



## Challenges to Library Materials Policy

In the interest of protecting the individual's right to have access to materials, the Tom Green County Library System supports the following documents:

- The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution
- The Library Bills of Rights—Adopted June 18, 1948, amended February 2, 1967, and June 23, 1980 by the American Library Association Council.
- The Freedom to Read Statement—Adopted June 25, 1953; revised January 28, 1972, January 16, 1991, by the ALA Council and the AAP Freedom to Read Committee.

Tom Green County Library does not promote particular beliefs or views. Rather, it provides a resource for the various opinions which apply to important, complex, and controversial questions, including unpopular and unorthodox positions. Language, situations, or subjects which may be offensive to some community members do not disqualify material which, in its entirety, is judged to be of value. Materials are not marked or identified to show approval or disapproval of contents, and no materials are sequestered, except to protect valuable items from injury or theft.

It is the view of the Library responsibility for the reading of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. The selection of materials for the adult collection is not restricted by the possibility that children may obtain materials their parents consider inappropriate.

The Library considers all materials selected under this policy to be constitutionally protected under the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. If a patron claims that a particular item is not constitutionally protected, the burden of proof rests with the patron.

The Library recognizes the right of individuals to question materials in its collection. When a patron objects to the presence or absence of any library material, the complaint will be given hearing and consideration. All complaints to staff members will be referred to the professional staff. The patron will be given a "Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials" form to complete. The completed form will be given to the Library Director who will evaluate the material in question and consider the merits of the request. The professional staff will consider whether the material meets the selection criteria outlined in this policy. A decision will be made regarding whether or not to add, withdraw, or reclassify the material within a reasonable amount of time, with written reasons for the decision conveyed to the patron. If the patron is dissatisfied with the decision or the written reply, he or she may appeal the decision to the Library Board at a regularly scheduled Board meeting. The Library Board, after receiving public testimony from the patron, other interested parties, and from the Director, will decide whether or not library policies have been followed and whether to add, reclassify, or withdraw the material in question.

Materials subject to complaint shall not be removed from use and circulation pending final action. If a court having jurisdiction over the Library decides that any material in the collection is unprotected by the Constitution of the United States, such material will be removed immediately. Material under court consideration will remain available to patrons until a final ruling is made.

