

# Why spoil a great idea? Remove **GEORGE** from Oregon Battle Of Books

There is one controversial book on OBOB's list this year for the 3rd-5th grade students (8–11 year olds). A work of fiction, *George*, by Alex Gino tells a story about a young boy who decides he wants to change his sex from a boy to a girl.

"A boy could become a girl. She [George] had since read on the Internet that you could take girl hormones that would change your body, and you could get a bunch of different surgeries if you wanted them... This was called transitioning. You could even start before you were eighteen with pills called androgen blockers that stopped the boy hormones already inside you, from turning your body into a man's."

## **Why the controversy?**

Some might argue the book is just "raising awareness" for gender dysphoria. Not so, because it is on a children's reading list, it clearly endorses transgenderism for children to children.

## **Promotes risky medical procedures for minors without parental involvement.**

Even more alarming, *George* promotes risky health data. A recent journal publication from a Washington University pediatric endocrinologist and two Johns Hopkins Medical School psychiatrists called hormone therapy in children "a drastic and experimental measure."

The FDA has not approved pediatric hormone blocking, a relatively new practice, first introduced in the United States in 2007. Giving cross-sex hormones, like estrogen to a boy is also not FDA-approved.

Oregon Law signed by Kate Brown, restricts parents' rights to seek counseling for minor children to help them with sexual orientation confusion or gender dysphoria (affirming biological sex), thus preventing a child from the health and safety dangers most commonly associated with this confusion. Oregon HB 2307 (2015) Amended ORS 675.300

Proponents for transgender medical treatment claim, without it kids would commit suicide, however individuals who have had transition surgery are 19 times more likely to die by suicide. Doctors often promise the effects of hormone blockers are fully reversible, however little scientific evidence shows this. Most kids who interfere with "nature's course" end up with irreversible health issues which can include lung damage, heart damage, sterilization, cancer, drug abuse, depression, and suicide.

Although doctors across the spectrum confirm 80 to 95% of children diagnosed with gender dysphoria, when allowed to develop normally, eventually identify with their biological sex, the Oregon Health Evidence Review Commission (HERC), an unelected, unaccountable committee appointed by Governor John Kitzhaber, voted 8-2 to allow children as young as 15 yrs. to undergo transgender conditioning, including hormone replacement and genital mutilation without regard for the possible long term consequences. Students age 15+ can request referrals through local School Based Health Clinics.

Treatment covered by the Oregon Health Authority is available now for minors at taxpayer expense, without knowledge or permission from parents, interfering with parental rights as primary decision-maker for their child's health and education.

## **Not age appropriate.**

*George* is not age appropriate. Most parents and responsible adults would agree passages featured in *George* about pornography, male genitalia, and sex change surgery, are not appropriate for the average 8-year-old.

## **Where is local input from parents?**

So, how did this book end up on the Oregon Battle of the Books (OBOB) list?

The national organization recommends a list of titles. Most BOB chapters nationwide make their own lists. Oregon draws on a statewide group of volunteer librarians to curate the state's list. They accept reader nominations for the list, and the selection committee considers whether nominated titles meet the organization's criteria.

(1) "is an appropriate reading level for 3-5th grade;"

(2) "adds diversity of character, plot, perspective, and genre" to the OBOB list; and

(3) "is an award winning book that has high-quality writing and is well-reviewed."

According to OBOB's selection chair Courtney Snyder, "There was not sufficient feedback to cause concern for the committee to exclude the book (GEORGE) from the list." According to the handbook, once a title is on the list, it cannot be removed.

Who are the members of the selection committee? Are they elected? When and how did they ask for feedback? Why were parents not brought into the discussion? Finally, who says a book on the list, if found to be wrong for any reason, cannot be pulled? This is not censorship, as the book is readily available in local libraries and through booksellers.

One would think a committee of this sort would make every effort to keep the list acceptable to all families, right? Public schools are for **ALL** children and families. There are books which are not allowed on the list because one word has been deemed "offensive" to a minority group of people. How is this book so easily defended, when there are numerous statements regarding questionable medical procedures, and content leading young children to question their biological sex?

Now, because of the heavy hand of OBOB, local school districts are choosing to opt out of the program completely because of this controversial book. What a shame!

### **Remove George from the OBOB list.**

Parents Rights' laws protect parents' responsibility to be the primary provider of the upbringing of their children. More than five Supreme Court Decisions establish these rights. As recent as 2000 they ruled, "[O]ur constitution long ago rejected any notion that a child is a mere creature of the State and, on the contrary, asserted that *parents have the right coupled with the high duty* to recognize and prepare [their children] for additional obligations."

-*Troxel v. Granville (2000)*

Parents Rights In Education takes exception to this, advocating for local control in these decisions, not some obscure statewide committee of librarians. George should be removed from the list so all Oregon 3-5th graders can participate in Battle of the Books.

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