



BANNED BOOKS WEEK

September 20-27, 2003

American Civil Liberties Union • www.aclu.org/banned2003

The Ten Most Challenged Books of 2002

(the following information is from the American Library Association website, www.ala.org)

1. *Harry Potter series*, by J.K. Rowling, for its focus on wizardry and magic.
2. *Alice series*, by Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, for being sexually explicit, using offensive language and being unsuited to age group.
3. *The Chocolate War*, by Robert Cormier (the “Most Challenged” book of 1998), for using offensive language and being unsuited to age group.
4. *I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings*, by Maya Angelou, for sexual content, racism, offensive language, violence and being unsuited to age group.
5. *Taming the Star Runner*, by S.E. Hinton, for offensive language.
6. *Captain Underpants*, by Dav Pilkey, for insensitivity and being unsuited to age group, as well as encouraging children to disobey authority.
7. *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, by Mark Twain, for racism, insensitivity and offensive language.
8. *Bridge to Terabithia*, by Katherine Paterson, for offensive language, sexual content and Occult/Satanism.
9. *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*, by Mildred D. Taylor, for insensitivity, racism and offensive language.
10. *Julie of the Wolves*, by Jean Craighead George, for sexual content, offensive language, violence and being unsuited to age group.

Other Banned Books Week Facts

The most frequently challenged authors in 2002 were J.K. Rowling, Judy Blume, Robert Cormier, Phyllis Reynolds Naylor, Stephen King, Lois Duncan, S.E. Hinton, Alvin Schwartz, Maya Angelou, Roald Dahl, and Toni Morrison.



Between 1990 and 2000, of the 6,364 challenges reported to or recorded by the Office for Intellectual Freedom:

- 1,607 were challenges to “sexually explicit” material (up 161 since 1999)
- 1,427 to material considered to use “offensive language” (up 165 since 1999)
- 1,256 to material considered “unsuited to age group” (up 89 since 1999)
- 842 to material with an “occult theme or promoting the occult or Satanism” (up 69 since 1999)
- 737 to material considered to be “violent” (up 107 since 1999)
- 515 to material with a homosexual theme or “promoting homosexuality” (up 18 since 1999) and
- 419 to material “promoting a religious viewpoint” (up 22 since 1999)

Other reasons for challenges included “nudity” (317 challenges, up 20 since 1999), “racism” (267 challenges, up 22 since 1999), “sex education” (224 challenges, up 7 since 1999), and “anti-family” (202 challenges, up 9 since 1999).

Please note that the number of challenges and the number of reasons for those challenges do not match, because works are often challenged on more than one ground. ♠

