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17th Annual Report

Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse

Seventeenth Annual Report
July 1, 2003 ? June 30, 2004

Goal of the Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse

The goal of the Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse is to uphold the principles of the intellectual freedom in all types of libraries, by improving communication between librarians, board members, professional associations, and other concerned groups in Oregon about challenges to intellectual freedom, and by increasing awareness as to how threats to intellectual freedom can be addressed.

Objectives of the Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse

To establish a central clearinghouse to collect and disseminate reports about challenges to intellectual freedom in all types of Oregon libraries.

To provide information about challenged materials to public library directors and library board members, school media center librarians and academic librarians when requests for reconsideration of materials are received.

To provide information to public library directors and library board members, school media center librarians and academic librarians about establishing appropriate policies and procedures before a challenge to intellectual freedom occurs.

To cooperate with other persons and groups concerned with intellectual freedom or related issues.

Scope of the Clearinghouse

The Clearinghouse collects information about written challenges to library materials in any type of library in Oregon. The information is submitted voluntarily and an annual report is prepared. The content of the *Annual Report* is taken from the reports that are submitted to the Clearinghouse. Challenges to materials that have been reported to the Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse are included in the *Annual Reports* produced each year since 1978.

The *Seventeenth Annual Report* summarizes 26 challenges to library materials in three public libraries and two school districts between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2004. The *Title Index to Challenges* on the Oregon State Library website contains summary information while the *Annual Reports* contain more complete information. Beginning with the *9th Annual Report*, 1995-96, the reports are posted on the Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse page of the Oregon State Library website <http://www.osl.state.or.us/home/libdev/oifch.html>. To obtain copies of *Annual Reports* prior to 1995-96 contact Val Vogt, Oregon State Library, at 503-378-2112, extension 222, or val.t.vogt@state.or.us.

Summary of Challenges Reported in 2003-04

The Oregon Intellectual Freedom Clearinghouse received information about 26 challenges to library materials between July 1, 2003 and June 30, 2004. Fourteen of the challenged titles were books, seven were videotapes, four were magazines, and one was audio material. Three public libraries reported twenty-two of the challenges and two school districts reported four challenges. Fourteen of the challenged items were designated as children's or young adult materials, and twelve were materials for adults. In all twenty-six of the challenges, library staff committees, library boards, or a school board decided that the challenged materials should be retained. In several cases the materials were re-cataloged to another part of the collection.

The challenges listed below are organized according to library type, public or school, and arranged alphabetically by the title of the challenged material. Under the summary of events, the phrase "Staff review process" refers to adopted procedures by which library staff read or view the materials, collect reviews and other information about the material, and make a decision about the challenged item. This procedure is more common in public libraries. Generally, the library director writes a letter informing the library patron of the decision and explaining the appeals process, in case the citizen is not satisfied with the decision. The phrase "Committee review process" refers to adopted procedures by which a committee, such as an Instructional Materials Review Committee, makes the decision about the

challenged item. This procedure is more common in schools. The school board, superintendent, or site council often makes the final decision based on a recommendation from the committee.

Challenges in Public Libraries

Adolf Graphic Novel Series by Osamu Tezuka (Adult Book)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about proximity to cartoon books like Garfield.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Selection committee decided to create new graphic novel section. Book retained 4/2/04. No further appeal filed.

Bat Thumb (Children's Video)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed that video is not appropriate for children because of sexual references throughout.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Selection committee decided to reclassify to Young Adult. Video retained 2/13/04. No further appeal filed.

Dance Till Tomorrow by Naoki Tamamoto (Adult Book)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed over sexual material.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 12/4/03. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Fantastic Stories by Terry Jones. Illustrated by Michael Forman. (Children's Book)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed that book was too disturbing for children.?

Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained in children's collection 12/19/03. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

I: The Creation of a Serial Killer by Jack Olsen (Adult Book)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed that violent content of the book could cause emotional trauma.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 4/12/04. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

It's Not Gay (Adult Video)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about anti-gay material.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained July 7, 2004.? Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

The Last Temptation of Christ (Adult Video)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about inaccurate portrayal of Christ.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained 11/13/03. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Molly's Family by Nancy Garden (Children's Book)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about promoting homosexuality.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 5/27/04. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Music with parental advisory labels (Adult and Young Adult CDs)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed that they promote violence, sexual activity and inappropriate language.

Summary of events: Management team review. Decision was made to continue to purchase music with advisory labels 10/16/03. No further appeal filed.

Nest: A Quarterly of Interiors (Adult Magazine)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed that magazine was bigoted because of cartoons in the magazine.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Magazine retained in collection 5/20/04. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

The New York Review of Books (Adult Magazine)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about children seeing the sexually explicit cover.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Magazine retained 4/10/04. Patron notified. No further appeal filed.

Pink Flamingos (Adult Video)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about sexual content.?

Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained 2/10/04. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Pink Flamingos (Adult Video)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about sexual content.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained 5/21/04. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Portland Mercury (Adult Newspaper)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about the language and sexual content.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Library will continue to provide space for free newspaper 5/21/04. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Rats by Paul Zindel (Children's Book)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about book's graphic contents. Summary of events: Library management team decided to move from Children's area to Young Adult area 10/16/03. No further appeal filed.

Shiloh2 (Children's Video)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about portrayal of character's inappropriate behavior. Summary of events: Staff review process. Video retained in collection 10/29/03. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Unshelved: Volume 1 by Bill Barnes and Gene Ambaum (Adult Book)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed that book promoted prejudice against people with disabilities.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 10/29/03. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Vibe Magazine (Young Adult Magazine)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about suggestive cover and article about connection between rap and the pornography industry.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Magazine retained in young adult collection 6/25/04. No further appeal filed.

The Waiting Dog by Carolyn and Andrea Beck (Children's Book) Two

Summary of objections: Concern expressed that violence portrayed was not suitable for children.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 3/9/04. Letter sent. No further appeal filed.

Walter and Henry (Children's Video/DVD)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about profanity and suggested book be moved to adult area.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Video reclassified to adult collection and retained 4/1/04. No further appeal filed.

Wizard's First Rule/Sword of Truth Series by Terry Goodkind (Young Adult and Adult Books)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about graphic sexual and violent material for young adults.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Decision was made to retain first volume in the series, Wizard's First Rule, as young adult and reclassify others in series as adult. Letter sent. Patron appealed to next level of Administration. Final staff decision to reclassify all volumes in the series as adult fiction 11/4/03.

Challenges in School Libraries

The Bluest Eye by Toni Morrison. (Book)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about graphic sexual and violent content.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 6/2004. Letter sent.

A Corner of the Universe by Ann M. Martin (Book)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about mature content of the book.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Assistant Superintendent decided to retain for upper elementary and older students 11/24/03.

Imani All Mine by Connie Porter (Book)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about pornographic passages and lewd language.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 6/2004.

Whale Talk by Chris Crutcher (Book)

Summary of objections: Concern expressed about foul language.

Summary of events: Staff review process. Book retained 12/12/03.

Our thanks to Val Vogt at the Oregon State Library for her assistance with data organization and reviews about materials.





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