

CENSORSHIP CHALLENGE REPORT – July 2008

COMPARISON Q4 FY07 AND Q4 FY08

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NCTE responded to more challenges during Quarter 4 of FY08 than in Quarter 4 of FY2007 (14 compared to 10). With the exception of challenges to Sherman Alexie's *Reservation Blues* and E. Annie Proulx's *The Shipping News*, the books challenged included works commonly challenged, such as Steinbeck's *Of Mice and Men* and Lowry's *The Giver* (both challenged twice this quarter), Hosseini's *The Kite Runner*, and Morrison's *Song of Solomon*.

A pleasant surprise this quarter was an offer from a 6th grade English teacher to provide NCTE with rationales her students had written for S.E. Hinton's *The Outsiders* and Madeline L'Engle's *A Wrinkle in Time*.

Below is a chart comparing the Quarter 4 FY2008 and the Quarter 4 FY2007 challenges and numbers of challenged works. A few things to know as you compare the numbers are the following:

1. Number of challenges = number of individuals who reported challenges.
2. Number of works challenged is usually higher because often challenges involve more than one work.
3. The bimonthly *SLATE Newsletter* features Censorship Challenge Reports by quarter.

April 2008	May 2008	June 2008	Q4 FY2008 Totals
6 challenges / 5 works and 1 student newspaper challenge / 1 inquiry	7 challenges / 8 works / 1 inquiry	1 challenge / 1 work / 3 inquiries	14 challenges / 14 works + 1 student newspaper / 5 inquiries
April 2007	May 2007	June 2007	Q4 FY2007 Totals
3 challenges / 3 works / 1 letter of complaint from a parent	6 challenges / 6 works / 2 inquiries	1 challenge / 1 work / 1 interview with reporter about the challenge	10 challenges / 10 works / 1 letter of complaint from a parent / 1 inquiries / 1 interview with reporter

Listing of 4th Quarter Challenges Reported from April-June, 2008

The Bean Trees, Barbara Kingsolver (9th grade summer reading list, TX) sacrilegious, glorifies unacceptable behavior, vulgar language. Sent resources and rationale.

Brave New World, Aldous Huxley (12th grade AP, TX) sexually explicit; drug use; no redeeming qualities. Sent resources and rationale.

Feed, Michael T. Anderson (10th grade curriculum, MA) language and sex. Sent resources.

The Giver, Lois Lowry (8th grade class, MI). Sent rationale and resources.

The Giver, Lois Lowry (7th grade summer reading list, LA). Sent rationale and resources. **RETAINED**. It really helped for the principal and two assistant principals to read it and to have the information on it.

Kaffir Boy: The True Story of a Black Boy, Mark Mathabane (9th grade Communications class, MN) sodomy/prostitution and language. Sent rationale and resources.

The Kite Runner, Khaled Hosseini (11th grade AP English, NY) description of mother. Sent resources and rationale.

Of Mice and Men, John Steinbeck (11th grade English, PA) language. Sent resources and rationale.

Of Mice and Men, John Steinbeck (10th grade curriculum and library shelves, CA) language. Sent resources and rationale.

One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest, Ken Kesey (11th grade AP English Language and Composition, TX) language, humor is crude and vulgar. Sent rationale and resources. RETAINED in AP course reading list because of its importance to the AP curriculum.

Reservation Blues, Sherman Alexie (elective 11-12th grade Native American Literature Class, MT) language and sex scene. Alternative book accepted for student.

The Shipping News, E. Annie Proulx (12th grade AP English, OR) rape, offensive language, unsuited to age group. Sent resources.

Song of Solomon, Toni Morrison (10th grade, AL) language and sexual content. Sent resources and rationale.