

Hello my name is Ellie Redig a 17-year-old queer woman from Belfield North Dakota and I see a huge issue with the proposed bill today. First and foremost, I would like to say I am very passionate about this subject and what it entails so if I come across as rude that is not and will never be my intention and second, I am very knowledgeable on how to speak in a professional setting due to being in student congress and debating bills just like this one. I would first like to clarify the definition of a public library. According to Merriam Webster dictionary a public library is defined as a nonprofit library maintained for public use and usually supported in whole or in part by local taxes. The public library manifesto of 1994 goes on to state that a public library is a local center of information, making all kinds of knowledge and information readily available to all its users. The services of a public library are provided on the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status. Now that we have knowledge of what a library should entail I can now move onto my main points of discussion. Which will include the topic of gender dysphoria, the library bill of rights, and the childhood effects of being exposed to homosexuality.

Moving on, the topic of gender dysphoria was brought up many times throughout the articles I read regarding this topic and I wanted to bring this up because the facts I will use will prove that the books have nothing to do with gender dysphoria. I would again like to bring up the definition of a word this time being gender dysphoria. According to the Mayo Clinic gender dysphoria is the feeling of discomfort or distress that might occur in people whose gender identity differs from their sex assigned at birth or sex-related physical characteristics. Transgender and gender-diverse people might experience gender dysphoria at some point in their lives. However, some transgender and gender-diverse people feel at ease with their bodies, with or without medical intervention. The diagnosis was created to help people with gender dysphoria get access to necessary health care. According to an article by e medicine the prevalence of gender dysphoria is 0.005 to 0.0014 percent in males and 0.002 to 0.003 percent in females. According to an article from NHS the exact cause of gender dysphoria is unclear. Gender development is complex and there are still things that are not known or fully understood. Gender dysphoria is not related to sexual orientation. People with gender dysphoria may still have a different sexual orientation. I would like to bring up one more point on gender dysphoria according to the Heritage Foundation social media may have effect of the promotion of transsexual lifestyles. Therefore, it's not the books that are of concern it's other's views on the media. Banning or having books has no relevance with gender dysphoria.

The next topic of discussion I would like to bring up is the library bill of rights. The library bill of rights goes on to state that libraries should provide materials and information presenting all points of view on current and historical issues. Material should not be proscribed or removed because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval. To break this down it means that libraries should provide material of all viewpoints even if the viewpoints are not equally represented. No material should be removed because the public disagrees with the manner of the material. This statement from the library bill of rights can prove that we cannot go through with the banning of the books.

The final point of discussion is the childhood effects of being exposed to homosexuality. Many children that may feel different may try to suppress these feelings to meet societal expectations, to fit in or even to avoid upsetting their family. In some cases, children and teens might get overwhelmed by all these feelings, which can and will increase the risk for depression, anxiety and other mental health issues. Now that is clarified I would like to speak straight from my heart. The banning of LGBTQ would simply be detrimental to our youth and those who are going through the process of figuring out who they are. Speaking from experience I always knew I was different but I didn't understand how until I saw a same sex couple shown in a book or on social media. I've never felt more seen than knowing people like me are being shown and respected in a public setting. It absolutely breaks that children may only get to see families that are "normal" and may never get to see how their life is. These children may grow up with narrative that their family is wrong and not normal because they never see a depiction of their family.

In conclusion it is not the libraries job to ban material you don't want to see but it is their job to have material of all points of view. Thank you for your time, genuinely hope that I changed even one person's view on this topic.