

# Group Reconsideration Recommendation

## Book Information

<b>Title</b>	<b>Gender Queer</b>
<b>Author</b>	<b>Maia Kobabe</b>
<b>Publication Year</b>	<b>2019</b>

ALA's [Library Bill of Rights](#) and the [Freedom to Read Statement](#)

### Controversial Materials

- Serve every single student; does not promote one point of view over another
- Cannot reject and remove a resource because an individual or a group has found the material objectionable
- Provide access to material that may be controversial to some patrons, while also providing a process to request reconsideration

### Resources consulted (include policies, articles, reviews etc.)

<p><b>Selection Quality Criteria</b></p> <p>This book meets these criteria from the Selection Policy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and enrich the curriculum and/or students' personal interests, extracurricular activities, and learning</li> <li>• Meet high standards in literary, artistic, and aesthetic quality; technical aspects; and physical format</li> <li>• Be appropriate for the subject area and for the age, emotional development, ability level, learning styles, and social, emotional, and intellectual development of the students for whom the materials are selected</li> <li>• Incorporate accurate and authentic factual content from authoritative sources</li> <li>• Earn favorable reviews in standard reviewing sources and/or favorable recommendations based on preview and examination of materials by professional personnel</li> <li>• Nominated and/or received awards and honorable mentions</li> <li>• Represent differing viewpoints on controversial issues*</li> <li>• Demonstrate physical format, appearance, and durability suitable to their intended use</li> <li>• Balance gaps in the collection utilizing collection analysis data</li> <li>• Balance cost with need</li> </ul>
<p><b>Awards</b></p>	<p>Alex Award, 2020 Stonewall Book Awards, Honor Book, 2020</p>
<p><b>Reviews</b></p>	<p><i>Publishers Weekly (February 25, 2019)</i></p> <p>This heartfelt graphic memoir relates, with sometimes painful honesty, the experience of growing up non-gender-conforming. From a very young age, Kobabe is unsure whether to claim a lesbian/gay, bisexual, or even transgender identity: "I don't want to be a girl. I don't want to be a boy either. I just want to be myself." Kobabe comes of age having to navigate expressions of identity such as clothing and haircuts, with fraught attempts at romantic and sexual entanglements. Eventually, Kobabe's supportive sister concludes: "I think you're a genderless</p>

	<p>person." (Kobabe: "She knew before I did.") Kobabe continues to explore the challenges of a nonbinary identity, including the use of alternate pronouns (in Kobabe's case, e/em/eir), the trauma of cervical exams, refuting misplaced concerns from a loving relative who believes "female to male" transgenderism could be rooted in a form of misogyny, and learning that the term autoandrophilia actually applies "for me." Intermixed are lighthearted episodes relating Kobabe's devotion to LGBTQ-inspired Lord of the Rings fan fiction and hero worship of flamboyant ice-skating champion Johnny Weir. Kobabe is a straightforward cartoonist who uses the medium skillfully (if not particularly stylishly), incorporating ample cheery colors, with a script that's refreshingly smooth and non didactic for the topic. This entertaining memoir-as-guide holds crossover appeal for mature teens (with a note there's some sexually explicit content) and is sure to spark valuable discussions at home and in classrooms. (May.) © Copyright PWxyz, LLC. All rights reserved.</p> <p><i>School Library Journal (July 1, 2019)</i></p> <p>Gr 9 Up-Kobabe, who uses the pronouns e, em, and eir, was assigned female at birth but never felt that this designation fit. As e grew up, e learned about the spectrum of gender designations and settled on nonbinary as the best descriptor. E came out to eir family as nonbinary and asexual and found that eir family supported em however e identified. In this memoir, Kobabe chronicles eir life from the time e was very young through eir coming of age and adulthood. E describes common situations from the perspective of someone who is asexual and nonbinary: starting a new school, getting eir period, dating, attending college. The muted earth tones and calm blues match the hopeful tone and measured pacing. Matter-of-fact descriptions of gynecological exams and the use of sex toys will be enlightening for those who may not have access to this information elsewhere. VERDICT: A book to be savored rather than devoured, this memoir will resonate with teens, especially fans of Alison Bechdel's Fun Home and Mason Deaver's I Wish You All the Best. It's also a great resource for those who identify as nonbinary or asexual as well as for those who know someone who identifies that way and wish to better understand.-Jenni Frencham, Indiana University, Bloomington © Copyright 2019. Library Journals LLC, a wholly owned subsidiary of Media Source, Inc. No redistribution permitted.</p>
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**Group Recommendation**

**Date of Review:** 11/15/21

**Have all members of the committee read the material entirely? If not, why?**

Yes

**Recommend for Following Collections:**

- K-5:** No
- 6-7:** No
- 8-9:** No
- 10-12:** No

## **Justification and comments (include majority and minority positions):**

After careful and thoughtful review and discussion of this title in its entirety, the committee decided to remove the book from all collections.

Our recommendation comes after review and discussion of several selection criteria. This title represents different viewpoints on controversial issues in a format that allows a variety of reading levels to access the information. It also received the Alex Award, which honors books written for adults that have special appeal to young adults, ages 12 through 18. This book was professionally reviewed as an adult piece of literature and was purchased as a set with other Battle of the Books titles. The Battle of the Books is a state-wide voluntary extra-curricular activity that we have participated in for several years.

It is important to remember that as a part of the reconsideration process, the entirety of the work must be considered, not just an excerpt pulled from the whole. In regard to pornography and obscenity, The **U.S. Supreme Court case of Miller vs. California** states:

*First, the average person, applying contemporary community standards, must find that the work, taken as a whole, appeals to prurient interests; second, that it depicts or describes, in a patently offensive way, sexual conduct as defined by state law; and third, that the work, taken as a whole, lacks serious literary, artistic, political, or scientific value.*

Although this book meets criteria of the selection policy, this particular book takes some different considerations. First, while in no way pornographic, the explicit visual and graphic nature of the graphic novel overshadowed the message to the reader, thus reducing the literary value as a whole. Often in books, people can skip sections or create their own images within their personal maturity level. In this case, however, the graphic images are already provided for the reader by the author and may not match a student's personal maturity level. Additionally, the images are impossible to skip for self moderation. Finally, this particular book was written for and reviewed professionally for adults.

With the combination of these factors, we have made the determination to not recommend this title in our district.

**Reviewing Committee:** A District Administrator and District Certified Teacher Librarians

***Note: This document is forwarded to***