

Chrystal Seager
Assignment 3, LIS 551
Challenge #2
2/22/09

Dear Ms. Taxpayer,

First, I would like to thank you for sharing your concerns about the library. We always appreciate input from our patrons on how to better serve their needs.

If I understand correctly, you have two concerns regarding *The Seattle Weekly* and *The Stranger*; first, that both publications contain sexually explicit content that you feel is inappropriate for inclusion in the library, and second, that their location in the lobby on the lower shelves is particularly problematic because it is easily accessible to children, for whom you feel it is especially inappropriate.

I would like to validate your concerns about these publications, which do indeed present content that is controversial and understandably unacceptable for some patrons. Our library serves a diverse community, including residents and taxpayers of all ages, backgrounds, and opinions. Our goal is to provide an equally diverse and unbiased selection of materials, representative of as many viewpoints as possible. In accomplishing this goal, it is inevitable that the response to such a collection will also inspire a range of responses. This means that there will be materials that some members of our community find invaluable, desirable, or entertaining, while others may find them offensive, unnecessary, or of no interest (and vice versa). While it is usually not possible for staff to determine what those responses will be ahead of time, I do know that both of the weekly newspapers in question are very popular with some members in our community, and that they would feel similarly passionate about their removal. For these reasons, we leave decisions about material quality, appropriateness, necessity, and so forth up to the individual patron's need, taste, and choice.

As for the location of these items and their accessibility to children, this is an issue that I can and will bring up with my supervisor and see if there might be a better location for the newspapers' intended audience, which I agree in this case is not children. While we cannot restrict access to materials based any criteria, including age, we do endeavor to make the library as useful to its patrons as possible. I will get back to you on this and let you know what we can do.

If you are interested, I have enclosed a copy of some of the library's policies that might be helpful in further explaining the mission and goals of the library and understanding how they influence the library's selection of materials. In addition, we do have a procedure that provides our community members with the opportunity to request that materials be reviewed and reconsidered for inclusion in the collection. I have included the form accompanying this procedure for your use as well, should you like to pursue that option.

Thank you again for sharing your concerns with me. We always appreciate hearing feedback from our patrons about our collection. If you would like to discuss this or any other issues further, please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,

Chrystal Seager

Library Director
Mallville Library
Everywhere, USA 90001

