



OWWL LIBRARY SYSTEM

BOOK CHALLENGE REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING: PRINCE & KNIGHT BY DANIEL HAACK

INTRODUCTION

Item Reviewed



Title: Prince & Knight

Author: Daniel Haack

Illustrator: Stevie Lewis

Publisher: Little Bee Books (2018)

Copies Owned: Three physical copies are available in the OWWL catalog at member libraries.

Shelving Location(s): Physical copies available at member libraries are shelved under “Juvenile” and “Picture Book.”

Book Description

“A prince and a knight in shining armor find true love in each other's embrace after fighting a dragon together¹.”

Reason for Review

Prince & Knight by Daniel Haack appeared on ALA’s Top 10 Most Challenged Books List in 2019. The following description appears on ALA’s website, “challenged and restricted for featuring a gay marriage and LGBTQIA+ content; for being ‘a deliberate attempt to indoctrinate young children’ with the potential to cause confusion, curiosity, and gender dysphoria; and for conflicting with a religious viewpoint².”

Prince & Knight also appears as number 91 on ALA’s Top 100 Most Banned and Challenged Books

¹ Prince & Knight (Book), OWWL Library System Catalog, <https://search.owwl.org/Record/582896>

² American Library Association, Top 10 Most Challenged Books Lists, <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/frequentlychallengedbooks/top10/archive>

of the Past Decade³.

COMMITTEE REVIEW

Committee Charge

A six-member committee comprised of Member Library Directors, a System Staff member, a System Trustee, and the System Executive Director read and reviewed this title. Due to schedules and illness, the committee exchanged email messages in order to share their opinions on this particular title.

Committee Discussion

The committee feels that *Prince & Knight* is a beautifully illustrated picture book that tells a wonderful love story that demonstrates bravery and acceptance.

- “I love this and have read it at storytimes before.”
- “A simple love story.”
- “I love how the family and kingdom accepts the relationship without asking any questions or judgements. They make it seem just as normal for the prince to be marrying a man as a woman. And that's a lovely thing to show children.”
- “There is no pushing of any agenda or sexuality in this book.”
- “*Prince & Knight* is a nicely illustrated picture book. It is a retelling of many fairy tales where the prince must find his princess. This book shows children that the hero can be gay and still be brave, and strong.”
- “The book promotes acceptance, diversity, and love regardless of gender.”
- “It is age appropriate and will be a favorite for many families”
- “There is nothing objectional depicted in this book when considering the importance of diverse collections in public libraries.”
- “Librarians should feel comfortable recommending this title when suggesting books to patrons about acceptance, fairy tales, and or diversity.”

PROFESSIONAL REVIEWS⁴

Booklist – February 21, 2018

Once upon a time, a handsome young prince lived in a very grand kingdom. His parents wish to find him a companion before he is old enough to take the throne. The prince meets a number of princesses from many diverse backgrounds, but the prince does not find the right partner for him. While out searching, the prince hears of a dragon ravaging his own kingdom, and immediately rides out to fight. With the help of a young knight, the dragon is

³ Top 100 Most Banned and Challenged Books: 2010-2019,
<https://www.ala.org/advocacy/bbooks/frequentlychallengedbooks/decade2019>

⁴ Professional Reviews were retrieved on October 29, 2023 from
https://search.owwl.org/Record/582896#unbound_reviews

soon subdued. Subsequently the knight and the prince fall for each other in a series of delightful and adorable illustrations. Similar in tone and setup to Linda de Haan and Stern Nijland's *King & King* (2002), this demonstrates that it is possible to create a gay-affirming book for young readers without resorting to didacticism. Debut author Haack and illustrator Lewis have constructed a colorful and entertaining tale exploring sexuality, acceptance, and young love. An appealing story for parents and children alike.

Horn Book Guide – November 14, 2018

A prince must choose a bride, but all the women he meets lack...something. He realizes what's missing when a knight in shining armor saves him from a dragon. The simplistic story works as a valentine to same-sex love, but several verses stumble over themselves to complete a rhyme; the glossy illustrations conjure classic Disney movie stills.

Kirkus Reviews – April 4, 2018

*A prince of marriageable age looks far and wide for a partner who sings the same tune. "Handsome and sincere," the prince accompanies his parents to meet ladies from nearby kingdoms. While the royals are away, a fire-breathing dragon ravages their home kingdom. The prince races home to protect his realm only to find a knight in shining armor battling alongside him. The two work together to defeat the dragon, but in the process, the prince loses his grip and nearly falls to his doom. The visored knight sweeps in to catch the prince, takes off his helmet to reveal his identity, and the two instantly realize their connection. Villagers and royals alike cheer for the two men's relationship and, soon, wedding. Lewis' lush colors and dramatic sequencing clearly show her background in animation and lend a timeless, Disney-like quality to the story. The art notably does not shy away from depicting the intimacy between the men, keeping it on par with images of heterosexual relationships that already dominate children's media. Though the royal family is white, the happy villagers and the prince's new betrothed add some necessary racial diversity to the mix. Victorious it may even usurp *King King* (2001) as the premier queer-friendly fairy tale for this age set. (Picture book. 4-8).*

APPROPRIATE AGE LEVEL

The publisher's recommended age for *Prince & Knight* by Daniel Haack is 4 Years to 8 Years (Pre School to Third Grade)⁵.

OWWL Library System does not offer a recommended age range or title restrictions. We encourage parents and guardians and their children to discuss their reading habits in the context of their goals to determine if this title is appropriate.

⁵ Reading Level retrieved from Syndetics Unbound, OWWL Library System Catalog, https://search.owwl.org/Record/582896#unbound_readinglevel

FOLLOW-UP ACTIONS

Item Copy Actions

Prince & Knight is available at three member libraries. There is currently no digital copies available through the OverDrive marketplace to purchase.

OWWL Library System will purchase a physical copy to maintain in local collections available to patrons to place on hold. Should an eBook copy become available, we will purchase for the System's online collection.

Concerned Parent Actions

A minor's access to materials is the responsibility of that minor's parents or guardians. According to the American Library Association:

The mission, goals, and objectives of libraries cannot authorize libraries and their governing bodies to assume, abrogate, or overrule the rights and responsibilities of parents and guardians. As "Libraries: An American Value" states, "We affirm the responsibility and the right of all parents and guardians to guide their own children's use of the library and its resources and services." Libraries and their governing bodies cannot assume the role of parents or the functions of parental authority in the private relationship between parent and child. Libraries and their governing bodies shall ensure that only parents and guardians have the right and the responsibility to determine their children's—and only their children's—access to library resources. Parents and guardians who do not want their children to have access to specific library services, materials, or facilities should so advise their own children. Libraries and library governing bodies should not use rating systems to inhibit a minor's access to materials.⁶

To aid parents and guardians in addressing title access in OWWL Library System's OverDrive collection, the default collection can be changed under account settings.

To accomplish this, log in to an OverDrive account at <https://owwl.overdrive.com/> > click on My Account > Settings > Content Preferences > Audience(s). An account can be limited to All Audiences, Juvenile, Young Adult, General Adult, and Mature Adult.

Physical collections cannot be changed to restrict a minor's access to materials. Instead, please follow the American Library Association's recommendation noted above.

CONCLUSION

⁶ Access to Library Resources and Services for Minors: An Interpretation of the Library Bill of Rights, <https://www.ala.org/advocacy/intfreedom/librarybill/interpretations/minors>

Future Reconsideration Requests

This report shall appropriately respond to any challenge or request for reconsideration of *Prince & Knight* by Daniel Haack until November 8, 2025. At that time, should a formal challenge or request for reconsideration be received by the OWWL Library System, the Executive Director shall once again form a committee to review the title and use this documentation and all other professional material as the foundation of that discussion.

System Policies and Resolutions

For additional information on the selection of System materials, please review the Selection and Reconsideration of Materials Policy and the Resolution on the Freedom to Read by visiting <https://owwl.org/freedomtoread>.

Report Approval

OWWL Library System's Board of Trustees reviewed and approved this report on November 8, 2023.

Approved: November 8, 2023