



April 29, 2025

Dear

This letter is in response to the completed Request for Reconsideration form for “As the Crow Flies” by Melanie Gillman in the Cromaine District Library (CDL) collection. I understand that a group of individuals helped you fill out these forms. We discussed at our second meeting that while each person filling out the forms selected that they represent themselves as an “individual” rather than “organization” because you are not a formal group, but a group of like-minded friends with similar concerns. You indicated that you may speak for the group and that I may communicate directly with you.

The concern about this title noted on the form was “sexualization/exploitation of children.”

When we met you explained to me that your main goal is to protect children from the subject matter of these particular books, which you broadly defined as containing viewpoints that, in your opinion, “will lead children to confusion about gender.” I explained to you that per library policy, only a parent may restrict what their own children read, and that public bodies may not restrict access to books based on the book’s viewpoint. You indicated that your personal views about gender confusion should take precedence over the rights of other parents in the community with whom you disagree.

After completing a staff review, I have concluded that this title was acquired in accordance with the library’s Materials Selection Policy #3010, which was provided when we discussed your concern in March 2025. This title was first available to community members in May 2018 and has circulated 14 times. It is published by Iron Circus Comics. It is shelved in the teen graphic novel collection, as it is a graphic novel written for readers ages 11 and up.

REVIEW: School Library Journal (slj.com), a professional review source used by librarians when selecting titles, reviewed the title on November 1, 2017:

*Gr 6 Up—Charlie, 13, is excited to embark on an all-girls Christian camp's backpacking trip. However, despite Camp Three Peaks' commitment to feminism, head counselor Bee and many of the campers are unwittingly racist and homophobic, and Charlie, who is black and queer, grapples with self-doubt. She confides in God, wondering if a feather that follows her on her trek is a sign from above, and her spirits lift as she bonds with the more outspoken Sydney, a trans girl who feels similarly alienated. This contemplative graphic novel, taken from Gillman's ongoing webcomic, perceptively explores race, gender, faith, and friendship. Elegantly composed, richly hued images vividly portray the lush forest setting and shy, thoughtful Charlie's inner turmoil as she yearns to voice her opinions. Scenes in which she appears on the periphery of panels or crowded by the speech bubbles of her insensitive fellow campers adroitly capture her isolation. Gillman zeroes in on seemingly small yet achingly relatable moments as Charlie and Sydney's friendship slowly develops. The book subtly folds in lessons about identity and the danger of assumptions; both girls learn and grow about each other, themselves, and the larger world. VERDICT Heartfelt, stimulating, and sure to spark discussion about feminism's often less than inclusive attitudes toward marginalized groups. For all graphic novel collections.*

CDL's Policy #3010, Section V part B. notes that *"Responsibility for the reading material of children rests with their parents or legal guardians. Selection shall not be inhibited solely by the possibility that books may inadvertently come into the possession of children. The Library respects each individual parent's right to supervise his/her children's choice of reading materials. However, the Library does not have the right to act in loco parentis (in place of the parent). Therefore, a parent who chooses to restrict the materials his/her children select must accompany those children when they use the collection to impose those restrictions.*

*C. The Library Director is responsible for overseeing where the books are shelved and catalogued. However, the Library Board recommends that any materials that are appropriate for adults or older teens but may be considered harmful to minors, as defined by the Library Privacy Act, are shelved within the adult collection.*

Review has deemed this content does not fit the definition of "harmful to minors" in [MCL722.674 sec.4](#). Therefore, "As the Crow Flies" will be retained in the teen graphic novel section of the library.

Policy #3010 provides a protocol to appeal of this decision in Section IX Part F: written appeal of the Library Director's decision may be made by the Requester to the Chair of the Library Board within ten (10) business days after the written decision is made by the Library Director. The appeal must include the specific Library Material being appealed and the reason that the Requester would like the decision reversed. Please direct an appeal to:

William Bolin  
President, Cromaine District Library Board of Trustees  
PO Box 308  
3688 N. Hartland Rd.  
Hartland, MI 48353

The Library Board will review any documentation it deems necessary to decide within sixty (60) days of receipt of the appeal. The Library Board may issue an additional extension if necessary in order to fully evaluate the material.

CDL's Board of Trustees delegates collection development responsibilities to the library director. A staff of librarians with advanced degrees and professional credentials make collection development decisions for CDL. Ultimately, however, the responsibility of what a child reads rests with parents and guardians. Public libraries cannot be expected to interfere with parental obligations and responsibilities when it comes to deciding what a minor may read, listen to, or view. It is the right of parent/guardian to determine what materials are available for their children to read.

The Cromaine District Library serves 30,000 people in Hartland Township and portions of Brighton, Deerfield, Genoa, Oceola and Tyrone Townships. Library patrons come from a wide variety of religious, political, ethnic, and social backgrounds. Members of our community are well educated and possess a broad range of interests. Not every item the library offers will be enjoyed by every reader, listener, or viewer, but there is something for everyone at the public library. I respect your personal taste in materials and encourage you to ask CDL librarians to recommend titles that more closely match your interests.

Best,

Sarah Neidert  
Director, Cromaine District Library