclusiveness, this one misses the bull's-eye. In this picture book, pink may be for boys, but colors are still not quite for everyone. (Picture book. 3-5) COPYRIGHT(2018) Kirkus Reviews, ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

Publishers Weekly (03/26/2018):

To whom does a color belong? Pearlman (*Groundhog's Day Off*) invites readers to think about this question gender-agnostically. "Pink is for boys," he writes. "And girls. And bows on fancy clothes." A bow, of course, could be a snappy bow tie on a dress shirt, or a big bow on a party dress. Nine more colors follow, with the boy-and-girl order flipped each time ("Green is for girls. And boys.") But except for an evocative acknowledgement that everyone owns the color orange in the form of "popsicles dribbling down sticky chins," the narrative sags after the opening salvo against traditional binary thinking and opts for predictable pairings (yellow is for paper crowns, brown is for teddy bears, and boys and girls have access to both). Happily, Kaban's (*Old MacDonald Had a Truck*) illustrations, resembling 1960s animation, create an inviting, kinetic world. Her characters are bundles of mischievous, untrammelled energy, with mouths wide open in expressions of infectious and very toothy joy, as if using their inside voices--or paying attention to any admonition from an adult--is the furthest thing from their minds. Ages 4-8. (June) Copyright 2018 Publishers Weekly, LLC Used with permission.

Booklist (05/01/2018):

Grades 1-3 The message doesn't just drive but serves as the whole vehicle for this manifesto against linking gender with particular colors. Pearlman's opening lines Pink is for girls. And boys. And bows on fancy clothes. serve as the narrative template (more or less: sometimes boys come first) as he runs through a series of hues to insist that they're for everyone and everything. Kaban chimes in with illustrations that feature a carefully diverse group of overstimulated children posing in baseball uniforms, running gleefully outdoors, barreling along in soapbox racers, setting up a Popsicle stand, cuddling a huge teddy bear, and similar collective activities, before gathering them all for a final parade beneath a rainbow. Though a scene in which all the girls are in skirts and the boys in short pants is probably meant to depict a period costume party, it still muddies the thematic waters by reinforcing another kind of stereotype. Nonetheless, as a component in a gender-centric storytime (or, provocatively, opposite a title like *Pinkalicious*, 2006), this has a role. (Reprinted with permission of Booklist, copyright 2018, American Library Association.)

School Library Journal (06/01/2018):

PreS-Gr 1--It starts with "Pink is for boys. And girls. And bows on fancy clothes." So the structure of the book begins with a color for girls and boys on one page followed by another thing it's good for on the next. Each duo is its own vignette. Blue baseball uniforms, yellow crowns, green grass, orange Popsicles, purple unicorns ("because...unicorns!"), etc. It is all summed up on the second-to-last page, "And all the colors are for EVERYONE. Girls and boys." The illustrations are an integral part of the reading experience as they perfectly set the scene for each color be it on the ball field, race track, park, or fancy dance. They depict a recurring cast of characters; the kids are all joyously engaged within each scene. Kaban uses a mix of saturated color and white space to good effect and easily shows a myriad of activities. **VERDICT** A good choice for opening discussion about color stereotypes, but one that ultimately undermines its message by equating "boys and girls" with "everyone," and failing to recognize nonbinary children. An additional purchase for most libraries.--*Catherine Callegari, Gay-Kimball Library, Troy, NH* Copyright 2018 School Library Journal, LLC Used with permission.

Hornbook Guide to Children (07/01/2018):

"BLUE is for girls. And boys. / And uniforms on a team." Pearlman gives each of the introductory-crayon-box colors a gender-neutralizing treatment; in the corresponding illustrations, Kaban shows a girl and a boy happily interacting (e.g., playing baseball). The book is persuasive: by the time young readers hear "All the colors are for EVERYONE" at the end, that point should seem obvious. (Copyright 2018 by The Horn Book, Incorporated, Boston. All rights reserved.)

BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Robb Pearlman is the author of many books, including *Pink Is for Boys*, *Bob Ross and Peapod the Squirrel*, *Groundhog's Day Off*, *Passover Is Here*, and others. He grew up in New York City and now lives in New Jersey with his husband and puppy dog Oscar.

Eda Kaban has illustrated many popular books for children, including *Pirates Don't Go to Kindergarten*, *Even Superheroes Have Bad Days*, and Robb Pearlman's *Pink Is For Boys*. Born and raised in Turkey, Eda now lives in Oakland, California, with her husband, small son, and two Siamese cats.

AWARDS & LISTS

N/A

RESOURCES

Ingram Content Group, LLC

Books in Print 2.0

Worldcat

Individual library websites (for holdings info)



June 9th 2023

Ms. Connie Phillips

██████████
Mandeville, LA 70471

Dear Connie Phillips,

Thank you for submitting your Statement of Concern regarding *Pink is for Boys* by Robb Pearlman. Per the St. Tammany Library Board of Control's policies and procedures, this correspondence is to notify you of the recommendation of the library staff committee regarding the material referenced in your Statement of Concern.

Pursuant to La. R.S. § 14:91.11, it is unlawful for any St. Tammany Library to display, exhibit, disseminate, check-out, or otherwise provide any minor anything that constitutes material harmful to minors by law. However, materials are only deemed harmful to minors if **all** four (4) of the following apply beyond a reasonable doubt:

1. First, the material must exploit, be devoted to, or principally consist of "descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality." To be "descriptions or depictions of illicit or sexual immorality," the material must convey ultimate sex acts, masturbation or excretory functions, lewd exhibition of private areas, sadomasochistic abuse, sexual intimacy via physical acts of private areas, or stimulation of human genitalia.
2. Second, the material must incite, appeal to, or be designed to incite or appeal to "the prurient, shameful, or morbid interest of minors," i.e., a sexual response over and beyond those that would be characterized as normal for a minor.
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Importantly, the statute defines “minor” as “any person under the age of eighteen years.” Thus, the last three (3) elements above must be considered in that context, e.g., “The material taken as a whole [must] lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for [any person under the age of eighteen years].” Additionally, if materials that qualify as harmful to minors are not sold, distributed, advertised, or otherwise distributed to minors, it is permissible under the law to have them available for adults to do so, as long as the minors are unable to see, “as displayed,” descriptions or depictions of illicit sex or sexual immorality.”

Under this analysis, the staff committee determined that the material at issue in your Statement of Concern does not qualify as unlawfully harmful to minors.

1. The book contains no sex acts, no mention of sexuality, and there is no nudity.
2. The committee found that the text and images did not incite or appeal to the prurient interests of minors. The book does not appeal to sexual response because there is no sexuality portrayed.
3. The committee did not find the material to be offensive to the average adult applying contemporary community standards with respect to what is suitable for minors. The book does not discuss sexuality. The book does not discuss gender non-conformity. The children pictured in the book all wear traditionally gendered clothing. It only discusses gender in terms of appropriateness of colors. This book was purchased upon request of a member of our community. The two copies owned by STPL have had good circulation.
4. The committee believes the material taken as a whole does not lack serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value for minors. The book has educational (scientific) value as a color concept book. The book has artistic value with beautiful illustrations that show the variety of shades and hues of the color spectrum.

The committee also reviewed the book in light of the other concerns you expressed outside of La. R.S. § 14:91.11. The committee did not find a “pretext of sexuality or alternative gender ideology” as the book depicts only boys and girls all wearing traditionally appropriate clothing. The page numbers, quotes, and profanity count you listed in the Statement of Concern are not found in this book. The committee’s opinion is that the book does not need to be restricted. It is appropriate in the picture book section.

While we recognize that some may find the material in question not suitable for their family, that alone does not render it unlawful and does not warrant censoring the public at large from accessing and/or checking out the material. Parents are the ultimate deciders of which books and media their children will consume. At the same time, we do acknowledge that

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this book may not be in line with the values of all families in the Parish. The purchase of any item by the St. Tammany Parish Library is not an affirmation of the content of the item, and each family in our Parish has the right and responsibility to make decisions regarding what their own children will read or hear.

The committee's report and recommendation will be made available to the St. Tammany Library Control Board, which shall make the ultimate determination based thereupon at the next regularly scheduled meeting on June 28th 2023, at 9:30 am where it will be on the agenda. At that meeting, you will have an opportunity to address the Board for 5 minutes.

Regardless of the outcome, we hope you will recognize the important role that a public library plays in a free and open democratic society as a neutral resource for everyone.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kelly LaRocca".

Kelly LaRocca, Director

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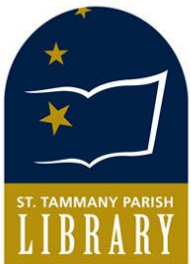
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**St. Tammany Parish Library Board of Control
Extension of time to allow for procedural due process of undecided Statements of Concern received
since March 2023**

June 28th, 2023

BE IT RESOLVED that the St. Tammany Parish Library Board of Control grants a waiver of the 45-day time limit for response to Pending statements of concern received since March 2023. The response time is extended to 120 days from the date of this resolution.

WHEREAS, the St. Tammany Parish Library has received statements of concern on 9 titles since March of 2023 and

WHEREAS, reconsideration committee recommendations shall be mailed to complainants and copied to the Library Board of Control on a rolling basis,

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, The Library Board of Control grants this waiver of time.

THIS RESOLUTION HAVING BEEN SUBMITTED TO A VOTE, THE VOTE THEREON WAS AS FOLLOWS:

Moved for adoption by _____ and seconded by _____,

YEAS:

NAYS:

ABSENT:

ABSTAIN:

AND THIS RESOLUTION WAS DECLARED DULY ADOPTED ON THIS DAY, THE 28th DAY OF JUNE 2023, AT A MEETING OF THE ST. TAMMANY PARISH LIBRARY BOARD OF CONTROL, A QUORUM OF THE MEMBERSHIP BEING PRESENT.

Rebecca Taylor, Board President

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