

LBTQ BOOKS,
CONTINUED

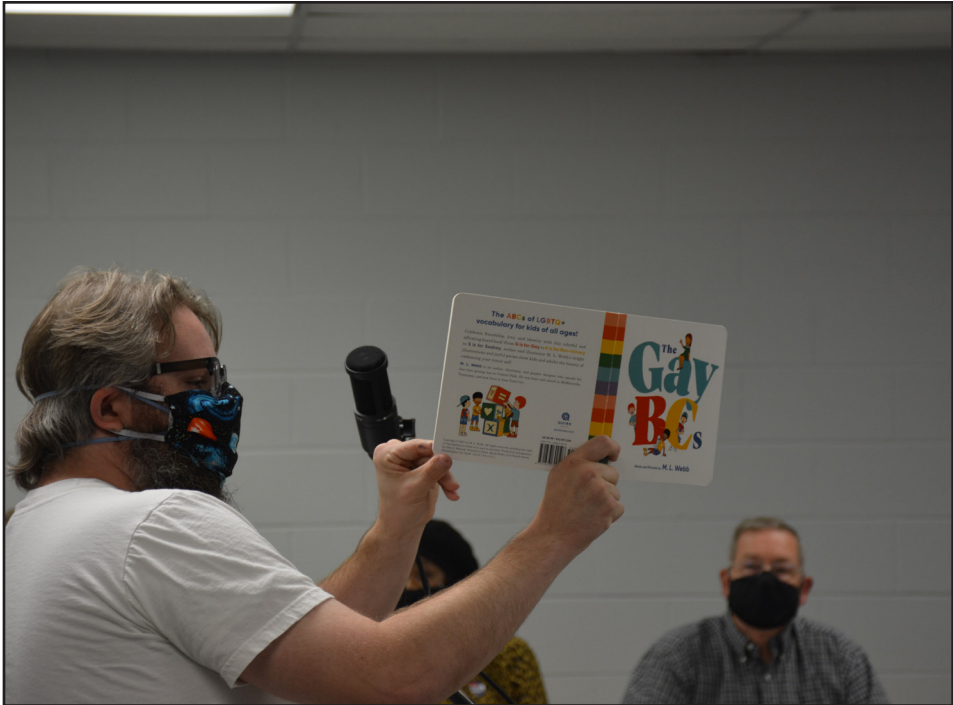
She went on to equate dinosaur books to LGBTQ books, and compared the higher dinosaur book checkout rate to the checkout rate on LGBTQ books. “There are topics that we can give kids that are important to them,” Escue said. A-State students Rebecca Robinson and Shannon Johnson voiced their opinions at the meeting. Both asked the board to not censor these books. “These books are not going to make your children gay,” Robinson said. “Bottom line, they are going to make them understand other perspectives, families and be accepting of others.” Johnson approached the subject with an open perspective. “I am not standing here to fully chastise or point my fingers,” she said. “I truly regret this, but I used to be on the opposite side from where I stand today. I was a 12-year-old telling other 12-year-olds that they were going to hell if they ended up loving the people they love. I was spreading hate to people who were just trying to love. To this very day I feel awful for how I treated some of my friends and some of my own family. People that I claimed to love, but obviously my words didn’t show that. Some of the things I wish I could take back, but I can’t.” Johnson compiled a list of

three reasons why taking away these books for “censorship” to “protect” the children will only hurt them more. Number one: children will try to find ways to read it anyways then hide it from you, which will cause resentment. Number two: your children will grow up and develop their own opinions, and they will have to live with the burden of things they said. Number three: your children will grow up with that hate in their heart. A-State students banded together and showed their support for the issue. Arkansas Young Democrats Director of The First Congressional District and senior political science and music education major, Dean MacDonald, passed out red and green cards to be raised during the meetings. Students raised the green cards when they agreed with what the speaker was saying, and the red cards to disagree with the speaker. A sea of cards could be seen going up across the room during the speeches. Nichols made three motions to the board regarding books mentioned by speakers. He first moved to transfer the book “It’s Perfectly Normal” to the adult section because it is “defrauding” and doing harm to the children. Second, he moved to transfer the book “Gender Queer” to the A-State holdings.

Nichols called this book] offensive. Third, Nichols moved to transfer “L8r, G8r” from the teen section and to the adult section due to its references of oral sex. All three motions failed on the ground of no second. People from the crowd began shouting comments such as, “we need a new board” and “disappointing,” Kaila Henick, a speaker at the meeting, threatened legal action towards the board. “I have been in contact with a Craighead County judge. We are going to take care of this. Also, since you guys are failing to protect our children, I am going to go seek out a lawyer,” she said. Following the meeting, Henick posted a Facebook live video calling for everyone to “cancel your library cards and please do not take your children to the Craighead County public library due to safety reasons.” Nichols offered attendees a DVD titled, “In His Image: Delighting in God’s Plan for Gender and Sexuality,” as they left the meeting. The meeting ended in no final decision on the matter of censorship. Many people have now voiced their opinion on the subject and are calling on the board to make a decision. The next meeting will be held on Dec. 13. The time has not yet been announced.



Photos by Jonathan Schaufler | News Editor
Library board meeting attendee holds up red card to indicate disagreement with speaker Kaila Henick.



Steven Summers reading the “Gay B Cs” to the library board.



Library director David Eckert holding up one of the books being debated for needed censorship.



A-State students Rebecca Robinson (left) and Shannon Johnson (right) show support for each other during their speeches.

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