

## Challenged Books and Magazines List

This selective list provides information about numerous books and some magazines and newspapers that have been challenged in the past decades. Each challenge sought to limit public access to these publications in schools, libraries and elsewhere. Some challenges were upheld; others were rejected. We have tried to update our research on unresolved challenges.

Because some challenges are dismissed, the publications remain on library shelves or curriculum lists. We think it is worthwhile to include such instances because the effect of a controversy over publications can spread even though the would-be banners lose. A book or magazine with a controversial reputation can be quietly dropped from reading lists and curricula. This interference can be most insidious—quiet acquiescence to the scare tactics that would-be censors know how to employ.

Because organizations and community groups that ask for book and magazine bans usually want to avoid public controversies, it is often difficult to discover why challenges are launched or what becomes of them. If you know of book or magazine or newspaper challenges or, better still, satisfactory resolutions anywhere in Canada, please use the accompanying case study form to give us details.

### 2016

Archibald, Samuel. *Arvida*.

**2016**—In January, a patron of the Edmonton Public Library challenged this collection of fictional stories set in the town of Arvida, Quebec. In 2015, the English translation was longlisted for the Scotiabank Giller Prize.

**Objection**—The complainant objected to a description of child rape. “Child pornography is against the law, and explicit depiction of child rape breaks the law,” the complainant wrote. The complainant wanted *Arvida* removed from the library and wanted the Edmonton Police Service notified about the book.

**Update**—The library responded in the same month: “In reviewing the passage you mentioned (p. 103), I am confident that this book does not advocate sexual activity with a person under the age of eighteen years. The book could not be described as one in which the ‘dominant characteristic is the description, for a sexual purpose, of sexual activity with a person under the age of eighteen years.’ While the description in the passage may be graphic, it is not the dominant theme of the book. While the library acknowledges your personal response to this book, it does fall within the Edmonton Public Library’s guidelines for inclusion in the collection for adults. The policy of the Library is to provide customers with access to all of our collections, with the stipulation that parents and guardians are expected to take responsibility for what their children read, view, and listen to.”

The library retained *Arvida*.

Bang-Campbell, Monika. *Little Rat Makes Music*.

**2016**—In November, patrons of a public library in Ontario challenged this children’s

illustrated story book.

**Objection**—Insensitivity. The complainants disapproved of one of the characters in the book and felt it conveyed “a very bad image for young children who take music lessons.” The complainants wanted the library to reconsider having this title in its collection.

**Update**—The library resolved the challenge within two days and kept the book. A librarian wrote: “I believe the library had the appropriate response to this challenge. We strongly value intellectual freedom.”

Boulanger, Fabrice. *Ma soeur veut un zizi*.

**2016**—In November, a parent challenged this illustrated sex-education book for children in a public library in Alberta.

**Objection**—The complainant asked the library to put a warning label on this book because it focuses on reproduction and human sexuality.

**Update**—The library viewed this request partly as a challenge to its access policy for children.

A librarian wrote this response: “Books which deal with reproduction and human sexuality are often the subject of valid concern for parents like yourself. Parents are concerned that children receive not only correct information, but also information presented according to their wishes and beliefs. However, there are as many ideas about what constitutes appropriate information for children as there are families. While the library acknowledges your personal response to this book, it is the policy of the Library to provide customers with access to all of our collections, with the stipulation that parents and guardians are expected to take responsibility for what their children read, view and listen to. In keeping with our adherence to the Statement on Intellectual Freedom and our commitment to support a diverse collection which reflects varying tastes and points of view, the Library will not be adding a warning label to this book.”

The library retained the book in its collection and retained its access policy too.

Bow, Erin. *The Scorpion Rules*.

**2016**—In January, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this novel for young adults.

It is the first novel in the Prisoners of Peace series of novels.

**Objection**—The book is age inappropriate, the complainant said, because it “contains a bi-sexual sex scene not alluded to on the cover.” The complainant requested that all books with homosexual content be located “in a special area reserved for adults 18+” and put on a shelf marked with a rainbow. The complainant wanted the books labelled “so that children, as well as adults, do not happen upon [them] unwillingly.”

**Update**—The library regarded this book challenge as multi-faceted. The library had policies not to label titles and not to have special shelves for readers over the age of 18. Because the patron complained about “... all [young-adult] books with homosexual content,” the library also regarded the complaint as a challenge to its collections policy.

The library decided that labelling books with LGBTQ content would be an example of expurgating library resources and, therefore, would violate the Library Bill of Rights. In February, the library resolved the challenge; *The Scorpion Rules* remained unlabelled in its usual location.

“I thought that our library handled the challenge well, educating not only the

patron, but also our community partners about intellectual freedom and library ethics,” a library employee wrote. “The library was asked, however, to refrain from purchasing ‘challengeable’ materials with Rotary Club funding, although they do not monitor our selections.”

Boyden, Joseph. *Three Day Road*.

**2016**—In September, a parent of a student in a grade school (K–12) in Alberta challenged this best-selling Canadian novel for adults. The student, however, was not reading the book. Two copies of *Three Day Road* were affected.

**Objection**—The school administrator thought the novel sexually explicit and sought the removal of all copies from the school.

**Update**—The novel was “partially banned” until the authorities resolved the challenge. The school administrator did not follow the challenged materials policy; the library was not involved in the decision. In the end, access to the novel was restricted.

The novel is no longer studied in this school, but students may request the novel as a “free read.” This result “seems to be the outcome that the school administrator wanted,” a librarian wrote.

Card, Orson Scott. *Empire*.

**2016**—In September, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this audiobook. *Empire* is an adult science-fiction novel.

**Objections**—The patron objected to the novel’s political viewpoint and felt the title was controversial. The patron asked the library to remove *Empire* from its collection.

**Update**—The library took nine days to resolve the challenge. The library retained the audiobook in its collection.

Christie, Agatha. *And Then There Were None*.

**2016**—In May, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this adult mystery novel.

First published in Britain in 1939, *And Then There Were None* is a best-selling book.

**Objections**—The patron described the book as racist and anti-Semitic and demanded its removal from the library.

**Update**—The library resolved the challenge in August and kept the book in its collection.

Cradle of Filth. *Hammer of the Witches*.

**2016**—In April, a parent of a 15-year-old complained about a booklet in a music CD package in a public library in Alberta. The teen had checked out the CD.

Cradle of Filth is a heavy metal band in Britain. *Hammer of the Witches* is the name of an album.

**Objections**—The parent objected to depictions of female nudity and sexualized violence against women. The patron wanted the library to remove the CD’s booklet.

**Update**—The library sent a letter to the parent and listed the reasons for retaining the booklet: the album got favourable reviews; it was characteristic of its genre; the band recently held a concert in the metropolitan Edmonton area; and other library patrons were borrowing the album.

The library resolved the challenge by the end of May and retained the item in its collection.

de Brunhoff, Jean. *The Travels of Babar*.

**2016**—In July, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this children’s story book.

**Objections**—The patron described the illustrations in *The Travels of Babar* as racist and insensitive. The patron demanded the book’s removal from the collection.

**Update**—“We explained that this book was written in 1934 and is dated in its portrayal of indigenous peoples of Africa,” a librarian wrote. “It is regarded as a classic, and other libraries have it . . .” The librarian added that the book provided “opportunities for conversation with the child” and that the library “would be retaining it.”

The library resolved the challenge in July and kept *The Travels of Babar*.

Defonseca, Misha. *Surviving with Wolves*.

**2016**—In May 2016, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged the shelf location of this adult book.

**Objection**—Inaccuracy. The patron suggested that the library move the book to the fiction section.

**Update**—The library did reclassify and relocate this book to the fiction section.

Ewart, Marcus. *10,000 Dresses*.

**2016**—In November, postsecondary students and a library staff member challenged this children’s picture book in an academic library in Saskatchewan.

The book, which is illustrated by Rex Ray, depicts the experiences of transgender people.

**Objection**—Stereotyping. “Students enrolled in a children’s literature course questioned the book (while building their thematic unit of quality children’s literature) because of its stereotypical construction of girl = dresses,” a librarian wrote. “In addition, they . . . could not find a book review for the book in the more reputable reviewing journals such as *School Library Journal*. Furthermore, they questioned the quality of the art, and they did not believe that the book contributed to the positive/affirming representation and identity formation of children from GLBTQ communities and their children. The students held the view that children from marginalized and historically maligned communities deserve to have the very best representation in children’s literature.”

**Update**—In November, the library removed the book from its collection.

“As librarian for children’s and YA [young-adult] literature, I agreed with the students’ evaluation of this book. I thought it was a stereotypical view of a gender issue where dresses = girl, and I also felt that the art was substandard. I decided to weed it from the library for those reasons and to buy other titles instead that were well reviewed in reputable sources (and not just Goodreads). Due to a protest of the book’s withdrawal, it is possible that it will be repurchased. My view of the quality of the title stands, however.”

Because of the protest, the library did re-order the book later.

“I believe this to be an issue of the quality of the book not measuring up, despite the fact that it was on a Booklist Best Books list for 2009,” the librarian wrote. “There are

better-written, better-illustrated and not so stereotypical titles in this area.”

Gaiman, Neil, and P. Craig Russell. *The Graveyard Book*, Volume 1.

**2016**—In March, a patron of the Edmonton Public Library (EPL) challenged this graphic novel for children.

This illustrated publication is based on an earlier novel by Neil Gaiman.

**Objections**—The complainant regarded the illustrations as graphic, violent and age inappropriate. “Please reclassify to a higher age range or put a warning on the front cover,” the complainant wrote.

**Update**—The library regarded this complaint as a challenge to its policy of not labelling items and its shelf location policy.

“The publisher, HarperCollins, lists this title as appropriate for ages eight to 12,” wrote a librarian. It “fits within the guidelines of the Edmonton Public Library’s children’s graphic novel collection. Many of the reviews of this title, however, place it slightly above the age range for the children’s collection, specifically grades six and up. The reviews also note the increased pace of the story and the gothic imagery that may be less accessible for young readers.”

The library decided to reclassify and relocate the book.

“For these reasons and the concern raised about the graphic content, EPL has decided to maintain this title in our collections but move it to the teen graphic novel collection,” the librarian wrote. “The novel that this graphic novel is based on will remain in the children’s fiction collection.”

Gould, Ed. *Tut, Tut, Victoria!*

**2016**—In November, a patron of a public library in British Columbia challenged two copies of this book. One copy was kept in the general adult collection; the other copy was kept in the local history collection.

Published in 1983, *Tut, Tut, Victoria!* features the humour writing of Ed Gould, a journalist who was based in Victoria, B.C.

**Objection**—The patron complained that the book was racist. Page 43: “A lot of visitors think Esquimalt is a malted milk for Eskimos.” Page 46: “The Indians have been getting skinned ever since.” The patron wanted the books removed from the collection.

**Update**—“The tone of the writing is informal and irreverent and pokes fun at Victoria-area residents and institutions, past and present. Some of the language is insensitive and, if the book were to be published today, would likely not find a readership,” wrote a librarian. “However, by providing access to controversial, even offensive books, libraries play a vital role in maintaining an open dialogue about historical stereotypes and changing perceptions.

“While [the Board] recognizes the right of any individual to reject material for personal use, it does not accord to an individual or group the right to restrict the freedom of others to make use of the same material. A copy of the book should remain in the Heritage Room collection, for its local history aspect. However, as the book is out of date and unlikely to interest readers generally, the committee will be removing the copy that is circulating in the adult non-fiction collection.”

In early December, the library relocated the book and resolved the challenge.

*GQ* magazine. (July 2016 issue)

**2016**—In July, a parent in a public library in Alberta challenged this men’s glossy consumer magazine.

**Objection**—The complainant objected to the photograph of a nude Kim Kardashian on the magazine’s cover. The complainant wanted the library to move the magazine to a different place, so children couldn’t see the cover.

**Update**—The library resolved this challenge within 24 hours. By phone, a librarian informed the complainant that it wasn’t practical or possible to change library shelving when magazine covers changed monthly. The magazines were also on the second floor, far from the children’s area.

*GQ* stayed in the same place.

Gutman, Dan. *Mrs. Lilly Is Silly*.

**2016**—In September, a patron of a public library in British Columbia challenged this work of fiction for children.

The book is part of the My Weirder School series of children’s books.

**Objection**—The book “teaches kids how to slander and twist the truth,” the complainant said. “At the end, innocent adults [are] being investigated, while kids think it is all an innocent prank.” The complainant wanted the library to add reading material about slander and its effects to the book and to encourage adults to discuss slander with the children reading it.

**Update**—The library regarded this complaint and suggestion as a challenge to its policy of not placing warning labels on publications.

The library did not have the legal authority or expertise to create its own ratings or warning systems and could not add reading material to qualify the book’s contents.

While the board recognized “the right of any individual to reject material for personal use, it [did] not accord to an individual or group the right to restrict the freedom of others to make use of the same material.”

The library retained the book and resolved the challenge in October.

Hoban, Russell. *Bedtime for Frances*.

**2016**—In June, a parent challenged this children’s picture book in a public library in Ontario.

*Bedtime for Frances*, which is illustrated by Garth Williams, tells the story of a young badger who can’t fall asleep at bedtime and who keeps getting up to talk to her parents.

**Objection**—The complainant said the book encouraged “bad bedtime behaviours.” The complainant wanted the library to place a warning sticker on the book’s front cover, so parents would be aware of the book’s content (i.e., child stalling tactics and the threat of spanking). The complainant also recommended removing the book from the shelf or putting the book in another section of the library, away from young children.

**Update**—The library regarded this complaint as a challenge to its policy of not labelling books and its shelving policy. However, the library kept the book in the children’s section.

Hoff, Syd. *Danny and the Dinosaur*.



**2016**—In March, a parent in a public library in Ontario challenged this children’s illustrated story book.

**Objection**—Racial insensitivity. The parent objected to an image in the book: a North American Indian and an Eskimo standing next to a stuffed bear in a museum. The parent wanted the library to reconsider having the book in the library.

**Update**—The library retained the book. “It was written in 1958 and we acknowledge that it has a dated view, but [it] is a product of its time,” a librarian wrote. “There is only one page out of 63 with the particular depiction described. It was a *New York Times* Outstanding Book of the Year and still resides in many other library collections across Canada.”

Lallemand, Oriane. *Le loup qui ne voulait plus marcher*.

**2016**—In July, a female patron of a public library in Ontario challenged all copies of this children’s picture book from France.

**Objection**—Racism. The patron objected to a two-page spread that displays stereotypical images of the indigenous peoples of North America. In the time of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission, the images were offensive, she said. The patron wanted the library to remove all copies of the book from the collection or put a disclaimer in each copy of the book.

**Update**—The library regarded the complaint partly as a challenge to its policy of not labelling publications. In July, the library decided to retain and not label the books.

“We explained that we were taking ... actions toward reconciliation through programming and other collection choices,” a librarian wrote. “This book is from France where they perpetuate a different view of our Indigenous Peoples, something we will have more awareness of, especially for this younger age group.”

Lallemand, Oriane. *Le loup qui ne voulait plus marcher*.

**2016**—In September, a female patron in a public library in Ontario challenged this children’s picture book from France. The complainant and the library were the same as the ones in the previous entry.

**Objections**—Anti-ethnicity and insensitivity. The complainant objected to a two-page spread that depicts three stereotyped indigenous men attacking a train with tomahawks and rubber arrows. She wanted the library to remove the book or put a note in each copy that explains that these stereotypical images are no longer acceptable in light of the report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

**Update**—The complaint challenged the library’s policy of not labelling publications and the policy of shelf location.

A librarian acknowledged that the book included “very stereotyped images,” but noted that they appeared in a “small percentage of the book that is part of a popular series in French.

“This challenge made us reach out to intellectual freedom leaders in the Canadian library world for support. In light of other challenges taking place across the continent against dated or stereotyped language or images, we wanted to take care and sensitivity with our second answer. Given that European books have a different view of the North American Indigenous Peoples, we are being more critical of picture books from France for our substantial French picture book collection.”

By the end of October, the library decided to keep the book in its collection. No policy was changed.

“This [book] was challenged by the same person twice, a very unusual occurrence in our experience,” a librarian wrote. “She gave very legal reasons why this [book] was unacceptable in the library’s collection of children’s picture books. Our second response reiterated our reasoning to keep [it] but added that, as a Canadian library, we were doing other things to support the TRC Report and recommended actions through programming, outreach and actively building our collection with a range of more Indigenous-positive materials. We received a letter of understanding and acceptance from her in the end.”

Martineau, Paul, and Britt Salvesen. *Robert Mapplethorpe: The Photographs*.

**2016**—In September, a patron of the Westmount Public Library in Quebec challenged the display of this adult photography book.

**Objections**—The complainant objected to sexually explicit photographs, photographs of nudes and photographs with homosexual themes. The complainant described the book as “inappropriate for any age” and demanded its removal from the collection.

**Update**—The library resolved the challenge a month later, in October. The library kept the book in its collection.

McNaughton, Colin. *Don’t Step on the Crack!*

**2016**—In November, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this children’s book.

**Objections**—Sexism and insensitivity. The complainant asked the library to review the book to see whether it was suitable for children.

**Update**—The complaint implied a challenge to shelf location policy. In November, the library decided to keep the book in its original location.

Ministry of Transportation of Ontario. *The Official MTO Driver’s Handbook*.

**2016**—In March, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this adult textbook.

**Objection**—Inaccuracy. “Drivers can turn right on a red light,” the complainant wrote. (This move is legal in Ontario.) The complainant wanted the library to remove the book until it was corrected.

**Update**—In May, the library resolved the challenge and retained the handbook in its collection.

Niffenegger, Audrey. *The Three Incestuous Sisters*.

**2016**—In November, a patron of a public library in British Columbia challenged this adult illustrated story book.

**Objection**—Not appropriate for any age. Although the book was in the adult graphic novel area, the complainant wanted the library to “remove [the book] from our children.”

**Update**—The library resolved this challenge on the same day and kept the book in its current location.

O’Leary, Dale. *One Man, One Woman: A Catholic’s Guide to Defending Marriage*.

**2016**—In August, a patron of a public library in British Columbia challenged this adult non-fiction book.



**Objection**—Religious viewpoint. The patron worried that the book attacked homosexuality and/or same-sex marriage and that the book might be intended for young readers. The patron wanted the library to withdraw the book.

**Update**—The library resolved this challenge on the same day and retained the book in its collection.

A librarian told the patron that the book was in the adult non-fiction collection, and they discussed intellectual freedom.

Patterson, James, et al. *Filthy Rich: A Powerful Billionaire, the Sex Scandal That Undid Him, and All the Justice That Money Can Buy*.

**2016**—In November, a patron of a library in British Columbia challenged this work of adult non-fiction.

*Filthy Rich* is an account of the life of U.S. financier Jeffrey Epstein who in 2008 pleaded guilty in a U.S. court to a charge of soliciting prostitution from girls as young as 14. He was eventually convicted in court and served time in prison.

**Objection**—The complainant said the book included a “very graphic detail of child sexual abuse ... [It was] not dealt with in a sensitive, empathetic way.” The complainant added that the detail was “intended to titillate or shock.” The complainant asked the library to either remove the book from the collection or clearly mark it “restricted.”

**Update**—The library regarded the complaint as a challenge to its policy of not labelling publications.

“The library does not have the legal authority or expertise to create its own ratings or warning systems,” a librarian wrote. “While [the Board] recognizes the right of any individual to reject material for personal use, it does not accord to an individual or group the right to restrict the freedom of others to make use of the same material.”

In November, the library decided to retain the book and the policy.

Pope, Paul. *Battling Boy*.

**2016**—In May, a parent in a public library in Ontario challenged this graphic novel for children.

**Objection**—The parent disliked depictions of violence and the book’s “poor attitude toward women.”

**Update**—In June, the library resolved the challenge. The library moved this book from the children’s section to the teens’ graphic-novel section.

Publications about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

**2016**—In April, a community organization challenged 13 adult non-fiction works on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in a government library in Manitoba.

**Objections**—Racism and anti-Semitism. The complainants claimed that the works delegitimized the state of Israel. The formal challenge initially named 13 titles, but it was directed at any book espousing a similar stance and argued that these works did not meet the library’s collections mandate.

**Update**—The library regarded the complaint as a challenge to its collections policy and followed its collection content challenge guidelines. The library struck a committee and reviewed the challenged titles. The committee determined that the titles met the collections mandate, and the titles remained in the collection. Then the library sent a

letter to the initiator of the challenge explaining the decision.

The challenge was resolved in July.

“This was the library’s first content challenge, and it helped us to formalize and to put into practice the procedures outlined in our library collection content challenge guidelines,” wrote a librarian. “The committee’s response to the challenge affirmed the importance of supporting the library’s role in providing access to information and in defending intellectual freedom.”

Sanderson, Terry. *The Gay Man’s Kama Sutra*.

**2016**—In January, a patron challenged the display of this adult non-fiction book in the new materials section of a public library in Ontario.

**Objection**—In a formal, written complaint, the patron objected to “a book displayed on a high-traffic shelf that contained nudity and sexuality.” The patron objected to the book’s sexually explicit and homosexual character. “I certainly think it would be reasonable to put this content (as well as any other movies that are similarly sexual in nature) in a special area reserved for adults 18+, with appropriate labelling, so that children as well as adults do not happen upon it unwillingly,” the patron wrote.

**Update**—The library regarded the challenge as threefold: to the library’s display policy, to the policy of not labelling content and to the policy of not having a special restricted shelving area for patrons 18 years of age or older.

The library and the complainant corresponded by email. The library sent the complainant its collection policies for review. The library “determined that this material was not against [its] policies and served the informational needs of our community. The patron was informed of this decision, and the issue was laid to rest.”

In early February, the library considered the challenge resolved. “The patron has not returned to the library,” wrote a librarian.

“I was really proud of our library for listening and responding to the patron’s concerns so thoroughly, and I am pleased that the material has remained in circulation.”

Shakira. *L’école autour du monde*.

**2016**—In February, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this illustrated story book for children.

Shakira is a Grammy Award–winning singer. The book’s title in English is *World School Day Adventure*. The book describes people around the world sharing resources.

**Objection**—Racism. The patron objected to the depiction of a blonde woman delivering technology to the Third World. It extended the First-World saviour narrative, the patron said.

**Update**—In May, the library resolved the challenge and kept the book.

Sharafeddine, Fatima. *Fi madinati harb* [*There’s a War in My Town*].

**2016**—In August, a person—someone who was part of a group that was sponsoring a newly arrived Syrian family—complained about this children’s picture book in a public library in Ontario.

The book, which is written in Arabic, depicts war from a child’s point of view. The author’s name could be translated as Fatimah al-Din Sharaf.

**Objection**—The patron wanted the library “to address their concerns for the depictions

of war's effects and how [these] would affect children coming from such a background.”  
**Update**—“We explained [that] the collection of Arabic children’s material at our library is for a wide age range,” a librarian wrote. “We expressed that it had a place in our collection despite the powerful—and to some, disturbing—images. There was context to the story and the theme of hope for peace.

“We always provide a link to the Canadian Library Association statements about intellectual freedom in our responses. In this case, we also provided alternative books for Arabic refugee children who are learning about Canada or seeking bilingual material to learn the language through books.”

The library resolved this challenge in September and retained the book in its collection.

Sheindlin, J.K. *The People vs Muhammad: Psychological Analysis*.

**2016–17**—In December 2016, a patron of a public library in British Columbia challenged this adult non-fiction book.

**Objections**—Inaccuracy, insensitivity and religious viewpoint. “Islamophobic hate literature ... may inflame anti-Muslim, anti-immigrant sentiment among the gullible,” the complainant wrote. The complainant wanted the book’s removal from the collection.

**Update**—The library struck a committee to review the book. “*The People vs Muhammad* was selected [because] it provides a different perspective on Islam than is available in the current collection,” a librarian wrote. “As stated in the Collection Policy, ‘collections are developed to present as many points of view as possible.’ However, ... the author has no scholarly credentials that can be determined, and the Committee finds the information contained in the book, marketed as a ‘psychological analysis,’ to be misleading and lacking credibility. In addition, the quality of the writing and editing does not meet standards for inclusion in the collection.”

The library withdrew the book from its collection. In January 2017, the library concluded the challenge.

Shelov, Steven P., and Tanya Remer Altman. *Caring for Your Baby and Young Child*.

**2016**—In September, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this adult non-fiction book.

**Objection**—Inaccuracy. The patron objected to the recommendation that a baby’s temperature could be taken rectally. The patron wanted the library to remove the book and ask the authors to rewrite the section.

**Update**—The library consulted the Canadian Paediatric Association. The CPA endorses rectal temperature readings in some cases. The library retained the book and resolved the challenge in December.

Shimada, Humikane. *Strike Witches: One-Winged Witches*, Volume 2.

**2016**—A patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this comic book.

*Strike Witches*, which is drawn in the Japanese manga style, is intended for readers over 16 years of age.

**Objection**—The patron objected to the “graphic nature of some of the illustrations.”

**Update**—Unrecorded.

*Sports Illustrated*. (2016 swimsuit issue)

**2016**—In March, a patron of a public library in Alberta challenged this adult glossy magazine.

**Objection**—Depictions of nudity. “Visual soft pornography or porn of any type is inappropriate,” wrote the complainant. “Have it removed from the shelves.”

**Update**—The library regarded the complaint partly as a challenge to its policy of not pre-screening items that go on display.

“In fulfilling this mandate, the Calder Branch subscribes to *Sports Illustrated*, a very popular, well-circulating magazine which is legally available to citizens whether at convenience stores or at the local branch of the public library. However, in addition to this magazine, it is essential to recognize that Calder’s adult magazine collection represents a broad range of opinions and interests,” a librarian wrote. “In keeping with our adherence to the Statement on Intellectual Freedom and our commitment to support a diverse collection which reflects varying tastes and points of view, the Library will not be pre-screening magazines before they are put on display, nor will we be removing this issue of *Sports Illustrated*.”

The library retained the magazine and the policy. The challenge ended in March.

Thitaume. *Rabbids 1. Bwaaaaaaaaaah!*

**2016**—In June, a parent in a public library in Ontario challenged this illustrated children’s humour book.

Rabbids is a series of comic books. Romain Pujol is the illustrator of this book.

**Objections**—Crude language and offensive humour. The parent wanted the book moved from the children’s section.

**Update**—The library rejected the challenge. The book “received good reviews and was in other public libraries in their children’s graphic novel collections,” a librarian wrote.

Thompson, Craig. *Blankets*.

**2016**—In September, a patron of the Edmonton Public Library (EPL) in Alberta challenged this graphic novel for young adults.

**Objection**—The patron objected to sexual content and depictions of nudity and drug use. The patron wanted *Blankets* moved from the teen section to the adult graphic-novel section.

**Update**—The library wrote to the complainant. “The librarian responsible for youth collections has reviewed the title and consulted a variety of library reviewing resources. As you indicated in your reconsideration request, *Blankets* has received many awards and has been heralded as a work of great value and importance. That being said, the audience is generally indicated as adults or mature teens. EPL will be moving *Blankets* to the adult graphic novel collection.”

This challenge was resolved in a week.

Tolstoy, Leo. *The Death of Ivan Ilyich*.

**2016**—In October, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this work of adult fiction by one of Russia’s master authors.

**Objection**—The patron complained about the grammatical and typographical errors in this edition. The patron asked the library to remove the book.

**Update**—The library withdrew the edition from the collection. A committee agreed that the edition was unreadable and that the library had many other editions.

The challenge was resolved in December.

Varadarajan, Siddharth, ed. *Gujarat: The Making of a Tragedy*.

**2016**—In February, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this work of non-fiction about a state in western India.

**Objections**—Inaccuracy and political viewpoint. The patron wanted the library to remove the book.

**Update**—The library retained the book and resolved the challenge in May.

Walters, Eric. *Power Play: A Novel*.

**2016**—In April, a parent in a public library in Ontario challenged this novel for young adults.

**Objection**—The parent objected to depictions of violence, underage (14-year-old) drinking and a coach raping a young hockey player. The patron thought the novel was important and should be kept, but also wanted the library to put an advisory label on the book.

**Update**—The library regarded this request as a challenge to its policy of not putting labels on publications. The library kept the novel and did not label it.

The challenge was resolved in April.

Wodehouse, P.G. *Thank You, Jeeves*.

**2016**—In May, a patron of a public library in British Columbia challenged the audiobook version of this English adult comic novel.

**Objection**—The complainant regarded the novel as racist and insensitive. It refers to “nigger minstrels” and white “characters putting on blackface.” The complainant wanted the library to consider whether the novel still had a place in the collection.

**Update**—In May, the library resolved the challenge and retained the audiobook.

“Along with some other writers’ works from earlier times, Wodehouse’s writing is not without controversy. *Thank You, Jeeves* does contain a plot point (a character puts on blackface to disguise himself) and language (‘niggers,’ ‘nigger minstrels’) that are offensive by today’s standards,” wrote a librarian. “However, removing books with which we may disagree from library shelves makes it more difficult to discuss how our society’s beliefs and attitudes have changed and how language can be hurtful. By providing access to controversial, even offensive books, libraries play a vital role in maintaining an open dialogue about historical stereotypes and racial slurs and changing perceptions.”

Yamada, Yoshinobu. *Cage of Eden*, Volumes 4 and 5.

**2016**—In April, a patron of the Edmonton Public Library (EPL) challenged these graphic novels for young-adult readers.

*Cage of Eden* is a science-fiction adventure series drawn in the Japanese manga style.

**Objections**—The patron thought the series was inappropriate for any age of reader. “This book is full of violence (extreme), collective rape, collective murders, etc. It’s blood from

beginning to the end.” The patron demanded “that all books like these ones will be banned forever from the shelves of our EPLs.”

**Update**—The library regarded the complaint as a challenge to its collection policy but moved *Cage of Eden* from the teen to adult graphic-novel section.

“The librarian responsible for youth collections has reviewed the series and consulted a variety of library and manga reviewing resources. This series has been well reviewed; however, the content is ... appropriate for ages 16+. EPL’s teen collections are aimed at youth 12–16 years of age. As such, EPL will be retaining the series in our collections but moving them to the adult graphic novel collection.”

The challenge was resolved in May.

Young-adult LGBTQ publications.

**2016**—In July, a female parent in the St. Albert Library in Alberta challenged all young-adult LGBTQ publications in a teen summer reading program.

The library displayed pamphlets that listed the young-adult LGBTQ book titles in the summer reading program.

**Objection**—The parent was offended by the inclusion of queer lit as one of the book category choices in a turn of the library’s Teen Summer Reading Game.

“There is a difference between showing respect for all peoples and using the summer reading program as a place to further LGBTQ propaganda,” the woman wrote. “My son recognizes that there are people who choose to live this lifestyle; however, it is not a healthy lifestyle to promote to our youth, and it is contrary to God’s plan for human sexuality, love and marriage.”

**Update**—The Teen Librarian inferred that the patron wanted the queer lit category removed from the Teen Summer Reading Game book category choices and that she may have wanted the queer lit booklist removed from the brochure display in the teen area of the library.

After reading the parent’s comments, the Teen Librarian wrote a letter which was given directly to the patron when she brought her child back to play the reading game. The Teen Librarian informed her supervisors of the challenge and consulted with them on the content of the letter before it was delivered. The queer lit category remained a choice for one turn of the 2016 Teen Summer Reading Game, and the queer lit booklist remained on display with the other booklists in the teen area of the library.

Here is the body of the letter:

“Thank you for expressing your concerns about the inclusion of the Queer Lit category in the St. Albert Public Library’s Teen Summer Reading Game. As stated in the Guidelines for the 2016 Teen Summer Reading Game on the player dossier: ‘There are multiple categories listed for each turn of the game. Choose just one of those categories to select your reading material from.’ In other words, players are not required to read from any one book category to advance to the next turn of the game.

“For the Mission Nighthawk turn of the game, three categories are provided for players to choose a book from: In Real Life (realistic fiction), Romance, or Queer Lit. Players can select a book that fits into any of these three categories. Librarians recognize that not all books are suited to all readers. Library patrons have a choice in what they read.

“As the Teen Librarian, I am responsible for creating a reading program for teen



participants that encourages them to read over the summer, for selecting books for the Young Adult collections, and for making booklists to help teen patrons discover books of interest to them. The St. Albert Public Library serves all members of the community, regardless of age, race, faith, education level, income, sexual orientation, gender identity, ethnic background, or language spoken. We serve LGBTQ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Questioning) youth, and the Library is a safe public space for them to visit.

“Many of these young people, as part of an invisible minority, have learned to be secretive about their sexual identity or gender identity for fear of rejection from their peers or their own families. They experience isolation and are often victims of bullying. For these youth, a realization that there are library materials available to them which address LGBTQ identities and issues can help them to become more resilient and to feel that they have a place in society.

“Including the Queer Lit category in the Teen Summer Reading Game is a way to raise awareness of the existence of LGBTQ materials in the Young Adult Collection, and it communicates to our patrons that the library is a welcoming place for all people. Having LGBTQ material available in the Young Adult collections and on book displays alongside other materials, not hidden away, helps to create an atmosphere of acceptance.

“If you would like further information on the importance of LGBTQ Collections in public libraries, I can direct you to some journal articles on the topic. Please feel free to contact me if you have further questions.”

After receiving the letter, the mother did not contact the Teen Librarian or take any further action regarding her challenge. Her son did complete the Teen Summer Reading Game and received a book prize. The family continues to regularly participate in programs at the St. Albert Library.

## 2015

Adult magazines.

**2015**—A patron in a public library in British Columbia challenged the collection of electronic magazines (from the Zinio distribution service) and paper magazines. The challenge affected a minimum of 17 titles: *Cosmopolitan*, *Details*, *Esquire*, *Glamour*, *GQ*, *Health*, *Men’s Fitness*, *Men’s Health*, *Redbook*, *Rolling Stone*, *SELF*, *Seventeen*, *Shape*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Teen Vogue*, *US Weekly* and *Women’s Health*.

**Objections**—sexism, insensitivity, inaccuracy, depiction of bodies that are “negatively objectified.” The patron demanded that all subscriptions be cancelled.

**Update**—The library kept the magazines and the subscriptions. They were popular with other readers.

Bagshawe, Tilly. *Mistress of the Game*.

**2015**—A patron challenged this work of adult fiction in a public library in British Columbia.

**Objection**—The patron objected to the “offensive language” and “sexually explicit” passages in the book. The patron also noted that Tilly Bagshawe had written a sequel to a Sidney Sheldon novel. (Sheldon died in 2007.) The patron thought that Bagshawe “did a

terrible job ... did not deserve to work on that series, and ruined what the original author had done.” The patron wanted the book removed from the collection.

**Update**—The library retained the book.

Bemelmans, Ludwig. *Madeline and the Gypsies*.

**2015–16**—In December 2015, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this classic children’s illustrated story book. The challenge lasted until March 2016.

**Objections**—The patron thought that the book conveyed racist or negative stereotypes of the Roma. The complainant wanted the library to move the book to the special collections section where people could read it solely for research.

**Update**—The library kept the book where anyone could read it. The librarian who handled the challenge also noted the “difference between the literary character of the gypsy, representing freedom and adventure, and Roma.”

Brook, Meljean. All titles.

**2015**—A patron of the public library in Alberta challenged every book written by this adult-fiction author.

**Objection**—The patron objected to depictions of sex and homosexuality and demanded the books’ removal from the library.

**Update**—The library retained the books.

Casey, Jo, and Catherine Saunders. *Darth Maul: Sith Apprentice*.

**2015**—A parent in a public library in Alberta complained about this easy-reader graphic novel for children. *Darth Maul: Sith Apprentice* is based on the *Star Wars* series of movies and is part of the DK [Dorling Kindersley] Readers series.

**Objections**—The parent objected to “suggestive sexual and visual sexual scenes.” The possibility of violence in the story also made the book inappropriate for the juvenile graphic novel collection. The parent wrote: “Remove this specific reader and any other readers that contain graphics, written and other content that is not age appropriate for the targeted age.”

**Update**—The library kept the book in its collection.

Dumas, Alexandre. *The Three Musketeers*. Adapted by David Morvan and Michel Dufranne.

**2015**—A woman complained about this graphic novel—part of the Classics Illustrated Deluxe series—for children in a public library in Alberta.

**Objection**—The woman thought the work was sexually explicit and age inappropriate. She flagged a page two-thirds of the way through the book (which has no page numbers). The illustrations show a man and a woman kissing. In the following pages, a shirtless man and a clothed woman are shown kissing and talking in bed. The complainant suggested in a note that some the book’s content “might be more YA” (young adult). She wanted the book reclassified and moved to the young adult section.

**Update**—Eight copies of this graphic novel were circulating in the library’s consortium, a librarian noted. In three libraries, it was shelved with young adult materials, and in the other five (including the affected library) it was shelved with juvenile/junior materials.

The library kept this edition of *The Three Musketeers* in the juvenile graphic novel section.

Emmett, Jonathan. *The Santa Trap*.

**2015–16**—In December 2015, a parent challenged this children’s picture book in a public library in Ontario.

**Objections**—The parent objected to “offensive language” (e.g., the use of the word “stupid”) and depictions of violence (e.g., Santa Claus blowing up). The patron wanted the library to remove the book from its collection.

The parent made these objections shortly after bombings had occurred in Paris.

**Update**—The library resolved the challenge in March 2016 and retained the book.

Gaiman, Neil, and P. Craig Russell. *The Graveyard Book*, Volumes 1 and 2.

**2015**—In a public library in Ontario, a mother complained about these graphic novels for children.

**Objection**—The mother didn’t specify what action she wanted, but she used the complaint form to complain about the book’s illustrations. Her 10-year-old son was crying because of the illustrations.

**Update**—After evaluating *The Graveyard Book* by checking other libraries’ collections and book reviews, the library retained the books in its collection.

Gaylord, Louise. *Sutton Place: A Novel*.

**2015**—A patron of a public library in Alberta challenged this work of adult fiction.

**Objection**—The patron objected to depictions of sex and violence, and demanded the book’s removal.

**Update**—The library retained the book.

Al-Ghazali, Muhammad. *100 Questions About Islam*.

**2015**—An anonymous blogger challenged this adult non-fiction book in a public library in Ontario. *100 Questions About Islam* is written in Arabic.

**Objections**—The blogger objected to the book’s religious and political viewpoint. It held anti-Western and extreme Islamist views, the blogger said. The blogger wanted the book removed.

**Update**—The library kept the book in its collection.

Hergé. *Tintin au Congo*.

**2015–16**—In December 2015, a patron of a public library in British Columbia challenged this graphic novel for young readers.

The fictional story depicts the adventures of Tintin, a reporter, in the Belgian Congo. The book is part of the Adventures of Tintin series.

The earliest black-and-white edition of this book appeared in Belgium in 1931; the first colour edition appeared in 1946.

**Objection**—The complainant objected to racial stereotypes of Africans. He accepted that the library should carry controversial material but questioned whether children had the judgment or knowledge to “not take [the racial stereotypes] at face value.” He wanted the library to move the book from the children’s section to another section of the library.

**Update**—The library’s Materials Review Committee carefully reviewed the challenge. This challenge was the second that the library had received for this title; the first occurred

in 2012.

The reviewers decided to move *Tintin au Congo* to the library's adult section because of the book's "extreme racist content" and their concern for undiscerning children who could find the book. But the reviewers also noted that "children do have open access to adult collections," so the reviewers did not consider the book's relocation a ban. They reduced the chance that children could casually find the book.

Parents were expected to supervise their children's use of the library.

The challenge was resolved in February 2016.

Hergé. *Tintin in America*.

**2015**—In March, a First Nations educator objected to the sale of this graphic novel in a Chapters bookstore in Winnipeg.

*Tintin in America* was first published as a book in 1932. It is part of the Tintin series of graphic novels. The book's cover depicts stereotypical images of indigenous people and their tipis. A chief wears a feathered bonnet and buckskin and waves a tomahawk. Tintin, the Belgian hero of the book, is tied to a wooden post in the background.

**Objection**—The complainant cited "the impact of racist images" and the perpetuation of "harmful narratives." The complainant asked the bookstore to withdraw the book from its shelves.

**Update**—The Chapters bookstore in Winnipeg briefly pulled *Tintin in America* from its shelves and investigated the content of the book.

Chapters will not carry child pornography, works that explain how to build weapons of mass destruction and "anything written with the sole intent of inciting society toward the annihilation of one group."

The bookstore put *Tintin in America* back on the shelf for sale because the book did not meet any of these criteria.

Hergé. *Tintin in America*.

**2015**—In March, after a Chapters bookstore in Winnipeg briefly withdrew this graphic novel from its shelves (see entry above), Winnipeg's public library withdrew *Tintin in America* from its children's shelves.

**Objections**—Anti-ethnicity, inaccuracy, insensitivity, offensive language and racism.

In 2006, the public library withdrew copies of *Tintin in America* and *Tintin in the Congo* and moved them to a special research collection that focused on historic children's literature. In 2013, this collection was disbanded because of the public library's changing mandate (the library was not an archive) and because few people used the special research collection. However, copies of *Tintin in America* did make their way back into the public library's children's collection. In 2015, the public library decided to review the book again.

**Update**—In June 2015, the public library moved *Tintin in America* into the adult graphic-novel section.

Hergé. *Tintin in America*.

**2015–16**—In December 2015, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this graphic novel for young readers.

The fictional story depicts the adventures of Tintin, a reporter, in America. The book is part of the Adventures of Tintin series. The earliest edition of this book appeared in 1932.

**Objection**—Racism. The patron thought the depictions of indigenous people were derogatory and wanted the library to remove the book from its collection.

**Update**—The challenge was resolved in March 2016. The library moved the book to the adult graphic-book collection. The library also recommended that parents read with their children to put the book's content in historical context.

This library took the same action when *Tintin in the Congo* was challenged.

See also similar challenges to this book in 2012 and 2010.

Jones, Bruce. *Hulk: Abominable*.

**2015**—In a public library in British Columbia, a patron objected to this graphic novel for young adults.

**Objection**—The patron objected to depictions of “graphic sex and violence” that could be seen by children. The patron wanted the book reclassified as adult.

**Update**—The library retained the book. “This graphic novel is shelved in the teen graphic novel collection. The suggestive images and violence depicted in this comic collection is similar to other graphic novels marketed to a teen audience, and selected for [the library's] teen graphic novel collection.”

Jones, Teresa. *Within His Keeping: God's Amazing Embrace of Your Life*.

**2015**—A patron of a public library in Alberta criticized the location of this adult book.

**Objection**—The patron wanted the book moved from the non-fiction to the fiction section of the library.

**Update**—The library retained the book.

Katz, Karen. *My First Ramadan*.

**2015**—A patron in a public library in Ontario challenged this children's picture book.

**Objection**—The patron disliked at least one illustration and deemed the book inappropriate for any age. The patron wanted the book removed.

**Update**—The library conducted some research. No image of Muhammad appeared in the book. Book reviews were favourable. The library team determined that *My First Ramadan* was not “meant to offend or be insensitive.” The library retained the book.

Kipling, Rudyard. *Kim*.

**2015**—A patron complained about this children's story in a public library in Ontario.

**Objections**—The patron criticized the quality of the book: it was a “poorly done edition of a classic with many errors”; it was “sloppy” with “excessive typos”; the publisher was “not a familiar publisher.” The patron wanted the book removed.

**Update**—The library replaced it with copies from a more established publisher to improve the quality.

Macdonald, Ian Verner. *The Star Weekly at War*.

**2015**—A patron of a public library in Ontario objected to this illustrated non-fiction book. *The Star Weekly at War* compiles the patriotic World War II covers of the *Star*

*Weekly*, a periodical published in Toronto.

**Objection**—The political viewpoint borders on anti-Semitism, the patron claimed. The patron wanted the library to reclassify the book.

**Update**—The library noted the historical value of *The Star Weekly at War*. (The Toronto publisher of the *Star Weekly* never kept copies of its own magazine, so the covers were “scattered hither and yon.”) The library also noted that the Toronto Public Library kept one copy of *The Star Weekly at War* in its reference section. So, “despite the rather anti-Semitic views of the author as expressed in the (limited) text,” the library moved *The Star Weekly at War* to the reference collection.

Proulx, Annie. *Close Range: Wyoming Stories*.

**2015**—A patron of a public library in New Brunswick challenged this book, a collection of adult fictional stories. *Close Range* includes “Brokeback Mountain.”

**Objections**—The patron objected to the depictions of homosexuality and violence and asked for the book’s removal from the library.

**Update**—The library retained the book.

Rowland, Cynthia. *The Magic of Facial Exercise*.

**2015**—In a public library in British Columbia, this non-fiction book for adults was challenged twice: once by a library patron and once by library staff.

**Objection**—The book was inaccurate, the complainants said. They asked for its removal from the collection.

**Update**—In both cases, the library kept the book in its collection.

Dr. Seuss. *If I Ran the Zoo*.

**2015**—In a public library in British Columbia, a patron challenged this children’s picture book.

**Objection**—The patron objected to ethnic stereotyping: “scenes depicting orientalism, major Asian stereotyping in images and words” and the “use of exaggerated ‘black face’ characters.” The patron wanted the book removed from the collection.

**Update**—The library kept the book.

*Star Wars* DK [Dorling Kindersley] Readers series.

**2015**—In Alberta, a parent in a public library asked for the reclassification of this series of children’s easy-to-read graphic novels. The series includes *Darth Maul: Sith Apprentice* by Jo Casey and Catherine Saunders. (See separate entry.)

**Objection**—“Suggestive sexual and visual sexual scenes” and the possibility of violence made the series inappropriate for the juvenile graphic novel collection, the parent said. The parent also asked for the reclassification of “any other readers that contain graphics, written and other content that is not age appropriate for the targeted age.”

**Update**—The library, which owned 41 of the 56 titles in the series, kept them in the same place. One librarian noted: “The primary users of this collection are pre-school and elementary aged beginning readers with a wide range of interests and skill levels. [They] require a broad collection of material including a variety of reading levels, writing styles, and topics. As a result, this material is shelved as a single collection, regardless of publisher, series and reading level. Shelving in this fashion also serves to assist readers



and caregivers in finding and continuing with preferred series and publishers.”

Steig, William. *Zeke Pippin*.

**2015**—In a public library in British Columbia, a patron challenged this children’s book, an illustrated humorous work of fiction.

**Objection**—The book depicts violence and is age inappropriate, the patron claimed. Remove it, the patron said.

**Update**—The library retained this book in its collection.

Tietje, Kate. *A Practical Guide to Children’s Health*.

**2015**—A patron in a public library in Ontario challenged this adult non-fiction book.

**Objections**—Inaccuracy, bad science and an anti-vaccination viewpoint. The patron demanded the removal of the book.

**Update**—The library kept the book in its collection.

Viola, Frank, and Mary Demuth. *The Day I Met Jesus: The Revealing Diaries of Five Women from the Gospels*.

**2015**—A patron in a public library in Alberta challenged this audiobook, a work of adult fiction.

**Objection**—The patron disliked the religious viewpoint and asked the library to remove the audiobook from the collection.

**Update**—The library kept *The Day I Met Jesus*.

Waters, John. *Carsick: John Waters Hitchhikes Across America*.

**2015**—A patron objected to this adult non-fiction book in a public library in Alberta.

**Objection**—“I found this book in the travel section, which is my favorite, but feel this book does not belong here. The first 2/3 of the book is made up of the author’s X-rated fantasy hitch-hiking,” the complainant wrote. He or she wanted the book moved into the fiction section.

**Update**—The library kept the book in the travel section and responded: “While the library acknowledges your personal response to *Carsick*, the item does fall within our guidelines for inclusion in the adult non-fiction collection. *Carsick* has been assigned the Dewey number 917.30493, which is the classification for travel in the U.S. in the 21st century. This is appropriate when the travelling is factual, whether in whole or in part. Other public libraries have placed the book in their travel sections as well, including the Vancouver Public Library and Ottawa Public Library.”

Wei Dong Chen and Xiao Long Liang. *The Legends from China: Three Kingdoms series*.

**2015**—A patron of a public library in Alberta objected to the location of this series of 20 graphic novels for children.

**Objection**—The patron objected to the depiction of suggestive and sexual scenes and of the possibility of violence. The series is inappropriate for juvenile readers, the patron said, and asked for reclassification.

**Update**—The library reviewed the series and consulted reviewing resources for school and public libraries to determine the appropriate location for these titles. The series was positively reviewed in several sources but was also recommended for readers age 12 and

up. The library moved the series into its teen graphic novel collection.

Willis, Jeanne. *Chicken Clicking*.

**2015**—A patron of a public library in British Columbia challenged this children’s picture book. In the story, a young chicken hops into a farmer’s house, starts browsing the Internet and gets into trouble.

**Objections**—The patron objected to the “moral of the story [or] lack thereof: stealing, fight[ing], going online, posting a picture and age, not telling mom and dad, and meeting a stranger alone.” The patron demanded the book’s removal.

**Update**—The library retained the book in its collection and explained: “As a cautionary tale, the storyline takes a dark trajectory in the tradition of folk tales such as *Little Red Riding Hood* and *Chicken Little*, which it references. With its short, lively text and dynamic illustrations, this picture book is appropriate for sharing with young children and could be used to start a conversation about the perils of behaving impetuously, online or otherwise.”

## 2014

Arnold, Adam. *Vampire Cheerleaders*.

**2014**—In January, a patron of a public library in Alberta objected to five titles in this series of graphic novels.

**Objections**—The patron said the series was sexually explicit and inappropriate for the teen collection.

**Update**—In the following month, the library moved the series to the adult graphic novel section.

Ataöv, Türkkaya. *An Armenian Source: Hovhannes Katchaznoui*.

**2014**—In January, a university professor in Quebec complained about the inclusion of this book and two others (Kamuran Gürün’s *The Armenian File* and Guenter Lewy’s *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey*) in an academic library.

**Objections**—The professor described these books as “hateful and disturbing” because they denied genocide events. The professor was especially troubled by the inclusion of these books in the library’s special Jonassohn Genocide Collection.

**Update**—The library explained that the books, although “deemed offensive,” fell within the mandate of the collection: to provide comprehensive resources for research, including resources that may be beyond what is “culturally acceptable,” to show the full range of information and debate about an event or issue. The books were retained.

Beiser, Tim. *Miss Mousie’s Blind Date*.

**2014**—In March, a staff member of a public library in Ontario challenged this children’s picture book.

**Objection**—The challenger claimed that the book promoted negative body images and asked for the book’s removal from the library’s collection.

**Update**—The library kept the book in its collection.

Bott, Robert. *Our Petroleum Challenge: Exploring Canada’s Oil and Gas Industry*.

**2014**—In September, a patron of a public library complained about the inclusion of this book in the library’s collection.

**Objection**—The book was “an apologia for the tar sands industry” and should not be circulated in a public library, the patron said.

**Update**—Librarians couldn’t find a copy of *Our Petroleum Challenge* in the library or the catalogue. They suspected that *Our Petroleum Challenge* was an unsolicited item that staff had put on the give-away table or that it was left in the library by another patron. In September, the library sent a letter to the complainant. The letter explained that the book was not listed in the catalogue, referred the patron to the Canadian Library Association’s statement on intellectual freedom and explained that the library’s collection tried to represent all points of view.

Chbosky, Stephen. *The Perks of Being a Wallflower*.

**2014**—In Kamloops, B.C., Dean Audet demanded the removal of this coming-of-age novel from his son’s high school and other schools in the Kamloops/Thompson school district.

**Objection**—Audet described the novel as pornographic, offensive and vulgar.

**Update**—Audet’s son was given a different book to study. A committee of teachers, a parent and librarians reviewed the novel and approved it for continued use. Audet considered taking legal action to remove the novel from schools.

*Cheng Shi Zhen Quing Hui Ben*. [Publisher: Yow Fu Culture Company]

**2014**—A patron of the Toronto Public Library complained about this Chinese children’s picture book and a similar work. (See Meihua Li’s *Shui Na Zou Wo De Liu Liu Qiu*).

**Objection**—The patron said that grammatical errors would make it difficult for children to follow the stories and improve their skills. The patron also asked the library to ensure that its Chinese books are chosen by Chinese speakers who know the written language.

**Update**—The library asked a PhD candidate in Mandarin Chinese to assess the book. In a detailed report, the PhD candidate concluded that *Cheng Shi Zhen Quing Hui Ben* does include grammatical errors that would make reader comprehension difficult. The library’s staff reviewed the report, withdrew the book from the collection and sent a copy of the report to the complainant.

Chotjewitz, David. *Daniel Half Human*.

**2014**—In January, a parent in Quebec complained about the inclusion of this young-adult novel in a grade school library. The tale is set in Nazi Germany.

**Objection**—The complaining parent thought a passage was too sexually explicit. A “gratuitous” description of girls’ breasts was “too graphic for our 15-year-old boys.”

**Update**—The novel was removed from the school library. The school considered the issue resolved in February.

DeLima, Jan. *Summer Moon*.

**2014**—In December, a patron of a public library in Alberta complained about this fantasy novel.

**Objection**—The patron said the scenes of passion were unsuitable for younger readers.

**Update**—The library kept the book in the collection.

Evans, Tabor. *Longarm and the Coldest Town in Hell*.

**2014**—In December, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this work of adult fiction, number 427 of the Longarm series of Western novels.

**Objection**—The novel was “sexually explicit.”

**Update**—The library kept the book in the collection.

Fitch, Sheree. *Sleeping Dragons All Around*.

**2014**—In February, a patron of a public library in Saskatchewan objected to this children’s picture book.

**Objections**—The patron said the book perpetuated negative stereotypes of the Chinese people, language and culture. Reducing a people to a funny character amounted to tokenism and was unacceptable.

**Update**—The library retained the book in its collection and sent a letter to the patron the following month.

Gürün, Kamuran. *The Armenian File: The Myth of Innocence Exposed*.

**2014**—In January, a university professor in Quebec complained about the inclusion of this book and two others (Türkkaya Ataöv’s *An Armenian Source: Hovhannes Katchaznouni* and Guenter Lewy’s *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey*) in an academic library.

**Objections**—The professor described these books as “hateful and disturbing” because they denied genocide events. The professor was especially troubled by the inclusion of these books in the library’s special Jonassohn Genocide Collection.

**Update**—The library explained that the books, although “deemed offensive,” fell within the mandate of the collection: to provide comprehensive resources for research, including resources that may be beyond what is “culturally acceptable,” to show the full range of information and debate about an event or issue. The books were retained.

Hite, Kenneth. *The Nazi Occult*.

**2014**—In June, a patron of a public library in Saskatchewan requested the removal of this illustrated book. The patron also asked for the book’s relocation if the library refused to remove the book.

**Objection**—The patron said the book could attract young adults to Nazism and the occult. The combination could be dangerous to vulnerable minds.

**Update**—The library retained the book in its collection. In September 2014, the library sent a letter to the patron.

Hoffer, Charles R. *Music for Elementary Classroom Teachers*.

**2014**—In January, a post-secondary instructor in an academic library in Alberta objected to this adult textbook.

**Objection**—The instructor disliked a reference to the “mentally retarded” in a chapter devoted to helping children learn music. The term was offensive and outdated, the instructor said.

**Update**—The instructor and a librarian discussed the book. They agreed that the value of the book’s content outweighed the use of an outdated phrase. The book stayed in the

collection.

Huafang Cui. *Zheng Jiu Wang Yin Shao Nian* [*Save Internet-Addicted Children: 48 Ways to Guide Children in Proper Internet Use*].

**2014**—In the summer, the Falun Dafa Association of Toronto challenged this adult Chinese book in the Toronto Public Library.

**Objection**—Members of the association said that a chapter in the book incited hatred against Falun Gong. They asked for the book's removal from the library's collection and asked the library not to buy similar books.

**Update**—A translation of the impugned chapter was attached to the complaint. To ensure that the translation was accurate, the library asked a City translator to check it.

*Zheng Jiu Wang Yin Shao Nian* aims to help parents guide their children in the safe use of the Internet, and the book describes different scenarios. In the impugned chapter, a boy speaks to his father. The boy plans to kill himself because he has been secretly reading about Falun Gong on a website. The chapter refers to Falun Gong as an illicit organization.

The library noted that the book's publisher is China Water and Power Press, which is owned by the Chinese government. The library also noted that Amnesty International and the U.S. State Department have said that the Chinese government has a history of abusing Falun Gong members. The library concluded that the anti-Falun Gong message in the book was inaccurate and misleading.

The library moved *Zheng Jiu Wang Yin Shao Nian* from the general collection to the Toronto Reference Library, where the book is now kept as a research copy. The library also reminded its selectors of multilingual materials to pay close attention to books on sensitive topics.

James, David. *A Not So Model Home*.

**2014**—In March, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this work of adult fiction. *A Not So Model Home* is an Amanda Thorne mystery.

**Objection**—The book's cover does not indicate the presence of homosexual characters and situations in the novel, the patron said.

**Update**—The library kept the novel in its collection.

Jolin, Dominique. *Qu'est-ce que vous faites là?*

**2014**—In November, a patron of a public library in British Columbia challenged this picture book for pre-school children.

**Objections**—The patron objected to the depiction of a busy work-at-home mother who leaves her children to look after themselves and get into mischief during the day. The patron also objected to the depiction of children walking into their mother's bedroom at night to ask their mother and her boyfriend "What are you doing?"

"Not appropriate," the patron said. "Remove from circulation."

**Update**—The library retained the book in the children's French picture-book collection. Dominique Jolin is well-known for writing humorous, child-centred stories.

This title was also challenged in 1995. See entry below.

Kawase Kohnske. *Gangsta*.

**2014**—In December, a patron of a public library in British Columbia objected to six titles in this series of graphic novels.

**Objections**—The patron said *Gangsta* was “too violent and sexually explicit for the teen collection.”

**Update**—In the same month, the library moved the series to the adult section.

Kenner, J. *Claim Me*.

**2014**—In September, a patron in a public library in Ontario challenged this adult erotic novel. *Claim Me* is the second volume in the Stark trilogy.

**Objection**—The novel was sexually explicit, included offensive language and was inappropriate for any age, the patron said.

**Update**—The library retained the novel in its collection.

Kusano Kouichi. *I Don't Like You at All, Big Brother!!*

**2014**—In January, a patron of a public library in Alberta objected to eight titles in this series of graphic novels.

**Objections**—The patron said the series was sexually explicit and inappropriate for the teen collection.

**Update**—In the following month, the library moved the series to the adult graphic novel section.

Lai Youxian. *Nuts Sisters*, Volume 2.

**2014**—In September, a patron of a public library in Alberta objected to this Chinese book.

**Objection**—The patron said sexual references made the book inappropriate for teens.

**Update**—On the same day, the library moved the book from the children's section to the teen Chinese section.

Leavitt, Martine. *My Book of Life by Angel*.

**2014**—In March, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this award-winning young-adult novel about prostitution in Vancouver.

**Objection**—The complainant thought the novel was too sexually explicit (“too graphic”) for young teenaged readers and asked the library to move the novel into the adult collection.

**Update**—The library kept *My Book of Life by Angel* in the young-adult collection.

Lewy, Guenter. *The Armenian Massacres in Ottoman Turkey: A Disputed Genocide*.

**2014**—In January, a university professor in Quebec complained about the inclusion of this book and two others (Türkkaya Ataöv's *An Armenian Source: Hovhannes Katchaznouni* and Kamuran Gürün's *The Armenian File*) in an academic library.

**Objections**—The professor described these books as “hateful and disturbing” because they denied genocide events. The professor was especially troubled by the inclusion of these books in the library's special Jonassohn Genocide Collection.

**Update**—The library explained that the books, although “deemed offensive,” fell within the mandate of the collection: to provide comprehensive resources for research, including resources that may be beyond what is “culturally acceptable,” to show the full range of



information and debate about an event or issue. The books were retained.

Loewen, Heidi. *Mennonite Is the Name, Evil and Deception Are the Game: An Autobiography*.

**2014**—In September, a lawyer who represented one of the people named in this non-fiction book contacted a public library in British Columbia.

**Objection**—The lawyer alleged falsehood and defamation.

**Update**—The library kept the book in its collection.

*Maxim*.

**2014**—In May, a patron of a public library in Alberta objected to this glossy magazine.

**Objection**—The patron said the magazine was sexually explicit.

**Update**—On the same day, the library resolved the dispute and kept the magazine in the collection.

Meihua Li. *Shui Na Zou Wo De Liu Liu Qiu*.

**2014**—A patron of the Toronto Public Library complained about this Chinese children's kit and a similar book. (See *Cheng Shi Zhen Quing Hui Ben*.)

**Objection**—The patron said that grammatical errors would make it difficult for children to follow the stories and improve their skills. The patron also asked the library to ensure that its Chinese books are chosen by Chinese speakers who know the written language.

**Update**—The library asked a PhD candidate in Mandarin Chinese to assess *Shui Na Zou Wo De Liu Liu Qiu*. In a detailed report, the PhD candidate concluded that the author's choice of informal language was appropriate because the work was meant to be read aloud. The library's staff reviewed the report, kept *Shui Na Zou Wo De Liu Liu Qiu* in the children's Chinese collection and sent a copy of the report to the complainant.

Moskowitz, Hannah. *Teeth*.

**2014**—In November, a parent challenged this fantasy novel in a public library in Ontario. *Teeth* is aimed at readers aged 14–18 years old.

**Objections**—The language was offensive and blasphemous, the patron said. The book lacked a warning about its explicit language.

**Update**—The library consulted book reviews and other libraries. The library kept *Teeth* in its teen collection.

Newman, Lesléa. *Donovan's Big Day*.

**2014**—In August, a patron of a public library in Alberta objected to this children's picture book.

**Objection**—The patron disliked the theme of same-sex marriage.

**Update**—On the same day, the library resolved the dispute and kept the book in the collection.

The Redsuits. Songbook.

**2014**—In January, McMaster University in Hamilton suspended the Redsuits, an unofficial society of engineering students, from campus events after Udoka Okafor, a third-year humanities student, complained about their book of bawdy songs and chants. (Song titles include “The S&M Man” and “Orgies Make the World Go Round.”)

McMaster University also promised to investigate the Redsuits.

**Objections**—McMaster University’s *Daily News* described the songbook as “sexist, violent and degrading.” David Wilkinson, a university provost and vice-president, said: “The material is highly repugnant. The university has clear expectations that everyone on campus show respect for each other. The engineering songbook that we have learned about is highly disturbing and is the exact opposite to everything for which the university stands.” Ishwar Puri, the dean of engineering, said: “It is upsetting in this day and age that a book was put together with materials that are entirely unacceptable. The redsuits organization has a significant track record of positive work within the faculty and the university . . . Sadly, the small number of students within the organization and the redsuits they wear have now become symbols of intolerance and a sexist mindset that has no place at the university or in our society.”

**Update**—In March, Simon Almeida, a fifth-year engineering student, launched a petition to reinstate the Redsuits’ campus privileges. He described the songbook as a “fringe document” that most students knew nothing about. In April, a law firm hired by McMaster University released a report about the investigation into the Redsuits. The report approved a ban on the singing of the Songbook’s chants and songs on campus.

Roebuck, Kevin. *3D Printing*.

**2014**—In October, a patron of a public library in Alberta objected to this book.

**Objection**—The book was a compilation of Wikipedia articles, the patron said, and therefore contained unreliable information.

**Update**—The library removed the book.

Sacco, Joe. *Footnotes in Gaza*.

**2014**—In August, a patron of a public library in Nova Scotia challenged this graphic novel for adults.

**Objection**—The patron said that the book presented a one-sided view of the conflict in the Gaza Strip. The patron also said that children should not be exposed to the depictions of violence in the book.

**Update**—Library managers and the patron discussed the complaint. The library kept *Footnotes in Gaza* in its collection but also moved its adult graphic novel collection farther away from the children/youth collection in the building.

Saint-Mars, Dominique de. *Lili se fait piéger sur Internet*.

**2014**—In February, a parent complained to a parents’ committee about this children’s book in an elementary school library in Quebec.

**Objections**—The parent worried about cartoon images of nude adults on a cartoon computer screen. (In one passage in the book, Lili, a young girl, accidentally finds pornography on the Internet and wonders what she is seeing.) The parent worried that young readers might not understand what they were seeing.

**Update**—The library kept the book in the collection but encourages students to read the book with a parent.

Scieszka, Jon, and Mac Barnett. *Battle Bunny*.

**2014**—In May, a parent complained about this children’s picture book in a public library

in Quebec.

**Objections**—The parent disliked the depictions of violence and didn't think the book was funny. Her 10-year-old child was "traumatised" by the bunny's "exceedingly violent" actions, she said. Many parents would share her opinion, she added, and she asked the library to remove the book from the collection.

**Update**—Librarians evaluated the book. They agreed that it was a work of humour and satire. They thought *Battle Bunny* could appeal to reluctant readers. The librarians also noted that professional book reviews were positive and that four previous borrowers of the book had made no complaints or complaints. *Battle Bunny* remained in the library's collection.

Smith, Daniel. *Monkey Mind: A Memoir of Anxiety*.

**2014**—In November, a patron of a public library in Alberta said this audiobook needed a warning label on the cover.

**Objection**—The book has dark, adult content.

**Update**—The library kept the book in the collection.

Smith, Kevin. *Tough Sh\*t: Life Advice from a Fat, Lazy Slob Who Did Good*.

**2014**—In October, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this audiobook.

**Objection**—The patron mistook *Tough Sh\*t* for a self-help publication. The patron objected to the audiobook's offensive language and sexually explicit content. The patron wanted a warning label affixed to the package.

**Update**—The library kept the audiobook in the collection and affixed no warning label.

*Sri Guru Granth Sahib in English Translation*.

**2014**—In February, a post-secondary student in an academic library in Alberta objected to the location of this work—a four-volume English translation by Gurbachan Singh Talib and Bhai Jodh Singh of Sikhism's main religious text—in the library's main collection.

**Objection**—The student wanted to move the work into a separate, revered location in the library.

**Update**—After talking to the student, the collections librarian discussed the request with faculty members in the religious studies department. The work—an academic text, not an original *Guru Granth Sahib*—remained in its original location.

Tsukasa Fushimi. *Oreimo*.

**2014**—In January, a patron of a public library in Alberta objected to four titles in this series of graphic novels for early readers.

**Objection**—The patron said the series was age inappropriate.

**Update**—In the following month, the library moved the series from the teen collection to the adult graphic novel section.

VeggieTales.

**2014**—In December, a parent challenged a children's picture book in the VeggieTales series in a public library in British Columbia.

**Objection**—The book spreads Christian propaganda, the parent said.

**Update**—The library kept the book in its collection. In an e-mailed message to the complaining parent, the library explained that its collection aims to reflect the reading needs of diverse individuals and communities (cultural, ethnic or religious). The library relied on parents to involve themselves in their children’s use of the library and their children’s reading choices.

Weingarten, Lynn. *Wherever Nina Lies*.

**2014**—In late March, a patron of a public library in British Columbia challenged this young-adult novel.

**Objections**—The novel featured “lots of swearing, under-age drinking, sex,” the patron said. The sexually explicit and offensive language made the book age inappropriate.

**Update**—Reviewers such as Kirkus Reviews and Booklist had recommended *Wherever Nina Lies* for teen readers, the library noted. However, the novel had been improperly catalogued as a children’s book. The library moved it into the teen collection.

Whiting, Charles. *Ike’s Last Battle: The Battle of the Ruhr Pocket April 1945*.

**2014**—In April, a patron of a public library in Ontario challenged this work of adult non-fiction.

**Objection**—The patron disagreed with the author’s allegation that General Dwight D. Eisenhower had a love affair during the war.

**Update**—The library kept the book in its collection.

Winegarner, Andrew. *Gilgamesh: A Graphic Novel*.

**2014**—In April, a patron in a public library in British Columbia objected to this book.

**Objection**—The patron mistook *Gilgamesh: A Graphic Novel*, which is intended for adult readers, for a children’s book. The patron said that the depictions of nudity were inappropriate for children and asked the library to put a warning label (“Explicit—Parental Advisory”) on the cover.

**Update**—The library had classified *Gilgamesh: A Graphic Novel* as an adult book and kept it in an adult section. However, because *Gilgamesh: A Graphic Novel* looks like a children’s book, it could have been shelved in the children’s section by mistake. The library kept the book but cautioned the staff to be careful when shelving it. The library also sent a letter to the patron in April.

## 2013

*Allure* magazine. (December 2012 issue)

Keira Knightley appears on the cover.

Objections: nudity; sexism; age inappropriate. The complainant wrote: “Do I see any nude male covers with testicles exposed? No! Are they (publishers) selling ideas or exploiting images of women? Sexism in body nudity in public domains! Seriously consider pre-adult exposure to the covers.”

Location: Alberta

Ankerberg, John, John Weldon and Dillon Burroughs. *The Facts on Halloween*. (part of the Facts On series)

Objection: religious viewpoint. A library staff member objected to the association of the history of Halloween and the devil, and alleged that the book demonstrates a pro-religious bias.

Location: Ontario

Bokram, Karen. *Head-to-Toe Guide to You*. (part of the Girls' Life series)

Objections: sex education; sexually explicit; age inappropriate.

Location: British Columbia

Brown, Sandra. *A Kiss Remembered*. (audiobook)

Objections: sexism; sexually explicit. The complainant said that the book is obscene and offends current sexual morality.

Location: Ontario

Carlson, Allan C., and Paul T. Mero. *The Natural Family: A Manifesto*.

Objections: religious viewpoint; insensitivity.

Location: Ontario

Cole, Babette. *Dr. Dog*.

Objections: age inappropriate; smoking; teen smoking, including pictures; scratching private areas to describe taking care of one's health, including picture/illustration; bathroom humour.

Location: British Columbia

Davies, Bob, and Lori Rentzel. *Coming Out of Homosexuality: New Freedom for Men and Women*.

Objections: inaccuracy; insensitivity; homosexuality. The complainant objected to the view that homosexuality is an illness and to the "discredited theory" that it could be cured by prayer and marriage.

Location: British Columbia

Delany, Vicki. *In the Shadow of the Glacier*. (a Constable Molly Smith novel)

Objection: inaccuracy. The complainant objected to printing errors and misnamed places; for example, Point Grey appears as Grey Point.

Location: British Columbia

Djian, Philippe. *Vers chez les blancs*.

Objection: sexually explicit. The complainant dismissed this book as "just pornography."

Location: British Columbia

Dr. Seuss. *Hop on Pop*.

Objection: violence. In this children's book, children hop on their father. The complainant argued that children are being "encouraged to use wanton violence against their fathers."

Location: Toronto

Dr. Seuss. *If I Ran the Zoo*.

Objection: racism.

Location: British Columbia

Eminem. *The Way I Am*.

Objections: nudity; sexually explicit; not educational. The complainant said that the book was “rude and inappropriate because [it] contained pictures of half-naked girls dancing on a pole topless. I think libraries should have friendly pictures and not inappropriate pictures. Sexual photos are just improper for readers to see.”

Location: British Columbia

Girgis, Sherif, Ryan T. Anderson and Robert P. George. *What Is Marriage? Man and Woman: A Defense*.

Objections: religious viewpoint; insensitivity. The complainant objected to the book’s “traditionalist” viewpoint.

Location: Ontario

*GQ* magazine. (December 2012 issue)

Rihanna (Robyn Rihanna Fenty) appears on the cover.

Objections: nudity; sexism; age inappropriate. The complainant wrote: “Do I see any nude male covers with testicles exposed? No! Are they (publishers) selling ideas or exploiting images of women? Sexism in body nudity in public domains! Seriously consider pre-adult exposure to the covers.”

Location: Alberta

Greenwood, Elinor, and Alexander Cox. *100% Me*.

Objections: sex education; sexually explicit; age inappropriate.

Location: British Columbia

Grey, Andrew. *Snowbound in Nowhere*. (e-book)

Objections: homosexuality; sexually explicit. A recommendation to attach a label warning of explicit sex was made.

Location: Ontario

Kenyon, Sherrilyn. *Styx*. (a Dark-Hunter novel)

Objection: sexually explicit. The complainant objected to the “repeated sexual and physical abuse of [a] young boy, causing adult psychological trauma.” The complainant added: “Materials should be identified as containing explicit child sexual abuse and not [as] a ‘paranormal romance.’ I have paid the replacement cost for the novel and will burn it to save others from being exposed to this material.”

Location: Alberta

Kirkman, Robert, and Tony Moore. *The Walking Dead*.

**2013**—In Strathmore, Alta., a parent complained about the inclusion of this graphic novel in the library at Crowther Memorial Junior High School.

**Objection**—The parent objected to “extreme violence and swearing” in the text.



**Update**—A committee reviewed *The Walking Dead* and deemed it inappropriate for use in a junior high school. The book was withdrawn from the collection.

Landis, Floyd. *Positively False: The Real Story of How I Won the Tour de France*.

Objection: inaccuracy. Landis wrote the book to refute doping charges, but he later recanted, rendering the information in the book out of date and inaccurate.

Location: Ontario

Lapidus, Jens. *Never Fück Up: A Novel*.

Objection: offensive language. The complainant described the title as “blatant and offensive.”

Location: Alberta

Lawhead, Stephen R. *The Skin Map*. (part of the Bright Empires series)

Objection: religious viewpoint. The complainant said that nothing in the book earned it the designation of Christian fiction.

Location: Saskatchewan

Lee, Dennis. *Lizzy's Lion*.

**2013**—In Toronto, a patron of the public library complained about this illustrated children’s book. Lee is an acclaimed Canadian author.

**Objection**—The library patron described *Lizzy’s Lion* as “a violent and disturbing book” and said that it had no place in a children’s library.

**Update**—The library rejected the challenge. In the 2015 issue of *Freedom to Read*, Lee commented on this book challenge and others. See page 19 of the magazine.

Lester, Julius. *What a Truly Cool World*.

Objections: anti-ethnicity; offensive language. The complainant disliked the “poor grammar and stereotypical black language” in its portrayal of African Americans.

Location: Ontario

MacEwan, Grant. *Fifty Mighty Men*.

Objections: insensitivity; racism.

Location: Alberta

Merriam, Eve. *Spooky ABC*.

Objections: occult; violence; age inappropriate; religious viewpoint; offensive. The complainant found depictions of violence and mention of the devil offensive. “Letters *D* and *I* poems not very appropriate for kids to read, and quite honestly the whole book was not OK to read to a child of any age. I don’t know if it would be useful to another child. Many other alphabet books [are] available. This one just seemed bad all across the board.”

Location: British Columbia

Movsessian, Shushann. *Puberty Girl*.

Objections: sex education; sexually explicit; age inappropriate.

Location: British Columbia

O'Reilly, Bill, and Martin Dugard. *Killing Kennedy: The End of Camelot*.

Objection: inaccuracy. The complainant wrote that the book contains falsehoods because it concludes that U.S. President John Kennedy was killed by Lee Harvey Oswald alone and that there was no conspiracy.

Location: Ontario

Petty, Kate. *Made with Love: How Babies Are Made*.

Objections: age inappropriate; sex education. The complainant asked the librarian to move the book to the parenting collection.

Location: Saskatchewan

Pynchon, Thomas, Mary Gordon, John Updike, et al. *Deadly Sins*.

Objection: glorifies sin. The complainant wrote: "The book entices and encourages people to actually commit the sins listed in the book, and any book that would encourage and glorify sin does not belong in a Christian's life or anybody else's life."

Location: Alberta

*Rolling Stone* magazine. (August 2013 issue)

Dzhokhar Tsarnaev, the Boston Marathon bomber, appears on the cover.

Objection: insensitivity. The complainant wrote: "To idealize this man, this bomber, who blew people up is an affront to the people of Boston and all humane people of the world."

Location: British Columbia

Sachar, Louis. *Small Steps*. (audiobook)

Objections: age inappropriate; violence. The library patron objected to a description of the attempted murder of a young girl. A recommendation to move the book from the junior to the teen collection was made.

Location: British Columbia

Schmid, Ron. *The Untold Story of Milk*. [edition unknown].

Objection: inaccuracy. The complainant said the book contains "incorrect scientific information about raw and pasteurized milk."

Location: British Columbia

Sendak, Maurice. *Alligators All Around: An Alphabet*. (part of the Nutshell Library series)

Objection: racism. The book contains caricatures of alligators imitating indigenous peoples on the letter *I* page. The text is "imitating Indians."

Location: British Columbia

Seuss, Dr. See Dr. Seuss.

Smart, Jack, and Frances Altorfer. *Teach Yourself Gulf Arabic*.

Objections: inaccuracy; offensive. The complainant said that the book's title and the term "Arabian Gulf" are incorrect, and said they should be "Persian Arabic" and "Persian

Gulf.”

Location: Alberta

Smith, Lane. *It's a Book*.

Objections: age inappropriate; offensive language. The complainant wrote: “A children’s book with the last line ‘It’s a book, jackass’ is not appropriate for 2–6 year olds. I don’t want my 6-year-old to repeat that line at school and get a detention. The concept and the rest of the language is adorable, funny, and appropriate, but the subversive twist at the end makes it a picture book for grown-ups.”

Location: Alberta

Snell, Rupert, and Simon Weightman. *Complete Hindi: A Teach Yourself Guide*.

Objection: inaccuracy. The complainant noted “many grammatical inaccuracies” and objected to the suggestion that Hindi and Urdu are paired languages.

Location: Ontario

Spilsbury, Louise. *Me, Myself and I: All about Sex and Puberty*.

Objections: sex education; sexually explicit; age inappropriate.

Location: British Columbia

Stein, Garth. *How Evan Broke His Head and Other Secrets*.

Objections: homosexuality; sexually explicit; offensive language; age inappropriate.

Location: Alberta

Willhoite, Michael. *Daddy's Roommate*.

Objections: homosexuality; age inappropriate. The complainant said that the “book presents homosexuality as normal, acceptable and even moral.”

Location: Ontario

Willis, Jeanne. *Je déteste l'école*.

Objection: age inappropriate. The illustrations scared a Grade 4 child and the library patron herself.

Location: Ontario

## 2012

Barlow, Steve, and Steve Skidmore. *Demon Hunter*. (part of the iHorror series.)

Objection: age inappropriate

Boyce Davies, Carole, ed. *Encyclopedia of the African Diaspora: Origins, Experiences, and Culture*.

Objection: inaccuracy

Capone, Donald. *G.I. Joe: The Rise of Cobra*.

Objections: violence; age inappropriate

- d'Aquino, Jason. *Circus ABC*.  
Objections: racism; sexism; nudity; age inappropriate
- Daunais, Lionel. *The Little Blue Doggy*.  
Objections: violence; age inappropriate
- Ezzo, Gary, and Robert Bucknam. *On Becoming Baby Wise: Giving Your Infant the Gift of Nighttime Sleep*.  
Objection: inaccuracy
- Farndon, John. *Do Not Open: An Encyclopedia of the World's Best-Kept Secrets*.  
Objection: age inappropriate
- Freedman, Claire, and Gavin Scott. *Mon Petit Lapin*.  
Objections: offensive language; age inappropriate
- Guibert, Emmanuel, and Joann Sfar. *Les Voleurs de yaourts*. (part of the Sardine de l'Espace series.)  
Objections: offensive language; age inappropriate
- Hamlin, Harry. *Full Frontal Nudity: The Making of an Accidental Actor*.  
Objection: nudity
- Hergé. *Tintin in the Congo*.  
Objections: racism; age inappropriate
- James, E.L. *Fifty Shades of Grey*.  
Objection: age inappropriate
- Kaelberer, Angie Peterson. *Cool Pro Wrestling Facts*.  
Objections: violence; age inappropriate
- Madaras, Lynda. *The "What's Happening to My Body" Book for [Unknown]*.  
Objection: age inappropriate
- Meder, Theo. *The Flying Dutchman and Other Folktales from the Netherlands*.  
Objection: age inappropriate
- Morgan, Sophie. *Diary of a Submissive: A Modern True Tale of Sexual Awakening*.  
Objection: sexually explicit
- Morris, Jackie. *Luminaria*.  
Objection: hate
- "The Reluctant Reader's Bill of Rights." (poster)  
Objection: age inappropriate

Saltz, Gail. *Amazing You! Getting Smart About Your Private Parts*.  
Objections: sex education; nudity; age inappropriate

Sedaris, Amy. *Simple Times: Crafts for Poor People*.  
Objection: [other]

Spencer, Robert. *The Politically Incorrect Guide to Islam (and the Crusades)*.  
Objections: anti-ethnicity; political viewpoint; religious viewpoint

Wakefield, Andrew J. *Callous Disregard: Autism and Vaccines: The Truth Behind a Tragedy*.  
Objection: inaccuracy

Whitney, Ellie, and Sharon Rady Rolfes. *Understanding Nutrition*.  
Objections: anti-ethnicity; inaccuracy; racism

Wolfe, Sean. *Hard and Fast*.  
Objections: sexually explicit; pornographic

## 2011

Bell, Ted. *Warlord*.  
Objections: anti-ethnicity; insensitivity; racism; political viewpoint; inciting hatred

Bial, Raymond. *The Inuit*. (part of the Lifeways series.)  
Objection: inaccuracy

Brown, Ian, ed. *What I Meant to Say: The Private Lives of Men*.  
Objection: sexism

Browne, Sylvia. *The Two Marys: The Hidden History of the Mother and Wife of Jesus*.  
Objections: inaccuracy; religious viewpoint

Brunetti, Ivan, Lilli Carré, et al. *Black Eye 1: Graphic Transmissions to Cause Ocular Hypertension*.  
**2011**—Officials of the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) seized five copies of this comic book anthology in Buffalo, New York, while artist Tom Neely and a colleague were travelling to the Toronto Comic Arts Festival.  
**Objection**—The customs officers found images of sex and violence in the book. They sent *Black Eye 1* to Ottawa to determine whether the publication was legally obscene and prohibited.  
**Update**—Later, after reviewing the book, the CBSA concluded it was not legally obscene.

Cabot, Meg. *Princess on the Brink*. (audiobook.)  
Objections: sexually explicit; age inappropriate

Constantine, Peter. *Making Out in Korean*.

Objections: anti-ethnicity; sexually explicit; offensive language; other (sexual exploitation)

Cowan, Lesley Anne. *As She Grows*.

Objection: sexually explicit

Cramer, Richard Ben. *How Israel Lost: The Four Questions at the Heart of the Middle East Crisis*.

Objection: anti-ethnicity

Crumb, A., and R. Crumb, eds. *Sophie Crumb: Evolution of a Crazy Artist*.

Objections: nudity; sexually explicit; age inappropriate

Doyle, Brian. *Boy O'Boy*.

Objections: sexually explicit; violence; age inappropriate

Dyck, Agneta. *Why I Canceled My Health Insurance*.

Objections: inaccuracy; insensitivity

Eaton, Maxwell. *Two Dumb Ducks*.

Objection: insensitivity

Epstein, Robin. *Pranks a Lot: The Girls vs. the Boys*. (part of the Groovy Girls Sleepover Club series.)

Objections: occult; Satanism; religious viewpoint

Feehan, Christine. *Murder Game*. (audiobook.)

Objections: sexually explicit; age inappropriate

Fierstein, Harvey. *The Sissy Duckling*.

Objection: homosexuality

Findley, Timothy. *The Wars*.

**2011**—In Ontario, Carolyn Waddell—the mother of a high school student—complained to the Bluewater District School Board about the use of this novel in Grade 12 English literature classes. The novel, which tells the story of a Canadian soldier in Europe during World War I, won the Governor General's Literary Award for fiction in 1977.

**Objection**—Speaking on behalf of a small delegation of parents, Waddell objected to depictions of sex and violence in the novel. She especially objected to a character's visit to a whorehouse and depictions of a homosexual gang rape. She said the novel was "inappropriate to be presented to a class of young people," worried about the book's effect on the minds of students and asked the board to review the novel. Waddell denied that she was asking for censorship.

**Update**—Students and other people in the community defended the novel's literary value



and argued for the book's continued use in English classes. The school board referred the issue to a textbook review committee which consisted of secondary school teachers, student senators and other staff. Later in the year, the committee recommended that *The Wars* be kept in the secondary school curriculum.

Hernandez, Jaime. *Love and Rockets*. (a series of 16 graphic novels.)  
Objections: sexually explicit; violence

Holzwarth, Werner. *The Story of the Little Mole Who Knew It Was None of His Business*.  
Objections: age inappropriate; other (excrement)

Hunter, Erin. *Warriors: The Rise of Scourge*.  
Objections: violence; offensive language

*Instigator* magazine.

**2011**—Officials of the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) seized and detained copies of this U.S. gay mens' leather fetish magazine.

**Objection**—Officials suspected the magazine was legally obscene.

**Update**—The importer—a magazine subscriber named Alfred B who lives in a town north of Vancouver—informed *Xtra* about the incident. *Xtra* publishes news for and about Canadian gays and lesbians. *Xtra* exposed the story on November 3. The CBSA, after holding the magazines for several weeks, released them to the importer.

Jeremy, Ron. *Ron Jeremy: The Hardest (Working) Man in Showbiz*.  
Objections: sexually explicit; age inappropriate

Kalman, Bobby. *Hooray for Dairy Farming*.  
Objection: inaccuracy

Kasokeo, Deanne. *Antigone*.

**2011**—In Saskatchewan, Chief Dwayne Antoine and members of the band council of the Poundmaker Cree Nation tried to ban a live performance of an adaptation of *Antigone* on their reserve.

**Objection**—*Antigone*—which was originally written by Sophocles in Greece in the 5th century B.C.—tells the story of a woman who gives her brother a proper burial in defiance of a tyrant's edict. Deanne Kasokeo's adaptation of *Antigone* is set on a Canadian aboriginal reserve and features a character who is a corrupt band chief. The band's council members provided no public explanation for banning the play.

**Update**—The actors defied the ban and performed *Antigone* in a school on the reserve. Approximately 60 people saw the performance. In press reports, Kasokeo said that the corrupt chief in the play was not a depiction of Chief Antoine.

Knight, Angela, Emma Holly, Lora Leigh, and Diane Whiteside. *Beyond the Dark*.  
Objections: sexually explicit; offensive language

Larmee, Blaise. *Young Lions*.

**2011**—Officials of the Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) seized this graphic novella in Buffalo, New York, while artist Tom Neely and a colleague were travelling to the Toronto Comic Arts Festival.

**Objection**—The customs officers found pencil sketches of fictional young people having sexual contact in the book.

**Update**—After reviewing the book, the CBSA concluded that *Young Lions* is legally obscene and banned its importation into Canada.

Lemire, Jeff. *Tales from the Farm*.

Objection: offensive language

MacKenna, John. *The Space Between Us*.

Objection: [other]

Mansbach, Adam. *Go the F\*\*k to Sleep*.

Objections: offensive language; age inappropriate

Mayle, Peter. “*What’s Happening to Me?*” *An Illustrated Guide to Puberty*.

Objections: sex education; age inappropriate

McIntosh, Patti. *The Remarkable Maria*.

Objections: anti-ethnicity; inaccuracy; racism

Mignola, Mike, et al. *Hellboy Junior*.

Objections: sexually explicit; age inappropriate

Mystery, and Chris Odom. *The Mystery Method: How to Get Beautiful Women into Bed*.

Objection: sexually explicit; misbound in the cover of children’s novel *Twelve* by Lauren Myracle

*NOW* magazine.

Objections: sexually explicit; nudity; anti-family; drugs/drug use; offensive language; age inappropriate

Phelan, Matt. *The Storm in the Barn*.

Objections: violence; offensive language

Polacco, Patricia. *Christmas Tapestry*.

Objections: violence; age inappropriate; [other]

Pullman, Phillip. His Dark Materials. (a series of three novels.)

Objections: Satanism; occult; religious viewpoint; violence; age inappropriate

Redd, Nancy Amanda. *Body Drama*.

Objections: nudity; age inappropriate

Rohmann, Eric. *Bone Dog*.

Objection: age inappropriate

*Rolling Stone* magazine.

Objection: violence

Rubenstein, Richard L. *Jihad and Genocide*.

Objections: anti-ethnicity; insensitivity; inaccuracy; political viewpoint; hate

Sapphire. *The Kid*. (audiobook.)

Objections: sexually explicit; violence; offensive language

*Spin* magazine.

Objection: age inappropriate

Stewart, Jon. *Earth (The Book): A Visitor's Guide to the Human Race*.

Objections: nudity; insensitivity

Stuart, Anne. *Fire and Ice*.

Objection: offensive language

Wilson, John. *Written in Blood*.

Objections: violence; racism; age inappropriate

## **2010**

For the year 2010, the Canadian Library Association learned of 92 challenges to books, magazines, other resources such as DVDs and even library policies in Canadian libraries. However, we have not yet acquired the locations of the challenges, the reasons for each challenge or the result of each challenge. We can only present, therefore, a list of challenged titles for this year.

Alexie, Sherman. *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-Time Indian*.

Athkins, D.E. *Swans in the Mist*.

Bateman, Colin. *Murphy's Law*.

Beck, Carolyn, and Andrea Beck. *The Waiting Dog*.

Benton, Jim. *Dear Dumb Diary: Never Underestimate Your Dumbness*.

Brannen, Sarah S. *Uncle Bobby's Wedding*.

Burns, Charles. *Black Hole*. (12 issues in comic book series.)

Butler, Dori Hillestad. *My Mom's Having a Baby! A Kid's Month by Month Guide to Pregnancy*.

Cairo. *The Man Handler*.

Canfield, Jack, et al. *Chicken Soup for the Unsinkable Soul: 101 Stories*.

**2010**—In a Canadian library, a parent challenged this book of inspirational stories.

**Objection**—The complainant objected to “The Birthday Present,” a story by Mavis Burton Ferguson. The complainant regarded the story as subtly racist and ethnocentric.

**Update**—Unrecorded.

Carter, Anne Laurel. *The Shepherd's Granddaughter*.

**2010**—In Ontario, B'nai Brith Canada—a Jewish advocacy group—called for the removal of this young-adult novel about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict from a recommended reading program for students in Grades 7 and 8 in public schools. Brian Henry—a parent with a child in a Toronto public school—also complained about the novel in a letter to Ontario's minister of education.

**Objection**—The complainants described the novel as anti-Israeli propaganda.

**Update**—The complaints provoked a public controversy. Sheila Ward, a trustee on the Toronto District School Board (TDSB), said that she would “move heaven and earth to have *The Shepherd's Granddaughter* taken off the school library shelves.” Carter and the novel's publisher—Patsy Aldana of Groundwood Books—denied the charge of anti-Israeli bias. Erna Paris—chair of the Writers' Union of Canada—and Aldana urged the TDSB to defend students' freedom to read. Others defended the novel's educational and literary value. In June 2010, a review committee of the TDSB said that teachers should use the novel to encourage students to read and think critically. In August 2010, Chris Spence—the TDSB's director of education—decided to keep the novel in the schools' recommended reading program.

Cash, William. *The Third Woman: The Secret Passion That Inspired Graham Greene's The End of the Affair*.

Cohen, Sacha Baron. *Bruno*.

Cooper, Roy. *Calf Roping: The World Champion's Guide for Winning Runs*.

DeFelice, Cynthia. *Cold Feet*.

Denim, Sue, and Dav Pilkey. *The Dumb Bunnies Go to the Zoo*.

Ennis, Garth. *War Stories*, Volume 1.

Ennis, Garth, John McCrea and Darick Robertson. *The Boys Volume 5: Herogasm*.

Gaiman, Neil. *American Gods* and *M is for Magic*.

Grey, Mini. *Egg Drop*.

Guru Granth Sahib [Sikh sacred scripture].

Heide, Florence Parry. *The Bigness Contest*.

Hergé. *Tintin in the Congo*.

Horwitz, Tony. *A Voyage Long and Strange: Rediscovering the New World*.

Howard, Korbin. *CFA: 100 Success Secrets; 100 Most Asked Questions*.

Jones, Rob Lloyd. *See Inside Pirate Ships*.

Joose, Barbara. *Hot City*.

Logan, Jake. *Slocum and the Lucky Lady*.

Lucas, George, Hisao Tamaki and David Land. *Star Wars: A New Hope*.

Manning, Mick, and Brita Granstrom. *Dino-Dinners*.

Mapplethorpe, Robert. *Certain People: A Book of Portraits*.

McNally, Brian. "Good Evening, Vietnam!" in *Vanity Fair*, April 2008.

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. *Alice on Her Way* and *Alice the Brave*.

Nissan, Colin, and Sean Farrell. *Don't Be That Guy: A Collection of 60 Annoying Guys We All Know and Wish We Didn't*.

Olsen, Gregg. *Victim Six*.

Ouellette, Sylvie. *Maria Monk*.

Perrault, Charles. *The Complete Fairy Tales of Charles Perrault*.

Pfeifer, Will. *Catwoman: Crime Pays*.

Reilly, John. *Bad Medicine: A Judge's Struggle for Justice in a First Nations Community*.

**2010**—In Alberta, the Stoney Nakoda First Nation asked the Judicial Council of Alberta to ban *Bad Medicine*. David Bearspaw, a chief of the Stoney Nakodas, also filed a libel suit against the book's author, a semi-retired judge who had served in Alberta's courts for more than 30 years.

**Objection**—Stoney Nakoda leaders objected to the negative portrayal of their government of the reserve.

**Update**—In 2011, the Judicial Council of Alberta found merit in the Stoney Nakodas'

complaint and said that Reilly should resign from the bench if he wanted to make political statements. No book ban occurred.

Rice, Anne. *Beauty's Punishment*.

*Rolling Stone*. (September 2010 cover image.)

Rowling, J.K. Harry Potter. (7 books in series.)

Sendak, Maurice. *Outside Over There*.

Sorokin, Vladimir. *Pir*.

Spiegelman, Art. *Breakdowns: Portrait of the Artist as a Young %@&\*!*.

Stack, Frank. *The New Adventures of Jesus: The Second Coming*.

Star Wars, Volume 3, Dark Horse Comics. (a series of 14 manga.)

Tremblay, Michel. *Contes pour buveurs attardés*.

**2010**—In Laval, Quebec, the religious mother of a student at the École d'éducation internationale tried to persuade the school to ban this collection of short stories. *Contes pour buveurs attardés* has been a staple of Grade 10 reading lists throughout Quebec for years.

**Objection**—In the book's preface, the author says that his stories tackle homosexuality, incest and encounters with the devil (although these references are so allusive that they are almost undetectable). The complainant declared that she did not want her son exposed to "such promotion of Satanism and pedophilia."

**Update**—The school board turned down the woman's demand and teachers kept the book on school reading lists.

Twain, Mark. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.

Willis, Jeanne, and Tony Ross. *Big Bad Bun*.

Wiseman, Jay. *Jay Wiseman's Erotic Bondage Handbook*.

*Xtra! West*.

## 2009

For the year 2009, the Canadian Library Association learned of 139 challenges to books, magazines, other resources such as DVDs and even library policies in Canadian libraries. However, we have not yet acquired the locations of the challenges, the reasons for each challenge or the result of each challenge. We can only present, therefore, the following list of challenged titles for this year.



To read the CLA's summary of the survey conducted for the year 2009, please visit [http://www.cla.ca/Content/NavigationMenu/CLAAatWork/Committees/Challenges\\_to\\_Canadi.htm](http://www.cla.ca/Content/NavigationMenu/CLAAatWork/Committees/Challenges_to_Canadi.htm).

*Adbusters: A Journal of the Mental Environment.*

Akamatsu, Ken. *Negima!* (29 books in series).

Baskin, Julia, Lindsey Newman, Sophie Pollitt-Cohen and Courtney Toombs. *The Notebook Girls.*

Blechman, R.O. *Franklin the Fly.*

Brunetti, Ivan, ed. *An Anthology of Graphic Fiction, Cartoons and True Stories.*

Brown, Andi. *The Whole Pet Diet: Eight Weeks to Great Health for Dogs and Cats.*

Cole, Babette. *Mummy Laid an Egg!*

Cole, Babette. *Mummy Never Told Me.*

De Haan, Linda. *King and King.*

Delafontaine, Marc, and Maryse Dubuc. *Les nombrils.*

**2009**—In Laval, Quebec, the Mosaïque school for troubled teens pulled copies of this internationally successful comic book series off its library shelves.

**Objection**—School authorities feared that the young, thin female characters in *Les nombrils* might encourage anorexia among the school's female students.

**Update**—School authorities rescinded their decision after the graduation of the girls whom they saw as vulnerable to anorexia.

Dubberley, Emily, and Al Needham. *The Going Down Guide: Tongue Tips and Oral Sex Techniques for Men and Women.*

Harris, Charlaine. *The Southern Vampire Mysteries.* (10 books in series).

Hoffman, Abbie. *Steal This Book.*

Jacobson, Eleanor M. *Bended Elbow.*

Lemieux, Diane. *Culture Smart! Canada: A Quick Guide to Customs and Etiquette.*

Maltin, Leonard. *Leonard Maltin's 2010 Movie Guide.*

Michaels, Fern. *Vendetta.*

*Now Magazine.*

*Paris Match.* (August 12, 2009, issue).

Perkins, Al. *Hand, Hand, Fingers, Thumb.*

Pimsleur, Paul. *Speak Spanish with Dora and Diego.*

Richardson, Justin, and Peter Parnell. *And Tango Makes Three.*

Roche, Charlotte. *Wetlands.*

Smith, Lori. *A Walk with Jane Austen: A Journey into Adventure, Love and Faith.*

*Sports Illustrated.* (swimsuit edition).

Taormino, Tristan. *The Anal Sex Position Guide.*

Tequila, Tila. *Hooking Up with Tila Tequila: A Guide to Love, Fame, Happiness, Success, and Being the Life of the Party.*

Tsuchiya, Yukio. *Faithful Elephants: A True Story of Animals, People, and War.*

Von Ziegesar, Cecily. *Gossip Girl* (15 books in series).

Zopol, Felicia, and Paul Kepple. *Sex Instruction Manual.*

## 2000–08

Allen, Kate. *Takes One to Know One: An Alison Kaine Mystery*.

**2000**—A patron of the Toronto Public Library complained about this murder mystery with a lesbian theme.

**Objection**—“Filthy language,” “casual use of the ‘f’ word” and a graphic depiction of sex.

**Update**—One copy remains in the library’s collection.

Alma, Ann. *Something to Tell*.

**2000**—At the beginning of a Children’s Book Week tour of schools and libraries in Prince Edward Island, the author was told that she should not read from this book, one of her three titles for young readers.

**Objection**—The tour coordinator said P.E.I. students were not mature enough for the book, which tells the story of a girl who has been subjected to sexual touching by the headmistress of her school.

**Update**—It turned out that a child had made an accusation of sexual touching in one of the schools Alma was to visit. After agreeing to the ban for the first day of her week-long tour, Alma decided to ignore the prohibition, and teachers in schools she visited subsequently thanked her for including the book in her presentations.

Asch, Frank. *Ziggy Piggy and the Three Little Pigs*.

**2006**—In the Edmonton Public Library, a parent complained about this children’s book about four little pigs.

**Objection**—The parent objected to an episode at the end of the book in which the Wolf huffs and puffs and blows the four pigs on raft far out to sea and the pigs then go for a swim. The parent wrote: “I don’t know what the author was hoping children would learn from the actions of the pig [i.e., Ziggy]. Yes, he was creative and perhaps a free spirit; however, he may have delivered his friends into greater danger. What is the lesson learned?” The parent considered the book inappropriate for young children and recommended that mature students or children critique the book to discover whether it was suitable for publishing or whether it was suitable for younger children.

**Update**—The library sent a letter to the complainant. The letter outlined the process and timelines for the library’s response. In the end, the library retained the book in its picture book collection.

Atwood, Margaret. *The Handmaid’s Tale*.

**2008**—In Toronto, a parent formally complained about the use of this dystopian novel in a Grade 12 English class at Lawrence Park Collegiate.

**Objection**—The parent said that the novel’s “profane language,” anti-Christian overtones, “violence” and “sexual degradation” probably violated the district school policies that require students to show respect and tolerance to one another.

**Update**—In 2009, a review panel of the Toronto District School Board recommended that schools keep the novel in the curriculum in Grades 11 and 12.

Ball, John. *In the Heat of the Night*.  
See Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Beck, Carolyn, and Andrea Beck. *The Waiting Dog*.

**2006**—In Ontario, a parent complained to the Burlington Public Library about this children's picture book.

**Objection**—The parent described the book as “revolting” and “vile.” The parent objected to depictions of violence and said that the work was age inappropriate.

**Update**—The library responded with a letter that explained that the “offbeat humour” in the book might not be to everyone's taste. The letter added that the book met the selection standards of the library and that not every book will be appropriate for every child or family. The library's picture book collection contained titles for a wide variety of ages and tastes. The library relied on parents, the letter said, to screen library materials for their children. The library also retained *The Waiting Dog* in its collection with no change to its classification or department.

Beisner, Monika. *Catch That Cat: A Picture Book of Rhymes and Puzzles*.

**2006**—In British Columbia, a parent complained about this children's book at the Prince George Public Library.

**Objection**—The parent described the book as occult and scary.

**Update**—The library retained the book in its collection and informed the parent in writing of the decision.

Birren, Faber. *Color Psychology and Color Therapy: A Factual Study of the Influence of Color on Human Life*.

**2000**—A patron of the Toronto Public Library complained about this work of adult non-fiction.

**Objection**—The complainant said the book was “racist” and promoted “ethnic discrimination and bias.”

**Update**—One copy remains in the library's collection.

Bou, Louis. *Street Art: The Spray Files*.

**2006**—A patron of the Surrey Public Library in British Columbia e-mailed a challenge about this picture book to a city councillor. The complaint was then forwarded to the chief librarian.

**Objection**—The patron was concerned that the book could inspire a reader to commit vandalism.

**Update**—The library's collection development manager read the book and advised the chief librarian about its content. The chief librarian then spoke to the city councillor who spoke to the complainant. Because the complaint was specific to one neighbourhood, the library branch transferred the book to another branch.

*Catholic Insight*.

**2007**—A gay activist in Edmonton filed a human rights complaint against this socially conservative Roman Catholic journal.

**Objection**—The activist alleged that *Catholic Insight* promoted hatred against gays and lesbians by opposing—on theological grounds—homosexuality and same-sex marriage.  
**Update**—In 2008, Canadian Human Rights Commission ruled that “the material is not likely to expose a person or persons to hatred or contempt based on sexual orientation.” The activist appealed this ruling to the Federal Court of Canada.

Chan, Gillian. *Glory Days and Other Stories*.

**2000**—During the sexual assault trial of a former teacher in Langley (BC), court heard evidence that the teacher had assigned a story, “Invisible Girl,” from this critically acclaimed collection to a Grade 4 and 5 class. The story deals with date rape. The school principal suggested to the board superintendent that the book be withdrawn from Langley schools.

**Objection**—The story was deemed inappropriate for the grade level.

**Update**—Almost two years passed before a school board official assured the preparers of the Freedom to Read kit that the book had been withdrawn from the elementary panel but not from all schools in Langley. The book’s publisher, Kids Can Press, also attempted to find out whether the book had been taken out of all schools in the district. The book is still available in secondary school libraries.

Coloroso, Barbara. *Extraordinary Evil: A Brief History of Genocide*.

**2007**—The Council of Turkish Canadians objected to the inclusion of this book on a recommended reading list for a proposed Grade 11 history course on genocide in Toronto public schools.

**Objection**—The book describes the deaths of more than a million Armenians in the Ottoman Empire early in the twentieth century as genocide.

**Update**—In April 2008, a committee of the Toronto District School Board decided to remove the book from the reading list because “a concern was raised regarding [its] appropriateness. . . . The Committee determined this was a far from a scrupulous text and should not be on a History course although it might be included in a course on the social psychology of genocide because of her [Coloroso’s] posited thesis that genocide is merely the extreme extension of bullying.” The decision to remove *Extraordinary Evil*, however, prompted new protests from the book’s defenders, including Canadian publishers, the Writers’ Union of Canada, the Book and Periodical Council and Holocaust scholar Gerald Caplan. In June, the school board reversed its decision, putting the book back onto the recommended reading list. But this decision prompted the Turkish Embassy in Canada to protest to Premier Dalton McGuinty and Ontario’s Ministry of Education.

DeMille, Nelson. *Wild Fire*.

**2007**—A patron of the Edmonton Public Library complained about this thriller. In the novel, which is set in 2002, a group of powerful Americans secretly plot to provoke a nuclear attack on the Middle East in retaliation for the terrorist attacks on New York City and Washington, D.C., in 2001.

**Objection**—The complainant said *Wild Fire* was “just another hate-promoting novel.”

**Update**—The library retained the book in its collection.

Deneault, Alain, with Delphine Abadie and William Sacher. *Noir Canada: Pillage, corruption et criminalité en Afrique*.

**2008**—Two mining companies—Barrick Gold Corporation and Banro Corporation—sued the authors and the publisher—Les Éditions Écosociété—of this book for defamation. Barrick filed its lawsuit in a Quebec court, and Banro filed its lawsuit in an Ontario court.

**Objection**—The mining companies said that the book misrepresents their business practices in Africa. The publisher and authors stood by their allegations of illegal conduct.

**Update**—Both mining companies sought millions of dollars in damages. In June 2008, the Union des écrivaines et des écrivains québécois (Union of Quebec Writers) launched a fundraising campaign to help the publisher pay for its legal bills. In September 2011, Barrick and the publisher settled their dispute out of court. To avoid a costly trial, Écosociété pulled *Noir Canada* off the shelves, and Écosociété's insurance company disbursed an undisclosed sum of money to the mining company.

*Dolls and Bears to Make and Dress*.

**2007**—A patron of the Edmonton Public Library objected to this paperback. Part of the *Australian Women's Weekly* Craft Library series, this book describes how to make toys and dolls for children.

**Objection**—The complainant said that two of the doll patterns—Golly Gosh and That Old Black Magic—are “racist.”

**Update**—The library retained the book in its collection.

Ellenzweig, Allen. *The Homoerotic Photograph: Male Images from Durieu/Delacroix to Mapplethorpe*.

**2002**—A patron of the Toronto Public Library challenged this scholarly book by an art and photography critic at New York University. The book, which features 127 duotone photographs, was published by Columbia University Press.

**Objection**—The complainant said the book verges on child pornography.

**Update**—One copy remains in the library's collection.

Ellis, Deborah. *Three Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak*.

**2006**—In Ontario, the Canadian Jewish Congress (CJC) urged public school boards to deny access to this children's non-fiction book about the Israeli-Palestinian conflict to students in the elementary grades.

**Objection**—The CJC said that Ellis had provided a flawed historical introduction to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The CJC also said that some children in the book portrayed Israeli soldiers as brutal, expressed ethnic hatred and glorified suicide bombing. The effect on young student readers, the CJC said, was “toxic.”

**Update**—Although the Ontario Library Association (OLA) had recommended *Three Wishes* to schools as part of its acclaimed Silver Birch reading program, and although schoolchildren were not required to read the book, at least five school boards in Ontario set restrictions on the text:



- a) The District School Board of Niagara encouraged librarians to steer students in Grades 4–6 away from *Three Wishes* and to tell parents that their children had asked for the book.
- b) The Greater Essex County District School Board restricted access to the book to students in Grade 7 or higher.
- c) The Toronto District School Board restricted access to the book to students in Grade 7 or higher and withdrew the book from school library shelves.
- d) The Ottawa-Carleton District School Board refused to stock the book and refused to provide copies to students who asked for it.
- e) In 2005, before the CJC made its views about *Three Wishes* public, the York Regional District School Board also withdrew the book from the Silver Birch program.

Protests by the OLA, The Writers' Union of Canada, PEN Canada and the Association of Canadian Publishers failed to persuade the school boards to repeal their restrictions.

French, Fiona. *Snow White in New York*.

**2006**—A parent complained about this retelling of the famous fairy tale (which is set in New York City in the 1920s) at the Prince George Public Library.

**Objection**—The parent objected on religious grounds to the depiction of violence and said the book was inappropriate for children.

**Update**—The library retained the book in its collection and notified the parent of its decision in writing.

Foreman, Michael. *Cat on the Hill*.

**2006**—In Alberta, a parent challenged this children's paperback in the Leduc Public Library.

**Objection**—The parent disliked the language in the text and described the book as age inappropriate.

**Update**—The head librarian and the library board met to review the request for reconsideration. In the end, no change occurred to the book's status.

Gay Calgary and Edmonton.

**2007**—A patron of the Edmonton Public Library complained about this local news and entertainment magazine.

**Objection**—The complainant said the magazine carries pictures of the naked backsides of men and men in sexual postures.

**Update**—Current copies are available for free at the library. The library keeps no copies in its collection.

Gourdeau, Gabrielle. *Clins d'œil à Romain Gary*

**2002**—A professor at Laval University, who thought he was being maligned in the short story "Gros-Câlisse" (which depicts the misbehaviour of a fictional department head in an unnamed university), sued Gourdeau for libel, damages, and psychological aggravation. The professor also obtained a court order that prevents the news media from identifying him. The suit was dropped in mid-trial. The professor died and Gourdeau declared bankruptcy in July 2003.

**Update**—The CBC and the newspaper *Le Soleil* appealed the court order that protects the professor’s anonymity.

Grobler, Piet. *Little Bird’s ABC*.

**2006**—A parent objected to this children’s book at the Prince George Public Library.

**Objection**—The parent said the book was age inappropriate.

**Update**—The library decided to keep the book in the library and notified the parent of its decision in writing.

Guterson, David. *Snow Falling on Cedars*.

**2006**—After receiving an anonymous letter of complaint, the Dufferin-Peel (ON) Catholic District School Board removed this novel about a murder trial from its high-school library shelves and the syllabus of a Grade 11 English course. In 1995, this best-selling book won the PEN/Faulkner Award for Fiction.

**Objection**—Sexual content.

**Update**—In 2007, the school board created a committee to review the book. The committee consisted of school trustees, parents, teachers representing elementary and secondary library associations, a religious education consultant, a supervisor of library services and the superintendent of the program. The committee decided to return the novel to school libraries and keep the novel in the Grade 11 English course. The committee also decided to send letters that explain the novel’s value and note the novel’s “sensitive content” to parents of students enrolled in the course. In addition, the committee recommended a comprehensive review of the process for selecting novels for use in schools.

Humphry, Derek. *Final Exit: The Practicalities of Self-Deliverance and Assisted Suicide for the Dying*.

**2005**—During Freedom to Read Week, the Lethbridge Public Library displayed books that had been challenged in North America. The inclusion of *Final Exit* in the display prompted one library patron to formally request the removal of the book from the library.

**Objection**—The complainant said that the book promoted suicide.

**Update**—The library’s board considered the request but retained the book in the collection.

Irving, David. *Hitler’s War*.

**2004**—In Ontario, the Kitchener Public Library received a complaint about this history of World War II by a British writer.

**Objection**—The complainant said that Irving was a Holocaust denier and that the library should not carry his book.

**Update**—After conducting a review, librarians retained the book in the collection. In their review, librarians noted that three local universities stock *Hitler’s War* in their collections. The Kitchener Public Library also carries more than 200 books on the Holocaust, including memoirs, to ensure a variety of viewpoints.

Kerr, Judith. *Mog and the Granny*.

**2008**—A patron challenged this children’s illustrated story book about a cat in the

Greater Victoria Public Library in B.C. The book is part of a popular series of books published in Britain.

**Objection**—The patron said the text is racist because it refers to “Red Indians.”

**Update**—The library’s collection development committee reviewed the book. The committee decided that “the narrative and illustrations are indeed dated and, if not deliberately racist, certainly demeaning according to current standards.” Although 450 people had borrowed the library’s five copies of the book between 1996 and 2008, the library put *Mog and the Granny* into the recycling bin.

Kristof, Agota. *Le grand cahier*.

**2003**—This award-winning novel, which is based on the author’s experiences in World War II, tells of the effects of a fictional war on two boys in an unnamed country. A parent of a 16-year-old girl in St-Jérôme (QC) complained about the book and took his case to the media when the school would not provide an alternative novel.

**Objection**—The parent complained that the book is “very violent and grossly pornographic, as it features scenes of bestiality and pedophilia.”

**Update**—School administrators announced that the book would be dropped in September 2003, but they also said their decision had nothing to do with the controversy. They noted that today’s teens are subjected to much harsher realities without adult supervision. The novel is used in high schools throughout Quebec.

Laird, Elizabeth. *A Little Piece of Ground*.

**2003**—A Canadian bookseller wrote to the British publisher of this novel about a 12-year-old Palestinian boy living in an Israeli-occupied area and asked that the firm consider not releasing the book.

**Objection**—The bookseller said the novel, intended for teenage readers, was “a racist, inflammatory, and a totally one-sided piece of propaganda.”

**Update**—The book was released by the Canadian distributor. Publicity about the Canadian objection and others in the United Kingdom pushed the novel to a sales ranking of 161 on [www.amazon.co.uk](http://www.amazon.co.uk).

Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

**2002**—Black parents and teachers in Yarmouth, Digby, and Shelburne (NS) objected to this novel, Barbara Smucker’s *Underground to Canada*, and John Ball’s *In the Heat of the Night*. The director of education of the Tri-County school board ordered the withdrawal of the three books pending a ruling by the board, but his order was rescinded at a board meeting and the books were restored. In 1993, a school principal in Hamilton (ON) removed the novel from the core reading list for Grade 10 after a complaint from a parent. In 1991, a black community group called PRUDE (Pride of Race, Unity and Dignity through Education) asked Saint John (NB) School District 20 to withdraw this book and *Huckleberry Finn* from reading lists.

**Objection**—The novel, which contains the word “nigger,” might cause black students to be mocked because of racial stereotyping.

*Maclean’s*.

**2007**— The Canadian Islamic Congress (CIC) filed complaints against *Maclean’s*

magazine with the Canadian Human Rights Commission, the Ontario Human Rights Commission and the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal.

**Objection**—On October 23, 2006, *Maclean's* had published an extended excerpt from Mark Steyn's best-selling book, *America Alone: The End of the World as We Know It*. The excerpt examines the possibility of an Islamicized Europe. The CIC said the excerpt is "flagrantly Islamophobic" and "subjects Canadian Muslims to hatred and contempt."

**Update**—In April 2008, the Ontario Human Rights Commission dismissed the CIC's complaint because the commission lacked the legal authority to rule on publications. Two months later, in June, the Canadian Human Rights Commission dismissed the complaint. In June, the B.C. Human Rights Tribunal held a well-publicized hearing for one week in Vancouver. In October, the tribunal cleared *Maclean's* of any wrongdoing.

*Maxim for Men.*

**2003**—The Toronto Public Library received complaints about the October 2002 and the November 2002 issues of this monthly magazine for men.

**Objection**—The magazines were described as "pornographic."

Meyer, Richard. *Outlaw Representation: Censorship and Homosexuality in Twentieth-Century American Art.*

**2002**—The author was due to appear at Glad Day Bookshop in Toronto when he discovered that his publisher, Oxford University Press, had decided not to sell the U.S. edition in Canada.

**Objection**—The book includes a photograph of a nude boy by Robert Mapplethorpe, and the publisher feared the photograph might trigger criminal charges under Canada's child pornography law. "The picture at issue, a portrait entitled 'Jesse McBride,' is not pornographic in any way," said Meyer, "and part of what I discuss in the book is how the patently false charge of child pornography has been used by conservative politicians and the Christian Right as a justification to suppress Mapplethorpe's work. Using these same arguments, Oxford has, in effect, censored a scholarly book on censorship."

Morgan, Allen. *Matthew and the Midnight Flood.*

**2006**—A parent challenged this illustrated children's fantasy book in the Edmonton Public Library. In the tale, a boy and a "midnight plumber" try to save the city from a flood.

**Objection**—In the tale, the complainant said, a stranger visits the little boy's bedroom window in the middle of the night and asks the boy to accompany him. The boy agrees to go because the invitation sounds like fun.

**Update**—The library retained the book in its picturebook collection. No change to the book's status occurred.

Naylor, Phyllis Reynolds. *Outrageously Alice.*

**2000**—A patron of the Toronto Public Library complained about this novel for young readers about a 13-year-old girl growing up and learning about sex.

**Objection**—Saying it was inappropriate for children, the library patron said that the book should be shelved in a "mature section" or children should be denied access to the book.

**Update**—The library retained the book in the children's collection.

Oliver, Marilyn Tower. *The Importance of Muhammad*.

**2006**—A patron of the Mississauga Public Library in Ontario challenged this biography for young adults of the Muslim religious leader.

**Objection**—On religious grounds, the patron considered depictions of Muhammad offensive.

**Update**—The library provided a written response to the complainant and retained the book in its collection.

Oliveros, Chris (ed.). *The Best of Drawn and Quarterly*.

**2004**—A patron of the Toronto Public Library challenged this anthology of adult humour and graphic art.

**Objection**—The book depicted sex and violence.

**Update**—The library retained copies in its collection.

Paterson, Katherine. *Bridge to Terabithia*.

**2006**—A parent challenged this children's book used by the Ottawa Catholic School Board (OCSB). The book is a winner of the American Library Association's Newbery Medal which is awarded annually to a distinguished children's book.

**Objection**—The parent objected to certain words in the text: "pervert," "lordy" and "see-through blouse."

**Update**—The principal of the school reported the challenge to the OCSB's Derry Byrne Teacher Resource Centre (DBTRC). The librarians at the DBTRC did not proceed with the complaint; instead, they suggested that the teacher give the student another book to read.

Richardson, Justin, and Peter Parnell. *And Tango Makes Three*.

**2006**—A parent complained about this picture book for small children in the Calgary Catholic School District. The book tells the story of two male penguins raising a baby penguin in a zoo.

**Objection**—On religious grounds, the parent objected to the theme of homosexual parenting.

**Update**—The library asked the central office of the Religious Education Department to review the book. Later, the library removed the book from its collection.

Patterson, Richard North. *Silent Witness*.

**2003**—A patron of the Toronto Public Library challenged this adult crime novel.

**Objection**—The patron disliked the descriptions of rape and murder.

**Update**—The library retained copies in its collection.

Pearson, Mike. *Waging War from Canada*.

**2001**—This non-fiction book argues that Canada is an ideal launching pad for international terrorism against the United States. Canada Customs intercepted several boxes of the book that were sent from the U.S. publisher to the author in Ottawa. The author is a Canadian writing under a pseudonym.

**Objection**—Customs officials said there is no record of the books' seizure. An over-

zealous official might have turned the books back because they were shipped just two days after the terrorist attacks on the U.S. on Sept. 11, 2001. The author later received two copies of the book by overnight courier.

Pritchard, Jimmy. *The New York City Bartender's Joke Book*.

**2004**—A library patron complained to the Saskatoon Public Library about this book-length collection of jokes that the author had heard while working in bars.

**Objection**—The complainant said that the jokes were in poor taste and promoted negative attitudes toward women and ethnic minorities.

**Update**—The library's Challenged Materials Committee later agreed that the book was "racist, sexist, and demeaning to women and citizens of many countries." The book also failed to meet the library's collection development standards. The committee withdrew the book from circulation.

Pullman, Philip. *The Golden Compass, The Subtle Knife, The Amber Spyglass*

**2007**—After receiving a single complaint, the Halton (ON) Catholic District School Board ordered the withdrawal of these fantasy novels for young readers from the open shelves of libraries in elementary schools. The books were collected at library circulation desks, and students who wished to read the novels had to ask librarians for copies. The board also formed a committee to review the books. Within days, the Roman Catholic school board in Peterborough (ON) received two complaints about the novels and withdrew copies from school libraries. In Peterborough, school employees denied students access to the novels while the board set up a committee to review the novels. The Durham (ON) Catholic District School Board followed suit. The Calgary (AB) Catholic School District told employees to pull the novels from library shelves, not use the novels in classrooms and exclude the books from Scholastic book fairs. In Calgary, the school board also established a committee to review the novels.

**Objection**—The stories, which are set in an alternative universe populated with talking animals, undermine belief in God and organized religion and promote atheism.

**Update**—In 2007, the Halton (ON) Catholic District School Board ignored the recommendation of its review committee and voted to ban the novels from schools. The board's order proclaimed, "Philip Pullman's trilogy of atheist ideology, carefully couched within the realm of fantasy for young readers, is in direct opposition to the mission statement and governing values of our board." But a few weeks later, in 2008, the board of the Calgary (AB) Catholic School District decided to use *The Golden Compass* in schools. "There is no doubt that the text is harsh in terms of its language about organized religion and that it presents a consistently negative view of church, clergy and faith-based institutions; however, there are glimpses of light with opportunities for positive reflection," the review document said. The board urged teachers, when using *The Golden Compass*, to use instruction guides to ensure "a carefully planned approach" and a Catholic focus.

Rowling, J.K. *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone, Harry Potter and the Chamber of Secrets, Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban*.

**2000**—The Durham (ON) Board of Education received numerous complaints about the immensely popular Harry Potter books being read in classrooms throughout the board's schools. A school board official said that the complaints came from fundamentalist



Christian parents.

**Objection**—As is the case in at least 19 states of the U.S. and other parts of Canada, parents were concerned that Harry Potter is engaged in wizardry, witchcraft, and magic-making, and that these activities are inappropriate for young readers.

**Update**—After listening to the complaints, the administration decided to withdraw the books from classroom use but left them in school libraries where they would be available for book reports. One board member said she had wanted the books to be withdrawn completely from the schools; another member said the board had never been asked to decide the issue, so the books' withdrawal amounted to censorship. Several months later, after a raucous public meeting, the board rescinded its decision to remove the books. However, in other jurisdictions teachers have been asked not to use the books in the classroom. This is said to have occurred in a school in Corner Brook (NF) and in Rockwood Public School in Pembroke (ON). In 2002, the Niagara (ON) District School Board turned down a parent's request for the removal of the books from area schools. The parent said the books contained violence and promoted a religion (Wicca) which is against the law in Ontario schools. She said that she had not read the books.

St. Stephen's Community House. *The Little Black Book for Girlz: A Book on Healthy Sexuality*.

**2006**—The Institute for Canadian Values (ICV), a Christian organization, campaigned against this frank sex-education manual for teenage girls. The ICV urged people to write and phone to complain to Prime Minister Stephen Harper, the minister of industry and local MPs to drop public funding for *The Little Black Book for Girlz* and similar books. The ICV also urged people to “monitor their local schools, libraries and other resource centres to ensure that the book is not introduced elsewhere.”

**Objection**—The book, which is written by teenage girls for teenage girls, encourages lesbianism, describes lesbian sex, contains “obscene” language and provides “misleading information” about safe sex.

Sanders, Lawrence. *The Seduction of Peter S.*

**2002**—A patron of the Toronto Public Library challenged this adult thriller about an out-of-work actor who becomes a male prostitute.

**Objection**—The patron said that the novel was a manual on how to become a male prostitute and that young readers could be affected.

**Update**—The library retained copies in its collection.

Sherman, Josepha, and T.K.F. Weisskopf. *Greasy, Grimy, Gopher Guts: The Subversive Folklore of Children*.

**2000**—A teacher from a private school in Kingston (ON) complained about the single copy of this book held by the Kingston Frontenac Public Library in its children's collection. She said that the book was better suited to the library's adult collection. The 248-page collection of street rhymes and folk tales was drawn from the authors' research with children in the U.S. and Canada.

**Objection**—The teacher said the book was inappropriate for children because it contains rhymes on “how to get girls pregnant, put-downs of homosexuals, racism and profanity.”

**Update**—An editorial in *The Kingston Whig-Standard* said that the book belonged in the adult section of the library, but the library board unanimously supported its staff and

decided to leave the book in the children's section.

Steinbeck, John. *Of Mice and Men*.

**2000**—Terry Lewis, a member of the Reform party's national executive council, complained about the use of this novel by Winnipeg's River East School Division and called for the book's removal from school reading lists. The novel has been targeted in other school jurisdictions across Canada as well.

**Objection**—Lewis, who distributed 10,000 copies of a pamphlet arguing against the book, said that Steinbeck's frequent use of "God," "God-damned," and "Jesus" in profane and blasphemous ways offended Christians and couldn't possibly have any educational benefit.

**Update**—The River East School Division took no action. This objection and its disposition echoed an incident in Alberta in 1994, when a member of the legislature demanded that the novel be withdrawn from all high school reading lists in the province.

Tate, Nikki. *Trouble on Tarragon Island*.

**2007**—A librarian at the Elizabeth School in Kindersley (SK) withdrew this children's novel from the library's shelves. The novel depicts a dispute over clear-cut logging in B.C.

**Objection**—In the novel, a girl's grandmother joins an anti-logging group and poses semi-nude for a calendar. In the first chapter, several boys taunt the girl about her grandmother's breasts, calling them "bazoongas." The librarian objected to the bullying scene—the Elizabeth School has a zero-tolerance policy for bullying—and to the word "bazoongas."

**Update**—In July 2007, the outgoing principal defended the librarian's decision. In the autumn of 2007, a new principal reversed the decision to withdraw the book.

Ungerer, Tomi. *The Beast of Monsieur Racine*.

**2006**—A patron of the Kitchener Public Library complained about this children's picture book.

**Objection**—The complainant—a parent—said the book depicted violence, showed a bloody foot in one picture and was age inappropriate.

**Update**—After listening to the parent's concerns, the librarian suggested that the parent fill out a "Materials Reconsideration" form. In the end, the library kept the book in its collection.

*Vue Weekly*.

**2007**—A patron of the Edmonton Public Library complained about this local news and entertainment magazine.

**Objection**—*Vue Weekly* is "a very negative, even dark publication" and includes ads for sex workers.

**Update**—Current copies are available for free at the library. The library retains copies in its collection.

Vigna, Judith. *Black Like Kyra, White Like Me*.

**2000**—A patron of the Toronto Public Library complained about this children's picture

book about a black family moving into an all-white neighbourhood and encountering racial prejudice.

**Objection**—The complainant said the story “reinforces negative stereotypes about blacks and positive types about whites.”

**Update**—The book was retained in the library’s collection.

Vinci, Simona. *What We Don’t Know About Children*.

**2001**—A patron of the Toronto Public Library complained about this work of adult fiction from Italy about five youngsters—teenagers and preteens—experimenting with sex and violence.

**Objection**—The complainant said the novel was sordid and disturbing.

**Update**—The library retained copies in its collection.

*Wallpaper*.

**2001**—A patron of the Toronto Public Library complained about the June 2001 issue of this glossy magazine about style and design. This issue features two topless men and one topless woman on the cover.

**Objection**—The complainant said that the female model was being used as a sex object to sell the magazine.

Waugh, Colin M. *Paul Kagame and Rwanda: Power, Genocide and the Rwandan Patriotic Front*.

**2005**—In Toronto, the Frost Library at York University’s Glendon campus received a request from a Rwandan student to remove this scholarly book from the library. The book was part of a display about the Great Lakes region of Africa.

**Objection**—The student’s family had been killed in the Rwandan massacre of 1994.

**Update**—A librarian removed the book from the display but kept the book in the library’s collection.

*Western Standard*.

**2006**—In Calgary, Syed Soharwardy, the leader of the Supreme Islamic Council of Canada, filed a complaint against Ezra Levant, the publisher of the *Western Standard* magazine, with the Alberta Human Rights and Citizenship Commission (AHRCC).

**Objection**—The February 14, 2006, issue of the magazine features eight Danish cartoons of the Muslim prophet Mohammed. They illustrate a news story about worldwide Muslim riots and protests over the same cartoons. Soharwardy said the cartoons promoted hatred against Canadian Muslims.

**Update**—The dispute went before a panel of the AHRCC. After receiving a lot of criticism from Canadian and U.S. journalists, Soharwardy changed his mind and broke off his attempt to punish Levant through the AHRCC. But the Edmonton Council of Muslim Communities took up the complaint. In August 2008, however, the AHRCC decided that the *Western Standard* did not expose Muslims to hatred or contempt. Levant estimated that the cost of defending himself was \$100,000.

Willhoite, Michael. *Daddy’s Roommate*.

**2005**—During Freedom to Read Week, the Lethbridge Public Library displayed books

that had been challenged in North America. The inclusion of *Daddy's Roommate* in the display prompted one library patron to request the removal of the book from the library.

**Objection**—The complainant said that this fictional children's book, which has a homosexual theme, was “not a proper role model for children.”

**Update**—The complainant did not pursue the challenge, so the book stayed in the library.

## 1990–99

Babbitt, Natalie. *Ouch*.

**1999**—This book, illustrated by Fred Marcelino, was withdrawn from an Edmonton school when the library technician warned the principal that the book was unsuitable. A teacher had chosen the book from the Edmonton Public School Board’s Best of the Best list.

**Objection**—The book deals with hell.

**Update**—When the teacher appealed the decision, the principal told her that the decision stood and that children could borrow the book from the public library.

Banks, Lynne Reid. *The Indian in the Cupboard*.

**1992**—Kamloops (BC) School Board removed this title temporarily from its libraries.

**Objection**—Potentially offensive treatment of native peoples.

**Update**—The books were replaced, but the title is included on a roster of challenged materials for teacher information.

Barker, Malcolm J., and T.C. Sobey. *Courting Disaster*.

**1990**—This book about goings-on in Buckingham Palace was banned worldwide by a British court. T.C. Sobey is a Canadian.

**Update**—It became a best-seller in the United States and Canada.

The Bible.

**1997**—Three men complained to the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission after they saw an anti-gay advertisement published in Saskatoon’s *StarPhoenix*. The ads, paid for by Hugh Owens, cited four Biblical verses that condemn homosexual conduct and displayed a drawing of two stick-men holding hands surrounded by a circle with a diagonal slash through it. A similar ad ran in Regina’s *LeaderPost*.

**Objection**—The Biblical citations, combined with the drawing, tended to expose homosexuals to hatred and ridicule.

**Update**—In 2001, a one-woman board of inquiry of the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission ruled that *The StarPhoenix*’s ad tended to expose homosexuals to hatred and ridicule. The newspaper and Owens were each ordered to pay \$4,500 to the three complainants; Owens was forbidden from publishing similar messages in the future. In 2006, however, Saskatchewan’s Court of Appeal overturned the ruling. Justice Bob Richards declared that Owens’s ad, although “bluntly presented and doubtlessly upsetting to many,” did not violate the province’s human rights code.

Block, Francesco Lia. *Baby Be-Bop*.

**1998**—One of two titles removed from a high school library in Calgary by the director of education who was pressured by a parent group intent on weeding out books with gay or lesbian content. The board appointed a review committee to assess the book’s appropriateness.

**Objection**—The book includes homosexual characters and situations.

**Update**—The board’s review committee recommended that this title be retained in the board’s database.



Booth, Jack, and David Booth (eds.). *Impressions*.

A language arts series for Grades 1 to 6 published from 1984 on by Holt, Rinehart and Winston Canada and a continuing target of fundamentalist religious organizations.

**Objection**—Promotion of the occult and Satanism.

**Update**—The books have been challenged in communities across Alberta, Manitoba, and southern Ontario. In 1995, some trustees of the Metropolitan Toronto Separate School Board asked to have this series removed from their schools. Because more than three quarters of the board's schools used the series, the board's decision would have cost the system \$1 million for replacement texts. The board ultimately decided to keep the series.

Buffie, Margaret. *Who Is Frances Rain?*

**1990**—Winner of the 1988 Young Adult Fiction Award from the Canadian Library Association and an American Library Association Notable Book. The author's visit to a public school in Orleans (ON) was cancelled during Canadian Children's Book Week.

**Objection**—The words "hell" and "bastard" made the book unsuitable for 10-to-13-year-olds.

Burgess, Anthony. *A Clockwork Orange*.

**1990**—One of several books challenged by a parent group in Essex County (ON).

**Update**—None of the books were withdrawn from the high school reading list as a result of the protest.

Califia, Pat, and Janine Fuller (eds.). *Forbidden Passages*.

**1995**—This collection of excerpts from books that Canada Customs had barred from Canada was published in the United States by Cleis Press, a small gay and lesbian publishing house. The book was turned down by several printers and distributors in Canada before finding a printer and a Canadian distributor, Marginal Distribution of Peterborough (ON).

**Objection**—Canadian distributors were concerned about reprisals from Canada Customs.

Cantin, Reynald. *J'ai besoin de personne; Le choix d'Ève; Le secret d'Ève*.

**1991**—Because they deal with teenage sex and abortion, these books were banned in the high school of Loretteville (QC), even though the author had taught there for 15 years.

Cormier, Robert. *We All Fall Down*.

**1998**—A parent in Simcoe County (ON) complained to the school board about the presence of this title and Lois Lowry's novel *The Giver* in two elementary school libraries. The Cormier novel begins with the description of the vandalizing of a family home and the brutal attack on a 14-year-old girl who lives in the house.

**Objection**—The violence portrayed in the novel makes it unfit for public schools, the parent said.

**Update**—When the board decided to move the book into the secondary schools, the parent remained unsatisfied and wrote a letter to the Ontario minister of education, who said (in the fall of 1999) that the school board should handle the problem. A school board spokesperson said, in turn, that the school's principal was accountable for any decision.



Coville, Bruce. *Jeremy Thatcher, Dragon Hatcher*.

**1993**—A parent group in Leeds-Grenville County (ON) wanted this fantasy novel about dragons and magic removed from the Linklater-Macdonald Public School Library.

**Objection**—One complainant said the book hints at occultism and “New Age religion.”

**Update**—A review committee set up by the board recommended that the book remain in the library.

DeClements, Barthe. *No Place for Me*.

**1995**—A parent of children in Surrey (BC) Traditional School fought to have this book removed.

**Objection**—The book was said to promote the Wicca religion.

**Update**—The Surrey School Board voted to keep the book in its libraries.

Deschamps, Yvon. *Tout Deschamps*.

**1998**—After Deschamps, Quebec’s top francophone storyteller, and black comic Normand Brathwaite read excerpts from this book onto a cassette, a unilingual anglophone complained about a 29-year-old piece entitled “Nigger Black.” The complainant didn’t understand that the piece was anti-racist. Nonetheless, the complaint was published in Montreal’s *Gazette*, which ran a front-page attack on the alleged slur by Deschamps.

**Update**—To offset further controversy, stores across Quebec stopped selling the cassette two days later.

Dickey, James. *Deliverance*.

**1990**—This title was one of several books challenged by a parent group in Essex County (ON).

**Update**—The books were not withdrawn.

Duncan, “Sandy” Frances. *Listen to Me, Grace Kelly*.

**1990**—During her tour of Newfoundland and Labrador during Children’s Book Week, the author was told by a language arts consultant that she was not to read from or even talk about her latest novel.

**Objection**—Author was never told.

**Update**—The author claims a whispering campaign prevented wide distribution of her book in schools.

Duras, Marguerite. *Man Sitting in a Corridor*.

**1993**—A Canada Customs agent prohibited entry after leafing through the novel. The shipment was destined for use in a graduate course at Trent University.

**Objection**—The book was ruled obscene because of its portrayal of “sex with violence.”

**Update**—The ruling was appealed and the shipment was released.

Dworkin, Andrea. *Pornography: Men Possessing Women and Woman Hating*.

**1993**—A shipment of books that included this title was detained by Canada Customs. Dworkin is a noted feminist writer opposed to pornography. The Supreme Court of Canada based its landmark Butler decision on obscenity, at least in part, on the works of this U.S. feminist. Ironically, Dworkin's books were among those detained by Canada Customs as a result of conflicting interpretations of the court's ruling.

**Update**—Both books were eventually released as a result of media coverage but without the filing of an appeal.

Elwin, Rosamund. *Asha's Mums*.

**1997**—This Canadian picture book, aimed at children in kindergarten and Grade 1, was banned from use in public schools in Surrey (BC) along with two other picture books, *Belinda's Bouquet* by Lesléa Newman and *One Dad, Two Dads, Brown Dad, Blue Dads* by Johnny Valentine. The books had been submitted to the school board for approval earlier in the school year by a primary-level teacher. Before banning these three books, the board also announced that it would not approve any materials drawn from resource lists submitted by the Gay and Lesbian Educators (GALE) of British Columbia. As a result, parents, teachers, and students launched a lawsuit against the school board, seeking to have the decisions reversed.

**Objection**—The books were said by the board to promote a homosexual lifestyle—though the words “gay,” “lesbian,” and “homosexual” are not used in the three books.

**Update**—In December 2002, the Supreme Court of Canada declared that the school board was wrong to ban books depicting homosexual parents in a positive light from elementary classrooms. The B.C. School Act, the court said, requires public schools to be secular, pluralistic and respectful of diversity.

Findley, Timothy. *The Wars*.

**1991**—In Lambton County (ON), a high school student asked that the novel be removed from the English curriculum.

**Objection**—A passage describes the rape of a Canadian soldier by his fellow officers during World War I. The book was said to pressure students to accept homosexuality.

**Update**—The school board upheld use of the book at the OAC (formerly Grade 13) level.

Friday, Nancy. *Women on Top: How Real Life Has Changed Women's Sexual Fantasies*.

**1997**—Winnipeg police entered libraries in the city and threatened to lay charges if this book were not withdrawn immediately from library shelves. The police were acting on advice from the Crown attorney's office, which was responding to an anonymous call to a radio phone-in show. The police also said they would prosecute anyone caught distributing the book, including bookstores. At the same time, RCMP officers in B.C. raided three libraries looking for copies of the book but without success.

**Objection**—The book, which was based on interviews with women who described their sexual fantasies in detail, was said to be pornographic. Although the book had been published in 1991, no charges had ever been brought against it.

**Update**—Within a week, the Manitoba Crown attorney's office retreated from the controversy, saying that a successful prosecution would be unlikely. In B.C., civil rights

organizations and the B.C. Library Association objected to the RCMP's intimidation of librarians.

Gauthier, Bertrand. *Ani Croche* and *La course à l'amour*.

**1995**—Before the Commission des états généraux sur l'éducation (Estates General of Education Commission), the president of the Association des parents catholiques du Québec (Association of Catholic Parents of Quebec) denounced these two books for youngsters, written by a multiple prize-winner, as being “unacceptable” and “borderline pornographic.” She asked the Ministry of Education to provide “better control over the selection of books found in libraries.” The news media described the recommendation as a return to blacklisting and noted that the APCQ exerted a strong influence over the Commission des écoles catholiques de Montréal (Catholic School Board of Montreal). The president of the school board said that APCQ influence would not affect the schools since *Ani Croche* was no longer on the list recommended by its Bureau of Teaching Materials and that *La course à l'amour* had not been on that list since 1990.

Gill, John (ed.). *New American and Canadian Poetry*.

**1994**—The school board in Sechelt (BC), responding to a parental complaint, removed this book from student use in Chatelech Secondary School.

**Objection**—Anthology was said to present an anti-establishment view and to present sex and four-letter words in a positive light.

**Update**—The school board decided, following a review, that the book should remain in the library. The sole copy has since been stolen and not replaced.

Grime, Tony. *Not the Only One: Lesbian and Gay Fiction for Teens*.

**1997**—The director of Calgary's Board of Education removed this book and one other title from a high school library, and asked a review committee to decide whether Grime's book should remain in the system. At the time, the board was considering a policy aimed at creating more support for gay and lesbian youth in Calgary schools but was under considerable pressure from a parent group that did not want the policy to be adopted.

**Objection**—Although no one had objected to the book, the director felt that the book was inappropriate because of content and language.

**Update**—The book was deemed inappropriate by the review committee and withdrawn from use in the schools.

hooks, bell. *Black Looks: Race and Representation*.

**1993**—hooks is a professor at Oberlin College (OH). She is a noted feminist and an anti-racist activist. Her book was adopted for women's studies courses at the University of Alberta, Simon Fraser University, York University, St. Mary's University, and the University of Windsor. As a result, the first printing had sold out in Canada. A reprint of 1,500 copies from the United States was held up by Canada Customs.

**Objection**—Examined as possible hate literature.

**Update**—The books were released 24 hours later.

Hornung, Rick. *Under the Gun: Inside the Mohawk Civil War*.

**1991**—A Quebec court’s injunction suspended for one week the sale and distribution of this account of the 1990 clash between Mohawks and soldiers at Oka.

**Objection**—Two native women complained that they had been misquoted and defamed by the writer.

**Update**—The ban was lifted by a Quebec Superior Court judge who said he could see no evidence of either charge.

Hoy, Claire, and Victor Ostrovsky. *By Way of Deception: A Devastating Insider’s Portrait of the Mossad*.

**1990**—Release temporarily restricted in Canada.

**Objection**—Said to contain “lethal information about Israeli intelligence services.”

**Update**—It became a best-seller in the United States after a ban was lifted there, but the Israeli government filed a lawsuit in 1990 against the Canadian publisher (Stoddart) and the authors. The lawsuit did not proceed, and in 1991 Stoddart released a paperback edition that included a chapter describing the legal problems the book had incurred.

Jackson, Shirley. “The Witch” from the anthology *Inside Stories I*, edited by two Edmonton teachers.

**1994**—Approved for curriculum use in high schools by the Alberta government, the anthology was removed from classrooms in Ponoka County because of the Jackson story.

**Objection**—A trustee with a son in a school in Rimbey said “The Witch” was “very, very disturbing” and inappropriate for children of any age. Students in the trustee’s son’s class surrendered the books, the teacher was threatened with dismissal if she did not comply with the books’ withdrawal, and a substitute teacher who wrote to a local paper to support the text was fired. Later the books were returned to the students with “The Witch” and a story by Alice Munro cut out.

**Update**—When Ponoka County amalgamated with another in 1995, the stories were reinstated.

Jolin, Dominique. *Qu’est-ce que vous faites là?*

**1995**—Although young readers rated the book at the top of the *Livromagie* list, this illustrated book for children was kept under lock and key in a Vancouver library along with books on sex. The reason: in the final scene, two children wake up to discover that their parents, who seem to be undressed under their bedsheet, are pretending to have a pillow fight. An elementary school in Manitoba, which had ordered the book, returned it to the publisher “because it might lead some parents to protest.”

**Update**—This title was also challenged in 2014. See entry above.

King, Stephen. *Different Seasons*.

**1995**—The Lanark County (ON) School Board refused to include this collection of four novellas chosen by teachers for senior students at Carleton Place High School.

**Objection**—Board members, one of whom had not read the book, said it was unsuitable because of language and sexual content.

**Update**—A Lanark County bookseller co-operated with King’s publisher to distribute 600 free copies of the book in three communities. The board decided that in future it

would not make arbitrary decisions about book choices but would establish a consultative process with teachers and members of the community.

Kinsella, W.P. *Dance Me Outside* and other titles.

**1994**—Books by the well-known Canadian author were removed from the library in Jean Vanier Roman Catholic school in Barrie (ON) after complaints from an Onkwehonwe anti-racism alliance.

**Objection**—“It was felt that there are some things that might be objectionable if taken out of context . . . A 14-year-old might not get the idea that Kinsella is using irony.”

**Update**—The public library and public schools in the district decided not to remove Kinsella’s books.

Kropp, Paul. *Moonkid and Liberty*.

**1998**—A parent in Winnipeg complained to her child’s school about this novel which was offered for study in Grade 8 language arts classes.

**Objection**—The book was said to include “negative and morally questionable situations” such as drug encounters, sexual comments, underage drinking, smoking in school washrooms, the selling of pornographic magazines, and offensive language.

**Update**—The principal persuaded the teacher to teach another novel.

Lally, Robert. *Heroes, Dreams and Incest*.

**1992**—This unpublished manuscript, which explored the mind of a pedophile and was written by a retired psychologist, was shredded by Canada Customs officers after they intercepted it on its way back from a U.S. literary agent. RCMP officers, acting on advice from Canada Customs, raided Lally’s home in Alberta to confiscate a second copy of the manuscript.

**Update**—The attorney general’s office later determined that the manuscript did not violate the Criminal Code.

LeBlanc, Pierre, and Robin Konstabaris. *Scrambled Brains*.

**1998**—A controversial cookbook with whimsical illustrations, the book was removed from gift shops in B.C. Ferries vessels after a chief steward raised concern. There were no public complaints, but a spokesman for B.C. Ferries said that a contract with a bookseller required that titles be “of a non-controversial nature.”

**Objection**—The book includes recipes such as “Exploding Jesus Cake,” a section called “Cooking with Weed,” and one illustration in which a semi-naked man displays an intimate interpretation of roulade, a rolled meat dish usually stuffed with a pickle.

Leger, Diane. *Maxine’s Tree*.

**1992**—An official of the International Woodworkers of America in Sechelt (BC) asked that the book be withdrawn from elementary school libraries in his community.

**Objection**—The young protagonist in this picture book is opposed to clear-cut logging in a first growth forest. The union leader charged that the book indoctrinated children into an anti-logging or extremist viewpoint.

**Update**—The school board rejected his request.

Lowry, Lois. *The Giver*.

**1998**—A parent in Simcoe County (ON) complained about the presence of this book and Robert Cormier's novel *We All Fall Down* in two elementary school libraries.

**Objection**—The parent said that teaching this book would be more appropriate at the Grade 11 level. The book is aimed at children aged 10 to 13.

**Update**—The board considered the objection but decided to leave *The Giver* in school libraries for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students.

Madonna. *Sex*.

**1991–92**—In Thunder Bay (ON), Cambridge (ON), Halifax (NS), and many other Canadian communities, a chorus of objections greeted news that libraries had purchased copies for patrons. One library recorded more than 100 requests for the book.

**Update**—After a noisy public meeting of Thunder Bay's library board, officials decided to keep the book in the system for borrowers over the age of 18.

Marineau, Michèle. *L'été des baleines*.

**1991**—When the author was invited to a school in Princeville (QC) to speak on this sequel to the novel *Cassiopée ou l'été polonais*, for which she received the Governor General's Award, a group of parents objected to the visit because the book deals with, among other things, teenage sex. After a survey of the sexual habits of students revealed that the novel would not unleash a wave of traumas, the visit was allowed to take place.

Martel, Suzanne. *The King's Daughter*.

**1993**—The Regina (SK) Public School Division pulled the book off library shelves after school curriculum consultants decided that the book was inappropriate for students to read unsupervised.

**Objection**—Martel, a historical writer who won the Ruth Schwartz Award for this book as well as the Vicky Metcalf Award for lifetime achievement, describes natives from the perspective of a scared young immigrant who has yet to overcome her prejudice.

**Update**—When Greenwood reprinted the book, the publisher added a warning to explain this subjective approach, but the "offensive" passages were nevertheless deleted or modified without notifying the author.

Matas, Carol. *The Primrose Path*.

**1995**—The author had been invited to speak at the Shaarey Zedek synagogue in Winnipeg where she and her family had attended for three generations, but several weeks before the agreed-upon date, the invitation was withdrawn.

**Objection**—The synagogue had been advised that it could be sued for libel if the author spoke about her most recent novel for young people, which described the sexual abuse of a girl by a rabbi who is her teacher. The fictional story resembled a recent case in which a Winnipeg rabbi had been charged but found not guilty of a similar offence.

Moebius (Jean Giraud). *Metallic Memories*.

**1992**—This collection of illustrations by the famous science fiction artist—France issued a stamp in his honour—was refused entry by Canada Customs while en route to Styx



International in Winnipeg (MB).

**Objection**—The customs form mentioned a drawing of an animal devouring its victim and a child pierced with needles. Not only is it impossible to find such illustrations in the book, but according to the government agency's own criteria, none of these reasons is sufficient to warrant an import ban.

Montpetit, Charles (ed.). *La première fois* and *The First Time*. Two volumes each.

**1992–2002**—In Quebec, five secondary schools asked the anthologist to give a lecture as part of a Department of Education tour. Each school received a box full of free copies of these critically acclaimed collections, which contain true accounts of first-time sexual experiences by writers for adolescents. Even though sex education was mandatory in secondary schools, all five schools refused to pass the books to the students who would attend the lecture, and the anthologist was asked to talk about something else—in one case, less than 15 minutes before the lecture took place.

Mohr, Richard. *Gay Ideas*.

**1992**—This controversial American book contains photographs by Robert Mapplethorpe. Oxford University Press, the Canadian distributor, decided not to distribute or promote the book, even though the company carries the rest of the list of the American publisher, Beacon Press. One salesperson resigned in protest.

Newman, Lesléa. *Belinda's Bouquet*.

See Elwin, Rosamund. *Asha's Mums*.

Oates, Joyce Carol. *Foxfire*.

**1996**—A parent demanded the removal of this novel from the optional reading list for senior English students at a Milton (ON) high school. His 16-page flyer, distributed throughout the community, included excerpts from the book and the text of an eight-page letter to the superintendent of educational services for the Halton Board of Education.

**Objection**—The book, which deals with the subject of teenaged gangs, was said to contain obscene and profane language as well as graphic scenes of sex and violence.

**Update**—In April 1997, the school board agreed that *Foxfire* should be retained as a curriculum option for Milton and other high schools but designated the book for small group instruction or independent study. Nothing further was heard from Parents Against Corrupt Teachers (PACT), the organization that sparked the controversy.

O'Brien, Dereck. *Suffer Little Children*.

**1991**—This autobiographical account of child abuse in the Mount Cashel orphanage and foster homes in the St. John's (NF) area was banned in the St. John's region.

**Objection**—The provincial government argued that the book should not be sold during the trials of the eight Christian Brothers charged with abusing boys at Mount Cashel.

**Update**—At first, the province extended the ban pending proceedings against a foster mother's court appearance in December 1992. The ban was extended even though the government had released the report of the commission that investigated the Mount Cashel affair. However, the book is now available in Newfoundland and Labrador.

Pierce, William. *The Turner Diaries*.

**1996**—This underground novel, said to have inspired the Oklahoma City bomber, describes how white supremacists launch an anti-government race war. Originally published in 1978, the book has recently been republished by Barricade Books in the United States. The Jewish publisher has said that he strongly opposes the content of the book, but he believes that it should be available to the public.

**Update**—Canada Customs has never allowed the book into Canada, having stopped it at the border half a dozen times. Since the new edition came out with a mainstream publisher, Canada Customs reviewed the book and classified it as hate literature. The import prohibition was issued in July 1996, by which time Barricade's Canadian distributor had received a shipment—which it promptly sent back. The bookstore that had ordered the book said it would not appeal the decision.

Pomerleau, Gervais. *L'affaire du cachalot noir*, *Tison-Ardent*, *La plainte des huarts*, and *Les colères de l'océan*.

**1995**—A student was invited to set up a display in the lobby of the Polyvalente des Îles-de-la-Madeleine (Magdalen Islands High School) on the theme of the damage caused by the sunken oil barge *Irving Whale*. But the principal asked him to remove *L'affaire du cachalot noir*, a young people's book that deals with this matter, or the display would be cancelled. The principal also prohibited the reading of other books by the author "because he doesn't know what he's talking about" and "because they are full of exaggerations and spelling mistakes." (The "spelling mistakes" occur when an uneducated character or a bird whose beak is glued together is talking.) The student withdrew the book but, despite his teacher's objections, did his end-of-term work in literature on *Les colères de l'océan*—and got one of the highest marks in his class.

Pron, Nick. *Lethal Marriage*.

**1995**—This account of the Bernardo-Homolka murders, written by a *Toronto Star* reporter, was removed from the St. Catharines (ON) Public Library by the library board.

**Objection**—The book was said to contain some inaccuracies, and the board received visits from the police morality squad and the mother of one of Bernardo's victims. It was said that retaining the book in the library would prove too traumatic for the community.

**Update**—In the fall of 1999, the book was still unavailable in the public libraries of St. Catharines.

Rahall, Monier M. *Banksters and Prairie Boys*.

**1997**—Shortly after the book was published, the author, publisher, printer, and three bookstores were threatened with legal action. The book alleged provincial government interference and improper business practices at the Alberta Treasury Branches.

**Objection**—One individual named in the book claimed to have been defamed. But the three bookstores continued to sell the book, and Steve Budnarchuk, proprietor of Audrey's Books in Edmonton, described *Banksters* as the fastest-selling local book he had ever carried.

**Update**—By the fall of 1999, the threatened lawsuit had not materialized, and Audrey's reported that the book was nearly out of print and that demand for it had disappeared.

Rancourt, Sylvie, and Jacques Boivin. *Melody*.

**1990–91**—Even though the author received a grant from the Quebec Ministry of Cultural Affairs, this illustrated autobiography of an exotic dancer was denounced by *Family Circle* magazine as “pornography” in cartoon guise. Later, after recognizing the cover of *Melody* on the wall of the Planet Earth comic store in Toronto, a mother complained to the police, who charged four employees with “possession and sale of obscene material.” The *Toronto Sun* indicated where the employees lived. Due to serious illness, the store owner could not appeal and the store closed shortly thereafter. The Toronto Morality Squad raided another comic store, Dragon Lady, and seized more than 400 magazines—one of which was *Melody*—kept in bags out of public view. The staff was charged with possession and sale of obscene materials, even though signs said that no “adult” title would be sold to minors. The store stopped selling these magazines. Shortly thereafter, the police raided the warehouse of the Andromeda distribution company and seized about 15 magazines. Upon a lawyer’s recommendation, Andromeda announced that it was relinquishing 66 comic-strip magazines—one of which was *Melody*—which might be considered obscene. Most stores no longer carry *Melody*.

Rule, Jane. *The Young in One Another’s Arms*.

**1990**—Although this Canadian novel had been published in 1977 and thousands of copies were available in Canada, a shipment addressed to Glad Day Bookshop in Toronto was detained by customs officers at the U.S. border.

**Update**—The shipment was released.

Sedgwick, Eve Kosofsky. *Tendencies; Fat Art, Thin Art*, and 14 other titles.

**1995**—These books by an American scholar, ordered by Glad Day Bookshop in Toronto and timed to arrive for an author reading, were detained by Canada Customs for a month.

**Objection**—No reason was given.

**Update**—The books arrived two weeks after the reading.

Smucker, Barbara. *Underground to Canada*.

**1998**—A mother in Transcona (MB) complained to the mayor of Winnipeg about this historical novel for Grades 5 to 8. The story describes the underground railway that brought slaves escaping from the American South to Canada during the 1850s and 1860s. The mayor turned the complaint over to Winnipeg’s race relations committee, which recommended that the book be withdrawn from provincial lists of materials approved for classroom use. The complaint was supported by the Black Educators Association in Manitoba.

**Objection**—The word “nigger” appears 20 times in the novel. The mother said her child was the only black student in her class and felt the novel was unsuitable in such circumstances.

**Update**—The school division’s review committee unanimously recommended that the book be retained for use in the schools. However, the parent continued to demand through the Human Rights Commission that the book be withdrawn from provincial reading lists. In 2002, the book was among three titles targeted by a black parents’ group in Nova Scotia’s Tri-County school district and was temporarily withdrawn from schools.

See Lee, Harper. *To Kill a Mockingbird*.

Stacey, Cherylyn. *How Do You Spell Abducted?*

**1996**—An Alberta MLA, Julius Yankowksi, called for the banning of the book after reading a negative review by Toronto journalist Michael Coren. Both men called for the withdrawal of provincial and federal government grants for the publisher, Red Deer Press.

**Objection**—Coren said the novel was no more than hate literature against men. The story, aimed at readers 10 to 12 years of age, is an account of the abduction of three children by their estranged father.

**Update**—By the fall of 1999, the novel had sold 12,000 copies, and no further attempt had been made to ban the book or cut government grants to Red Deer Press.

Stine, R.L. *Goosebumps* and *Fear Street* book series.

**1995**—A parent group in Halifax asked that both these series be withdrawn from schools in the Halifax School Board's jurisdiction.

**Objection**—The books were said to convey violence and a lack of respect for parental authority.

**Update**—The board agreed that parents could govern what their own children read in school but not what other children read. It was agreed that the books should be available at age-appropriate levels; thus the *Fear Street* series was placed in junior high school libraries but withdrawn from elementary schools. When the parent group subsequently asked that all horror books be withdrawn from schools, the board turned down the request.

Trotsky, Leon. *On Chapters from My Diary*.

**1996**—This title was selected for a reading given at the Harbourfront Reading Series (Toronto) to mark Freedom to Read Week, but the book could not be found in any Canadian public library. When former Conservative cabinet minister Ron Atkey could not find a copy in Canada, he arranged for a portion of the book to be faxed from the New York Public Library.

**Objection**—During the early years of the Cold War, the book appeared on Canada Customs' prohibited list of books, probably because the author was a renowned Russian communist.

Twain, Mark. *Huckleberry Finn*.

**1991**—With Harper Lee's *To Kill a Mockingbird*, this classic novel was targeted by a parent group for removal from recommended reading lists in the Saint John (NB) School District 20.

**Objection**—Racism in characterization and language.

Valentine, Johnny. *One Dad, Two Dads, Brown Dad, Blue Dads*.

See Elwin, Rosamund. *Asha's Mums*.

Weisbord, Merily, and Marilyn Simonds Mohr. *The Valour and the Horror*.

**1992**—The book, based on a three-part TV series, was targeted by Canadian veterans'

organizations and was discussed in the hearings of the Senate Subcommittee on Veterans' Affairs. Veterans demanded that the TV production be withdrawn from distribution and that the book be pulled from libraries.

**Objection**—The TV series and the book raised questions about Canada's military participation in the Second World War.

**Update**—In 1993, a group of veterans known as the Bomber Harris Trust launched a \$500-million class action suit against those connected with the TV production and the two authors of the book. The action was thrown out of court.

Wilder, Laura Ingalls. *On the Banks of Plum Creek*.

**1997**—Two parents in the Fort Garry School Division in Winnipeg complained about this book. The title is part of the renowned series that inspired the TV series *Little House on the Prairie*.

**Objection**—The classic children's book, based on tales of the settlers in the American West, was said to contain several references offensive to aboriginals. But school superintendent Henry Izatt said: "Stories like this are an important part of our history on this continent. Simply eradicating them from shelves does not seem to be the answer."

**Update**—A committee of teachers, parents, and other members of the community prepared to examine the complaint and report back to the administration, but in the meantime the complaint was withdrawn.

## 1980–89

Awashish, Basile, Lucien Awashish, Claude Lachapelle, and Christine Laniel. *Carcajou le glouton fripon*.

**1982**—Several schools turned down these educational strips on native lore (funded by the Canada Council, the Secretary of State, and Quebec’s Ministry of Cultural Affairs) because of nudity—even though it’s part and parcel of the legends.

Babel, Isaac. “The Sin of Jesus” from the anthology *The Story-Makers*, edited by Rudy Wiebe.

**1984**—This book was challenged at the Halton County (ON) Board of Education.

**Objection**—Blasphemy.

**Update**—The anthology has not been listed since 1984.

Butz, Arthur. *The Hoax of the Twentieth Century*.

**1984**—This book was seized from the library of the University of Calgary by RCMP officers acting under the authority of the Customs Tariff Act.

**Objection**—Classified as “hate literature.”

**Update**—The book was put back on the university’s library shelves because of a technicality; customs officers’ prohibition of the book came after the book had entered the country.

1995—A copy of the book was seized by the RCMP from a public library in Didsbury (AB). Before the librarian could respond to the seizure, the book was shredded—because the RCMP said it was prohibited.

Doyle, Brian. *Hey, Dad!*

**1984**—Doyle’s publisher received a letter from the principal of a rural Ontario school stating that copies of the book were being returned because they promoted negative views and did not contain the values of “positive citizenship.”

Golding, William. *Lord of the Flies*.

**1988**—The Race Relations Committee of the Toronto Board of Education recommended that the book be withdrawn from curriculum use in all Toronto high schools.

**Objection**—The novel was seen to contain racial slurs.

**Update**—The board rejected the committee’s recommendation but circulated to all its schools the reasons for the parents’ objections that had led to the committee’s study of the book and asked its Committee on Bias in the Curriculum to suggest ways the book could be taught with sensitivity.

Major, Kevin. *Hold Fast*.

**1988–89**—One of three books challenged by one person in a high school library in Estevan (SK).

**Update**—The board followed regular procedures for dealing with challenged materials, and the book remains in the library.

Background—The book, credited with being the first young-adult novel to be written in Canada, has been at the heart of many controversies in schools and communities across Canada. A public reading of *Hold Fast* was held at the Canadian Children’s Book Centre



in Toronto to mark Freedom to Read Week 1995.

Munro, Alice. *Lives of Girls and Women*.

**1982**—Toronto parents petitioned, without success, to remove the book from the high school curriculum. This book has been the target of challenges in school districts across the country.

**Objection**—Parents objected to the “language and philosophy of the book.”

Newlove, John (ed.). *Canadian Poetry: The Modern Era*.

**1987**—This text—and *Dreamspeaker* by Cam Hubert, *The Diviners*, *A Jest of God*, and *The Stone Angel* by Margaret Laurence, and *Selected Poems* by Al Purdy—triggered objections by a parent group in Victoria County (ON).

**Update**—The board voted to retain *Canadian Poetry: The Modern Era* on its reading list. During the 1987–88 school year, the parent group objected to J.D. Salinger’s *Catcher in the Rye* and *Faces of Mythology*, edited by John Livesay. The school board rejected the challenges. The parent group ran candidates for the school board during the 1989 municipal elections; all were defeated.

Richler, Mordecai. *The Apprenticeship of Duddy Kravitz*.

This book has been attacked in various jurisdictions. In 1982, the Etobicoke (ON) Board of Education was asked to ban it from the high school curriculum. The motion was defeated. In 1990, a complaint from a student and her father led the Essex County (ON) Board of Education to establish a written policy to deal with such objections. The book was not withdrawn.

Schulman, Michael, and Eva Mekler (eds.). *Contemporary Scenes for Student Actors*.

**1989**—Excerpts from this anthology for senior high school drama students were included in a flyer distributed to 20,000 homes in Victoria County (ON). Parents for a Quality Curriculum, which produced the flyer, sought to influence school board elections by citing the book as an example of texts that should be removed from schools.

**Objection**—Language in the book.

**Update**—When the elections were held, none of the candidates put forward by the parent group won seats, and the book remained on the curriculum.

Sernine, Daniel. *Les envoûtements*.

**1989**—In Quebec, the distribution of this novel for teenagers and at least one school reading were cancelled. The author has won numerous prizes.

**Objection**—Sernine is believed to promote the occult—even though the “bewitchments” mentioned in the title are fraudulent and exposed as such in the story.

Valgardson, W.D. *Gentle Sinners*.

**1989**—A parent group in Fort Garry (MB) distributed a flyer with excerpts from this novel by the much-admired Manitoba writer and asked for its withdrawal from school reading lists.

**Objection**—Explicit sexual references, violence, negative relationships, and attitude towards organized religion.

**Update**—An independent committee appointed by the school board upheld use of the book in schools. Parents for Quality Education renewed its attack in 1991, and the board agreed to re-examine the matter. The teacher who used the book decided not to use it again.

## 1970–79

Fowke, Edith (ed.). *Sally Go Round the Sun: 300 Songs, Rhymes and Games of Canadian Children*.

**1972**—In Hamilton (ON), a public school library withdrew this anthology of children’s songs, rhymes and games. In 1970, the book won a bronze medal from the Association of Children’s Librarians.

**Objection**—The library received a complaint about bad language.

**Update**—In 1985, Fowke received the Vicky Metcalf Award from the Canadian Authors Association for producing “a body of work inspirational to Canadian youth.”

Keyes, Daniel. *Flowers for Algernon*.

**1970**—In Cranbrook (BC), the school board banned this science fiction novel from the Grade 9 curriculum and school libraries. The story is about a mentally retarded adult who becomes a genius after having a brain operation.

**Objection**—A parent complained that the book was “filthy and immoral.”

**Update**—The president of the B.C. Teachers’ Federation criticized the book’s removal. The board reconsidered its decision and returned the novel to the school library; however, trustees did not lift the ban on the book in the curriculum.

Laurence, Margaret. *The Diviners*.

From 1976 to 1994, the book was challenged repeatedly and removed from senior high school reading lists across Canada. In at least two provinces it does not appear on the curriculum.

**Objection**—Language and sexual content.

Salinger, J.D. *Catcher in the Rye*.

This novel has been consistently challenged in Canadian schools for at least 15 years.

**Objection**—“Foul language.”

## 1960–69

Anthony, Evelyn. *Anne Boleyn*.

**1960**—In Port Credit (ON), authorities banned this book from a high school library.

**Objection**—“Immorality.”

Harris, Joel Chandler. *Uncle Remus*.

**1964**—In Abbotsford (BC), the British Columbia Association for the Advancement of Coloured People petitioned for the removal of this book from school libraries. The book is a collection of folk tales told by an African-American in the Old South.

**Objection**—The BCAACP said the book was “offensive to Negroes.”

**Update**—The request was denied.

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Disclaimer: The Book and Periodical Council neither endorses nor condemns the content of a publication merely because it has been the target of a challenge.