



***My Body, My Choice: The Fight for Abortion Rights* by Robin Stevenson**

Orca Book Publishers, 2019

9781459817128 (paperback)

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BOOK SYNOPSIS

Abortion is one of the most common of all medical procedures. But it is still stigmatized, and all too often people do not feel they can talk about their experiences.

Making abortion illegal or hard to access doesn't make it any less common; it just makes it dangerous. Around the world, tens of thousands of women die from unsafe abortions every year.

People who support abortion rights have been fighting hard to create a world in which the right to access safe and legal abortion services is guaranteed. The opposition to this has been intense and sometimes violent, and victories have been hard won.

The long fight for abortion rights is being picked up by a new generation of courageous, creative and passionate activists. This book is about the history, and the future, of that fight.

REVIEWS AND PRAISE

★ "Exceptional entry in the Orca Issues series...With impeccable research, statistics, a resource list, and thorough source notes, this illuminating resource should be required reading for teens of every gender." – *Booklist*, starred review

★ "Well-researched and visually appealing, this is a boon for those seeking clear, comprehensive information from the perspective of the reproductive rights movement." – *Kirkus Reviews*, starred review

"A magnificent and thoughtful examination of the fight for abortion rights in Canada, the United States, and around the world. Through often untold histories, *My Body My Choice* details tactics activists

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employed to fight for abortion rights, explains how race and class are barriers to access—historically and today—and the impact youth activists are making today. *My Body My Choice* also explains the basics of reproductive health in an affirming, non-stigmatizing, and digestible way for young readers. *My Body My Choice* is the book I wish I had as a teen, before, during, and after my abortion. I know I would have felt less alone and more empowered with it in hand." – Renee Bracey Sherman, writer, abortion storyteller, and reproductive justice activist

"I would have been a much wiser person had I been able to read this book twenty-five years ago. Robin Stevenson conveys the reality of abortion and the true stories of people—all kinds of people—who have them. In sharing the inspiring history of the fight for abortion rights, she makes it clear how much those rights matter." – Kerry Clare, National Magazine Award–nominated writer and editor

"For a heavy topic, the book is both arrestingly visual and dynamic in tone...Thoroughly researched and thought provoking, offering in-depth information balanced with first-person accounts, including stories of women who have had abortions themselves." – *Quill & Quire*

"Youth will be armed with concrete tips and advice on how they can help fight against abortion stigma and support their right and others' right to make this important decision for themselves. This comprehensive, empowering, and accessible resource will be of great use to teens interested in learning more about reproductive rights either for school or for personal knowledge." – *School Library Journal*

"As fascinating as it is significant...Readers will finish this book with a broad comprehension of what abortion means and why it matters...*My Body My Choice* needs to be in every secondary school library and every teen section across the country...But young people need good information, and young people who care about their futures need to understand this history. Highly recommended." – *Resource Links*

AWARDS AND ACCOLADES

- Kirkus Reviews Best Teens & Young Adult Nonfiction, commended, 2019
- Ontario Library association (OLA) Best Bets, commended, 2019
- CCBC Best Books for Kids & Teens, starred selection, commended, 2019
- School Library Journal (SLJ) Best Books - Nonfiction, commended, 2019
- BC and Yukon Book Prizes - Sheila A. Egoff Children's Literature Prize, winner, 2020
- Bank Street College of Education Children's Book Committee Best Children's Books of the Year, commended, 2020

MEDIA AND RESOURCES

Add link to discussion guide, author interviews, blog posts, or any additional resources that provide useful context about the book.

RESPONSE TO CHALLENGES

Cheyenne, Wyoming 2021 – After discovering several books promoting sex-positivity and LGBTQIA+ issues, conservative parents began submitting reconsideration forms to the Campbell County Public Library. *My Body My Choice: The Fight for Abortion Rights* is under review by the library committee to determine whether it will be retained or removed from the library. —from Cynthia Varady's [book blog](#)

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Additional reading: Library makes progress on 35 book reconsideration.

<https://county17.com/2021/10/04/library-makes-progress-on-35-book-reconsiderations/>

Campbell County Public Library Facebook Page.

https://www.facebook.com/story.php?story_fbid=4622803787744021&id=125975157426929

Campbell County officials abet bullies in battle of radicals v. librarians. <https://wyofile.com/campbell-county-officials-abet-bullies-in-battle-of-radicals-v-librarians/>

Wyoming librarians under fire for books about sex, LGBTQ issues. <https://www.nbcnews.com/nbc-out/out-news/wyoming-librarians-under-fire-books-about-sex-lgbtq-issues-n1280704>

Wyoming librarians under fire for books about sex, LGBTQ. <https://apnews.com/article/entertainment-lifestyle-business-wyoming-nonfiction-22b0a682cb5ba95de8eb3975d101228c>

CAMPBELL COUNTY COMMISSION. CAMPBELL COUNTY COMMISSIONERS 7/07/2021 AGENDA. WEDNESDAY, JULY 7, 2021. 9:00 AM.

<https://play.champds.com/gillettewy/event/117?fbclid=IwAR18s3w0XBuAb18aCqKRDwFTclyzxqDe-Z8Z5-ekEKxB9TOhksh3jufResM>

Gillette grapples with anti-LGBTQ bigotry. <https://wyofile.com/gillette-grapples-with-anti-lgbtq-bigotry/>

Librarians in Wyoming face criminal ‘obscenity’ charges for stocking LGBT+ books in teen sections.

<https://www.pinknews.co.uk/2021/10/05/wyoming-campbell-county-library-lgbt-books/>

LIBRARIANS FACE POSSIBLE CHARGES FOR CARRYING SEX EDUCATION BOOKS.

<https://bookriot.com/campbell-country-library-challenges/>

“Book challenges cause tremendous pain: I’ll never forget the anguish in many of the emails I received from LGBTQ+ people and their allies in Wheaton. I discovered that while some people will attempt to censor books like mine, far more people support LGBTQ+ rights and social justice. We cannot—as authors, teachers or librarians—give too much power to a small group of vocal bigots. And I learned that an attempt to censor, if challenged publicly, can lead to positive change. People who believe in equality and inclusion may be moved to act when bigotry in their community suddenly becomes more visible.

LGBTQ+ books are the most often challenged. In 2019, eight of the 10 books on the ALA’s most challenged book list had LGBTQ+ content. But they are only the tip of the iceberg: the homophobia and transphobia that leads to these challenges are there, just below the surface, all the time. For every time a book is contested in a library, how many libraries opt to avoid controversy by not shelving it? For every cancelled visit, how many schools simply choose not to invite queer authors and authors of books with queer content? This [soft censorship](#) is both insidious and commonplace.

LGBTQ+ books are much needed, and young people in conservative, homophobic, transphobic communities—the communities most likely to restrict access—may need them most of all. My experience in Illinois showed me that even in these communities, there is enormous support for inclusion. We need to find ways to mobilize that support. Instead of just responding when books are challenged, we need to take the initiative to make sure that our kids’ teachers, principals and school boards know that we want our children to learn about the world in a way that includes LGBTQ+ people. We need to make it clear that we expect to see queer people and families represented on library shelves and in classrooms. And we need to support, include and promote LGBTQ+ books and authors all the time—not just when they are challenged.” —Robin Stevenson in a Freedom to Read Week [article](#)

*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

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appropriate age range for the diverse learners they work with and understand these ranges vary depending on a book's intended use.