

Material Challenges in Maine Schools and School Libraries 2003-2009

Censorship & Material Challenges in Maine Schools - 2009

Material Challenged: **Running with Scissors** by Augusten Burroughs

Institution: Telstar Middle & High School Library

Location: Bethel, Maine

Complainant(s): parent

Complaint: **unsuited to age group** (6th grade): parent thinks book is inappropriate for sixth graders

Date: May 2009

Result: parent was offered reconsideration form but decided not to pursue formal challenge

Material Challenged: **Holes** by Louis Sachar

Institution: Connors Emerson School Classroom

Location: Bar Harbor, Maine

Complainant(s): parents

Complaint: **unsuited to age group** (5th grade) & **not quality literature**: parents did not think book was appropriate for fifth grade class read aloud, wanted teacher to read from "classic" canon

Date: March 2009

Result: parents were offered reconsideration form but they decided not to pursue formal challenge

Material Challenged: **Cosmo Girl**; **Family Handyman**; **Four Wheeler**; **Hot Rod**; **Popular Mechanics**; **Popular Science**; **Transworld Motocross**; **Transworld Skateboarding**; **Transworld Snowboarding**

Institution: Biddeford Middle School Library

Location: Biddeford, Maine

Complainant(s): school staff member

Complaint: concern about messages primarily in magazine **advertisements regarding drugs, smoking, alcohol and sexual activity unsuited to age group** (middle school)

Date: January 2009

Result: all magazines were retained

Censorship & Material Challenges in Maine Schools - 2008

Material Challenged: **Names Will Never Hurt Me** by Jamie Adoff

Institution: Sacopee Valley Middle School Library

Location: Hiram, Maine

Complainant(s): parent

Complaint: -

Date: September 2008 (reported)

Result: book was challenged by parent, reconsideration form was sent but not returned

Material Challenged: **The Boyfriend List** by E. Lockhart

Institution: Searsport Middle School Library

Location: Searsport, Maine

Complainant(s): parent

Complaint: -

Date: July 2008 (reported)

Result: book was challenged by parent but was retained in library

Censorship & Material Challenges in Maine Schools - 2007

Material Challenged: Deo gratias by J.P. Stassen

Institution: King Middle School Library

Location: Portland, Maine

Complainant(s): student

Complaint: **sexual violence & racial/ethnic bias & unsuited to age group** (6th grade): student was "disgusted" by the material, believes "others would be too" and wants school to "take it out of the library"

Date: 2006

Result: formal challenge form was completed but student changed mind about formal challenge

Material Challenged: The Indian in the Cupboard by Lynne Reid Banks

Institution: Longfellow Elementary School Library

Location: Portland, Maine

Complainant(s): certified SLMS

Complaint: **racial/ethnic bias**

Date: December 2007

Result: book was removed by certified school library media specialists because book contained outdated stereotypes of Native Americans

Censorship & Material Challenges in Maine Schools - 2006

Material Challenged: Executioner's Song by Norman Mailer

Institution: Community High School Library

Location: Fort Kent, Maine

Complainant(s): **unsuited to age group** (9th grade)

Complaint: parent

Date: October 2006

Result: -

Material Challenged: Girl Interrupted by Susanna Kaysen

Institution: Orono High School Classroom

Location: Orono, Maine

Complainant(s): **profanity & graphic sexuality** "pornographic" & **unsuited to age group** (9th grade)

Complaint: parent

Date: February 2006

Result: book was removed from classroom, reviewed by committee and returned to classroom

Censorship & Material Challenges in Maine Schools - 2005

None reported

Censorship & Material Challenges in Maine Schools - 2004

Material Challenged: Please Don't Kill the Freshman by Zoe Trope

Institution: King Middle School Library

Location: Portland, Maine

Complainant(s): parent

Complaint: **graphic sexuality & unsuited to age group** (6th grade)

Date: December 2004

Result: book was challenged by parent, reconsideration form was sent but not returned

Material Challenged: Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger

Institution: Noble High School Classroom

Location: North Berwick, Maine

Complainant(s): parent

Complaint: **immoral & unsuited to age group** (9th grade)

Date: December 2004

Result: book was retained on reading list & committee also recommended that schools provide information regarding classroom material selection and alternate reading in case of parental objection

Material Challenged: Guinness World Records 2002

Institution: Orland Consolidated School

Location: Orland, Maine

Complainant(s): school staff member

Complaint: **graphic sexuality**: staff member complained that pop culture represented in the back of the book was too sexual for young children. Some boys had been chasing each other on the playground with the picture of Britney Spears(p.37) and kissing the picture.

Date: December 2004

Result: staff member and librarian spoke about ways to handle inappropriate behavior on playground; book retained in library

Material Challenged: Inside Out by Terry Trueman

Institution: York Middle School

Location: York, Maine

Complainant(s): parent

Complaint: **profanity & unsuited to age group**: parent thought access to book should be limited due to profane language and mature theme

Date: December 2004

Result: -

Material Challenged: Ranma 1/2 by Rumiko Takahashi

Institution: King Middle School

Location: Portland, Maine

Complainant(s): school staff member

Complaint: **graphic sexuality**: staff member complained about some of the illustrations in the graphic novel, which had been vandalized to show sexual body parts

Date: October 2004

Result: library staff met with each student who had checked graphic novel out that year to discuss destruction of school property and sexual harassment; guilty party was revealed and disciplined; vandalized graphic novel was discarded and replaced

Material Challenged: It's So Amazing: A Book about Eggs, Sperm, Birth, Babies and Families by

Robie Harris and illustrated by Michael Emberley

Institution: South Hiram Elementary School Library

Location: South Hiram, Maine

Complainant(s): parent

Complaint: **graphic sexuality & unsuited to age group** (elementary school)

Date: September 2004

Result: book was retained in library; letter was written and sent to parents explaining how material selection policy

Material Challenged: Secrets in the Fire by Henning Mankel

Institution: Falmouth Middle School Library

Location: , Maine

Complainant(s): school staff member

Complaint: **unsuited for age group** (5th grade) & **graphic violence**: staff member took book away from student claiming that topic (effects of landmines) was inappropriate (too violent) for fifth graders

Date: Spring 2004

Result: librarian spoke with staff member; book was retained in library

Material Challenged: Nickelodeon, Ride BMX, Sports Illustrated, Teen People, Transworld Motocross, Transworld Skateboarding

Institution: Rockland District Middle School Library

Location: Rockland , Maine

Complainant(s): -

Complaint: **graphic sexuality & profanity**

Date: Spring 2004

Result: committee reviewed magazines as per district challenge policy and decided to remove some and retain others; superintendent agreed with committee's decision; school board voted to remove all magazines, overriding committee's decision

Material Challenged: Switch Bitch by Roald Dahl

Institution: Connors Emerson School Classroom

Location: Bar Harbor, Maine

Complainant(s): parents

Complaint: **graphic sexuality & unsuited to age group** (8th grade): two short stories from collection were read aloud in eighth grade class; materials was challenged as "sexually graphic" and inappropriate for students

Date: January 2004

Result: teacher apologized to parents for assigning collection of sexually graphic short stories

Material Challenged: Holes by Louis Sachar

Institution: C.K. Burns School Classroom

Location: Saco, Maine

Complainant(s): parent

Complaint: **unsuited to age group** (4th grade) & **immoral & violence & not quality literature**: parent objected to book being read aloud in fourth grade class, questioned book's morality, complained of violence--that book is more violent than movie--and thought book was not quality literature

Date: January 2004

Result: -

Censorship & Material Challenges in Maine Schools - 2003

Material Challenged: Princess Diaries by Meg Cabot

Institution: Berwick Academy

Location: South Berwick , Maine

Complainant(s): parent

Complaint: -

Date: March 2003

Result: parent did not want to pursue formal complaint after being given paperwork