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More challenged books: couple petitions West Bend, WI, public library

National Coalition Against Censorship

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Posted on [April 8, 2009](#) by [Blog of the National Coalition Against Censorship](#)

[In another case](#) of challenged books from public libraries, a [Wisconsin couple has petitioned](#) for the reclassifying of several Young Adult books to Adult. Ginny Maziarka and her husband feel that books like *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*, *The Geography Club*, and *Deal With It! a whole new approach to your body, brain and life as a gURL* should be moved to a restricted adult area, smattered with warning labels, and flagged for parental approval before check-out. She calls them “explicitly sexual” and “pornographic,” yet the West Bend Community Memorial Library Director Michael Tyree objects, explaining that “these books are from reputable publishers.”

As we have argued before, where parents may object to their children reading certain material, it is not their responsibility to reclassify material, or impose new policies or content restrictions on libraries.

The petition has also demanded that the library balance its shelves with “affirming traditional heterosexual perspectives” that are faith-based or written by “ex-gay” authors. This may sound good, but there is a faulty logic behind it. Libraries choose their literature based on reviews from reputable sources and on their literary or scientific value. They should not be shuffling books between sections simply because community members object to the content, nor are they obliged to include an opposing viewpoint for every book they hold. Otherwise someone may demand that Diaries of Anne Frank were balanced out by the work of a Holocaust denier. Not to speak that “traditional heterosexual perspectives” are more than well represented both in libraries and in the culture at large.