

Woodland Public Library  
250 First Street  
Woodland, CA 95695

Julie Wagner  
863 Cordoza Court  
Woodland, CA 05695

December 10, 2011

Dear Woodland Public Library Director,

Thank you for your service to our library. My children love to read and have utilized many of the materials in the juvenile section of the Woodland Public Library according to their interests for school as well as pleasure. We are always excited to check the book shelf labeled "new books", which is situated immediately within view when entering the children's section. One book of inappropriate subject matter, yet with a very attractive cover caught my eye. I was surprised to find that such a book was in the children's section at all, and placed at the eye level of very young children. The book is entitled *Supernatural*, by Andrea Mills, DK Publishers, 2010<sup>1</sup>. Due to the subject matter of the book, I thought perhaps it was miss-shelved, but I discovered it was indeed a children's book as evidenced by the board book format, which is most commonly used for young readers. I was infuriated upon checking the book's contents and finding that the book was indeed marketed for children, yet contained subject matter that was very much in appropriate. I make a plea to you, today, to remove this textbook from the library shelves.

I asked the attendant nearby about the appropriateness of this book, mentioning to her that the book contained such subjects as mediums, seances, psychic powers, witchcraft and spellbinding, levitation and possession. She was undaunted and explained that the book is merely entertainment enjoyed by both young readers and adults. This so called "entertainment" is dangerously influential, especially when considering the publisher's target age of such impressionable readers of 10 years of age and over.

I do not believe that one could prove this book entertaining, which by definition means "to provide (someone) with amusement or enjoyment", but it is instead detrimental to the enrichment of the reader. DK Publishing describes *Supernatural* this way, "Perfect for readers who can't get enough of the spooky stuff, *Supernatural* brings all things mysterious together in one spellbinding volume, along with the science behind the stories. Learn the terrifying truth about the otherworldly world, from aliens, ghosts, and poltergeists, to vampires, werewolves, and zombies. Bursting with evidence-including special investigations, rare images, and eyewitness accounts-and full of the spine-chilling details kids love, this book is an eerily illuminating guide to the unexplained." While the publisher is correct in stating the book is an eerily illuminating guide, what the publisher doesn't mention, is that this book is more of a "how to" manual designed to convince the reader to experience supernatural phenomena and it does not indicate the information contained is purely intended for entertainment purposes, as the librarian had suggested to me.

The library's mission statement according to the 1996 Strategic Plan reads, "The Woodland Public Library embraces the diversity of the community and provides a central resource for information, learning, recreation, and enrichment. Its broad goal is to offer opportunities for all people to participate fully in a rapidly changing world." *Supernatural* is not a book that merely gives information or entertainment. It entices the young reader to experience the paranormal without offering any warning of the dangerous consequences. It does not merely share information about such ideas as ghost hunts, psychokinesis and curses, but it explains how to experience these phenomena. The reader is encouraged and even challenged to delve into these dangerous areas for the thrill of the experience, and

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<sup>1</sup> Mills, Andrea, Francesco Francavilla, and Peter Minister. *Supernatural*. New York: DK, 2010. Print.

on some occasions, given specific instruction. "Ghost hunts, vigils and seances are tried and tested ways to experience spooky activity first hand." (page 14) It goes on to explain where to start your hunt, such as local graveyards, historic houses, etc., and the tools of the trade to bring along. There are recipes for spellbinding with a number of "weird and wonderful ingredients" mixed with mortar and pestle (page 42). There is no warning, but instead a childlike lure by using the word 'spooky' and deceptive wording is employed by using the word 'wonderful' to entice the reader to engage in experiencing the supernatural.

The book presents evidence and then challenges the young reader to make a decision regarding the paranormal evidence given in this 90 page book, all the while enticing the reader to engage in the supernatural. The book presents evidence such as photos, scientific observations and data along with historical facts. It utilizes many clever literary devices to capture the young reader's attention. *Deus ex Machina* is an effective device utilized by introducing, in this case, the character Doctor Doubt, who is skeptical of any supernatural phenomena. He presents a challenge to the reader that he be proved wrong time and time again throughout the book. At the conclusion of the book, the reader is challenged by Doctor Doubt who calls for resolve on the issue of the supernatural. I personally have no issue with the reality of the supernatural, but the fact that it is reality does not necessitate my participation in it. Page 89 says, "It's time to make up your mind. Are you spooked into believing that the supernatural is worth all this scientific study or are you joining the skeptics' school of thought that this subject should never be taken seriously? Dr. Doubt is just one of many skeptics who find it difficult to believe that the supernatural warrants serious research, time and funding. Skeptics dismiss any evidence of the supernatural as highly speculative and instead insist that there are conventionally scientific or rational explanations." The reader is effectively manipulated into experiencing the supernatural because proof of its reality has been provided and, therefore, it should be taken seriously. Again, there is never a warning that any of these paranormal experiences could be detrimental to the targeted audience.

What's more, the author of *Supernatural* challenges the readers' intellect and thereby lures the reader by the benefit of the experience. The reader is encouraged to broaden his mind, which is not necessarily negative. However, the experiences suggested include psychic powers, stating, "harnessing our psychic powers can open our minds and broaden our experience." All of page 38 and 39 is a quote by a philosopher, who said "Everyone is born with psychic abilities. It's just a matter of knowing how to tap into them." The book goes on to say that people need to learn how to use the psychic powers we all have in order to maximize our full potential. Who doesn't want to reach his full potential? These statements are designed to persuade the reader to experience psychic powers. On page 36 the book states that telepathy "is believed to be possible once we learn how to make the most of our minds." Here's the word 'experience' again; "If people are aware of the energy passing between themselves and others, they can open themselves up to the possibility of telepathic experiences." It goes on to explain scanning and gives instructions for telepathic thinking between two people. "Meditation, trances and concentration techniques are the most mind-blowing movements of objects and people can result." Here we find more beguilement to experience the supernatural without any caution as to its detrimental effects.

In literature, one of the strongest devices is imagery wherein the author uses words and phrases to create "mental images" for the reader. *Supernatural* lures the reader into the experience using the senses. The section on vampires begins with a sickening quote; "Two deep fangs sink deep into your skin. This is all it takes to join the flesh-frenzied, blood curdling club forever." There is also a shocking full page image that includes the text, "When there's no more room in hell, the dead will walk the earth." citing the movie, "Dawn of the Dead" Now remember, ten year olds are the reading audience, as well as the reader's younger siblings who may have access to the information as well. These images are anything but beneficial or enriching to the reader.

As the library's mission states that part of its broad goal "is to offer opportunities for all people to participate fully in a rapidly changing world." This book indeed exposes "our rapidly changing world", but it does so at the expense of the innocence of our children. I obtained a copy of a typical fourth grade reading list. It includes books like *Sarah Plain and Tall*, *Shiloh* the dog, *The Keeping Quilt* by Patricia Polacco, and *Judy Moody*. *Supernatural* is not beneficial entertainment or information for anyone, much less a growing child of 10 years of age. Child development experts say 10 year olds typically experience anxiety along with new found independence. In this book, the curiosity of the supernatural is encouraged and instructions to experience it are given, which result has the potential to create added anxiety in that child.

On page 27, the book states "French teacher Allan Kardec called the board an instrument for talking to spirits. From a mindreader for the living, the Ouija board had become a device to communicate with the dead." According to experts who are actual experiencers who crave the power of the paranormal realm, there are no safe rewards to this dabbling. They say that although the power of the supernatural is attractive, it comes with a warning. Once you enter that realm, most paranormal activity is unplanned and unprovoked. This is evidenced in an occurrence in 2010, when two girls were "playing" with a Ouija board. Their lives have been forever changed, and not for the better. According to this article, they continue to struggle with fainting spells and unusual behavior. See <http://colombiareports.com/colombia-news-lite/97-news/5780-teenage-girls-suffer-fainting-fits-after-playing-ouija-online.html>. In Belize, a girl was using a Ouija board and became possessed. See the story at <http://amandala.com.bz/index.php?id=11094>. Possession is real, as *Supernatural* claims, and statistics tell us that exorcisms are on the rise.

You may remember David Horowitz, serial killer known as the "Son of Sam". His story is an interesting one, as he dabbled in the occult, lived through possession, and suffered grave consequences as did his victims and the families left behind. David now serves the One true and living God from prison, and testifies of God's truth and power in his life. He has seen both sides and has chosen God. See his website at <http://www.ariseandshine.org/>

In conclusion, *Supernatural* is not appropriate for 10 year old readers, nor is it appropriate information for anyone to view and I'd request removal from the library shelves. The author utilizes literary manipulation to entice the reader to experience the supernatural without any warning of the consequences. Young readers who lack discernment are challenged to believe and then lured to act on that belief for the sake of the experience. The typical 10 year old's curiosity to experience the supernatural could lead him to a place he did not plan on going, and with lingering consequences. There is no benefit in this "How to" manual of the occult. Granted, our world is changing, but encouraging the trends of our "changing world" is not always best for those with ever-developing minds. Our children have always been happy to read about Judy Moody and her brother Stink. Do we really want our children's minds influenced by the destructive trends of our changing world? One could write a rather lengthy expose of the ruination of our society as evidenced in the ideals of our school-aged children. *Supernatural* and its publisher exhibits little discernment, especially considering its impressionable fourth grade audience and any on lookers.

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I believe in the existence of the supernatural. One facet of the supernatural has been conveniently ignored in this book, and that is the supernatural power of God as He has acted upon and continues to interact with this world. The Bible tells us that He loves us and has plans for our good. Like a good Father, he gives us boundaries for our safety. He says we should not drink blood, therefore not participating in vampirism. Deu 12:23<sup>2</sup> "Only be sure that you do not eat the blood, for the blood [is] the life; We are instructed in Deu 18:10-12 not to be involved in the occult. "Let no one be found

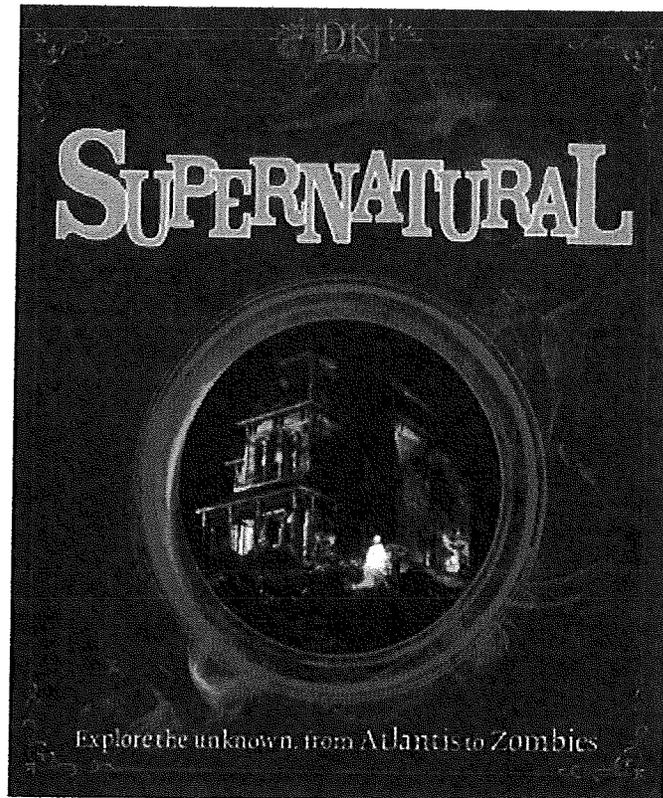
among you who sacrifices his son or daughter in [fn] the fire, who practices divination or sorcery, interprets omens, engages in witchcraft or casts spells, or who is a medium or spiritist or who consults the dead. Anyone who does these things is detestable to the LORD, and because of these detestable practices the LORD.

Mankind follows his own desires, which the Bible calls sin. This separates us from a loving God, who supernaturally made a way for us to be restored to Himself. Romans 3:23 says, "all have sinned and fall short of God's glory." and the "wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is Christ Jesus". The Bible says Jesus paid the price for our sin with the sacrifice of His own blood. That's why blood is sacred. His blood gives us new life. "In Him was life, and that life was the light of men." "And the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not comprehend it." The people of our changing world believe the supernatural yet fail to recognize a supernatural God, and furthermore reject the idea that a supernatural God loves them. Perhaps this is why DK Publishing failed to include these supernatural events in their book. I am grateful to know this supernatural power. "For God so loved the world that He gave his only Son, that who ever believes in Him will not perish, but have eternal life."

I am requesting a response regarding the library decision on this book, Supernatural. Please contact me at 530.383.2828. Thank you so much for your time.

Sincerely,

Julie Wagner



Close

## Heather Muller

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**From:** Patricia Lakie  
**Sent:** Tuesday, December 13, 2011 6:10 PM  
**To:** Heather Muller; Cara Baker; Carol Davis  
**Subject:** RE: Challenged book  
**Attachments:** selection policy final 05.06.08.doc

Hi Ladies,

I checked the title on calcat. Every library I checked -- within 245 miles of us -- has this book in their Children's Non-Fiction collection (J 130 or J 133). The libraries I checked are: Sacramento Public; Yolo County; Roseville PL; Solano County; Marin County; Redwood City; Sunnyvale; Monterey County; Salinas PL; Tulare County; and San Luis Obispo County/City Library.

I have attached our Woodland Public Library Selection Policy. The policy includes the following statements:

- No book and/or library materials shall be excluded because of the race, nationality, or the political, religious, or social views of the author.
- The Board believes that censorship is a purely individual matter and declares that, while everyone is free to reject for himself or herself such materials which the individual does not approve, he/she cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom to read of others.
- Responsibility for the reading of minors rests with their parents or local guardians. The library does not act in place of parents. Selection of material will not be restricted by the possibility that these materials may come into the possession of minors.
- All materials added to the collection, whether purchased, requested, or donated, are considered in terms of the city library's needs and professional standards of evaluation. Those standards include diversity, quality, timeliness, accuracy, cost, and popular appeal. Selection sources include publishers' catalogs, library review journals, patron requests, and staff suggestions.
- In selecting materials to suit a variety of tastes, differing viewpoints will be included. It should be clearly understood that the library does not endorse opinions expressed in the materials which are selected.
- Professional library staff makes selections in a manner based upon principle rather than personal opinion, reason rather than prejudice, and judgment rather than censorship. Selection must be inclusive rather than exclusive. Variety and balance of opinion are sought whenever available.
- This Board defends the principles of the freedom to read and declares that whenever censorship is involved, no book or other library material shall be removed from the library save under the orders of a court of competent jurisdiction.

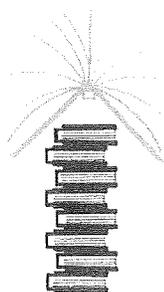
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### ***Policy on Controversial Materials***

While the library neither endorses nor opposes any particular item, ideology, or tenets represented in the materials, Woodland Public Library is committed to providing a full range of expression, ideas, and points of view in order to maintain a balanced collection in which all library users may find free access. As a result, controversial materials that meet the selection policy will be added. Consequently, not all materials will appeal to all users, and some materials may actually be offensive to some. This policy is entirely consistent with professional practices, the *Library Bill of Rights* and the *First Amendment to the United States Constitution*—“Congress shall make no law...abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press...”

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### ***Reporting Challenges***



# WOODLAND PUBLIC LIBRARY

250 FIRST STREET • WOODLAND, CA 95695 • 530/661-5980 Fax 530/666-5408

<http://www.cityofwoodland.org/library>

HEATHER MULLER  
Library Services Director  
[heather.muller@cityofwoodland.org](mailto:heather.muller@cityofwoodland.org)

December 21, 2011

Dear Ms. Wagner,

Thank you for your recent letter regarding the book *Supernatural* by DK Publishing.

I understand that you did speak to a staff member about the book but are not satisfied with their answer.

I did attempt to call you regarding your letter but have not yet been able to reach you so with the holidays approaching I am mailing you the Woodland Public Library Selection Policy. This policy was approved by the Woodland Public Library Board of Trustees on May 5, 2008. There are a few relevant points from the Selection Policy that I would like to highlight.

From the *Guiding Principles for Selection* (page 4):

- No book and/or library materials shall be excluded because of the race, nationality, or the political, religious, or social views of the author.
- The Board believes that censorship is a purely individual matter and declares that, while everyone is free to reject for himself or herself such materials which the individual does not approve, he/she cannot exercise this right of censorship to restrict the freedom to read of others.
- Responsibility for the reading of minors rests with their parents or local guardians. The library does not act in place of parents. Selection of material will not be restricted by the possibility that these materials may come into the possession of minors.
- All materials added to the collection, whether purchased, requested, or donated, are considered in terms of the city library's needs and professional standards of evaluation. Those standards include diversity, quality, timeliness, accuracy, cost, and popular appeal. Selection sources include publishers' catalogs, library review journals, patron requests, and staff suggestions.
- In selecting materials to suit a variety of tastes, differing viewpoints will be included. It should be clearly understood that the library does not endorse opinions expressed in the materials which are selected.
- Professional library staff makes selections in a manner based upon principle rather than personal opinion, reason rather than prejudice, and judgment rather than censorship. Selection must be inclusive rather than exclusive. Variety and balance of opinion are sought whenever available.

- This Board defends the principles of the freedom to read and declares that whenever censorship is involved, no book or other library material shall be removed from the library save under the orders of a court of competent jurisdiction.

From the *Policy on Controversial Materials* (page 7):

- While the library neither endorses nor opposes any particular item, ideology, or tenets represented in the materials, Woodland Public Library is committed to providing a full range of expression, ideas, and points of view in order to maintain a balanced collection in which all library users may find free access.

Ms. Wagner, I cannot express how appreciative the Library is of parents like you who actively help their children select appropriate material and are involved in their reading choices. However, other people may choose differently and the Library is here to support everyone and their journey through life.

If you would like to ask the Library to formally reconsider the book *Supernatural*, please submit the enclosed form to me. The process of appeal is on pages 8 & 9 of the Selection Policy. The form needs to be signed and completed – but you don't need to repeat in detail what's in your letter since I have a copy of it.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.

Sincerely,

Heather Muller  
Library Services Director  
Woodland Public Library

**City of Woodland Public Library  
Director Performance Assessment  
Rating Form**

<b>GOALS FOR REVIEW YEAR</b>			
<b>Goal</b>	<b>Measurement</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Actual Outcome</b>
Maintain family programming	<p>Ensure the library is staffed to provide regular story times</p> <p>Make SRC priority:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure staffing to help with SRC (events and planning)</li> <li>• Outreach to schools and Head Start</li> </ul>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Summer</p> <p>Summer</p>	
Increase outreach to the Latino community	<p>Explore ideas for programming:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Entertainers?</li> <li>• Activities?</li> <li>• Volunteers?</li> <li>• Offer “special” events</li> </ul> <p>Seek funding from alternative sources for Spanish Language material</p>	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>Santa Party?</p> <p>Summer Party?</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	
Explore partnerships within the community to offer more services / programming to our patrons	<p>Work with Head Start – possible SRC support/outreach</p> <p>Solicit community volunteers to lead programming</p> <p>Explore shared service opportunities with Yolo County</p>	<p>Before end of school year</p> <p>Ongoing</p> <p>Ongoing</p>	

## **WOODLAND – CAMPAIGN INFORMATION SOURCES**

### **REGISTRAR OF VOTERS – A GOOD PLACE TO START**

Role of City Clerk?  
How to place a measure on the ballot  
Fact Sheet on Form 410  
FPPC campaign disclosure manual  
Key dates and deadlines  
Ballot language requirements and definitions  
Precinct maps and precinct data

### **SECRETARY OF STATE**

Political Reforms Division – very helpful 916-653-6225  
Go through Secretary of State to form the committee by submitting  
Statement of Organization (FPPC form 410). There are various types of  
committees. We in Solano are a “primarily formed committee.”

### **FAIR POLITICAL PRACTICES COMMISSION**

FPPC help line 866-275-3772  
FAQ called “Candidates and Campaign Committees” – not legal advice but  
provides good general background  
Form 410 – Statement of Organization

### **BANK ACCOUNT**

Need an EIN # for campaign from the IRS in order to set up a bank account  
Need a named treasurer  
Need SSN to get an EIN – we used campaign chair’s SSN

### **TREASURER**

Most important person – need someone to agree to be responsible for all  
paperwork when Form 410 is filed. All official correspondence is sent to the  
treasurer. Must be willing to meet FPPC reporting deadlines, which are  
increasingly tight as Election Day nears, collect required contributor data.  
Needs an able assistant.

### **PHIL GIARRIZZO CAMPAIGNS, INC.**

Office: (916) 737-9325 Cell: (916) 837 -3490  
[Giarriz@Earthlink.net](mailto:Giarriz@Earthlink.net)  
[www.giarrizzoconsulting.com](http://www.giarrizzoconsulting.com)

## INITIAL STEPS

1. Gather information. Start at Registrar of Voters.
2. Form a Committee and file Statement of Organization (Form 410) with Secretary of State. Need a treasurer and campaign chair initially. Can amend.
3. Set up a bank account. Need EIN from IRS.
4. Identify and recruit volunteers (webmaster, database manager, office workers, reps from key segments of the community, etc.) Consider an honorary chair. Fundraise.
5. Look for a well-respected or beloved community member as treasurer (or chair or honorary chair, for that matter). Can use that name on letterhead, envelopes, etc.
6. Gather data and develop a fact sheet: What does 1/8 of a penny buy the Woodland Library? How much money is that? What percent of the library budget? Changes in numbers of annual visitors, library hours, computer access, children's programs, literacy efforts, etc.
7. **POLLING - critical for assessing level of community support, timing, duration of tax, key arguments, etc.**
  - There are many good reasons for renewing the sales tax. Polling will help identify the arguments that best resonate with the greatest number of prospective voters.
  - This ballot measure requires a 2/3 vote to pass. With a good percent of the population firmly anti-tax for any reason, there are only a few percentage points to play with and a very small margin for error.
  - Polling will help identify the most persuasive arguments against the renewal of the measure. The campaign can use that information in campaign materials to address/counter/rebut or nip those arguments in the bud.
  - Polling will identify the profile of voter who will be most likely to support the ballot measure, and the voters most likely to be persuaded by arguments in favor. It is essential that the campaign target the right voters.
  - Polling provides the information needed to use scarce campaign resources cost effectively.
8. Draft ballot language for City Council to approve for placement on the ballot.