Censorship Report
Quarter 1 FY2011 Compared to Quarter 1 FY10
By Millie Davis

While NCTE was called upon only 9 times this quarter to respond to challenges to classroom and library texts, anti-censorship, work was far from slow. Two challenges consumed a good deal of time and NCTE was joined in our responses by the National Coalition Against Censorship (NCAC), the American Library Association (ALA), the American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression (ABFFE), the Association of American Publishers (AAP), the PEN American Center, and the Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators (SCBWI). In addition, information on Common Sense Media’s book rating system provided at continued discussion among members of this collaborative group.

We've been working on the challenge to Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* in the Stockton R-1 School District in Missouri since last spring and the challenge itself has been through two iterations—with the book being banned both from the classroom and school library and then the ban being upheld when it was challenged. NCTE joined the organizations listed above in two letters this quarter to the superintendent and school board objecting to the ban. ALA actually sent a representative to the public meeting held in September that resulted in the ban being upheld. And NCTE, ALA, and NCAC all worked with different local educators to collaborate to fight the ban. The banning of this book made the news in Missouri many times over.

The second big challenge concerned the banning of young adult author Ellen Hopkins from the Teen Lit Festival in Humble, Texas, to which she'd been invited to speak. When Hopkins was disinvited from the festival, other authors scheduled to speak cancelled their engagements. NCTE joined the above organizations in a letter protesting the banning of Hopkins and supporting the authors who chose to support her by cancelling their appearances. This story found its way around the internet and recently appeared in *Time Magazine*.

Of the challenges this quarter, three were for advanced classes (IB and AP), four were for 9th graders, four were from summer reading lists, and some fell in more than one of these categories.

Below is a chart comparing the Quarter 1 FY2011 and the Quarter 1 FY2010 challenges and numbers of challenged texts. A few things to know as you compare the numbers are the following:

- Number of challenges = number of individuals who reported challenges.
- Number of works challenged is usually higher because often challenges involve more than one work.
- The bimonthly SLATE Newsletter features Censorship Challenge Reports by quarter. See http://www.ncte.org/action/slate.

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<th>July 2010</th>
<th>August 2010</th>
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<th>Q1 FY2011 Totals</th>
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<td><strong>0 Challenges</strong></td>
<td><strong>6 Challenges</strong> / 1 request for information on <em>The Students' Right to Read</em></td>
<td><strong>3 Challenges</strong></td>
<td><strong>9 Challenges</strong> / 1 request for information on <em>The Students' Right to Read</em></td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>July 2009</th>
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<tr>
<td><strong>0 Challenges</strong></td>
<td><strong>4 challenges</strong> / 2 books, 1 website, 1 nonuse of mandated curriculum / 1 request for</td>
<td><strong>8 challenges</strong> / 50+ books</td>
<td><strong>12 challenges</strong> / 50+ books, 1 short story, 1 website, 1 nonuse of mandated curriculum / 1 request for information</td>
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Listing of 1st Quarter Challenges Reported July-September, 2010

The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian, Sherman Alexie, (9-12 grades all students read, MO). Signed on letter w/NCAC, ALA, others to keep book in the curriculum.

The Kite Runner, Khaled Hosseini, (9th grade English, HI). Profanity, rape scene. Sent rationale and resources.

Of Mice and Men, John Steinbeck, (9th grade, Taiwan). Inappropriate for age. Sent rationale and resources.

Poisonwood Bible, Barbara Kingsolver, (senior AP summer reading, NH). Sexually explicit scenes. Sent resources and sample rationale.

The Sound of Waves, Yukio Mishima, (9th grade IB class, MA). Sensual scenes. Sent resources.

Teen Lit Festival, (TX). Author Ellen Hopkins disinvited as speaker. Other authors withdrew. NCTE signed letter with five other groups.

To Kill a Mockingbird, Harper Lee, (9th grade English, PA). Violence and N-word. Sent rationale and resources.

Water for Elephants, Sara Gruen, (High School summer reading list, VA). Masturbation scene. Sent resources and rationale.

Written on the Body, Jeanette Winterson, (senior AP summer reading, NH). Sexually explicit scenes. Sent resources and sample rationale.

Updates on Previous Challenges

Angela’s Ashes, Frank McCourt (10th grade, NY). Sent resources.). Sexual content. RETAINED IN CURRICULUM

The Bean Trees, Barbara Kingsolver, (9th grade honors English, CA) sexual crimes against children vulgarity, molestation. Sent rationale and resources. RETAINED FOR 10TH GRADE HONORS ENGLISH CLASSES.

Brave New World, Aldous Huxley (11th &12th AP, GA). Sexual content. Sent resources and rationale. RETAINED

The Lords of Discipline, Pat Conroy (9th grade summer reading list, GA). Sent rationale and resources. NOT SELECTED FOR THE SUMMER READING LIST.
Note to Millie, these were all the same school:

Adventures of Huckleberry Finn, Mark Twain (high school English classes, FL) not appropriate to read out loud. Sent rationale and resources. RETAINED

Catcher in the Rye, J. D. Salinger, (high school English classes, FL) not appropriate to read out loud. Sent rationale and resources. RETAINED

Grapes of Wrath, John Steinbeck, (high school English classes, FL) not appropriate to read out loud. Sent rationale and resources. RETAINED

The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald, (high school English classes, FL) not appropriate to read out loud. Sent rationale and resources. RETAINED

Lord of the Flies, William Golding, (high school English classes, FL) not appropriate to read out loud. Sent rationale and resources. RETAINED

Of Mice and Men, John Steinbeck, (high school English classes, FL) not appropriate to read out loud. Sent rationale and resources. RETAINED

Their Eyes Were Watching God, Zora Neale Hurston, (high school English classes, FL) not appropriate to read out loud. Sent rationale and resources. RETAINED