

**Censorship Report**  
**Quarter 2FY2013**  
*By Millie Davis*

NCTE's collaboration with other freedom-to-read groups to send letters in support of keeping challenged books in the classroom extended throughout Quarter 2 FY2013. The groups we work with include 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](#)). We handled four of the eleven challenges during this quarter with these groups and three of these challenges were to multiple texts.

Complainants, as is usually the case, objected to something they found in the text that they didn't like—language, sexual content, religion—and they, therefore, didn't want anyone in the school to read the texts. Many complainants were offered alternative texts for their students but still insisted that no student should read the text as part of a class in the school. The challenges, which were all at the high school level, ranged from Curtis Sittenfeld's *Prep* and Chuck Palahniuk's *Fight Club* to Maya Angelou's *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* and Sherman Alexie's *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian* (twice). The five texts challenged in [Katy, Texas](#) were removed while four other texts (In different challenges) were retained. The Fight Club challenge, one of the Katy, Texas, books was unique because two of the challenge reports we received were from students who were reading the book in their 12<sup>th</sup> grade AP class.

*Below is a chart comparing the Quarter 2 FY2013 and the Quarter 2FY2012 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>.*

October 2012	November 2012	December 2012	Q2 FY2013 Totals
<b>4 challenges</b> , 4 texts; 1 request for information	<b>4 challenges</b> , 11 texts	<b>3 challenges</b> , 3 texts	<b>11 challenges</b> , 18 texts; 1 request for information
October 2011	November 2011	December 2011	Q2 FY2012Totals
<b>3 challenges</b> , 3 texts	<b>2 challenges</b> , 2 texts; <b>1 request for assistance on writing district policies</b> for selection and challenge; 1 interview with student on book censorship	<b>2 challenges</b> , 3+ texts	7 challenges, 8+ texts; <b>1 request for assistance on writing district policies</b> for selection and challenge; 1 interview with student on book censorship

• **Listing of 2nd Quarter Challenges Reported October—December, 2012**

1984, George Orwell (10th grade, AZ). Sexual Content. Sent rationale & resources.

*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, Sherman Alexie (10th grade, WA). Sexual content, profanity, use of the N-word. Retained in the 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> grades/English department applying for use in the 10<sup>th</sup> grade.

*The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*, Sherman Alexie (9th & 10th grade, MA). Content: violence, addiction, poverty. [Signed on letter with NCAC and others.](#)

*Angela's Ashes*, Frank McCourt (10th grade, AZ). Sexual Content sent rationale & resources. Retained.

*Brave New World*, Aldous Huxley (10th grade, AZ). Sexual Content. Sent rationale & resources.

*Cat's Cradle*, Kurt Vonnegut (HS AP Class, NC). Denigrates Christianity & tears down traditional values. [Signed on letter with NCAC and others.](#)

*The Electric Kool-Aid Acid Test*, Tom Wolfe (10<sup>th</sup> grade summer reading list) Language, drugs, sexual content. Sent resources.

*Fight Club*, Chuck Palahniuk (HS AP Class 12th, TX). Language, content. [Signed on letter with NCAC & others.](#) Removed.

*The Glass Castle*, Jeannette Walls (9th grade, MI). Content. [Signed on letter with NCAC and others](#)

*Handmaid's Tale*, Margaret Atwood (HS AP Class, NC). Denigrates Christianity & tears down traditional values. [Signed on letter with NCAC and others.](#)

*Hills Like White Elephants*, Ernest Hemingway (HS AP Class 12th, TX). Language, content. [Signed on letter with NCAC and others.](#) Removed.

*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, Maya Angelou (9th grade, MN). Board received a formal Request for Reconsideration. Sent rationale & resources. Retained.

*I Look at Young Girls Now*, Jewel (9th Grade, PA). Content-sexual, girls clothing. Sent information and resources.

*Perks of Being a Wallflower*, Update from author Stephen Chbosky. Movie rating changed from R to PG-13. Film premiered 10/12/12 and was shown at the NCTE Annual Convention.

*Prep*, Curtis Sittenfeld (, PA). (9<sup>th</sup> grade summer reading list) Language, drugs, sexual content. Sent resources.

*The Other Wes Moore*, Wes Moore (, MA). Content: violence, addiction, poverty [Signed on letter with NCAC and others](#) -- Wes Moore wrote letter also.

*A Thousand Acres*, Jane Smiley (HS AP Class 12th, TX). Language, content [Signed on letter with NCAC and others.](#) Removed.