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# The Poet X

on March 25, 2023

To the Editor:

The Poet X is a book that contains a sexually charged poem about masturbation, and it is being taught inside an 8th grade English class at ORR Junior High School. The kids in class are only 13-14. What on earth is going on??

The same book also contains a passage in which the main character desecrates the Eucharist inside a Catholic church, a grave offense in the Catholic faith. Would ORR ever allow a book that blasphemes the Jewish, Muslim, or Hindu faith? No, it wouldn't. And rightfully so.

And now over the objections from parents to a 240-page "graphic novel" with explicit illustrations of sex acts and sex toys, the so-called "Standards Committee" of the ORR School Committee has publicly declared that the library book Gender Queer is both "valuable" and "beneficial" for our students. "Valuable" and "beneficial." Let that sink in.

We have about 3,500 years of the human written word to choose from and only a tiny window of time to expose our kids to the greatness that literature has to offer. Instead, the ORR school district is flinging at our students sexually explicit and demeaning books that suggest that there is somehow virtue in a life immersed in sex toys, hookups on dating apps, self-loathing, sexual dysfunction, and rejecting God.

Let me be clear again: I don't hate anyone, as defenders of these books like to claim. My message is that Mattapoisett, Marion, and Rochester are wonderful towns, and we are better than this crud being heaped upon our kids. What has evolved in our schools over the past couple of years is heinous.

And as a teacher myself for over 20 years, I don't say it lightly when I say that the trust in the staff at ORR which I once held in high esteem has been greatly damaged.

David F. Pierre, Jr, Mattapoisett

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