

Standing Committee Against Censorship

Charge:

- To solicit and receive reports of [censorship](#) incidents from NCTE members, constituent groups, and sources outside the Council;
- to serve as a resource on current patterns of censorship; to continue to raise awareness of censorship issues;
- to serve as an advisory committee to NCTE Headquarters considering the kinds of support and services that an Intellectual Freedom/Anti-Censorship Center could provide;
- to promote policies for literature adoption that allay the possibility of censorship;
- to help NCTE develop rationales for the teaching of controversial texts, and
- to develop a white paper that further explores students' right to write and all of its implications.

What actions, projects, initiatives, or studies are "in progress" at this time?

- The NCTE Standing Committee Against Censorship (SCAC) prepared for our convention meetings and sessions for the NCTE 2016 Annual Conference, Atlanta, Georgia, November 18 -20, 2016.

Convention Meetings:

- SCAC Meeting: Friday 11/18 9:30 AM - 10:45 AM in Georgia World Congress Center, B319
- C.54 Trigger Warnings: The Importance of Being Uncomfortable Friday, November 18, 2016, 12:30 – 1:45 p.m. Room B307
- Intellectual Freedom Award given at Awards Session F.02 Room TBA Saturday 11/19 8:00-9:15 a.m.
- L.01 Incorporating Author Voices in Censorship Challenges: Authors as Advocates Sunday 11/20 10:30 AM - 11:45 AM in Georgia World Congress Center, A305

Monthly Meetings:

- Monthly Meetings: Monthly meetings were held from January to October, 2016 via Zoom and telephone connections. Committee members met and discussed upcoming NCTE convention program events as well current issues regards censorship of public school materials. Millie Davis, NCTE liaison, met with committee members and took minutes.

Classroom Library Policy Statement:

- Classroom Library Policy Statement: Individually and collectively, NCTE SCAC Committee members produced a proposed NCTE Classroom Library Policy Statement for review by the NCTE Executive Committee – which upon approval – will be posted on the NCTE Standing Committee Against Censorship Position Statement website.
- This policy statement will serve as a guideline for public and private school teachers who desire to have a classroom library and want to know what specific guidelines they should recognize while building and promoting their collection.

Rationale for Controversial Books:

- Rationales for Controversial Books: Individually and collectively, NCTE SCAC Committee members will help contribute to the NCTE Rationales for Controversial Books.

- As NCTE redesigns its website, NCTE SCAC Committee members will be asked to contribute to the development of new and improved rationales for the many young adult novels that are often critiqued for being inappropriate for classroom use.
- By producing a revised and up-to-date list of NCTE Book Rationales for Controversial Books, the NCTE SCAC Committee members will be contributing to the development of a series of sound and reasoned rationales for using controversial texts in the elementary and secondary classroom.

NCTE Intellectual Freedom Award

- NCTE Intellectual Freedom Award: The NCTE Standing Committee Against Censorship formed a subcommittee for the selection of the NCTE Intellectual Freedom Award Winner and Honorary Award Winner. After careful consideration, the NCTE subcommittee for the selection of the NCTE Intellectual Freedom Award selected the following
- Matt de la Peña, author and social justice advocate, will be honored at the NCTE Awards Presentation with the NCTE National Intellectual Freedom Award on Saturday, November 19, 2016 at the NCTE Annual Convention, 2016, Atlanta, GA.
- Courtney Kincaid of North Richland Hills Public Library, North Richland Hills, Texas, will receive an Honorable Mention National Intellectual Freedom Award this year.
- [Here is the NCTE Press Release...](#)

NCTE Survey on Text Selection

- NCTE Survey on Text Selection: The NCTE Standing Committee Against Censorship Committee Members, Millie Davis (NCTE) and Joan Bertin (National Coalition Against Censorship) conducted a national survey of elementary and secondary school educators on the books they have bought for their respective school libraries. The intention was to determine how and why they selected the books they purchased.
- Simultaneously [School Library Journal connected another survey of librarians](#) which addresses self-censorship and updates the landmark 2008 NCTE Self-Censorship Controversial Book Survey.
- Joan Bertin and Millie Davis wrote [an article](#) for *School Library Journal* based on some of the findings in both surveys.

Joan and Millie are writing an article based on letters authors have received and shared with us about the importance of their books. We asked authors to share these letters with us because young readers are so often *not* heard when books are challenged. We've received hundreds of responses from letters to Chris Crutcher, Matt de la Peña, Emily Danforth, Ellen Hopkins, Lois Lowry, Wes Moore, Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, and Rainbow Rowell.

NCTE SCAC Future Writing Projects

- NCTE SCAC Future Writing Project: Millie Davis and Joan Bertin are writing an article based on letters authors have received and shared with them about the importance of their books to young people. Millie Davis and Joan Bertin asked young adult authors to share these letters with them because young readers are so often not heard when books are challenged. Millie and Joan received hundreds of responses from letters to young authors such as Chris Crutcher, Matt de la Peña, Emily Danforth, Ellen Hopkins, Lois Lowry, Wes Moore, Phyllis Reynolds Naylor and Rainbow Rowell.

- Paula Greathouse, Brook Eisenbach, and Joan Kaywell are writing an article that also feature young adult authors and how they handle issues of censorship.
- NCTE Standing Committee Against Censorship will be proposing a themed-issue for *Theory in Practice*, a peer-reviewed journal on teaching and teacher education, on the issue of Young Adult Literature and School Censorship Practices and Policies. NCTE Standing Committee Against Censorship members – as well as outside members – will be asked to contribute to this themed journal.
- NCTE SCAC Committee will contribute to the NCTE Literacy Blog reporting about the committee's endeavors.

What have you accomplished so far, and what is your timeline for future work?

We have accomplished considerably so far (see above) and our timeline is to continue to meet monthly – via Zoom under the direction of Millie Davis, NCTE Liaison – and to continue to review, promote and educate NCTE members and non-members on issues of involving censorship of public school materials.

Jeffrey Kaplan, Chair