

5000 Collection Development 7 Appendix: Request for Reconsideration of Library Materials

Please describe the item in question as fully as you are able:

Title:

Not My Idea: A Book About Whiteness

Author(s): Anastasia Higginbotham

Format (book, recording, etc.): Book

Call number or location in library: childrens section

How was it brought to your attention?

Came across while supervising my children in library

Please state the action you wish taken on this item: [ ] Shelve it elsewhere  **Remove from the library** [ ]

Other (specify): Why? Please see attached.

Please explain how such an action would improve the library's service to the community: Have you (read, viewed, listened) to the entire work? Yes

If not, then which parts?

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 9-6-22 (Optional) I am

acting as a spokesperson for the following group or association

This book contains material which is both prejudiced and antagonistic towards people of different ethnicities. I began reading this book as I was supervising my children in the library. In order to relay my personal perspective on this book, I need to provide some background on myself. My family is Mexican American and I grew up in a city just east of Los Angeles. I grew up in a home with no father and 2 older brothers who were in and out of jail for much of my childhood. Our neighborhood was plagued with gang violence, much of which I witnessed firsthand because of my brothers involvement.

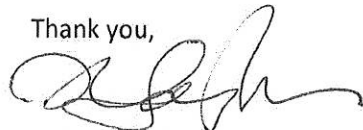
Fortunately, our city library was within walking distance of our home. My family had unpaid library fines, thus, I was unable to check out books. However, I could sit and read for as long as I desired. The library was my refuge. When I was reading 'Not my Idea' I came across the page that stated 'your skin color makes a difference in how the world sees you'. It then goes on to explain all the negative ways my skin color will affect my life, even stating I am not welcome in certain neighborhoods based on the color of my skin.

For a moment, I imagined myself reading this as a little girl in that library so many years ago. What a shameful and defeatist thing for a child to read. I cannot imagine the shame and rejection I would have felt as a child reading a book with something that expressed such hopeless and degrading ideas. The fact that this book is written by an upper class educated white woman only further exacerbates the inflammatory nature of these statements. Frankly, the statements make me uncomfortable as an adult.

I am now a physician, with children of my own, their father is white. This book states that 'racism is a white person's problem'. The overtly racist nature of this statement is undeniable. The entire book is riddled with similar statements, all of which convey the idea that white people are bad just by the nature of being white. When I initially voiced my concerns with the gentleman working in the library, he commented that the topics in this book are very complicated and difficult to understand, 'even for adults'. I agree, but if this is indeed the case, then why is such a book in the children section of the library?

Telling children that if they are white they are responsible for racism is clearly shaming. Telling children they are not welcome in certain neighborhoods because of the color of their skin is racist. This book creates shame and condemnation in children, while burdening them with the problem of racism. This is terrible for our children in ordinary times, but especially in these at times where we are seeing increased rates of depression, anxiety and suicide amongst children. This book is a massive disservice to all children of our community, regardless of their color. I sincerely hope that this is not something that Imagine If Libraries staff and trustee board support being representative of the library collection.

Thank you,



Michele Taylor