



[Girls on the Verge](#) by Sharon Biggs Waller

Henry Holt Books for Young Readers, Macmillan Children's Publishing Group, 2019

ISBN: 9781250233745 (TP)

*Age Range: 14-18

Grade Range: 9 and up (Recommended by *School Library Journal*)

BOOK SYNOPSIS

Girls on the Verge is an incredibly timely novel about a woman's right to choose. Sharon Biggs Waller brings to life a narrative that has to continue to fight for its right to be told, and honored.

Camille couldn't be having a better summer—she kills it as Ophelia in her community theater's production of *Hamlet*, catches the eye of the cutest boy in the play, and nabs a spot in a prestigious theater program. But on the very night she learns she got into the program, she also finds out she's pregnant. She definitely can't tell her parents. And her best friend Bea doesn't agree with the decision Camille has made.

Camille is forced to try to solve her problem alone...and the system is very much working against her. At her most vulnerable, Camille reaches out to Annabelle Ponsonby, a girl she only barely knows from the theater. Happily, Annabelle agrees to drive her wherever she needs to go. And in a last minute change of heart, Bea decides to come with.

Over the course of more than a thousand miles, friendships will be tested and dreams will be challenged. But ultimately, the girls will realize that friends are the real heroes in every story.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

"Absolutely essential, as is the underlying message that girls take care of each other when no one else will."
—Booklist, **Starred Review**

"[C]ompelling... This title offers realistic viewpoints on teenage pregnancy, along with what it is like to have the right to choose, wanting that right, and living knowing that you will be judged for having exercised it." —[School Library Journal](#), **Starred Review**

"Highly informative, filled with frank, detailed descriptions of our nation's restrictions on reproductive health as well as the emotional and physical experiences of abortion. A *Forever*-esque story for reproductive justice, this is a timely and vital book." —[Kirkus Reviews](#)

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AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

A Bank Street Books' Best Books of the Year
A Chicago Public Library Best Book of 2019 Selection
A Cosmopolitan's Books You Won't Be Able to Put Down in 2019 Selection
A Bustle's 37 New Books...To Add To Your Reading List Selection
An American Library Association "Rise List" Selection
Shortlisted for the 2020 Indiana Authors Award

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

- [School Library Journal Teen Librarian Toolbox Review](#)
- [TeachingBooks.net Resources](#)

AUTHOR STATEMENT (OPTIONAL)

"I wrote *Girls on the Verge* in 2017 when I assumed laws were as ominous as they could get for teens' reproductive rights. I wrote the book to sound an alarm, but as we know, rights for girls, women, and uterus-having people have since been stripped away. I had a feeling that my book would be banned and I wasn't wrong after Knoxville County in Tennessee recently pulled *Girls on the Verge* from school libraries along with 47 other books because it broke the states "obscenity laws." It's also been challenged in Florida and Texas.

I revised *Girls on the Verge* for the paperback edition when Roe V Wade was overturned. Jane's Due Process, an organization that helps Texas teens find lawyers to represent them in court to bypass parental permission for abortions, featured heavily in my book. I was so worried about the vigilante justice laws that I changed the name of the organization to a fictitious one in the book in order to protect them from lawsuits. (Ironically, I had to censor my own book.)

Book banning has become an unfortunate reality in our country, in particular with young adult literature. The number one banned book in the country is the teen graphic memoir, *Gender Queer* by Maia Kobabe. I'm not sure what the future looks like for book banning, but I cannot imagine it will get better anytime soon. As I said, I wrote *Girls on the Verge* to sound an alarm, but I think the alarm will have to get louder for all books everywhere."

*A NOTE ON AGE RANGES

A publisher-suggested age range covers the gamut of readers that publishers envision using the book, whether for independent reading, family sharing, group study, or in other ways. Educators have the best sense of the appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.

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