

**Statement by Campbell County Library Director Terri Lesley  
regarding the book  
“Trans Mission: My Quest to a Beard” by Alex Bertie**

**Campbell County Library Board meeting  
December 20, 2021**

I can review the analysis of the book.

These are some basic statements. I know you have heard them before, but just for the record on this particular book: Our collection development policy states that a singular obligation of a public library is to reflect within its collection differing points of view on controversial or debatable subjects.

And so, while you have every right to not read or check out any individual book, the inclusion of this title in a diverse collection is intended to meet a wide variety of reading interests. Additionally, young adult non-fiction books about controversial topics serve the educational research needs of secondary students.

This book is written as an informal resource for adolescents. Transferring it would be a form of censoring it. Taking it out of the library would also be a form of censoring the book. In answer to concerns that youth may check out this title, as we’ve discussed before, parents do have the ability to review what their children are checking out, can link to a library card and be able to monitor what the check-outs are.

We do believe the parents do have a responsibility for their children.

The next point is while the Campbell County Public Library strives to have balanced collections that present all perspectives of human experience, no individual book can be expected to be balanced, and this title is based on the life experiences of this author, and expresses the author’s unique perspective. The title is reviewed by several professional library journals: *Publishers Weekly*, *Booklist*, *School Library Journal*. A recommendation grade 7-12, ages 13 and up, which is consistent with our target audience of the young adult non-fiction collection.

It’s currently shelved in YA [Young Adult] non-fiction. There are 1,200 other books. There are other books that somebody could check out. We’ve talked about where these books are in Wyoming systems and in the region.

We know that this author has a significant YouTube following. The book does expand on this work from YouTube and is written as an informational resource about gender dysphoria and the author’s experience in transitioning from female to male.

It’s informational. Information about the transition process is based on the author’s personal experience and supported by research. The tone is factual, though slightly informal to appeal better to a teen audience.

I know you have expressed concerns about the author’s description of being unhappy with their body, and stated that they need counseling, and this is their parents’ job to address. The author writes that they did actually seek help from a school counselor, which led to the diagnosis of gender dysphoria and their eventual transition. In her chapter, the author’s mother writes about

not knowing why her son was so unhappy and about the lack of information about gender dysphoria available to parents. Therefore, the author did seek counseling. But his parents were not able to address the issue. He does not encourage teens to self-diagnose their own dysphoria. There may be people who would like to learn about this to help their own kids, and this is why we have a public library, that we have these books on the shelf.

You've expressed concern about encouraging sex to young people under 18, not an adult until 18 or 20, is not acceptable. The book is a resource about gender dysphoria and the transgender experience, which does not necessarily include sexual encounters. All references to the author's sexual preferences and experiences are discreet. The whole intent of the work, judging from the tone, textual information, and illustrations, is to inform and educate about the transgender experience. The author also writes about transphobia and discrimination against transgender people, and does not ignore the difficulties of being transgender.

The intent of the work is not to encourage experimentation, but to support individuals who are themselves experiencing gender dysphoria and may be considering gender transition.

My follow-up work, I've looked through our collection development policy, and I felt like the book did meet the criteria of our collection development policy, so I did support the decision of the manager of the department.