

# Where Is Judy Blume?

## Controversial Fiction for Older Children and Young Adults

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Some conversations about intellectual freedom and censorship resonate for a long time in one's mind. In my case, the remarks that two public library directors, one Canadian, the other British, made during 1991 data-gathering interviews have troubled me for ten years. Their words have been shared with MLIS students in classes about censorship and eventually acted as catalysts for the investigation reported here.

According to the Canadian librarian:

If you keep a targeted book in the same place, it just infuriates the complainant every time she comes into the library. If a young person really wants that particular YA book, he'll find it. So it doesn't really matter if it's in the reference section, the adult section, or the teen section. The important thing is that we have the book, not where it is in the library.

The British librarian remarked:

I grew up on a sheep farm in Yorkshire, and I'm certain that at the age of 12, I knew more about sex than my teacher, but I still was not allowed to read anything "physical." Adults are so naïve when they think that children don't know about death and sex and injustice and the strong Anglo-Saxon four-letter

words of real life.

The research project sparked by these statements investigated two phenomena related to censorship:

- An investigation of the "relocation" of controversial materials for older children/young adults to the adult or reference area, including the extent of this practice and identification of the types of controversial materials most likely to be moved.
- An investigation of the most common reasons given when older children/young adult materials are challenged.

### Part 1—Relocation of Controversial Material

#### Background

The practice of relocating material to avoid a censorship challenge or in response to a challenge has been addressed only briefly in censorship articles and research projects. Young adult librarian Jessica Yates believes that public librarians may move controversial YA materials to adult areas because the librarians are fearful of young children "wandering over" to the YA area.<sup>1</sup> Dave Jenkinson, in his research on Manitoba school libraries, found evidence that library personnel moved potentially controversial material on topics such as date rape, drugs, and witchcraft from the regular collection to restricted "Teachers' Collections" or to the bookshelf in the school counselor's office.<sup>2</sup> Alvin Schrader reported in his Canadawide survey of censorship in public libraries that 13 percent of items retained after a censorship

challenge were "either relocated in the library, reclassified, labeled, or restricted by age or grade level."<sup>3</sup> Commenting on the extent of this phenomenon in the U.S., Louise Adler in the *Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom* described it as a "disturbing trend" in school libraries that teacher-librarians were responding to complaints about library materials by reclassifying books into different sections of the collections—to professional shelves, reserved sections, or otherwise less accessible areas.<sup>4</sup>

Previous research in this area also includes the project that prompted the remarks of the Canadian librarian quoted earlier. That early 1990s' project investigated censorship in public libraries through in-depth interviews with thirty Canadian and thirty British library directors.<sup>5</sup> During these interviews, directors were asked what methods they used to manage censorship challenges. The management action that directors mentioned most often was speaking with complainants to explain the library selection policy—90 percent of respondents noted this. Educating staff and board members about the philosophy of intellectual freedom was also noted frequently—70 percent mentioned education. However, a surprising number alluded to relocating problematic material to a different, if equally accessible, location after a complaint. Sixty-two percent of British directors who had received pressure to withdraw an item mentioned that they sometimes do this, while 40 percent of Canadians mentioned doing so. The relocation examples that directors gave included relocating items from the children's section to the teen section, from teen to adult, from the circulating collec-

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tion to reference or other specially designated areas, from one subject section to another through a classification change, and from one library branch to another. They explained that these actions are taken to defuse a situation and quiet the complainant, while retaining free access to the material.

Transferring material from the children's section to the teen section or from teen to adult was the most common Canadian "moving" strategy, while transferring material to another branch was the most common British strategy. When transferring material to a section for older readers or when reclassifying, both Canadian and British directors explain to the patron that the library has "reassessed the reading level" or that the "initial judgement of the catalogers was wrong." Directors justify moving a book to another branch by saying it may be "more suited" to the new location. In addition, they sometimes move material temporarily to a closed-stack collection (sometimes called the resource collection or stack reference) until the immediate furor has abated. Directors noted that this protects the material from the patrons as well as protecting the patrons from the material, thereby preserving controversial objects from willful damage or theft.

The point of view expressed by the Canadian librarian quoted above is indicative of the opinions of those directors who utilize these "moving" strategies. They consider them acceptable alternatives to removing books from the collection since the books remain accessible through the catalog or through asking a staff member. Although the researcher did not directly ask the respondents whether they considered that moving material might compromise accessibility or might even constitute a form of censorship, it should be noted that none of the thirty directors who described moving material mentioned this possible connection. Only one Canadian director noted that "browsability" might be hampered.

## Method

The information about "relocation"

obtained in the 1990–1993 research project was qualitative and anecdotal, gathered through lengthy interviews with a small number of respondents.

Consequently, the actual extent of this practice could not be determined. To further investigate this phenomenon of relocation, a quantitative analysis of the placement of controversial fiction titles for older children and young adults in British Columbia (B.C.) public libraries was carried out.

First, a list of older child/young adult fiction books that had been challenged in school and public libraries in Canada and the United States from 1984 to 1999 was compiled. Titles for this list emerged from twenty sources that included bibliographies, newspapers, journals, books, and Internet discussions. The primary sources for titles challenged in the United States were the American Library Association's *Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom* and the journal *American Libraries*—all issues for both journals for the sixteen-year period were searched. For titles challenged in Canada, the primary sources were Schrader's book *Fear of Words: Censorship and the Public Libraries of Canada*, and the journals *Quill and Quire* and *Feliciter*.<sup>6</sup> An initial list of 340 challenged titles was collected.

Various writers and researchers designate different age groups to be "young adult." Some consider those as young as 9 to be in this category, while others include only those 13 and older to be YA. For this project, it was decided to include books targeted for ages 10 to 17, as this appeared to be an age range noted often by those writing about censored material, and to describe this range as "older child/young adult." To determine whether the books on the "challenged" list were indeed targeted for this age range, the following sources were consulted: articles on young adult materials written by authorities on the literature; *Books in Print*, which often includes a "target grade" in the publisher's note; Amazon.com; the author's own remarks about the age group intended for his or her book; book reviews; and (most often) the descriptive blurb on the book's jacket. Materials were added to the list if the targeted age group

overlapped with several years of the 10 to 17 age designation. For example, books written for 8- to 12-year-olds were generally included.

The final list contains 220 titles (see appendix A). Titles were eliminated from the initial list of 340 because: (1) they were adult books perhaps suitable for young adults, but not geared specifically for that audience; (2) the reasons for the challenge could not be determined; or (3) the challenge appeared to be an isolated incident unique to a particular community.

All 220 titles were then matched against the Web-based database Outlook, a union catalog of over three million items that provides interlibrary loan information for B.C.<sup>7</sup> This database is comprised of the holdings of eighty-two public, post-secondary, and special library systems with automated catalogs. Sixty public libraries, serving approximately four million people in total, contribute their holdings. The coverage is almost province-wide, as those that have not added their holdings are generally very small libraries or reading rooms.

When a title match occurred, indicating that the book was in the collection of one or more B.C. public libraries, the "shelving location" information (if available) was noted. As the data submitted for the Outlook database originate from online public access catalog records, the records usually include shelving location for fiction. This information includes labels such as "adult," "juvenile," "young adult," "teen," "storage," and "children."

## Results

All 220 titles on the list appeared on the Outlook public library database records, indicating that at least one copy of each title was held in a B.C. public library and therefore easily available on interlibrary loan. Considering the controversial nature of these books, B.C. public librarians should be congratulated as a group for their collection management courage. This overall praise must be tempered, however, by data that showed considerable differences in title holdings among

systems of the same size. A comparison of the number of controversial titles held by individual libraries was not the focus of this research, but as total provincial holdings were tallied it was clear that some collection management librarians were more “courageous” than others.

In-depth investigation of the shelving location data revealed that a variety of inconsistent labeling practices and shelving practices existed within individual collections and among the sixty libraries. As the Outlook database is used primarily for interlibrary loan information, internal shelving location data are not of primary concern, but the inconsistencies created problems in data analysis. Some B.C. libraries do not have “teen” or “YA” sections, and as a result, interfile all fiction for customers over age ten. Others do have separate “YA” sections, but fail to designate any fiction locations in their catalog. This practice is found mostly in small libraries where the librarians maintained that they and their customers just “know” where the books will be shelved. Telephone calls and e-mail messages clarified many of the “mysteries” that emerged from the data, but inconsistencies in the original database must be acknowledged.

Analysis of the location records reveals that in libraries that have both an adult and a children’s/teen/YA area, approximately 15 percent of the copies of controversial titles designated for older children/young adults have been placed in the adult fiction area. For example, when searched in 1999, the database shows that twenty-six copies of *Go Ask Alice* are held by various B.C. public libraries. Of these, sixteen (62 percent) are shelved in adult fiction areas, while ten are shelved in areas designated for teen/YA fiction. Thirty copies of Katherine Paterson’s *Jacob Have I Loved* are listed: four are in adult collections (13 percent), while twenty-six are in teen/YA areas. The average of these percentages for all 220 titles is 14.5 percent, which indicates that approximately one in seven copies of the controversial titles on the research list has been “mis-shelved.”

No clear patterns could be discerned regarding the subject matter of books for

older children/young adults most likely to be shelved in the adult fiction area. However, it appeared that books in which a sexual act was described were more likely to be moved to the adult collection than those containing profanity, descriptions of violence, or allusions to homosexuality. It also appeared that copies of titles published before 1985, such as *Mr. and Mrs. Bo Jo Jones*, *The Boy Who Drank Too Much*, and *Annie on My Mind* were more likely to be placed in the adult fiction section than were more recently published titles. Viewing this phenomenon optimistically, it may be that current collection managers are willing to take more risks by placing potentially controversial *new* titles in “YA/teen” sections. Viewing it pessimistically, it may be that the recently published titles are *too new* to have received complaints in a particular library, and therefore are just waiting to be moved up the “age” ladder.

Overall, the degree of relocation adds evidence to the conclusions reached from anecdotal statements gathered in previous research: controversial books for older children/young adults are sometimes moved/reclassified to adult fiction sections, and it appears from the subject matter of the titles studied that avoiding or defusing censorship challenges is likely the justification for this action.

## Part 2—Why Is Material Challenged?

### Background

The words of the British librarian quoted at the beginning of this article led to part two of this research project—an investigation of why material for older children/young adults is challenged.

Although excellent research has already been completed in this area, it appears that no recent study has focused on material for older children/young adults or categorized by subject the reasons why materials were challenged.

Excellent background information on challenged titles in U.S. schools and public libraries can be found in books such as the ALA *Hit Lists*, *Banned in the U.S.A.*, *Censorship of Expression in the*

*1980s*, *Preserving Intellectual Freedom*, *Censored Books*, and in the recent four-volume *Facts on File Banned Books* series.<sup>8</sup> Similar information for titles challenged in Canada can be found in *Fear of Words*, Jenkinson’s article on censorship in Manitoba’s school libraries, “Censoring the Imagination,” and in the fourteen articles in a special “Censorship” issue of *Canadian Children’s Literature*.<sup>9</sup> With the exception of ALA’s *Hit List: Frequently Challenged Books for Young Adults*, however, none of these sources specifically addresses materials challenged for older children/young adults.

### Method

When the list of challenged titles was compiled for part one of this study, the reasons for the challenge were also noted, and the words of the person(s) challenging the material were recorded if available (see appendix A). In most cases, a title had been challenged more than once for the same reason. Rather than repeating similar phrases, the words most descriptive of that reason were used on the list. For some particularly controversial titles, such as Cormier’s *The Chocolate War* and Yep’s *Dragonwings*, complainants gave three or four different reasons why they wanted the book banned, all of which were noted.

The reasons for the complaints were then grouped under thirteen broad categories (see table 1). If a book had been challenged for more than one reason, it was cited under each relevant category. For example, complainants have challenged Mazer’s *Silver* for containing both foul language and violence, so this title would be cited under two categories—”Profanity” and “Violence.”

## Results

### Profanity

Profanity was the reason cited most often in challenges of the 220 books on the research list. Complaints focused most often on characters uttering “traditional” swear words such as “bitch,” “shit,” and “fuck,” as in the case of Conly’s *Crazy*

*Lady* and Richmond's *Wheels for Walking*. Seven books in this category, however, including Blume's *It's Not the End of the World*, were cited for breaking the Third Commandment—taking the Lord's name in vain. In these cases, the word "god" was used as an expression and the author usually expressed the term without first letter capitalization, a practice that was noted as being particularly profane.

**Sexuality**

Heterosexual activity was the second most often cited reason for complaint. This category included a wide variety of subtopics, but an author's description of consensual sexual "groping" or actual/implicit intercourse, as in Blume's *Forever*, was the most common basis for objection. Complainants also protested the mention of body parts such as breasts and penis, and the description of body changes such as menstruation and pregnancy.

An author's discussion of homosexuality was also a flashpoint. In most cases (thirty-four of forty-six complaints), one of the primary characters in the targeted book is a positively portrayed gay male, sometimes the protagonist, but often an important friend or older brother. A lesbian relationship prompted calls for withdrawal of seven books, the most well-known of which is Garden's *Annie on My Mind*. In five cases, the objections focused on the discussion of AIDS, with homosexuality likely the underlying reason for the complaint. This was the case with Humphrey's *Until Forever*.

Descriptions of sexual activity deemed by the complainant to be immoral or illegal were the impetus for forty-one complaints. Some of the acts depicted are indeed illegal both in the U.S. and Canada, but in most cases, writing about those acts is not. Sexual intercourse between an unmarried man and woman or the portrayal of an unmarried mother (implying such activity) was the basis of twelve complaints, including Klein's *Mom, the Wolfman, and Me*. Other sexually related activities mentioned or described, which engendered two to four complaints each, were prostitution, masturbation, birth control, sodomy, promis-

cuity, necrophilia, and incest. Five authors included the very difficult topic of child sexual abuse in their books; for example, Canadian author Culleton's *April Raintree* and Naylor's *Send No Blessings*.

**Religion/Witchcraft**

Authors' depictions of witchcraft, the occult, or Christianity prompted thirty-four complaints. Of these, twenty-three focused on witchcraft, the occult, or descriptions of "other powers" such as extrasensory perception. Dahl's *The Witches* is the most well-known title challenged for this reason, but J. K. Rowlings' *Harry Potter* series is quickly gaining equal or greater notoriety for its wizardry theme. Those concerned about the treatment of Christianity usually accused an author of "disrespect" for Christian beliefs, as was the case for Doerkson's *Jazzy* and Godard and Ribera's *The Ultimate Alchemist* in which God is portrayed as a depraved old man. Other challenges involved a character "shopping around" various religious denominations as Margaret does in Blume's *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*, and the positive portrayal of a non-Christian religion such as Taoism in Yep's *Dragonwings*.

**Violence/Horror**

Descriptions of violent or horror-filled acts were the cause of thirty-four complaints, and two books targeted frequently for this reason were *The Outsiders* by S. E. Hinton and *My Brother Sam is Dead* by James and Christopher Collier. Inclusion of cruelty against animals in the plot line appeared to raise particular anger against some books, for example, Peck's *A Day No Pigs Would Die*.

**Rebellion**

The category of "Rebellion" includes complaints about characters resisting parental or legal authority, with the major rebellious act cited being running away from home. It also includes complaints that centered on an author's negative portrayal of parents or the police. In all cases, it appears that complainants' fears that the book might encourage or

**TABLE 1**  
Title?

Reasons for Challenge	No. of Times Reason was Cited
Profanity	69
Heterosexual Activity	48
Homosexuality	46
Sexual Activity Deemed Immoral/Illegal	41
Religion/Witchcraft	34
Violence/Horror	34
Rebellion	32
Racism/Sexism	29
Substance Use/Abuse	18
Suicide/Death	13
Crime	11
Crude Behavior	8
Depressing/Negative	6
Other	10

justify rebellion prompted the challenges. Three of the titles in this category are Stacey's *How Do You Spell Abducted?* in which a father kidnaps his children, Cole's *The Goats*, in which children run away, and Cormier's *The Chocolate War*, in which the author portrays most of the adult authority figures unsympathetically.

**Racism/Sexism**

Challenges of "racism" and "sexism" were charges leveled in twenty-nine instances against the titles on the survey list. In eleven cases, people objected to words used to describe particular racial, ethnic, or minority groups. For example, Smucker's *Underground to Canada* and the *Colliers' Jump to Freedom* and *War Comes to Willy Freeman* were challenged because authors included the word "nigger" in the text, while Keehn's *I Am Regina* was challenged because of the word "squaw." In addition to complaints about particular words, people expressed concern about the way an author portrayed a racial, ethnic, minority, or gender group. In these eighteen cases, objectors usually chastised an author for "stereotyping," based on a fictional character's perceptions of a group's physical characteristics, work ethic, social habits, or abilities, or the author's unflattering portrayal of an individual belonging to a

particular group. For example, Taylor's *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry* has been accused of being racist by two different groups: one charging it with being "anti-black," the other, "anti-white." In Canada, complainants have objected to the portrayal of Metis people in Culleton's *April Raintree* (the author herself is of First Nations' heritage). Only three books received charges of "sexism"; for example, Greene's *The Boy Who Drank Too Much*, which supposedly presents a belittling view of women.

### Substance Use/Abuse

Descriptions of alcohol or drug use/abuse prompted eighteen complaints, with eight of those focusing on alcohol and ten on illegal drugs. Consumption by minors was the basis of most alcohol-based concerns; for example, the underage drinking described in Wieler's *Bad Boy*. However, depictions of irresponsible drinking by adults also prompted complaints; for example, the alcoholic father in Klein's *Learning How To Fall*. Those objecting to depictions of drug use often accused the author of "glorifying" this behavior, despite the harrowing and sometimes sordid context of most drug scenes. Three of Pike's books have been targeted because his young adult characters explicitly use drugs, while Klein's book *Dinky Hocker Shoots Smack* has been targeted for promoting heroine use because of its title. In truth, poor Dinky never even considers shooting up!

### Suicide/Death

Complainants were concerned in thirteen cases that descriptions of suicide and death were too traumatic for older children and young adults or would encourage them to commit suicide after reading the text. Pfeffer's 1980 book *About David*, centering on a teenager's suicide, continues to receive complaints twenty years after publication, while Paterson's *Bridge to Terabithia*, published in 1977, remains one of the most challenged books for her portrayal of a child's accidental death among other reasons.

### Crime

Eleven books on the list were challenged

because the author described a type of criminal activity. In most of these cases, the complainants were concerned that these descriptions provided a "how to" manual for children or made such acts exciting. General portrayal of teenage gang activities (as in Hinton's *The Outsiders*) appeared to cause the most concern, but objections were also based on an author's description of vandalism, euthanasia, stealing, and driving a car too quickly.

### Crude Behavior

"Crude" or "impolite" language or behavior formed the basis of eight accusations, which focused on such things as flatulence, discourteous remarks to adults, and bad grammar. The characters' delight in anal and armpit farts in Colville's *My Teacher Glows in the Dark* and the farting in Doyle's *You Can Pick Me Up At Peggy's Cove* raised the ire of complainants, as did the poor grammar of the heroes in Kevin Major's *Hold Fast* and Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*.

### Depressing/Negative

A small number of books were challenged because they were thought to be too depressing or negative for young people. This concern was coupled with other reasons such as "suicide" in four of the six titles in this category, but for Platt's *Headman* and Levoy's *Alan and Naomi*, negativity was the primary reason cited by complainants. For the latter title, the horror of the Holocaust and death of children were said to be too sad for the intended age group.

Reasons cited in just one or two instances are gathered together under the category "Other." Most concerned the teaching of moral values, and complainants expressed their views using phrases such as "improper moral relativism," "humanist undertones," and "no evidence of regret or punishment for actions."

Overall, profanity was the most frequently given reason for challenging the 220 listed titles, with 69 of 399 objections (17 percent). However, when the three major complaints regarding sex and sexuality—heterosexual activity, homosexuali-

ty, or acts perceived as illegal—are combined, the total of 135 of 399 objections (34 percent) reveals the dominance of sexually focused reasons. Objections based on religion/witchcraft were also numerous, accounting for approximately 9 percent (34 or 399) of complaints. However, this reason was of lesser importance in this research than in Jenkinson's (1994) study of censorship in school libraries in Manitoba in which it was the most frequently given reason for challenges.

### Conclusion

Those who are lobbying for what they call "family-friendly libraries" maintain that all members of a community must take responsibility for the upbringing of the community's children.<sup>10</sup> This is a laudable concept, but a difficult one to put into practice because members of the community have different ideas about that responsibility. To some, it means protecting children and young adults from challenging and difficult ideas. But to most librarians, that responsibility includes introducing young people to those ideas through books that reveal the complexity of a world of conflicting voices in which sexual images are pervasive but sex itself is forbidden, diversity and tolerance are celebrated but gays and lesbians are beaten, and individualism is encouraged but rebellion is condemned.

Those who wish to withhold materials often fear that introducing a child to stories about black magic or a drug-addicted teenager will prompt the child to experiment with all the actions described. In contrast, librarians who want to include those stories believe that a book is a much safer place than "real life" in which to develop wisdom about unsettling and possibly dangerous activities. Children and young adults are often looking for images of themselves, images as they are at that moment, struggling with parent conflicts, problem acne, feelings of rejection, and raging hormones, and images of what they might become. Literature affords the distance to examine one's self or potential self in a way not

otherwise possible. An unbiased portrayal of a love affair gone wrong or the difficulties and joys of teenage pregnancy show life as it really is, and allows a teenager to think about the “what ifs” without really being *in* the situation. Older children and teenagers, like adults, need a wide range of information in order to make the best decisions possible in the minefield areas cited in this study—sexuality, acceptable language, religion, drug/alcohol use, and interaction with authority. While nonfiction may provide objective facts, the challenged books on the list provide much more—the exploration of emotions, the factors that motivate people into dangerous and illegal actions, and the relationships in which they engage. Librarians hope they are helping teenagers develop judgement, while those who wish to restrict books consider these controversial materials “how to” manuals of sin.

Books that deal openly with controversial subjects are the ones young people like the best. Public and school librarians know this because they see these books devoured in their libraries. Writers know it because they frequently get letters from readers who say that the authors’ books helped them to think through difficult issues, to “talk” with someone about ideas that they don’t dare discuss with parents or even friends. The late Norma Klein, whose books are frequently challenged and who received thousands of letters from her readers, said: “I am convinced that to many teenagers, books are a lifeline to life.”<sup>11</sup> One of the most important responsibilities we assume as librarians is to make sure older children and young adults *get* those lifelines. We need to provide them with challenging books, including controversial ones, in the areas of the library where they can most easily find them—the children’s/young adult shelves. ●

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10. David Burt, testimony before the Pennsylvania House Judiciary Committee, March 8, 2000. Posted to ALAOIF electronic discussion list, March 24, 2000.
11. Norma Klein, “Some Thoughts on Censorship: An Author Symposium,” *Top of the News* 39 (winter 1983): 137–153.

## Appendix A: Books for Older Children/Young Adults Challenged in Schools and Public Libraries in the U.S. and Canada, 1984–99

All entries include author, title, year published, and subject of complaint.

- Anaya, Rudolfo. *Bless Me, Ultima*, 1994. Profanity. “Witchcraft.” “Gives a negative outlook to Hispanics.”
- Anonymous, *Go Ask Alice*, 1971. “Inappropriate language, references to homosexuality, oral sex, and drug addition.” “Forays into prostitution, incest, and rape.”
- Armstrong, William. *Southerner*, 1969. Use of word “nigger” and reference to black sharecropper as a “boy.”
- Arrick, Fran. *Tunnel Vision*, 1980. Teen suicide. “Too depressing.”
- Ashley, Bernard. *Break in the Sun*, 1980. Teenage runaways.
- Avi, *Devil’s Race*, 1984. “Foul language and violence”
- . *Something Upstairs*, 1988. A boy plans a killing, partly in self-defense.
- Banks, Lynne R. *The Indian in the Cupboard*, 1980. Portrayal of Indian said to be stereotypical and racist. “Objectionable language.”
- Bargar, Gary W. *What Happened to Mr. Forster*, 1981. A teacher who helps a sixth grade boy develop a sense of self-worth is suspected of being gay.
- Bell, William. *Crabbe*, 1986. Teenage runaways, alcoholism.
- . *The Cripples Club*, 1988. Portrayal of/attitude toward those with disabilities. Re-issued due to censorial pressure.
- . *Absolutely Invincible*, 1991.
- QY: INFO MISSING

- Bellairs, John. *Figure in the Shadows*, 1975. Portrayal of a very overweight boy who uses "black magic."
- Betancourt, Jeanne. *Sweet Sixteen and Never . . .*, 1987. "Graphic depiction of teenage romance."
- Block, Francesca Lia. *Cherokee Bat and the Goat Guys*, 1992. Issues in all four titles: sex.
- . *Weetzie Bat*, 1992. Co-habitation without marriage
- . *Missing Angel Juan*, 1993. The occult, homosexuality.
- . *Baby Be Bop*, 1995. Sex.
- Blume, Judy. *Are You There God? It's Me, Margaret*, 1970. "General filth." "Explicit sex and reproduction." Menstruation, choosing a religion.
- . *Then Again, Maybe I Won't*, 1971. "Explicit sex, immorality, reproduction, voyeurism, profanity." "Too mature for readers."
- . *It's Not the End of the World*, 1972. Profanity: "Damn," "Bastard," and using God's name in vain.
- . *Deenie*, 1973. "Immorality of masturbation."
- . *Blubber*, 1974. Profanity: words "damn" and "bitch" used.
- . *Forever*, 1975. "Objectionable language, masturbation, birth control, explicit sex scenes, premarital sex." "Too mature for readers." "Book is thoroughly immoral."
- . *Starring Sally J. Freedman as Herself*, 1977. Profanity: "bastard," "pissed." Sexual interests of young boys.
- . *Tiger Eyes*, 1981. Issues of suicide and attempted rape.
- . *Here's to You, Rachel Robinson*, 1991. Profanity: three "inappropriate" words.
- Bonham, Frank. *Gimme an H, Gimme an E, Gimme an L, Gimme a P*, 1980. "Breasts are mentioned."
- Bottner, Barbara. *Nothing in Common: A Novel*, 1986. Account of first sexual experience.
- Briggs, Raymond. *The Tin Pot Foreign and the Old Iron Woman*, 1984. "Incredibly sexually graphic pictures."
- Brooks, Bruce. *The Moves Make the Man: A Novel*, 1984. "Racist terms in dialogue were offensive." "Profane language was inappropriate."
- Desegregation: A white boy and a black boy form a friendship.
- Buffie, Margaret. *Who is Frances Rain?* 1987. Profanity: "hell," "damn," and "bastard."
- Chambers, Aidan. *Dance on My Grave: A Life and Death in Four Parts*, 1982. "Encourages and condones homosexuality. Does not reflect community standards. Filthy."
- Childress, Alice. *A Hero Ain't Nothing But a Sandwich*, 1973. "Profanity. Glorification of the drug culture." An African-American boy from Harlem suffers from heroin addiction.
- . *Rainbow Jordan*, 1981. Profanity. Sexually explicit.
- Clauser, Suzanne. *A Girl Named Sooner*, 1972. "Explicit sexual content."
- Cohen, Daniel. *The Headless Roommate and Other Tales of Terror*, 1980. "Terrifies young people with blood, gore and violent murders. Evil and illegal."
- . *Phantom Animals*, 1991. Witchcraft, "demonic."
- Cole, Brock. *The Goats*, 1987. "Sexual imagery, moral relativism, rebellion, profanity/crudeness." Running away.
- Collier, James Lincoln and Collier, Christopher. *My Brother Sam is Dead*, 1974. "Profanity, graphic violence." Drinking, references to rape, bad behavior of soldiers during American Revolution.
- . *Jump Ship to Freedom*, 1981. "Derogatory, degrading, and humiliating image of African Americans." "Offended by the assumption in the book that blacks were inferior." Historical fiction (Connecticut 1787) about a young black hero, a slave, who questions his own intelligence, refers to himself as a "nigger" and is called that by others.
- . *War Comes to Willy Freeman*, 1983. Use of word "nigger." Stereotypical portrayal of African Americans.
- . *With Every Drop of Blood*, 1994. Includes story of Noah putting a curse on Canaan and condemning him as a slave.
- Colman, Hila. *Happily Ever After*, 1986. Having gay friends.
- Colville, Bruce. *My Teacher Glows in the Dark*, 1991. Crude language: "farting," "armpit farts."
- . *The Dragonslayers*, 1994. "Witchcraft, deception." Heroine disobeys her parents.
- Conly, Jane Leslie. *Crazy Lady*, 1993. Profanity: "damn," "hell," and "bitch." Description of shoplifting technique.
- Cormier, Robert. *The Chocolate War*, 1974. "Pessimism. Harsh portrayal of adults, authority, school life, and teachers. Offensive language. Explicit description of sexual situations and violence. Destructive of religious and moral beliefs and of national spirit." "Masturbation and sexual fantasies."
- . *I Am the Cheese*, 1977. Portrayal of organized crime.
- . *After the First Death*, 1979. "Violent, crude."
- . *The Bumblebee Flies Anyway*, 1983. Exploration of experimental hospitals for terminally ill patients, young and old.
- . *Fade*, 1988. Contains "a violent death, child abuse, incest, and voyeuristic sexual scenes." A psychological novel about a fantasy world.
- . *We All Fall Down*, 1991. Teenage drinking, glorifying vandalism.
- Crutcher, Chris. *The Crazy Horse Electric Game*, 1987. Teenage runaways.
- . *Chinese Handcuffs*, 1989. "Graphic sexual references." Animal torture, teen drug use, profanity
- . *Athletic Shorts*, 1991. "Has a lot of foul language in it, is disrespectful to parents and authority. Makes homosexuality sound like a normal thing."
- Culleton, Beatrice. *April Raintree*, 1984 (Originally published as *In Search of April Raintree*). "Rape and swearing. Poor portrayal of Metis girl." "Child abuse. Explicit sex. Role stereotyping. Degradation of women."
- Cushman, Karen. *The Midwife's Apprentice*, 1995. Subject matter too mature for children.
- Dahl, Roald. *The Witches*, 1983. "Witchcraft, satanism, fantasy." "Desensitizes children to crimes"

- related to witchcraft.”
- . *Matilda*, 1988. “Condone illegal activity.”
- Davis, Terry. *Vision Quest*, 1979. Profanity.
- Deuker, Carl. *On the Devil’s Court*, 1988. Book “advocates the devil’s use of power over a child.”
- Doerkson, Margaret. *Jazzy*, 1981. “Defiance of authority. Explicit sex.” Profanity, inappropriate treatment of religion.
- Donovan, John. *I’ll Get There. It Better Be Worth the Trip*, 1969. Straight teens with gay experiences.
- Doyle, Brian. *Hey Dad*, 1978. “Obscene language.”
- . *You Can Pick Me Up At Peggy’s Cove*, 1979. “Flatulence. Father’s desertion. Divorce. Problems with the police.” “Defiance of authority. Racism. Poor role model.”
- Duncan, Lois. *Down a Dark Hall*, 1974. “Foul language and violence.”
- . *Killing Mr. Griffin*, 1978. “Profanity and violence.” Disrespect for parental and police authority.
- . *Daughters of Eve*, 1979. Sexual references.
- . *Don’t Look Behind You*, 1989. “Immoral book with graphic passages and sexual references.”
- Durant, Penny Raife. *When Heroes Die*, 1992. Being gay, AIDS.
- Ecker, B. A. *Independence Day*, 1983. Being gay.
- Ferguson, Alane. *Show Me the Evidence*, 1989. “Graphic passages, sexual references, and alleged immorality.”
- Fox, John. *The Boys on the Rock*, 1984. Being gay, profanity.
- Fox, Paula. *Slave Dancer*, 1973. “Racist.” Includes the word “nigger.”
- Garden, Nancy. *Annie on My Mind*, 1982. “Encourages and condones lesbianism among young girls. Doesn’t reflect community standards. Filthy.”
- George, Jean Craighead. *Julie of the Wolves*, 1972. Runaway Inuit girl flees an unwanted marriage. Includes an attempted rape scene.
- Gipson, Fred. *Savage Sam*, 1962. Stereotypical description of Indians: “naked wild man,” “red devils.”
- Glenn, Mel. *Who Killed Mr. Chippendale?* 1996. Student shoots and kills a teacher.
- Godard, Christian and Ribera, Julio. *The Ultimate Alchemist*, 1983. Profanity. Theme that God is a depraved old man.
- Gould, Steven. *Jumper*, 1992. Attempted sodomy. Teleportation. Glorification of bank robbery.
- Greene, Bette. *Summer of My German Soldier*, 1973. Depiction of African Americans. Use of words “nigras” and “darkies.”
- . *The Drowning of Stephan Jones*, 1991. Being gay. “Teaches anti-Christian beliefs and condones illegal activity.”
- Greene, Constance. *I Know You, Al*, 1975. “Author deals with sensitive subjects in an insensitive way.”
- Greene, Sheppard. *The Boy Who Drank Too Much*, 1979. “Sexism. Seeming toleration of alcohol consumption by minors.”
- Guy, Rosa. *The Friends*, 1973. “Explicit sex. Homosexuality.”
- . *The Music of Summer*, 1992. Prejudice within a group of African American teenagers.
- Hahn, Mary Downing. *Wait Till Helen Comes*, 1986. Ghosts, poltergeists. Suicide is presented “as an attractive way to solve problems.”
- Hall, Lynn. *Sticks and Stones*, 1972. Straight teenager is rumored to be gay.
- Hauggaard, Erik. *The Samurai’s Tale*, 1984. Violence, ritual suicide, references to “Lord Buddha” bring religion into school.
- Hautzig, Deborah. *Hey, Dollface*, 1978. “Encourages and condones homosexuality. Doesn’t reflect community standards.” “Defiance of authority.”
- Head, Ann. *Mr. and Mrs. Bo Jo Jones*, 1967. “Teenagers are too young to learn about pregnancy.”
- Hinton, S. E. *The Outsiders*, 1967. “Glorification of death and gangs. Death of parents.” “Glamorizes smoking and drinking. Excessive violence and use of obscenities.” “Defiance of authority.”
- . *Tex*, 1979. “Obscenity. Profanity”
- Holland, Isabelle. *The Man Without a Face*, 1972. Straight teenagers with gay experiences.
- Homes, A. M. *Jack*, 1989. Being gay. Profanity. Negative portrayals of all adults.
- Hotze, Sollace. *A Circle Unbroken*, 1988. “Foul language and violence”
- Humphreys, Martha. *Until Whatever*, 1991. AIDS.
- Irwin, Hadley. *Abby, My Love*, 1985. “Deals with incest, child abuse.”
- Jacobs, Anita. *Where has Deedie Wooster Been All These Years?* 1981. “Readers too immature for subject.”
- Jenkins, Lyll de. *The Honorable Prison*, 1987. “Violence, sexual scenes, lack of family values.”
- Johnson, Julie. *Adam and Eve and Pinch Me*, 1994. Objectionable language such as “damn” and “jerk-ass.”
- Johnson, Mendal W. *Let’s Go Play at the Adams’*, 1980. “Violence gratuitous and distasteful.”
- Jones, Adrienne. *Street Family*, 1987. Teenage runaways.
- Keehn, Sally. *I Am Regina*, 1991. “Unflattering” stereotypes of Native Americans, attempted rape scene, use of word “squaw.”
- Kerr, M. E. *Dinky Hocker Shoots Smack*, 1972. Use of heroin (which never occurs), references to religion, use of diet medication, which leads to drug use.
- . *I’ll Love You When You’re More Like Me*, 1977. Having a gay friend.
- . *Gentlehands*, 1978. The author sought to condemn Nazism while showing an individual Nazi in a positive light.
- . *Night Kites*, 1986. Discussion of homosexuality and AIDS.
- Kesselman, Wendy. *Flick: A Novel*, 1983. Lesbian overtones. Sexual activity of parents noted.
- Killingsworth, Monte. *Eli’s Songs*, 1991. “Anti-local, anti-city, logger-bashing sentiments. A political eco-mania book that is being pushed onto children. Portrays men who are loud and drinking.” A long-haired young man protects an old-growth forest from being logged.
- Klein, Norma. *Mom, the Wolfman, and Me*, 1972. Unmarried mother.

- . *It's Not What You Expect*, 1973. Breakdown of family unit.
- . *Naomi in the Middle*, 1974. "Sexually explicit language." Objections to passage describing two pre-teen sisters in a bathtub discussing their mother's pregnancy.
- . *Blue Trees, Red Sky*, 1975. "Profanity and immorality"
- . *What's It All About*, 1975. "Profanity."
- . *Hiding*, 1976. "Obscenity."
- . *It's Okay if You Don't Love Me*, 1977. "Too mature for readers."
- . *Tomboy*, 1978. "Too mature for readers."
- . *Breaking Up*, 1980. Lesbian mother.
- . *Beginner's Love*, 1983. Oral sex episode. "Pervasively vulgar."
- . *Family Secrets*, 1985. Sex between teenagers, incest.
- . *Now That I Know*, 1988. Gay father, divorced parents.
- . *That's My Baby*, 1988. Explicit sex. No link of actions to consequences.
- . *Learning How to Fall*, 1989. Lesbian mother, alcoholic father.
- . *Just Friends*, 1990. "Pornographic smut."
- Koertge, Ron. *The Arizona Kid*, 1988. "Encourages and condones homosexuality. Does not reflect community standards."
- Kushner, Ellen. *Mystery of the Secret Room*, 1986. "Teaches witchcraft. Children should be taught about Christ, not Satan."
- L'Engle, Madeleine. *A Wrinkle in Time*, 1962. Witchcraft: Time travel and magic.
- Lee, Joanna. *I Want to Keep My Baby*, 1977. "Anti-religious sentiments."
- Lehrman, Robert. *Juggling*, 1982. Sexual experience described.
- Levoy, Myron. *Alan and Naomi*, 1977. A novel about the Holocaust criticized for its "poor" portrayal of Jews. The subject and the ending said to be too sad for children.
- Lindgren, Astrid. *The Brothers Lionheart*, 1975. Suicide. Too depressing overall.
- Lipsyte, Robert. *One Fat Summer*, 1977. "Sexually explicit and full of violence."
- Lowry, Lois. *Anastasia Krupnik*, 1975. Inappropriate language.
- . *The Giver*, 1993. The "black magic" of memory transfer, themes of infanticide and euthanasia.
- Lyle, Katie Letcher. *Dark But Full of Diamonds*, 1981. "Profanity." "Explicit description of sexual intercourse."
- Lynch, Chris. *Shadow Boxer*, 1993. Harsh, graphic language.
- . *Iceman*, 1994. Profanity.
- MacGregor, Roy. *Mystery at Lake Placid*, 1995. Crude language: Hockey face-off circles are compared to "boobs."
- Major, Kevin. *Hold Fast*, 1978. "Immoral and filled with sexual plots" "Explicit language." Condones running away. Use of slang and bad grammar.
- Marzollo, Jean. *Halfway Down Paddy Lane*, 1981. Objectionable language including "breasts, crotch, bastards, Jesus Christ and Mary." "References to incest." "Lack of guilt and regret."
- Mazer, Norma Fox. *Dear Bill, Remember Me?* 1976. Two teens make love on a couch.
- . *Up in Seth's Room*, 1979. "Explicit sex."
- . *Silver*, 1988. Foul language and violence.
- . *Out of Control*, 1993. "Language inappropriate for that age level."
- Mazer, Harry. *The Last Mission*, 1979. "Profane language." A 15-year-old Jewish boy enlists in the U.S. Air Corps and is taken prisoner by the Germans.
- . *Cave Under the City*, 1986. Teenage runaways.
- Meyer, Carolyn. *Elliott and Wyn*, 1986. Having a gay friend.
- Miklowitz, Gloria. *Good-bye Tomorrow*, 1987. AIDS.
- Mosca, Frank. *All-American Boys*, 1983. Being gay.
- Mowry, Jess. *Way Past Cool*, 1992. Street life in California, violence, profanity.
- Myers, Walter Dean. *The Legend of Tarik*, 1981. "Violent, full of gore." Use of the word "god" uncapitalized.
- . *Fallen Angels*, 1988. "Full of cursing."
- Naylor, Phyllis R. *The Agony of Alice*, 1985. Sex.
- . *Send No Blessings*, 1990. "Condone child molestation and promiscuity. Promotes illicit contact between adults and children."
- . *All But Alice*, 1992. Discussion of necrophilia.
- . *Alice, In Between*, 1994. Sexual incidents.
- . *Outrageously Alice*, 1997. Sex and rebellion.
- Nelson, Theresa. *Earthshine*, 1994. Homosexuality, profanity, running away from home.
- Neufeld, John. *Freddy's Book*, 1968. Sex instruction.
- Nixon, Joan Lowery. *High Trail to Danger*, 1991. "Foul language and violence."
- Oates, Joyce Carol. *Foxfire*, 1993. Profanity, promotion of gang culture.
- O'Brien, Robert. *Z for Zachariah*, 1975. "Foul language and violence."
- O'Hara, Mary. *My Friend Flicka*, 1941. Profanity (one "inappropriate" word).
- Paterson, Katherine. *Bridge to Terabithia*, 1977. "Profanity, frightening death of a child."
- . *The Great Gilly Hopkins*, 1978. "Profanity and graphic violence." "Using the Lord's name in vain."
- . *Jacob Have I Loved*, 1980. "Offensive language."
- Paulsen, Gary. *Nightjohn*, 1993. Violence.
- Peck, Richard. *Are You in the House Alone?* 1976. Rape of a teenager and unflattering portrayal of police.
- Peck, Robert Newton. *A Day No Pigs Would Die*, 1972. "Bigotry against Baptists and women. Violence, hatred, animal cruelty."
- Pfeffer, Susan Beth. *About David*, 1980. "Teenage suicide."
- Pike, Christopher. *The Graduation*, 1989. "Contains scenes dealing with suicide and birth control. Inappropriate for young teen readers."
- . *The Party*, 1991. Drug use and references to sex.
- . *Die Softly*, 1991, Horror and drug use.
- . *Whispers of Death*, 1991. Horror.
- . *Road to Nowhere*, 1993. Sex, hor-

- ror, drug use.
- Platt, Kin. *Headman*, 1975. "Too depressing and nihilistic."
- Reading, J. P. *Bouquets for Brimbal*, 1980. "Implied lesbianism and vulgar terms."
- Reiss, Joanna. *The Upstairs Room*, 1972. Use of "the Lord's" name in vain.
- Richmond, Sandra. *Wheels for Walking*, 1983. Profanity. Smoking marijuana. Rebellion against adults.
- Rowling, J. K. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, 1998. All three books: Wizardry, anti-family values, rebellion against family authority.
- . *Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets*, 1999.
- . *Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*, 1999.
- Sacher, Louis. *The Boy Who Lost His Face*, 1989. "Profanity and frightening war scenes." Historical fiction about a girl in Holland hiding from the Nazis.
- Salinger, J. D. *The Catcher in the Rye*, 1951. "Bad grammar, preoccupation with death and sex. Profane, immoral filth. Use of Lord's name in vain."
- Samuels, Gertrude. *Run, Shelley, Run!*, 1975. Teenage runaway, profanity, lesbianism, "Promotes acceptance of masturbation."
- Schwartz, Alvin. *Scary Stories to Tell In the Dark*, 1981. All three books: "too frightening for children," "promotes the occult and Satanism," "too violent."
- . *More Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark*, 1984.
- . *Scary Stories 3*, 1991.
- Scoppettone, Sandra. *Happy Endings Are All Alike*, 1978. "Promotes lesbianism. Contains rape and violence."
- Shannon, George. *Unlived Affections*, 1989. Gay family member and death of grandmother.
- Sleator, William. *Blackbriar*, 1972. "Objectionable language." Devil worship.
- Slepian, Jan. *The Alfred Summer*, 1980. "Profane, blasphemous, and obscene. Bad for a teen's moral development."
- Smucker, Barbara. *Underground to Canada*, 1977. Use of the word "nigger."
- Sparks, Beatrice, ed. *Jay's Journal*, 1979. Witchcraft, teenage suicide.
- Spinelli, Jerry. *There's a Girl in My Hammerlock*, 1984. "Foul language and violence."
- . *Jason and Marceline*, 1988. "Shocking and pornographic. Profanity and explicit sexual language."
- Stacey, Cherylyn. *How Do You Spell Abducted?* 1996. Father kidnaps his children. Said to promote hatred of men and fatherhood.
- Stine, R. L. *The Babysitter*, 1989. "Foul language and violence."
- Stevenson, James. *The Bones in the Cliff*, 1995. Too "racy."
- Strasser, Todd. *Angel Dust Blues*, 1979. "Nudity and immorality." Drug-dealing, alienation of a seventeen-year-old boy.
- Sweeney, Joyce. *Shadow*, 1994. Graphic language, extrasensory perception.
- Synder, Anne. *The Truth About Alex*, 1981. Being gay.
- Talbert, Marc. *Dead Birds Singing*, 1985. "Pornographic and explicit sexual passages." A boy struggles to deal with the death of his grandmother.
- Taylor, Mildred. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, 1976. "Racial bias, anti-white." Racial bias, anti-black due to use of word "nigger."
- Taylor, Theodore. *The Cay*, 1969. "Racist, maligns African-Americans."
- Truss, Jan. *Jasmin*, 1982. Teenage runaways.
- Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, 1885. "Racial slurs are offensive to both black and white students."
- Velasquez, Gloria. *Tommy Stands Alone*, 1995. Being gay.
- Voight, Cynthia. *David and Jonathan*, 1992. Profanity, masturbation. "Crude"
- . *When She Hollers*, 1994. Child sexual abuse.
- Walker, Kate. *Peter*, 1993. Exploration of gay sexual feelings.
- Welch, James. *Fool's Crow*, 1986. Sexual references, "disgusting."
- Wersba, Barbara. *Just Be Gorgeous*, 1988. Homosexuality
- Wieler, Diana. *Bad Boy*, 1989. Underage drinking, date rape, homosexuality, speeding in a car.
- Yep, Laurence. *Dragonwings*, 1975. "Anti-Christian. Advances the beliefs of Taoism." Might encourage children to commit suicide so they can be reincarnated as someone else. "Racist . . . blame is not placed squarely on the economic system which then, as now, used non-whites for maximum profit." "Promotes secular humanism by implying that man can achieve his goals without God's intervention." Profanity. Violence. Alcohol and drug use supposedly depicted in positive light.
- Yolen, Jane. *Devil's Arithmetic*, 1990. "Foul language and violence."
- Young, Alida E. *I Never Got to Say Goodbye*, 1988. AIDS.
- Zindel, Paul. *The Pigman*, 1968. "Negative role models and values. Destructive, disrespectful, antisocial and illegal behavior."
- . *Loch*, 1994. Profanity.