



3600 Denali Street
Anchorage, AK 99503
Telephone (907) 343-2975
www.anchoragelibrary.org

April 6, 2023

Dear Ms, Graham,

Thank you for taking the time to submit a Request for Reconsideration for the teen graphic novel Let's Talk About It: The Teen's Guide to Sex, Relationships, and Being a Human by Erika Moen and Matthew Nolan. The library values input from the community about our collections.

After receiving your statement, a committee of three librarians was convened to consider your request. We each read the book carefully, looked at reviews and circulation statistics, and then held a group discussion. A *School Library Journal* review (Dec 2020) states: "...every panel of this book, every anatomical drawing, every conversation over tea or in a tent, is loaded with crucial information about consent, respect, consideration, and boundaries." (Gr9Up) A *Booklist* review (Jan 1 & 15, 2021) states: "With back matter including helpful resources, this book is recommended for teens who want an easy-to-follow guide that won't talk down to them." (Gr. 9-12) *Publishers Weekly* (Feb 1, 2021) says this in a review: "Though some text-packed pages can be difficult to digest, they nevertheless provide vital information, embracing the complexity of relationships...and offering comprehensive, no-nonsense information on sex and sexuality." (Ages 14-up) *Kirkus Reviews* (Feb 1, 2021) offers this evaluation: "While the dialogue can occasionally feel stilted as it conveys comprehensive content, the work is still crisp, breezy, effective, and noteworthy in a crowded field for its holistic emphasis on human, emotional aspects of sexuality." (13-18) Finally, the Young Adult Library Services Association (YALSA, a division of the American Library Association) included the title on its list of 2022 Great Graphic Novels for Teens (ALA press release, Feb 4, 2022).

Upon reading and discussing the book, we agreed that, while not to everyone's taste, the book is appropriate for ages 14-18, depending on a teen's maturity. We gave consideration to the cartoon style of the artwork, the high school setting and age of the characters depicted, and the use of relatable language for the target age group. It is fittingly shelved in the Young Adult/Teen section of the library; books for that age range include a deep, broad, and diverse spectrum of titles.

The public library acquires materials for a wide range of ages, tastes, values, and interests to meet the needs of our very diverse community. There is no single standard which can be applied to all acquisition decisions. Some materials may be judged primarily in terms of artistic merit or scholarship; others are selected to satisfy recreational or informational needs of the community.



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Materials are judged on overall effect rather than specific illustrations, words, passages, or scenes which in themselves may be considered offensive by some.

In addition, the library adheres to the American Library Association's *Freedom to Read Statement* and *Library Bill of Rights*. Both documents may be found in the *Appendix* to APL's entire Collection Management policy. It may be accessed at this link:

<https://www.anchoragelibrary.org/media/2244/collection-management-policy.pdf>

The library's Collection Management policy is applied equally to materials for children. The library believes that individuals may reject for themselves and their children—and only their children—materials which they find unsuitable. The responsibility for the reading, viewing, and listening choices of minors rests with their parents or legal guardians.

Based on the reasons outlined above, the committee has made the decision to retain this title in our Young Adult/Teen collection.

The library welcomes the opportunity to assist parents, legal guardians, and caregivers in locating suitable materials for their child, and we have professional youth services librarians at each location for this purpose.

Sincerely,

The Request for Reconsideration Ad Hoc Review Committee

Cc: Virginia C. McClure, Director

