

# Mother wages war on MTV in libraries

By Andrew Cain  
THE WASHINGTON TIMES

Karen Jo Gounaud does not want her MTV — at least not in Fairfax County's libraries.

Mrs. Gounaud, a conservative activist, believes the county's five libraries with cable television should not show MTV because some videos on the music television channel are sexually suggestive and should not be viewed by minors.

"When parents send their children to the library, they assume a certain atmosphere," Mrs. Gounaud said yesterday. "They assume it's a safe place to send children and teens."

The libraries "don't have HBO and they don't have the Playboy Channel, and nobody considers that censorship," she said.

At Pohick Regional Library Monday night, the Fairfax County library board's policy committee will assess the use of cable television in the five libraries and will develop recommendations for the full library board.

## Says kids should not view sexy videos

Mrs. Gounaud hopes one of those recommendations will be to block access to MTV, which any parent can do on their home cable system. Now, anyone can tune the library TVs to any channel.

Complaints about MTV in the libraries first arose last fall. Springfield resident Shirley Edwards told library board members she did not want her 17-year-old daughter to see programs at the library that she was forbidden to watch at home, such as the MTV cartoon "Beavis and Butt-head."

Fairfax County offers cable television at its Reston, Lorton, Pohick, Kings Park and Sherwood libraries. Between March 13 and March 20, library staff members monitored cable television viewership at all five through observation and by collecting questionnaires.

The staff observation indicated that 37 percent of cable television watchers were children ages 12 and under and another 27 percent

were young adults ages 13 to 18.

The staff observed that children aged 12 and under watched comedies 35 percent of the time and watched music video programs 6 percent of the time. They observed that viewers aged 13 to 18 watched sports 25 percent of the time, drama another 25 percent and music video channels 14 percent of the time.

When children under 12 were asked to list channels they watch at the five libraries, 22 percent listed Nickelodeon, 16 percent listed Fox-Channel 5, and 10 percent listed MTV, according to the user survey.

Among respondents aged 13 to 18, 38 percent listed MTV, 22 percent listed Fox-Channel 5 and 16 percent listed Black Entertainment Television.

The MTV issue continues a three-year debate over the content of and access to materials in Fairfax County's libraries. Mrs. Gounaud previously led a fight to

restrict library access to the Blade, a free weekly written for and about homosexuals. The publication still is available at the county's 22 libraries, but is relegated to back shelves.

Last fall, the library board granted parents access to the book borrowing records of children 12 and under.

Library board Chairman Mark D. Sickles said yesterday that the policy committee will take up a number of issues Monday night, such as whether cable television sports programs should be shown in the libraries.

Regarding MTV, he said the library's offerings "are a reflection of our culture." He said a library "cannot be a day care center," and parents must be responsible for their children's viewing.

Library board member Ronald Savage, who represents Sully District, said he wants the board to re-evaluate the purpose of having cable television in the five libraries. But he added he is concerned about minors watching "Madonna cavorting about" on MTV.

Tom, Jr.

Here is the

Fairfax Mother.