

A STUDY OF CONTROVERSIAL LITERATURE
IN THE HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH PROGRAM

by

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Few teachers of high school English can avoid pressure concerning the use of particular works of literature in the public schools. It may be the direct pressure of a parent or citizens' group objecting to the use of a specific piece of literature in the classroom. It may be a principal, librarian or other teacher who "warns" the new teacher about a piece of literature before it is selected. It may be the feeling the teacher has that he must "tread lightly" in this area of book selection.¹ It may be the omission of materials from texts or library shelves. Whatever the case, the likelihood of the use of some piece of literature by the English teacher becoming an aim of censorship by right wing, liberal, black, white, atheist, religionist or, in all fairness, honestly concerned parents is on the increase. And the probability that those literary works objected to will be removed from the reading list, the classroom or the library is also on the increase.

Richard B. Kennan, former executive secretary of the NEA Committee on Professional Rights and Responsibilities, said in a speech before the conference on the Critics and the Schools that "only 15 per cent of books under attack were removed in 1962 but 29 per cent were removed in 1965. In 1968, will it be 55 per cent? And in 1971, will it approach 100 per cent?"² What

¹Lee A. Burress, Jr., "Censorship and the Public Schools," American Library Association Bulletin, LIX (June, 1965), p. 493.

²Richard B. Kennan, speech before the 1966 Conference on the Critics and the Schools, National Education Association, Washington, D.C., January 17, 1966, as quoted in "School Censorship in Fascist Italy and the United States," by George L. Williams, School and Society, XCV (March 18, 1967), p. 188.

are the causes for the increase in objections to materials in school libraries and classrooms? Part of the increase can probably be attributed to the role in society that minorities are demanding, to the activities of nationalist groups, and to the concern of parents for a quality education of their children and for the lower standards of which adolescents are accused today. One suggestion is that the rise is in part due to less reliance on texts (although they come in for their share of criticism) and more on other materials and also to the fact that teachers are aware of and are inclined to use much more contemporary and controversial literature.³ Looking back only a few years in Kansas before school unification, teachers can see the increase of materials being used now in rural schools. In many small high school libraries there were hardly any books. The cases of objections would necessarily be few. Certainly this use of more material outside the textbook is typical of recent trends in all teaching fields: more use of paperbacks, addition of more supplementary literature, more individualization of assignments. The problem comes back to the English teacher in his own teaching methods, but certainly the solution is not the elimination of this material from the classroom.

I. THE PROBLEM

The problem of concern in this report is to examine the increased attempts to censor materials in the high school literature program and to study the lack of knowledge and concern about censorship by teachers. Most

³Williams, loc. cit.

teachers know little of the scope of censorship, of effective ways of combating it, or of procedures to teach controversial literature. Many teachers claiming to have no problems with censorship simply avoid controversy by avoiding any materials except those which have been proven relatively safe by time. The teacher who avoids controversy by selecting only aged and tested works is placing public approval above his responsibility to the students. If the practice of avoiding any material which might be offensive to some person or group were carried to its extreme there would be virtually empty shelves in the libraries.

Wayne C. Booth, in "Censorship and Values of Fiction," suggests that any teacher owes it to himself to have ready, either in his mind or in his files, arguments to approach censors with and material and facts on special cases of censorship.⁴ The purpose of this paper was to provide material for these "files" of English teachers. It consists of (1) background information and censorship laws, (2) suggestions of how to avoid censorship and what to do if criticized, and (3) suggestions for book selection methods and use of controversial materials in the classroom.

II. LIMITATIONS AND DELIMITATIONS

Material used in the report was selected with the idea of usefulness to the English teacher. There are countless articles and books concerning the general topic of censorship; the purpose of this paper was to deal with the information more directly affecting the literature class in high school.

⁴Wayne C. Booth, "Censorship and the Values of Fiction," English Journal, LIII (March, 1964), p. 156.

Although some information was included in the third chapter, no attempt was made to prove that certain literature is or is not harmful to some people. The author approached this thorny problem with the idea that some literature can be harmful to some people.

III. DEFINITION OF TERMS

Controversial literature. In this report controversial literature was used to mean any book, poem, play or prose work whose use on a reading list, in a library or in a classroom may be objected to by some person. This included Biblical literature, racial literature, suggestive literature, literature presenting moral, economic and spiritual values differing from the norm of the community, and literature whose authors may be objected to on national, racial, political or moral grounds.

Obscene literature. The definition of obscene literature used in this report is based upon various statements of the United States Supreme Court in the 1957 Roth case and the so-called Jacobellis case in 1964.

To be obscene:

- (1) the dominant theme of the work must be an appeal to prurient interest
- (2) the work must exceed the community's bounds of permitted candor and the "community" whose standards are to be applied is the nation
- (3) the work must lack all redeeming social value, social value to be judged first in determining obscenity

(4) the work must be patently offensive⁵

Literature. A value criteria is usually talked about in defining literature, or the effect literature should have on a person, or the purpose and intent of the work. In its broadest sense "literature" applies to "the total of preserved writings belonging to a given language or people."⁶ Many people tend to associate "literature" with that which is "good" and "writing" or "book" or some lesser sophisticated sounding term with that which is "not so good," and hence the discussion turns to effect, purpose and value. The definition of "literature" is dealt with more fully in Chapter IV.

IV. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Much of the literature available on censorship and teaching controversial material is relatively recent. The 1963 statement of the National Council of Teachers of English "The Students Right to Read"⁷ spurred many comments on professional rights and responsibilities of teachers. Richard B. Kennan, former executive secretary of the NEA's Professional Rights and Responsibilities Committee has given outspoken support of the right of the individual teacher to select books and has warned of the undermining effect of censorship on the

⁵Dan Lacy, "Censorship and Obscenity," American Library Association Bulletin, LIX (June, 1965), p. 473.

⁶"Literature," Webster's New Collegiate Dictionary (1959 edition), p. 491.

⁷Commission on Right to Read of the National Council of Teachers of English, The Students Right to Read (Champaign, Illinois: National Council Teachers of English, 1962).

schools.⁸ In a general approach, Cecil Winfield Scott and Clyde M. Hill in Public Education Under Criticism⁹ and Ernest Oscar Melby and Morton Puner in Freedom and Public Education¹⁰ have collected essays and articles on freedom and criticism of public education. Many of the writers, including Jack Nelson,¹¹ Donald L. Ayres,¹² and Lee A. Burress¹³ have suggested specific actions for dealing with attempted censorship and selection of books. Dwight L. Burton's Literature Study in the High Schools¹⁴ talks about book selection and needs of youth as does Geneva R. Hanna and Mariana K. McAllister's Books, Young People and Reading Guidance.¹⁵

Few writers have approached the problems of teaching objectionable literature in the classroom. William J. O'Malley presents an analysis of

⁸Richard B. Kennan, "Censorship in Schools Can Cause 'Fear' Fatal to Academic Freedom," Arizona Teacher, LIV (November, 1965), p. 27.

⁹Cecil Winfield Scott and Clyde M. Hill, Public Education Under Criticism (New York: Prentice-Hall, Inc., 1954).

¹⁰Ernest Oscar Melby and Morton Puner, Freedom and Public Education (New York: Praeger, 1953).

¹¹Jack Nelson, "What is the Problem?" National Education Association Journal, LII (May, 1963), pp. 19-21.

¹²Donald L. Ayres, "Censorship of Literature as a Curriculum Problem," Journal of Secondary Education, XXXVII (January, 1962), pp.61-63, and "What Can the Teacher Do?" National Education Association Journal, LII (May, 1963), p. 24.

¹³Burress, op. cit., pp. 491-499.

¹⁴Dwight L. Burton, Literature Study in the High Schools (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, Inc., 1964).

¹⁵Geneva R. Hanna and Mariana K. McAllister, Books, Young People and Reading Guidance (New York: Harper and Brothers, 1960).

teenage attitude and relates it to the necessity of teaching literature containing sex. He gives guidelines to follow and suggests the use of a graph designating literature according to literary difficulty and the nature and amount of sex.¹⁶ Sister Kathleen Marie has outlined the program she used to prepare students in her classes to read The Catcher in the Rye and A Tree Grows in Brooklyn.¹⁷ Carlo Farina gives a series of "norms" for teaching controversial literature. Although several of the sections of his article may be only of interest for the Catholic educator, the discussion is excellent especially on emotional make-up of the teenager.¹⁸ All three of these writers agree that two of the chief duties of the teacher is to prepare the students to critically evaluate novels and to maintain aesthetic distance when reading before any controversial material is attempted. Although no parental objections to teaching the Bible as literature were recorded in current articles, the Bible is still considered controversial material. Suggestions and guidelines are provided by the outlined programs of R. L. Hunt,¹⁹ Robert F. Hogan,²⁰ Betty Stainer,²¹

¹⁶William J. O'Malley, "How to Teach 'Dirty' Books in High Schools," Media and Methods, IV (November, 1967), pp. 5-11.

¹⁷Sister Kathleen Marie, "Teaching Controversial Literature in Catholic High Schools," Catholic Educational Review, LX (December, 1962), pp. 588-598.

¹⁸Carlo Farina, "Norms for Teaching Teenagers Controversial Literature," Catholic Educational Review, LXIV (January, 1966), pp. 12-30.

¹⁹R. L. Hunt, "How Religion Can Fit in the Curriculum," Nation's Schools, LXXVIII (August, 1966), pp.38-40.

²⁰Robert F. Hogan, "The Bible in the English Program," English Journal, LIV (September, 1965), pp.488-494.

²¹Betty A. Stainer, "Don't Forget to Bring Your Bible to Class," Minnesota Journal of Education, XLIVIII (December, 1967), pp. 16-19.

R. Paul Hildebrand²² and John R. Whitney²³ for use of the Bible in the classroom, and all agree that objectivity in discussions is of prime importance. Because of the nature of this report, much of the literature is reviewed in the body of the paper.

²²R. Paul Hildebrand, "We Study the Bible as Literature," English Journal, LV (November, 1966), pp. 1022-1024.

²³John R. Whitney, "Introducing Religious Literature in Pennsylvania Secondary Schools," Religious Education, LXIII (March, 1968), pp. 89-96.

CHAPTER II

CASES OF CENSORSHIP AND CENSORSHIP LAWS

Without some knowledge of previous cases of censorship and laws concerning censorship, the teacher of literature should hardly feel prepared to know what may become controversial should he select to use it, what protection he and the school have from censorship or what current attitudes concerning censorship and controversial literature prevail. This chapter presents a summary of some of the attempts and/or successes to censor reading material in the schools. The first section is a general discussion of the status of censorship and objections to books in the schools, and the second part is a more specific discussion of the historical and legal background of censorship.

I. THE STATUS OF BOOK CENSORSHIP IN THE SCHOOLS

Perhaps one of the most humorous incidents dealing with attempts to censor material involves the citizen who expressed his feeling that Pierre Salinger should be removed from the President's staff on the grounds that he had written the dirty book The Catcher in the Rye.²⁴ Most teachers have their own humorous stories of books locked in school safes, books underlined by parents, and misunderstandings about authors and titles such as "Catch Her in the Raw." The choice itself of the particular literary work that offends

²⁴Rozanna Knudson, "My Mother the Censor," American Library Association Bulletin, LX (June, 1966), p. 614.

may seem almost unbelievable. Some books objected to in a Wisconsin study show the variety of reasons given.

Shaw's Androcles and the Lion was objected to because, asserted a Wisconsin clergyman, Shaw was an atheist.

A Bell for Adano was objected to because it was alleged that it had a Russian author.

Crime and Punishment was objected to because it allegedly had too much profanity.

Failsafe was objected to for fear that it might undermine confidence in America's defense system.

Gone with the Wind was objected to because of Scarlett's immorality.

Chekhov's Lady with the Dog was objected to because it had a Russian author.

The Ox-Bow Incident was objected to because of the description of the character Helena in the novel.

The Atlantic Monthly was objected to because it allegedly had crude and sensational articles. The New York Times Book Review magazine was objected to because it allegedly contained obscenity.

Today's Health was objected to because it dealt with the birth of a baby.

In another case in Wisconsin, a teacher was prevented from using To Kill a Mockingbird because it wasn't a classic.²⁵

This same study revealed that World Geography by Loyal Durand and others was objected to because it contained too little nationalism. Other literature removed from use in some schools in Wisconsin included Andersonville, Main Street, The Wasteland, The Wayward Bus, For Whom the Bell Tolls, and Dictionary of American Slang.²⁶

²⁵Burress, loc. cit.

²⁶Williams, op. cit., pp. 186-187.

The list of books may seem humorous but the problem is not. Any book may be offensive to someone, and for what may seem, to that person, good reasons. The Negro father may be offended that his children hear Negroes referred to as "niggers" throughout The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn. The mother may object to her son reading "dirty words" in The Catcher in the Rye. A local member of a patriotic organization may object to 1984 or books by "communist writers". A citizens' group may attack and have taken from circulation, as they did in Alabama, a book as innocent in appearance as The Rabbits' Wedding by Garth Williams because it teaches miscegenation.²⁷ Even the sacred textbook isn't clear from criticism. In a textbook survey conducted by the Daughters of the American Revolution 220 textbooks were blacklisted. A majority of the social science books blacklisted had, they said, an under-current of "economic determinism" running through them and "contain uncomplimentary pictures of slum areas or of long lines of unemployed during 'The Great Depression,' one book even labeling such a photograph 'A Long Line of Unemployed Waiting for Christmae Dinner.'"²⁸ In one third of the state legislatures in the first part of 1958 until the end of 1962, textbooks came under fire. Censorship groups stepped up their activities in 1961-62.²⁹ In one 1965 case a school district requested a publisher to delete a whole chapter on the United Nations from an eighth grade civics book.³⁰

²⁷Charles Morgan, Jr., "The Freedom to Read and Racial Problems," American Library Association Bulletin, LIX (June, 1965), p. 486.

²⁸Jack Neleon, "What is the Problem?" National Education Association Journal, LII (May, 1963), p. 19.

²⁹Ibid.

³⁰Williams, loc. cit.

As stated earlier, most people who object to what is being used are offended in some way by the material, but from what areas may the teacher expect the most recurrent criticisms? What groups are trying to censor and why? Criticism may come from almost any source and from almost anyone. It may be in the form of a request to eliminate material or add material to the curriculum. Some groups "push" more than others, and these groups the teacher can be familiar with.

One area of censorship promoted by particularly active groups and dealing in both additions and deletions stems from the current civil rights actions. Negroes have been excluded from much portrayal of their role in history and literature and until quite recently lacked much means of expressing themselves. The Negroes of today are becoming both readers and writers and are pressing the schools for more consideration. Their goal is not only addition of literature about and by Negroes and Negro culture but also the elimination of books containing racism and dedication to Southern ways. Writers and publishers, with few exceptions, make "common-sense" decisions about what to include in textbooks and many are fearful of Southern sales if they include pictures of groups of people of mixed races. This attitude is one of the things the Negro pressure groups wish to change. Books under attack in New York include Jeremiah's Black Lamb, America's Own Story, Climbing Higher, and Working Together.³¹ The goals of the Negro push for Negro literature in the schools are outlined by Larry Cuban in The Journal of Negro Education: (1) to offer a more balanced picture of the role of the

³¹Morgan, op. cit., pp. 484-487.

Negro in America (2) to improve interracial relations (3) to improve the self-concept of low-income Negro children.³² Other minority groups, especially if concentrated in a particular area, are likely to have their own demands they will be pressing for in the schools.

Opposing the civil rights groups are various groups against integration or any change from established ideas. Many of these groups, but certainly not all, will be found in the South. Some of their censoring of integration literature will be done under the guise of censoring out the obscene. Many groups are not reticent to say they are censoring because of racial issues. Besides The Rabbits' Wedding mentioned earlier (which, incidentally, was retained in Orlando, Florida, when assaulted³³), other books have been attacked on the issue of race. The Three Little Pigs, one black, one white, one some of both, "ran into a huffing, puffing segregationist in Miami, who attempted but failed to roast the book." In Baton Rouge, Louisiana, Scottsboro Boy, The Ugly American, and Eight Men were attacked by police as "contrary to Louisiana's policy of segregation." Life, Time, and Look were ordered off the library shelf of two parish school systems in Louisiana and a public school shelf in Mississippi. In Savannah in 1956 Laughing Boy by Oliver LaFarge (Pulitzer Prize-winner in 1930), The Walls Came Tumbling Down by Henrietta Rosenberg and Color Blind by Margaret Haley were removed from school libraries by the superintendent who had not read them. Countless

³²Larry Cuban, "Not 'Whether'? But 'Why?' and 'How?'--Instructional Materials on the Negro in the Public Schools," The Journal of Negro Education, XXXVI (Fall, 1967), p. 434.

³³Morgan, op. cit., p. 486.

reports are not seen on television in parts of the South which might ease some of the discrimination against books: NBC's White Paper on the sit-ins, CBS's Who Sneaks for the South, ABC's Walk in My Shoes.³⁴

The selection policies of large Southern libraries often reflect the feeling of Southern people toward certain types of literature.

In buying religious films, an attempt is made to avoid controversial issues, and to add only those films which are of interest to a broad group of viewers.

An attempt is made to provide books that give evidence of a sincere desire to get at the facts and seem to be written in a reasonable fashion and as a result of careful study. The library may, on the other hand, decide to exclude sensational, violent, or inflammatory books, and those that contain demonstrably false statements and undocumented accusations. For exceptions see the paragraph below.

The library may exclude from its collection a majority of the books presenting views that are regarded by a consensus of responsible opinion--civic, scientific, religious, and educational--as un sound, and have been so regarded over a period of years. For the use of students and scholars, however, the library collection may include a few representative and prominent books which, when published, favored practices which have since come to be regarded as either anti-social or positively illegal, e.g., it possesses a number of antebellum works in favor of slavery, which are of great value to students of the period.³⁵

Many of these people feel their value system, beliefs and way of life are threatened by inclusion of materials which oppose the established ways of thought and action.

Other groups that have been doing a great deal of pressuring in the schools are the "right wing" organizations. The DAR has already been mentioned with their blacklist of textbooks. The John Birch Society, the Sons of the American Revolution, and America's Future cooperate with the DAR in exchanging material and aiding in attacks on books. Criticism

³⁴Ibid. ³⁵Ibid., pp. 488-489.

sometimes comes from members representing the American Legion and the Veterans of Foreign Wars. Many of these groups are highly organized, backed by funds and exert some amount of influence in various parts of the nation. Their methods are often criticized: DAR never identifies the experts who criticize the books for them, the method of one group to determine "communistic" tendencies was to measure amount of space in textbooks devoted to conservative presidents as opposed to that devoted to liberal presidents, many of the groups flood the schools with free material, making liberal use of "scare" words such as, "subverting" and "brainwashing."³⁶ These groups have succeeded in getting hundreds of books removed from the shelves of the school. In 1965 the Levittown, New York, Board of Education rejected a book because it considered the authors "leftists."³⁷ In Scarsdale, New York, controversy which began with objections to Howard Fast's Citizen Tom Paine lasted more than a year and a half.³⁸ The United Nations, communism, United States internment camps in World War II, the bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, American poverty, and integration are barely mentioned in some American history texts.³⁹

David Reisman, an English teacher at Santa Clara (California) High School, sees the increased censorship as a "new class struggle between the 'old' professional, Eastern (America), educated middle class and the 'new' half-educated small business, small town manual classes...city slickers..."

³⁶Nelson, op. cit., pp. 19-21. ³⁷Williams, loc. cit.

³⁸Ibid., p. 166. ³⁹Ibid.

drummers of ideas."⁴⁰ Perhaps this is an apt description of some of the unorganized censorship that takes place, especially in the areas of attacks on literature on moral grounds. It may be that this 'new' class valuing education highly, wishes to take an active part and wishes to safeguard education for their children, however inappropriate the action may turn out to be for the school. They wish to guard their newly acquired middle class values. With this group might be included those pressing for or against religion or religious materials in the schools. They too are trying to protect their values. Recent cases have reached the Supreme Court about the use of religious materials in the schools. Teachers must remember that in these groups, as well as those mentioned earlier, there are many sincere people doing what they think is for the best. The teacher must recognize also that, as with any cause, there are certain to be some "rabble-rousers." Theodor Gill in "The Freedom to Read and Religious Problems" reminds those who are bothered by the zealots that the various religions are in themselves "pestered" by them.⁴¹ Certainly this is true in all areas; those who pester the schools about censorship are often the ones who pester the city commission, the police department and various civic clubs.

All opposition to materials used in the schools does not come from outside the school. Some pressures come from within the school. From the Wisconsin study mentioned earlier comes information that school librarians often have problems with teachers who disapproved some of the books selected

⁴⁰ Ayres, Journal of Secondary Education, p. 24.

⁴¹ Theodor Gill, "The Freedom to Read and Religious Problems," American Library Association Bulletin, LX (June, 1965), pp. 477-483.

for the library. Books disapproved by teachers in some Wisconsin schools included The Catcher in the Rye, Children of Sanchez, Delinquency: Sickness or Sin, A Farewell to Arms, The Fountainhead, Hawaii, The Hunchback of Notre Dame and Les Miserables, Lord of the Flies, 1984, Of Mice and Men, The Pearl, To Kill a Mockingbird, Two and the Town, the magazine America and the magazine Ebony, some issues of Life, and the jokes in some issues of the Wisconsin Engineer. Since publication of the Wisconsin report one of the authors of that report has had two or three oral reports of teachers stealing an allegedly immoral book from the library to keep it from circulation. On the other hand, teachers having problems from librarians removing books from circulation has included removal of the Bible, Brave New World, The Catcher in the Rye, Exodus, The Final Score, The Grapes of Wrath, Jude the Obscure, Peppercorn Days, Something of Value, The Town, Two and the Town, and such periodicals as The Christian Science Monitor, Life, Photography, and Theatre Arts. One Wisconsin director of school library services refuses to buy any book which deals with war or has the word "war" in the title.⁴²

Certainly the teacher should know from what directions to expect criticism, even within the school. Knowing something about those likely to criticize may aid him in defending a particular choice of literature put on a book list or used in the classroom.

II. CENSORSHIP AND THE LAW

The attempted censorship of materials of the English teacher or any teacher or school can lead to legal problems. The teacher owes it to

⁴²Burress, op. cit., pp. 494-495.

himself to know something about the laws of the nation in regard to censorship. In some cases teachers have been dismissed or threatened with dismissal for teaching or allowing students to read 1984, Of Human Bondage, The Catcher in the Rye, and Brave New World.⁴³ Most cases are not as severe as that of the teacher in the Midwest (Thompson, Michigan) who was awakened in the night, arrested and put in jail. Police seized his personal library and destroyed some of his books. His crime: he had allowed some of the high school students to read The Stranger.⁴⁴ Later that year, after the teacher had served ninety days in jail and had paid a fine of one hundred dollars (despite support from the state association), the Circuit Court discovered that the teacher had been convicted under a law that had been repealed three years before.⁴⁵

Censorship seems to come in waves. One wave followed when mass-produced and distributed literatures became possible, a second at the advent of movies, and a third when mass-marketed paperback books became popular. A fourth wave of censorship may be precipitated by the nudity in magazines.⁴⁶

As waves of censorship occur, so do legal cases involving censorship. Cases involving booksellers and book companies are numerous. These cases are often what promote the establishment or clarification of censorship laws. First federal legislation prohibiting the importation or the carriage

⁴³Williams, loc. cit. ⁴⁴Kennan, op. cit., p. 27.

⁴⁵Dale Livengood, "The Kansas State Board of Review: A Study of Censorship" (unpublished Master's Report, Kansas State University, Manhattan, Kansas, 1963), p. 17.

⁴⁶Looy, op. cit., p. 471.

through the mails of obscene matter was passed in 1873. This was paralleled by state laws making the publication or sale of such materials an offense. All were based in large part on a British act of 1857. As a result of the British act, a British court in the case of the Queen v. Hicklin, decided 1868, labeled "obscure" material that whose tendency is "to deprave and corrupt those whose minds are open to such immoral influences, and into whose hands a publication of this sort may fall."⁴⁷ Under this ruling almost anything could be labeled obscene. Enforcement was left to the discretion and interpretation of local officials, as it was in the United States.

Actual clarification of obscenity and freedom to read has been attempted at various times by the United States Courts. In a 1933 case involving Joyce's Ulysses, Judge Woolsey of the Federal District Court placed the first judicial limits on censorship, holding that the "intent and character of a work as a whole must be considered, rather than isolated words or episodes, and that the court must also consider the probable effect of the work on a normal person rather than one 'open to such influences.'"⁴⁸

In an interesting but inconclusive case in 1949, the Supreme Court heard an appeal from a New York court on Edmund Wilson's Memoirs of Hecate County. It was argued by Doubleday, the book's publishers, that no banning of "obscenity" as such was constitutional under the first amendment, and that only those writings could be suppressed that were so brigaded with action as to present a "clear and present danger" of leading to unlawful acts. The court divided four-to-four with Mr. Justice Frankfurter abstaining and, hence, expressed no opinion, and upheld the New York decision against the sale of the book.⁴⁹

⁴⁷Ibid.

⁴⁸Ibid.

⁴⁹Ibid.

Dan Lacy in the June, 1965 American Library Association Bulletin discusses a 1957 appeal of Samuel Roth, convicted of publishing a magazine called American Aphrodite.

The Court rejected the contention that the publication of obscene works enjoys the protection of the Constitution. It did hold, however, that a defendant charged with publishing an obscene work was constitutionally entitled to a judicial determination, including if necessary an appellate determination, as to whether the work was in fact obscene.⁵⁰

Asked to define "obscene", the Court said "the dominant theme of the work... must be an appeal to prurient interest, and the work must exceed the community's bounds of permitted candor."⁵¹ Later it added that it must be patently offensive. Lacy continues by discussing the problems involved in this definition.

But the most confusing element in the opinion was a statement that the reason obscenity did not enjoy constitutional protection was that it lacked all redeeming social value. This made it clear that obscenity and social value could not coexist, but did it mean that obscenity robbed a work of any social value it might otherwise have, or that the presence of social value cleansed a work of obscenity?⁵²

The Court, extending its normal procedure, applied this definition to several works. Neither nudity, nor "immorality", nor vulgar words themselves could apparently now render a work obscene.

In cases involving the Lady Chatterly movie in 1959 and the book Lady Chatterly's Lover in the same year, the Court struck down part of the New York state film-licensing law as unconstitutional. The Court ruled that the movie did not show scenes of sexual immorality, perversion, or lewdness, "but merely approved such matters as adultery, without actually portraying them in an obscene way." It also stated that the

⁵⁰Ibid. ⁵¹Ibid. ⁵²Ibid.

film was protected under free speech. In the case of the book, involving the Postmaster General's refusal to allow it to be sent in the mail, Judge Bryan said that it was "an honest and sincere novel of literary merit" and that the language in the book was consistent with character, situation, and theme. Overruling the Postmaster General, he allowed the book to be sent through the mail.⁵³

In the summer of 1964, the Court wrote an opinion to clarify the 1957 Roth opinion. This was in the so-called Jacobellie case, involving an appeal from an Ohioan decision that a film, The Lovers, was obscene.

Mr. Justice Brennan stated:

1. The "community" whose standards are to be applied is the nation.
2. "Social value" is to be judged first. It includes advocacy of issues and literary, artistic, or similar merit. If such social value is found, the constitutional protection is absolute, no matter how sexually explicit the work. The various tests of obscenity are to be applied only when a work is found to lack such value.⁵⁴

In other cases the Court declared a public official could not threateningly circulate a list of works to whose sale he objected, and that a bookseller could not be convicted of selling an obscene work unless it could be proved that he actually knew it to be obscene.

Mr. Justice Brennan, in the Jacobellis case, makes a statement of interest to the teacher on the Court's attitude that "state and local authorities might well consider whether their objective in this area would

⁵³Livingood, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

⁵⁴Lacy, op. cit., p. 474.

be better served by laws aimed specifically at preventing distribution of objectionable material to children, rather than at totally prohibiting it dissemination."⁵⁵

On the question of the Bible in the classroom the Court seems to be rather specific. While prohibiting the teaching of a particular religion in the schools, or prayer in the schools, Justice Clark in the 1963 Pennsylvania and Maryland cases said, "It certainly may be said that the Bible is worthy of study for its literary and historical qualities. Nothing we have said here indicates that such study of the Bible or religion, when presented objectively as part of a secular program of education, may not be affected consistent with the First Amendment."⁵⁶ In the 1963 *Abington v. Schimpp* case the Court even gives a test to apply to the legislative requirement of a requirement for religious literature in the schools.

The test may be stated as follows: What are the purpose and the primary effect of the enactment? If either is the advancement or inhibition of religion then the enactment exceeds the scope of legislative power as circumscribed by the constitution. That is to say that to withstand the stricture of the Establishment Clause there must be a secular legislative purpose and a primary effect that neither advances or inhibits religion.⁵⁷

⁵⁵Ibid.

⁵⁶Richard B. Dierenfield, "God and Caesar in the Minnesota Public Schools," Minnesota Journal of Education, XLVIII (December, 1967), p. 8.

⁵⁷Hunt, op. cit., p. 39.

CHAPTER III

HOW TO AVOID CENSORSHIP

"Our greatest danger is the self-appointed guardian of the mind--blinded by self-righteous confidence in his superiority or judgment as to what is best for others," writes Dr. Richard B. Kennan in an Arizona Teacher article.⁵⁸ Certainly the teaching procedures, communication of the school and community, and community atmosphere are the best defenses against attack of literature in the school, but there are certain precautions the teacher can help foster in the school and community. There are certain procedures and arguments he can use if involved in a complaint by a parent against his teaching material. The following chapter, discussing these conditions, procedures, and arguments, is divided into three sections. The first section deals with conditions within the school and the school district that the teacher can foster through his own work and suggestions and through his professional associations. The second section deals with suggestions for the teacher to follow if attacked for using a particular piece of literature. The last section provides some general arguments to some of the common statements and questions of those who criticize.

I. CONDITIONS AND PROCEDURES TO PROMOTE

The teacher may feel that the chief obligation for much of the preparation dealt with in this section belongs to the administration and the school board.

⁵⁸Kennan, loc. cit.

Much of it does, but the teacher, through suggesting, aiding, and working, either personally, or through his professional organizations, can do much to see that good conditions exist.

The first line of defense against criticism lies in the attitude of the community toward the school and its involvement with the school. Lay people are being used more than in past years on curriculum or other committees. The local Parent-Teacher Association can be involved in programs or presented teacher prepared programs about changes in the school. The school can make extra effort to establish a public relations program to keep the community informed of what is being done in the schools. The object is to make friends when they are not needed so they will be there when they are needed.⁵⁹

A good way to involve parents and members of the community in the literature program is to help establish, with the librarian, a Friends of the Library committee for the school. The idea is used often in public libraries. This group would meet to discuss and study current books, some of which might be controversial.⁶⁰ The committee might be extended to a type of advisory committee which would function in the selection of material to be used in school libraries throughout the district. The following guidelines have been suggested for this sort of committee:

1. Members of the committee would read all books referred to them and would read reviews of the books, if possible.
2. The general acceptance of books would be checked by consulting authoritative lists and the holdings of local libraries.

⁵⁹Robert F. Hogan, "Book Selection and Censorship," National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, LI (April, 1967), p. 75.

⁶⁰Ibid.

3. The values and faults of the book as a whole would be evaluated without taking passages out of context.

4. The committee, in a discussion meeting, would prepare an advisory report on the books. The decision to retain or withdraw a book would remain with the school.

5. The committee's report would be sent to all schools in the system.

6. Books rejected by the committee and the school would not be approved for further purchase in the district.⁶¹

Selection of members for this committee should provide for variance in belief, economic and educational status, ethnic background and race.

There are pitfalls in working with the public in the school, and the teacher is wise to keep them in mind. J. Harvey Littrell has pointed out that lay people should act in an advisory capacity only, that they often have an incomplete knowledge of the program, that they may be reticent in expressing their actual views, that they may recall their own schooling with a "halo" like nostalgia, and that they think in terms of their own children and interests and tend to form opinions before objective evidence is presented.⁶²

Since we do not get fully backed in other areas, and since we are told to be careful how we express ourselves--we must not sound like complainers--I assume that I should tread lightly in this area [book selection] also. If the

⁶¹ Elizabeth Hodges, "What Can the Library Committee Do?" National Education Association Journal, LII (May, 1963), pp. 25-26.

⁶² J. Harvey Littrell, "Lay Participation," Clearing House, XXXVI (November, 1961), pp. 137-139.

administration openly defended a teacher's choices, and if they let the new teacher know that she need not fear for her job in case of trouble over chosen books, I would be braver.⁶³

Comments of teachers like this one in the Wisconsin study point out the need, not only for clearer policies of the school, but also for a climate of mutual respect and support between the teachers and administration. The principal in each school can set a climate that not only directs the staff to respect the rights of the student not to read a book, but also urges them to be aware of the intellectual and sexual maturation of students and of their exposure to materials outside of the school.⁶⁴

The principal can aid the teacher by seeing to it that the English department meets regularly and that some of the business of these meetings is to discuss and formulate reading lists, both adding and subtracting books. The principal, along with the librarian, can attend some of the meetings.⁶⁵ By letting it be known that he is interested in what the students are reading, much criticism can be avoided or halted with a parent's visit to his office.

The principal should be sure that the English department and the library, perhaps cooperatively, have a definite book selection policy which is approved by the board of education, and is clearly stated and written out.⁶⁶ Although the principal is responsible for making sure that his teachers

⁶³Burress, *op. cit.*, p. 493.

⁶⁴Hogan, *op. cit.*, p. 69.

⁶⁵*Ibid.*, pp. 75-77.

⁶⁶William D. Boutwell, "What's Happening in Education," Parent-Teacher Association Magazine, LVI (April, 1962), p. 15.

have such a policy, the texts and library books should be chosen primarily by the professional staff who will use them. These should be the people who will then be involved in meeting a challenge to a book. The policy should state clear procedures in the event that a text or an individual piece of literature is challenged and should provide that no one who has not read the entire book shall share in the final disposition of the book.⁶⁷ This group should keep a file in which are recorded the bases for decision on titles likely to be questioned or to be considered controversial.⁶⁸

Local associations can often induce boards of education to adopt specific policies for handling controversial matter. The local associations can provide information on useful policies and procedures which the board may not have had time to acquire, or would not acquire until the specific need for them arose. The local associations can aid the board of education and the administration in forming three levels of defense: good structure, good routine and good emergency drill.

Good structure and good routine would involve justified school board confidence in the professional competence of its teachers and sound, clearly defined policies and procedures for the selection and use of instructional materials. There are various ways the board can remain informed on selection and use of instructional materials. Principals should keep the board informed on new developments, through the superintendent. The board should have copies of and be familiar with the book selection policy. Curriculum study groups or presentations by individual teachers can keep them up to date on timely

⁶⁷Hogan, op. cit., p. 74.

⁶⁸Boutwell, loc. cit.

topics. Classroom visits can give the board some idea of the teacher at work, and informal dinners for different groups can let them see the teacher outside the classroom.

Emergency procedures can be suggested by the local association for an established method of handling complaints if the board has no established procedure. Suggestions should include (1) open hearings on all grievances, with the questions and statements submitted in writing ahead of time so the board may study them, and with reasonable time limits set for the discussion; (2) no action taken on the first presentation but a reference to the staff for study; (3) limitation of oral response to the statement of adopted policy, a reference to board requirements that it be in writing, or to the intention to study the matter.⁶⁹ The board should clearly identify members of a complaining group to determine if they are merely a small group with a "special ax to grind," or if they express the sentiments of many members of the community.⁷⁰

The school board may wish to adopt an "open-book" statement similar to that used in the Wichita, Kansas, public schools:

Any citizen may read and comment on any textbook or library book used in our school system. Indeed, we welcome such comments and suggestions. However, the ultimate selection of these books is a professional responsibility which cannot be delegated to any lay citizen or group of citizens. While care must be exercised to avoid selection of books which will be offensive to any group, it would be obviously impossible to eliminate every book containing words or ideas objectionable to some person. If this were to be done our library would be a place of bare shelves. May I add, however, that we would never knowingly approve putting into the library any book which had as its obvious intent the creation of a derogatory image of any group, nationality, or race.⁷¹

⁶⁹Archibald B. Shaw, "What Can the Superintendent Do," National Education Association Journal, LII (May, 1963), pp. 22-23.

⁷⁰Kennan, loc. cit. ⁷¹Shaw, op. cit., p. 22.

The teacher can help promote the measures suggested in the last two sections, perhaps with success and perhaps without success. But what can the individual teacher do to prepare himself to meet controversy? There are seven general steps the teacher can follow to prepare himself.

1. Establish an individual book selection policy. If or if not the school has a book selection policy, the teacher should be quite clear in his own mind and write down the basis he uses to establish what books he selects. Suggestions from other policies may help, but only the teacher can give the clear, concrete reasons for using a particular piece of literature with a particular class.

2. Keep a file on controversial material and general censorship arguments. The file established by the book selection committee may be adequate, but if none is available the teacher should establish her own.⁷²

3. Keep material on hand on the freedom to read.⁷³ There are various sources for this material. The National Council of Teachers of English has a pamphlet that may be ordered in quantity entitled "The Students Right to Read;"⁷⁴ the Freedom of Information Center at the University of Missouri in Columbia provides monographs and clipping files;⁷⁵ the National Commission on Professional Rights and Responsibilities has a pamphlet entitled "How Libraries and Schools Can Resist Censorship;" and the American Library

⁷²Hodges, op. cit., p. 26. ⁷³Boutwell, op. cit., p. 16.

⁷⁴National Council Teachers of English, The Students Right to Read.

⁷⁵Nancy Baker, "A Resource in the Fight Against Censorship," American Library Association Bulletin, LIX (June, 1965), pp. 529-530.

Association provides copies on order of the School Library Bill of Rights, the Library Bill of Rights, and the statement "Freedom to Read" of the Westchester Conference. Issues of the English Journal contain articles on freedom to read and the American Library Association publishes a "Newsletter on Intellectual Freedom."⁷⁶

4. Work with the local association. Local professional teachers associations have organized professional rights and responsibilities committees in thousands of school districts.⁷⁷

5. Keep informed on censorship cases and local attempts or laws on censorship.

6. If possible become involved in, or support, studies of censorship activities. There are some workshops on book selection and intellectual freedom. One was held at Wisconsin State University in July, 1965.⁷⁸

7. Use the proper channels to try to make changes. If the teacher feels he cannot stomach something, he should apply first through the established channels of the school to change it.

II. HOW TO HANDLE CRITICISM

"In disseminating new programs," says Henry M. Bricksall in a New York curriculum study, "it is not necessary to arouse the active enthusiasm of

⁷⁶Hodges, op. cit., p. 26.

⁷⁷Richard B. Kennan, "Censorship and the Schools," American Library Association Bulletin, LIX (June, 1965), p. 523.

⁷⁸Burress, op. cit., p. 494.

local parents, but it is necessary to avoid their active opposition."⁷⁹ This is little consolation to the teacher attacked for using a controversial piece of literature. What should the teacher do in case of attack? The following procedure is recommended by the National Council of Teachers and other groups:

1. Remain calm. Usually the community will back the school when given the facts. Insist on a written complaint. Treat the complaint with dignity, courtesy and good humor.
2. Take immediate steps to make sure that all facts are known to the administration--in writing.
3. Seek the support of the local press.
4. Inform local civic organizations of facts and enlist their help.
5. Defend the principle of freedom to read and professional rights of the teacher and librarian, rather than individual books.
6. Inform the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the American Library Association, the National Education Association's committees, and those other appropriate groups who might be able to help.⁸⁰

Quite often if the teacher remains calm and insists on a written complaint the majority of the complainers, perhaps acting on an impulse, will not carry the action further. The written form suggested by the National Council of Teachers of English⁸¹ is well thought out to help discourage all but the serious.

⁷⁹Henry M. Brickell, Organizing New York State for Educational Change, Office of the President of the University and the Commission on Education, (Albany: State Department of Education, 1961), p. 19.

⁸⁰Boutwell, op. cit., pp. 15-16.

⁸¹National Council Teachers of English, The Students Right to Read.

The local press can greatly aid the cause of freedom in the schools. Newspapers generally realize that if a point of view can be suppressed in the schools it well could be suppressed in the press. An example of this cooperation and effect of having a friendly ally in the press is illustrated in the following item:

Not long ago...a Wisconsin school board member who belonged to a radical right-wing organization objected to the use of the New York Times Book Review magazine in the school. One young teacher wrote a letter to the local paper protesting vigorously against this attempted censorship. The teacher won community support, and the matter was dropped.⁸²

The Wisconsin study on censorship suggested that publicity is a most useful weapon for protecting intellectual freedom in the public schools. Much censorship, it said, is done very quietly. Words which showed up frequently in the returns were "quiet," "cautious," "reasonable discretion," "given out judiciously," "nothing is said openly about such a policy," and "to suggest that teachers be a bit careful."⁸³

Other groups from which the teacher can receive support are librarians, lawyers, and minority groups. Librarians and the American Library Association have long been interested in freedom from censorship. Lawyers are often the first to recognize that if the rights of one are abridged, all are threatened. Minority groups have felt the effects of infringement on individual freedom, and know that their views and rights could also be threatened.⁸⁴ The American Civil Liberties Union supports intellectual freedom in the schools, and some communities have citizens organizations,

⁸²Burrese, op. cit., p. 492. ⁸³Ibid., p. 493.

⁸⁴Kennan, Arizona Teacher, p. 27.

such as the New Jersey Committee for the Right to Read.⁸⁵ The National Education Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, and local and state education associations oppose censorship and have fought censorship battles.

III. GENERAL ANSWERS TO ARGUMENTS

The teacher himself must be prepared, when teaching controversial material, to answer specific arguments about that particular work. There are some general arguments, however, that the teacher might use in establishing contact between himself and the objector. The sources for such points of contact--and hence of real rather than merely self-comforting arguments--are many. Wayne C. Booth says:

Most censors want to preserve some form of society in which they can exercise their own freedom; we can argue, following Mill [John Stuart Mill On Liberty] and many others, that the kind of society the censor really wants cannot be maintained if his kind of censorship prevails. Similarly, most censors respect and seek to further the "truth" as they see it, and some of them can be shaken by arguing, with Milton and others, that truth flourishes best when ideas can compete freely. Or again, many censors, irrational as they may seem to us, respect consistency and would like to think of themselves as reasonable; they can be shaken, sometimes, by showing the inevitable irrationalities and stupidities committed by any society that attempts to censor.⁸⁶

The person objecting to some material in the literature program will probably have some specific evil or question in mind. The following

⁸⁵Harold F. Flandere, "The Public Organizes for the Fight on Censorship," American Library Association Bulletin, LIX (June, 1965), p. 228.

⁸⁶Booth, op. cit., p. 155.

hypothetical questions with quotations and material following them can be used by the teacher when confronting such an objection. Only the individual teacher, of course, could select the best argument and provide the specific details that would make the argument effective. The statements are divided into four general categories--Fears for Child, Questions Professional Capacity of Teacher, Misunderstande Need of Child and Goals of Education, and Miscellaneous--but the categories overlap and many arguments can be used in a variety of places.

Fears for Child

1. "My child will become corrupt if he reads dirty books." or "delinquent." or "upset." or "will pick up dirty words."

Certainly the child who is unstable, confused or emotionally disturbed will need special guidance, but the reactions of normal students are usually a healthful, highly individual assortment. "The reader's total background of training and experience determines what meanings he will assign to particular words and passages. Predispositions within the child's personality and character are already pretty well established by the time he picks up his primer."⁸⁷ "Knowing and doing are two different things. With the young readers, it may be more strategic to let them experience an illicit love affair in the fantasy of Peyton Place rather than in the back seat of a parked car in their home town."⁸⁸

⁸⁷William C. Kvaraceus, "Can Reading Affect Delinquency?" American Library Association Bulletin, LIX (June, 1965), p. 519.

⁸⁸Ibid., p. 518.

There is no actual evidence that reading can make a bad boy good, but possibly a wide variety of material available and the opportunity to discuss issues presented in them with a friendly adult could result in a better approach to life's problems by some adolescents.⁸⁹

Reading must be viewed more as a symptom than a cause of adjustment or maladjustment. Reading tends to reinforce what is already present and what has been learned or experienced, frequently as far back as the early childhood years.⁹⁰

2. "I do not allow that sort of literature in my home and forbid my son to read it."

"I know of no better way to assure that a child will read a book than to forbid him to read it," stated Hoke Norris.⁹¹ Questionable books exist in abundant supply on newsstands and in the public library. The possibility of keeping an adolescent from any contact with objectionable books is to be questioned. "If we educate youngsters to succeed at home and at school but not to deal with the street, we have not educated them at all; we have merely schooled them," continued Norris.⁹²

The difficulty of keeping adolescents out of contact with bad books might be paralleled with the difficulty of keeping teenagers from driving because of their hazardous driving habits. Many schools, rather than merely making sure that their hands are clean, have approached the driving problem by

⁸⁹ Ibid., pp. 520-521. ⁹⁰ Ibid., p. 521.

⁹¹ Hoke Norris, "Should We Censor What Teenagers Read?" The Parent-Teacher Magazine, XXXVI (March, 1965), p. 11.

⁹² Ibid., p. 12.

providing a stepped-up schedule of driver training in the curriculum.⁹³ So, too, in meeting the hazards of "dirty books" do children need training.

The removal of books from the classroom lists and library shelves has appeared to have little effect on the circulation of these books. An example might be the figures cited by various publishing houses on books that have been removed from use in some schools:

Harper and Row	<u>Brave New World</u>	Estimates 2,500,000 copies in circulation
W. W. Norton	<u>A Bell for Adano</u>	Sold 175,000 copies in the fall of 1965
Viking	<u>Grapes of Wrath</u>	Has sold approximately 5,000 to 6,000 copies a year
Bantam	<u>Grapes of Wrath</u>	Paperback edition has sold about 500,000 copies a year
New American Library	<u>1984</u>	Estimates 4,080,945 copies in circulation
	<u>To Kill a Mockingbird</u>	Has sold 263,909 copies plus 792,200 copies through book clubs, etc.
Simon and Schuster	<u>Catch-22</u>	Has sold 40,000 copies plus 1,750,000 paperback copies
	<u>Catcher in the Rye</u>	Estimates of all editions 250,000 copies annually

It is difficult to prove that book banning increases sales, but it is equally difficult to prove that it decreases sales."⁹⁴

"How much more danger is there possible," asks Robert L. Hogan, "if the reading is secretive and the student is left entirely on his own to brood about it and probably misinterpret what he has read?"⁹⁵

⁹³Hogan, op. cit., p. 70.

⁹⁴Ibid., p. 71.

⁹⁵Ibid., p. 72.

Questions Professional Capacity of Teacher

1. "Who gave you the right to choose?"

One report suggests that "administrators--having hired the best talent available--take the risk of trusting their teachers to teach in their own way and of letting them work out their own relationship to the class and the material for themselves."⁹⁶ The teacher has been professionally trained to this position which includes book selection. More than anyone the teacher knows the particular needs of his class. His judgment may be in error at times, but unless he is free to select materials rather than being tied to an anthology he will not be able to fit his teaching to the response of his class.⁹⁷

2. "Why teach that? There are enough other good books around."

The teacher has a professional obligation to select the best material for the students. He must consider their needs, interests and maturity. Many of the "objectionable" books deal with questions of high interest to students. The American Association of School Administrators says:

Let an honest curiosity be cultivated in all students. Let them be inquisitive about everything about them and explore everything that is singular and rare. See that no restraining bounds in books or in subjects are imposed...

Let them have their turns in discussion and discourse, parry with ideas, learn to discern, learn to discriminate and to choose, taste strange fruits of learning, and try their wings while they can be guided.⁹⁸

⁹⁶ Norman Freidman, "Toward College English in the High School," High Points, XLVIII (January, 1966), p. 11.

⁹⁷ Ibid., p. 10.

⁹⁸ American Association of School Administrators, Imperatives in Education, (Washington: American Association of School Administrators, 1960), p. 67.

In a sense the subject of a book is irrelevant. The deciding factor is the context that the subject is placed in, the way in which the subject is presented.⁹⁹ Wayne C. Booth, for example, discusses this in the following passage:

You find something objectionable. "Fuck you"--repeated!-- and a school boy visit to a prostitute. The big job is to relate the seemingly offensive passage to the context provided by the whole work. If someone told us that a book talked openly about nakedness, we might, if we are worried by pornography, begin to worry. But we are not troubled to read "I was a stranger, and ye took me in: Naked, and ye clothed me: I was sick, and ye visited me." The context has transformed the concept of nakedness to obviously moral use. Similarly, when we read about the woman "taken in adultery," caught "in the very act," we do not ask that the reading be changed to something less specific. Not only do we take piety of the Bible for granted but the immediate context in John VIII quite evidently requires a forceful statement of the nature of sin that is being forgiven. If you doubt this, try substitution of some lesser sin--say gossiping--for adultery in the passage, or some euphemism like "caught flirting with another woman's husband."

Though we might question the wisdom of teaching a particular section of the Bible to children of a particular age, we would never think of firing a teacher simply for "teaching the Bible." We would want at the very least to know what the teacher was doing with it.¹⁰⁰

Studies of reading habits indicate that there is a falling off, even of those who had been avid readers, in reading among adolescents. One suggestion of what happens is that they never make the transition to adult books. Too often nothing happens in the high school English class to introduce the teenage to adult books.

⁹⁹Hogan, English Journal, p. 11.

¹⁰⁰Booth, loc. cit.

He does not have an opportunity to read books that honestly come to grips with life as he knows it to be, because his school may be afraid to use the works of Hemingway or Faulkner or O'Hara or Steinbeck or Baldwin. Teachers of English and high school librarians alike all over the country find themselves harassed by pressures that would seal off students in the classroom from the very books available on the newsstand and in the public library and praised in the literary reviews.¹⁰¹

Misunderstands the Needs of the Child and the Goals of Education

1. "Just what sort of an education are you handing out around here anyway?"

The purpose of education must remain what it has always been: to develop a free, reasoning person who can make up his own mind, who can understand his culture, and who can live compassionately with his fellow men.

Great literature...presents solutions and answers to the questions that have always perplexed man of the greatest minds the world has known. If the solutions and answers are not complete, they are the best we have. The continued search for answers is necessary.¹⁰²

Literature, international and universal, is civilizing. It extends the scope of an individual through his senses, his emotions, and his mind. Literature makes it possible for him to see beyond himself into other lands, into other times, and into the minds and hearts of all kinds of people.¹⁰³

2. "My child doesn't need to know about that side of life. We're decent, God-fearing people."

¹⁰¹ Lacy, op. cit., p. 475.

¹⁰² Norris, op. cit., p. 12.

¹⁰³ Marion C. Sheridan, "The Teaching of Literature in the Secondary School," Perspectives in English: Essays to Honor W. Wilbur Hatfield, Robert C. Poolay, editor (New York: National Council Teachers of English, 1960), p. 39.

"If students don't hear 'varying points of view' they become 'to some degree biased,'" says Dr. Kennan.¹⁰⁴ The student of today is bombarded on all sides by a variety of media. He cannot shut out the world. Careon McCullers quotes St. Cyril of Jerusalem: "The dragon sits by the side of the road, watching those who pass. Beware lest he devour you. We go to the Father of souls, but it is necessary to pass by the dragon."¹⁰⁵

Authors have often discussed the need of a preparation for evil through some sort of experience or teaching in order to combat it. Mark Twain in a short story entitled "The Man That Corrupted Hadleyburg" makes his point by describing the citizen's inability to cope with evil because they had always been sheltered and sheltered their children from any knowledge of it. A clergyman in Graham Greene's "The Hint of an Explanation" describes how he was drawn closer to his faith by an early temptation to stray from it.¹⁰⁶ John Milton wrote the classic argument against censorship including an idea often quoted about the necessity of contact with evil:

I cannot praise a fugitive and cloistered virtue,
unexercised and unbreathed, that never sallies out and
sees her adversary, but slinks out of the race where
that immortal garland is to be run for, not without
dust and heat. Assuredly we bring not innocence into
the world, we bring impurity much rather; that which
purifies us is trial and trial is by what is contrary
...Since therefore the knowledge and survey of vice is

¹⁰⁴Kennan, Arizona Teacher, p. 21.

¹⁰⁵Dwight L. Burton, "Literature and the Liberated Spirit: Programs in School Libraries and Classrooms," American Library Association Bulletin, IX (December, 1966), p. 904.

¹⁰⁶Burress, op. cit., p. 498.

in this world so necessary to the constitution of human virtue, and the scanning of error to the confirmation of truth, how can we more safely, and with less danger, scout into the regions of sin and falsity than by reading all manner of tractates and hearing all manner of reason?¹⁰⁷

Alain Renoir in "Satellites and the Teacher of Literature" has stated the proposal in terms of modern man:

Modern man...desperately needs the lesson of literature, to help him see through the veil which technology has stretched between him and the reality of his own actions... he must strive to distinguish the first-rats from the second-rate. Literature...can lend us eyes and ears superior to our own when they are at their best. Indeed, I readily acknowledge that the only man toward whom I feel condescension is he who thinks he knows his own wife but owns to having met neither the Wife of Bath or Emma Bovary.¹⁰⁸

3. "My child has had all the sex education he needs in biology class."

The purpose of the literature program is certainly not to teach sex education, but literature is a good place to get information of the role of sex in life. Much of the information students receive in biology, home economics, home living class, or family and marriage class has little to do with emotions. The student may see through literature that others have had feelings much like his and that they have handled them in various ways. Like Holden in The Catcher in the Rye they may see the situation with the prostitute for what it is and, like Holden, feel pity.

¹⁰⁷John Milton, Areopagitica, November 24, 1644.

¹⁰⁸Alain Renoir, "Satellites and the Teacher of Literature," Educational Forum, XXIV (November, 1959), p. 36.

4. "What do you mean teach him to read? He could read since he was in the second grade."

The purpose of using this type of literature in the high school is not to teach new (and dirty) words or meanings, grammar, or genre. The purpose is to teach the student to read with an ability to discriminate trash from good literature; to read with ability to understand the mood, purpose and idea the author is presenting; to read with the ability to understand and have compassion for the characters of the book; to read with the ability to understand the use of obscenity and obscene scenes in their proper perspective in literature.

If the student has learned the most important fact of all, the exciting power that books contain, he will be driven by desire to find that excitement in books appropriate to his continuing years of growth and change. The nature of imagination and of literature is such that we need not fear the results of free access to books.¹⁰⁹

Miscellaneous

1. "But that author is a communist." "But that author is immoral."
"That preaches against democracy." "That makes America look bad."

Books are often attacked on the grounds that they are not "democratic." John Stuart Mill has discussed the necessity of different views on subjects, the value to be gained from them, and the need for individuality. "Genius can only breathe freely," he said, "in an atmosphere of freedom."¹¹⁰

Arguments on the need of contact with different ideas in order to be able to cope with them, on the need to seek answers to questions, and on

¹⁰⁹Burress, op. cit., p. 499.

¹¹⁰John Stuart Mill, On Liberty, 1859.

the results of censorship in other countries provide good answers to these statements. The first two have been covered in previous sections. Many reminders from history, for example, the book burning in Nazi Germany and the censorship in Fascist Italy, show the effects of censorship. Write one student during the Fascist Regime:

The changes the Fascists made weren't made overnight, but little by little, so that we, the youngsters, did not feel that we were being deprived of something or in any way indoctrinated. For example, Machiavelli's I Discorsi (praising the virtues of the Roman Republic) was removed and Il Principe (The Prince) by Machiavelli (favoring dictatorship and the authoritarian state) was put in its place. To us, this meant nothing. One work by Machiavelli was just as good as another. But only now in retrospect, we can see what all these little changes meant.¹¹¹

2. "But I don't see why you need to teach Bible in school; we go to church."

The Bible may be objected to on grounds of the legality of use in the school, in which case the best answer is the statement of the Supreme Court. If, however, the objection is the Bible as a non-necessary part of literature, the results of the pretest given by Thayer S. Warshaw to classes of high school students in his school could be cited. Large per cents of the students had misconceptions such as "Sodom and Gomorrah were lovers," "Jezebel was Ahab's donkey," "the original language of the Bible was King James' Version," "Eve was created from an apple," "Jesus was baptized by Moses," and "Jesus taught parodies." Given common Biblical phrases with words left out, many could not complete them; eighty-eight per cent could not complete the phrase "Pride goeth before a _____."¹¹²

¹¹¹Williams, op. cit., p. 100.

¹¹²Thayer S. Warshaw, "Studying the Bible in Public School," English Journal, LIII (February, 1964), p. 91.

Hebrew and Christian beliefs have had a great influence on our language ("scapegoat," "jubilee," "let us reason together," "sackcloth and ashes"), historical incidents (Crusades, Inquisition, Jewish genocide), music (a monk developed the method of writing music, classical and folk music such as the Messiah, "Joshua Fit the Battle of Jerico," "Turn, Turn, Turn"), art (Michelangelo, Rembrandt, El Greco), philosophy (St. Augustine, Thomas Aquinas, Paul Tillich, Martin Buber), architecture (Cathedral St. Paul, Chartres Cathedral), and, most important in this case, literature (Biblical allusions in Wilder's Skin of Our Teeth, Faulkner's Absalom, Absalom, the Peanuts comic strip, the story base in Douglas' The Big Fisherman, The Robe, the movies Samson and Delilah and the Greatest Story Ever Told).¹¹³ Many pieces of literature, if not practically impossible to understand, are not enjoyed fully unless the reader has some knowledge of Bible characters, history, and terms.

3. "That's what is wrong with society today."

Do not be too ready to join those who feel that today's candor in depicting and discussing sex as a wholly unfortunate by product of freedom from censorship...But, the years when Dreiser's Sister Carrie was banned and Shaw's Mrs. Warren's Profession could not be performed were also the years when large scale, organized, officially tolerated prostitution most abundantly flourished...¹¹⁴

¹¹³Stainer, op. cit., p. 17.

¹¹⁴Lacy, op. cit., p. 476.

CHAPTER IV

BOOK SELECTION AND THE USE OF CONTROVERSIAL LITERATURE IN THE CLASSROOM

The solution some teachers have for teaching controversial literature is either to avoid it entirely or pretend that it doesn't exist. The teacher who understands teenagers and his responsibility toward them will face the problem and learn how to teach controversial literature. The following chapter is divided into three sections: (1) the purpose of literature, (2) selection of books, and (3) classroom procedures and the program.

I. THE PURPOSE OF LITERATURE

William J. O'Malley, a high school teacher and a cleric, tells the following anecdote:

One evening at an NCTE convention a few years ago, the conversation swung inevitably around to "the right to read," and another English teacher said to me, "Well, your job is to keep them from sin; my job is to make human beings out of them." And I said, "What's the difference?"

The Biblical Greek word for sin is hamartia, which, originally comes from a term in archery meaning "to miss the point." When you come right down to it, then, we need not even mention the word "sin." Whether teachers are religiously-oriented or not, they're all trying to prevent the same thing: missing the whole point of human life.¹¹⁵

The first step for any teacher of controversial literature is to determine what he sees as the purpose of literature. The teacher may

¹¹⁵O'Malley, op. cit., p. 5.

takes the approach of entirely turning every piece of literature into a discussion of values, or he may go to the opposite extreme and "grimly... proceed with a junior version of the seminar he took at graduate school."¹¹⁶ Critics disagree on the approach to literature, but certainly most teachers use an approach falling somewhere between a strict analysis in literary terms and a discussion of the values the book is presenting, depending on the book itself. In the case of controversial material, it is the value system that the book is presenting on which the teacher must clarify his position.

Professor Helen White of the University of Wisconsin in a preface to a syllabus prepared by the group of English teachers for institutes in English in 1962 states an encompassing view of the purpose of teaching literature:

The purpose of teaching literature in schools and colleges is to make the student aware of the power of great literature to illuminate human experience and to give inexhaustible pleasure. ...The student must be trained in thoughtful and sensitive reading, supported by essential knowledge of the cultural context and guided by each teacher's understanding of his class. The student must be put in possession of such indispensable tools of literary study as analysis of structure, and semantic examination of meaning and tone.¹¹⁷

Dr. Arthur H. Compton, a Nobel Prize scientist says the purpose of literature is "to open the way for the fullest growth of the spirit of men."¹¹⁸ The response to literature should then provide not only for

¹¹⁶Burton, Literature Study in the High Schools, p. 1.

¹¹⁷Burress, op. cit., p. 497.

¹¹⁸quoted in Sheridan, op. cit., p. 29.

objectivity but also for mood and emotion. Dwight Burton defines a full literature program as having three dimensions, one dealing with "the developmental dimension...in providing personal delight and insight into human experience," one dealing with the "humanistic dimension...of bringing youth into contact with a cultural tradition," and the last concerning form, genre, and development of skill in reading.¹¹⁹

Whatever the teacher's definition of the purpose of literature, his evaluation of purpose will affect the approach he takes to controversial literature. Whatever this approach it should be "subtle and artistic, concerned with the whole student--his senses, his emotions, his imagination, and his intellect."¹²⁰

II. SELECTION OF BOOKS

Once the teacher has determined what he feels to be the proper purpose of teaching literature and what role values will play, he is faced with the difficult problem of how and on what basis to select material for students. What book will the class study as a group? What criteria can he use to judge contemporary or objectionable literature? How will he reach the students and with what book?

The teacher must base the selection of books first on the level of maturity of the student and on the needs of the student. He must understand and evaluate realistically the boy or girl in the light of the demands of our time.

¹¹⁹Burton, op. cit., p. 3. ¹²⁰Sheridan, op. cit., p. 30.

"Too frequently," cautions Carlo Farina in the Catholic Educational Review, "a teacher overlooks or forgets or deliberately ignores the physical and emotional elements of the students he is instructing and concentrates solely on the students' intellectual ability when assigning a book."¹²¹ He suggests that sexually stimulating material be introduced to the student no earlier than the junior year and preferably not until the senior year. By the age of sixteen, says Farina, the teenagers are capable of responding physically to an erotic stimulus, are extremely impressionable and easily persuaded by the appeal of the pleasurable, are not interested particularly in consequences but will accept what becomes the more appealing influence, have marked up and down periods where they tend to focus on themselves and may be easily thrown off balance, are often fearful of sex, although it is also alluring, and tend to seek it out more in fantasy and in private secretive conversation. "The English teacher has the right to presume a definite amount of moral and religious training on the part of each student even though it might be in varying degree," says Farina, but the teacher who is wise will also try to determine this amount and consider it, rather than just expect it as Farina says.¹²²

Geneva R. Hanna and Mariana K. McAllister present a discussion of the growth factors and characteristics of adolescents and the needs of adolescents with suggested books that are subject oriented toward these needs in

¹²¹ Farina, op. cit., p. 14.

¹²² Ibid., pp. 15-17.

their book Books, Young People and Reading Guidance.¹²³ "Although knowing some of the characteristics of adolescents is no substitute for knowing each individual young person, this general knowledge serves as a background for working with young people and their literature."¹²⁴

The teacher with a knowledge of the maturity, emotions, level of sophistication and needs of his students is ready to turn to the task of judging the literary quality of works to recommend to his students. A report of the Commission on English says that the general criteria for judging are variety in kind, richness in content, expertness in execution and suitability.¹²⁵ In providing a variety of kind the teacher inevitably comes to the problem of controversial literature.

"If the literary quality of a work is high, then the morale will take care of themselves"¹²⁶ is not necessarily true, but certainly the teacher will need to exercise special care to evaluate literary quality of any book which could become controversial. In addition to evaluating the literary quality of a book, the teacher, at this stage must face the facts: What needs to be taught? Who cannot be overlooked?¹²⁷ One of the needs of

¹²³Hanna and McAllister, op. cit., pp. 27-35, 52-101.

¹²⁴Ibid., p. 26.

¹²⁵Report of the Commission of English, Freedom and Discipline in Teaching English (New York: College Entrance Exam Board, 1965), p. 14.

¹²⁶James R. Squire and Robert F. Hogan, "Where is the Danger?" The Parent-Teacher Magazine, XXXVI (March, 1965), p. 14.

¹²⁷Luke M. Grande, "Teaching Dangerous/Difficult Fiction in the Secondary School," Catholic Educational Review, LX (January, 1962), p. 4.

students is certainly academic preparation especially if they are continuing their education. The teacher faces the problems then of establishing some kind of literary criteria and deciding what of the material must be left out because of time.

Questions of form, rhetoric, meaning and value must be asked by the teacher about any piece of literature. It may be difficult to find an answer to the question "how good is it?" but "to admit that final answers to these questions cannot be given...is not to argue that the questions should not be face."¹²⁸ The teacher who is unsure of his judgment may wish to consult sources such as those listed under "Book Reviews in the Humanities" on page eighty-three in the Appendix.

Many controversial books will pass the test of literary worth, many will not; many controversial books will fit the designation of suitable, many will not. Should the teacher recommend or use the controversial book? The impact of contemporary literature which has been objected to and the sophistication of the student may determine the answer.

Robert S. Whitman cites the response of graduates from high schools ranked as consistently graduating outstanding students. When asked the most movingly significant reading experience they had in high school, they most frequently listed The Catcher in the Rye which only one half of these high school libraries kept on the shelves. Atlas Shrugged was sixth ranked with only twelve per cent of the school libraries providing copies. Are the most moving reading experiences of students to be outside the classroom?¹²⁹

¹²⁸ Report of the Commission on English, pp. 56, 73.

¹²⁹ Hogan, National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, p. 75.

"The 'innocence' of our youth is already being dastly filched away by the mass media, and who says that the secure ignorance engendered by the hard cover anthology is preferable to the risk involved in growth?" questions O'Malley. "Furthermore, how do you give The Ingenus of the Sierras to a boy who has witnessed Ursula Andress undress last Saturday night?"¹³⁰ Without doubt the effect mass media has had upon the sophistication of youth must be considered, as must the sophistication of the community. "The extent to which we will use some of these works and reject others will probably be determined by the degree of sophistication in the community which we serve."¹³¹ The community with no Negroes or Jews may be much less sophisticated about their problems.

Parina has suggested three principles to guide teachers in the selection of books containing sex:

...First, the books we give out should be neither too literally sophisticated nor so sexually unrealistic that anyone who has seen Batman will know they are a joke, kid stuff. Second, an adolescent's initial contact with love in books should be normal love, with no physical descriptions. Third, the first contact with sexual description should occur only after a great deal of preparation and then only with situations which mostly suggest vaguely and are placed in an easily recognizable moral context.¹³²

In judging and evaluating what fiction concerning social problems to include in the program, the teacher may be guided by three suggestions of Burton:

¹³⁰O'Malley, op. cit., p. 8.

¹³¹Edwin H. Sauer, English in the Secondary School (New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1961), p. 145.

¹³²O'Malley, op. cit., p. 9.

Does the selection place the main stress on the timeless rather than the timely?

Is the reader given alternatives in emotion or are his feelings rigidly channeled? ... [that is] does the author make us feel with the characters or only about them?

Whatever problem is dealt with, does the story represent the true art of the storyteller?¹³³

The final thing the teacher must determine in book selection is his own ability in discussing the book with a student. He must ask himself if he can objectively discuss the issues in a book dealing with inter-marriage of races. He must determine if he has a plan for and can discuss the moral values presented. He must determine if he can discuss sex. The teacher must retain objectivity in order to teach controversial material.

The key to teaching controversial books is, I think, precisely here: keeping enough objectivity about a story to know that I am not actually going through it myself, to know that I am reading this story as much for their sake as for my own, to know that the old Jewish pawnbroker is more important than the prostitute's attempt to seduce him.¹³⁴

III. CLASSROOM PROCEDURES AND THE PROGRAM

Classroom procedures and programs will vary somewhat with the type of controversial material being used. Because of this the following section is divided into three roughly defined categories related to that which might be considered objectionable: (1) sex and morals in literature, (2) race, economic, religious, political and ethnic problems in literature, and (3) the Bible as literature. Many of the controversial materials contain elements

¹³³Durton, op. cit., pp. 92-94.

¹³⁴O'Malley, op. cit., p. 10.

from all three sections, as for example, treatment of sex and morals in the Old Testament; suggestions from various sections may then be useful.

Sex and Morals in Literature

The teacher has certain responsibilities in approaching a controversial work dealing with sex and morals before any student contact is made. The teacher must be thoroughly familiar with any works before recommending them, and certainly before actually considering them for classroom use; but in addition the teacher must be sure that he can discuss without embarrassment or bias anything that might be brought up before the class. In the specific case of sex, he must be familiar with the terminology of sex, physical and psychological, and must recognize and face any problems of his own which might affect his teaching. The teacher must create a healthy emotional climate in the classroom. His ease and familiarity in discussing a work can lead to the development of an honest, questioning attitude on the part of the students.¹³⁵

The teacher must prepare the students prior to the use of morally or sexually controversial material. This problem is twofold: the teacher must try to help students acquire the ability to judge literary quality and he must prepare them to approach increasingly more vivid and "adult" types of literature.

O'Malley says that teenagers must first know what a novel attempts to do. "Students must be shown," he says, "that a novel is not judged merely

¹³⁵Ayres, National Education Association Journal, p. 24.

on its ability to entertain," but that "a significant novel tries to say something bigger, something about man's life."¹³⁶

While every teacher has ideas of how and on what criteria students should be taught to judge literature, Pearl Aldrich in an English Journal article suggests the use of a chart, shown on page eighty-eight in the Appendix, giving characteristics of "serious" and "superficial" literature. Her suggested chart includes a definition, purpose, characteristics and life expectancy of both types.¹³⁷ A similar chart to guide students could also be created by other teachers.

A chart of this kind illustrates that a work of literature can never be judged solely on writing ability of the author, as good literature "has something to say." A program preparing a student to judge a literary work will also be preparing him to deal with the moral and sexual material in a work. The program should, therefore, be carefully worked out to guide the student toward better and more difficult literature. O'Malley cautions against the danger in "hodge-podge" lists handed out to students.

...One [teacher], for instance, has Pasternak just before Poe, Koestler just after Kipling, Of Mice and Men just before Dracula. Until he was "discovered," one teacher was giving all seniors an unbroken diet of Albee, Williams, Camus, Nietzsche, and (gasp!) Giovanni's Room! These people have something to say to today's kids, something that frequently "grabs" them, but I submit that, although we cannot shield them from darkness, it is our job to illuminate it a bit.¹³⁸

¹³⁶O'Malley, op. cit., p. 9.

¹³⁷Pearl Aldrich, "A New Method of Evaluating Fiction," English Journal, LIV (November, 1965), p. 745.

¹³⁸O'Malley, op. cit., p. 9.

He suggests that teachers formulate a graph of literature which would go from literature requiring little to much sexual sophistication and from "near illiteracy" to the necessity of a great degree of literary ability.¹³⁹

Sister Kathleen Marie goes into detail on the program she used to prepare students for The Catcher in the Rye and A Tree Grows in Brooklyn. Essentially through teaching them to judge and evaluate literature, she prepared them for the possibly "shocking" parts of the two books. Starting with A Tale of Two Cities, she guided the students through the reading of The Bridges of Toko-Ri, Rebecca, Mrs. Mike, My Fair Lady, Hiroshima, The Ugly American, West Side Story and The Sins of Susie Slade. In preparation for the last two books, Sister Kathleen discussed with the students the understanding of the characters as creatures of the artist's imagination, the effect of first person narrator, the need for maintaining aesthetic distance, the evaluation of author's purpose, and the use of "crude" scenes and language in some of the novels. Discussion was not limited to a particular topic in each book, although she found some novels best suited to teaching certain things. Students at the end of the course were able, she said, to agree that the scenes were objectively told and that the language was necessary in The Catcher in the Rye and A Tree Grows in Brooklyn. Having been taught how to judge and evaluate a novel, she felt that the students were able to effectively handle these two books.¹⁴⁰

¹³⁹Ibid., p. 10.

¹⁴⁰Sister Kathleen Marie, op. cit., pp. 589-597.

One particular problem in teaching books such as The Catcher in the Rye and A Tree Grows in Brooklyn, discussed by Sister Kathleen Marie, O'Malley, and others, is that of training the teenager "to maintain aesthetic distance." The imagination of the teenager often places him in the story; he becomes the character. Because he cannot separate his fictional self from the immediate context, he may overgeneralize.

He arrives at what Edmund Fuller calls "the whore-house mystique." With his very minimal, inchoate "philosophy of life" and his limited usually sheltered experience, he is unable to balance Irma and Belle Watling with Sadie Thompson, Gruehenka, or with the pitifully real girl, to form a comprehensive, undramatic, adult notion of the life of the prostitute. ...And yet the teenager is not going to understand the prostitute either by being thrust into a room with her (actually or vicariously) or by hearing her existence denied. The important thing is not knowing the facts about her or having the experience with her but feeling the compassion for her. Experience without reflection is not educative. It is merely one damn thing after another.¹⁴¹

A list of suggestions and cautions have been provided by some of those teaching controversial literature. Before starting to teach a book that may be morally or sexually offensive, the teacher may want to write a letter to the parents explaining what he is doing and, more important, why.¹⁴² The teacher may wish to go so far as to secure signed releases. This is not to "shirk responsibility but an invitation to share in the process of determining which books best enrich the lives of youngsters."¹⁴³

The teacher should take the offensive in referring in class to the "shocking" passages and forcing discussion of them.¹⁴⁴ "Don't be a Liberal

¹⁴¹O'Malley, loc. cit. ¹⁴²Ibid.

¹⁴³Ayres, National Education Association Journal, p. 24.

¹⁴⁴O'Malley, loc. cit. and Sister Kathleen Marie, op. cit., p. 598.

in assignments and a Puritan in discussions," says O'Malley. "Kids never bring problems to someone who can be shocked, nor do they ordinarily bring them to someone who sounds toughened."¹⁴⁵

The teacher should try to talk individually to any student who appears disturbed or offended, preferably before the end of the day. The best safeguard on the sensibility of the student, says Donald Ayres, is an honest, objective presentation of all representative viewpoints. He also suggests that other teachers listen and watch students' reactions.¹⁴⁶

Other besides the English teacher should be able to discuss any problems that come up in the students' reading, and the student should be provided the opportunity of consulting others if he so desires.¹⁴⁷ O'Malley suggests that the student counsellor and the principal read the books and even sit in on discussions.¹⁴⁸ Students should also be urged to consult the opinions of reviewers of each of the books being studied.¹⁴⁹

The teacher must always respect the individual parent or student, adapting if the situation demands it.¹⁵⁰ "A deeply felt conviction, however eccentric, is justification enough for a substitute assignment for that student," states Robert Hogan.¹⁵¹

¹⁴⁵O'Malley, loc. cit.

¹⁴⁶Ayres, National Education Association Journal, p. 24.

¹⁴⁷Sister Kathleen Marie, op. cit., p. 597.

¹⁴⁸O'Malley, loc. cit. ¹⁴⁹Sister Kathleen Marie, loc. cit.

¹⁵⁰O'Malley, loc. cit.

¹⁵¹Hogan, National Association of Secondary School Principals Bulletin, p. 74.

Sister Kathleen Marie preferred the caution of keeping the boys and girls separate; she taught the boys The Catcher in the Rye and the girls A Tree Grows in Brooklyn. In order to keep books from falling into the hands of untrained readers, she purchased them through the school bookstore, provided them free to the students, and then returned them to the bookstore.¹⁵² The teacher may, or may not, wish to be this cautious depending on the circumstances.

To quote O'Malley:

As long as their exposure is gradual, aiming more at compassion for persons than at knowledge or sexual variations, and governed by that elusive virtue, prudence, high school seniors should be able to read more and more sexually and literarily sophisticated novels and be prepared to look into the lives of other human persons--to care rather than to snoop.¹⁵³

Race, economic, religious, political and ethnic problems in literature

Many of the suggestions under sex and morals in literature will also apply to this section, i.e., the teacher should be very familiar with the work, the student must be prepared in terms of judging and understanding increasingly more difficult literature, the student must be taught to keep aesthetic distance, the teacher may wish to acquire parental consent, the teacher should lead in referring to any of the problems presented and should present the different views of the subject objectively, students should have recourse to consult other adults, and the rights of the individual should be respected. The teacher must also remember in approaching literature

¹⁵²Sister Kathleen Marie, loc. cit.

dealing with group problems that often the objection to this type of literature will come in the form of objection to alleged obscenity. In some places in the South the works of Eleanor Roosevelt and Archibald MacLeish have been labeled obscene, probably to cover up the real objection to their work on racial grounds.¹⁵⁴ "It is not accident," says Dan Lacy, "that the countries most rigid and narrow in their suppression of discussion of sex--such as Spain, South Africa, Russia, and Communist China--are also those that practice the most complete political censorship. Censorship is indivisible."¹⁵⁵

In handling literature dealing with social problems the teacher must remember that he is teaching literature, not trying to directly change attitudes. The administration may not be in agreement with the teacher who wishes to change the attitude of the white children in the school toward civil rights.¹⁵⁶ The teacher must "select fiction--and teach students to judge it--as fiction rather than as sociology, economics, political science, psychology, though fiction may have some elements in common with all these disciplines."¹⁵⁷

In judging and evaluating fiction that deals with a social problem, the reader has the formidable task of distinguishing his criticism of the selection as a piece of literature, a work of art, from his opinion of the importance of its theme or message. An ideology may favorably prejudice the reader's

¹⁵³O'Malley, op. cit., p. 46.

¹⁵⁴Lacy, op. cit., p. 476. ¹⁵⁵Ibid.

¹⁵⁶Ted Hipple, "Through Literature to Freedom," English Journal, LV (February, 1966), p. 191.

¹⁵⁷Burton, Literature Study in the High Schools, p. 92.

estimate of the literary worth of a selection, for when a book deals with values in which we believe deeply, which are interrelated with our security and by which we live, the matter of mere literary technique may become a minor one. On the other hand, a selection, wretched as an example of literary art, may receive serious attention because of the importance of the problem with which it deals.¹⁵⁸

The criteria for selecting a book suggested on page fifty-two of this report can be taught to the students to guide them in evaluating social problem literature.

The teacher should remember that while literature has had and can have a great deal of influence on society, it is unlikely, for example, "that the person who considers the Negro race anthropologically inferior to the white race will...necessarilly change his attitudes after reading Arna Bontemps' We Have Tomorrow, and may only deepen his prejudice by reading Native Son."¹⁵⁹ Burton says that the three chief purposes of this type of literature in regard to human relations can be to help "relieve group tensions by stressing the universals, the basic similarities in life as it is lived at many different levels and under many different conditions in our American society and in our world," "develop a sensitivity to the problems of people living under conditions different from one's own and to reveal the stake each of us has in the other groups," and "aid students to become aware of alternative approaches to group problems."¹⁶⁰

The vicarious participation in different ways of life may have a...broadly social liberating influence. The image of past civilizations or of past periods within our western civilization, as well as images of life in other countries today, can help the youth to realize that our American society is only one of a great variety of possible social structures. When this insight has been attained, the

¹⁵⁸ Ibid., p. 92.

¹⁵⁹ Ibid., p. 91.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid., pp. 89-91.

individual is able to look at the society about him more rationally. He is better able to evaluate it, to judge what elements should be perpetuated and what elements should be modified or rejected.¹⁶¹

The teacher must also understand some things about teenager and social problem literature.

The adolescent has emerged from the "classless" peer culture of childhood and preadolescence into the teen-age culture of cliques and crowds in which class consciousness sometimes takes the form of extreme snobbishness, and sometimes that of an idealistic, even romantic, equalitarianism.¹⁶²

The adolescent since World War II has been "economically and politically conservative."¹⁶³ although recent events may indicate that there is a shifting in this attitude. A 1957 study, for instance, showed that a "sizeable proportion of American teenagers would keep foreigners out of this country."¹⁶⁴ Writers of adolescent fiction have generally considered these attitudes, so the teacher may find that the student has had little experience with, for example, books about life in other countries or economic problems.

The Bible as Literature

None of the recent articles have recorded objection to the Bible when taught in a comparative religions class, a humanities class or as literature in the English classroom. The chief objective seems to be to stay within the bounds of the law in using religious literature in a secular and objective nature. Some of the activities relating to religion and literature that can legally be done in the classroom are the following:

1. Study the Bible for literary qualities.
2. Study the Bible for historical qualities.

¹⁶¹Ibid., p. 91.

¹⁶²Ibid., p. 100.

¹⁶³Ibid.

¹⁶⁴Ibid., p. 103.

3. Use as a reference for a secondary subject.
4. Study as a comparative religion.
5. Study relation of religion to the advance of civilization.
6. Recite historical documents mentioning God.
7. Study the history of religion.
8. Sing official anthems mentioning God.
9. Make reference to God on patriotic or ceremonial occasions.¹⁶⁵

The literature class will probably be most concerned with the first three activities mentioned.

Most textbooks take up one or two psalms, a parable, a passage of St. Paul's epistles, and maybe one Old Testament story, mostly at the twelfth grade level. The teacher who is teaching the Bible as literature faces not only the fact that it is a "controversial issue" but also that there is little material available to teach it.¹⁶⁶ Besides using the Bible itself, and possibly the books of other major religions the teacher may find The Holy Bible in Brief,¹⁶⁷ Beecher Keyes' Story of the Bible World, Mary Ellen Chase's Life and Language in the Old Testament, and the Monarch Study Notes on The Old and New Testament useful.¹⁶⁸ One school used Life magazine's December 25, 1964 special issue devoted to the Bible for a text. This issue includes a discussion of Biblical lands, background of various translations, archeological findings, sequential condensation of the Old and New Testaments, and beautiful illustrations.¹⁶⁹ Selections from the Bible

¹⁶⁵Hunt, op. cit., p. 39.

¹⁶⁶Hogan, English Journal, p. 494.

¹⁶⁷Warshaw, op. cit., p. 91.

¹⁶⁸Stainer, op. cit., pp. 16-19.

¹⁶⁹Ibid.

itself may vary greatly. Perhaps the best guide for the teacher in use of the Bible would be the description of some of the programs and procedures used by others.

Bloomington High School using the Life magazine issue as a text read selections from Genesis, Exodus, Ruth, Job, Luke and John from any translation of the Bible the student wished to use. The Bible study began in the Bloomington curriculum in the fall of 1964 in an English 12 humanities course designed for the top ten per cent of the students. As it gained popularity students in English 12 also wished to study the Bible as literature. Teachers tried to show the similarities and differences of Greek anthropomorphic gods during the time of Homer and the Hebrew concept of anthropomorphic God of Genesis. They tried to show the early Christian practices and the practices of other cults of the same time such as the cult of Mithras and the cult of Cybele. Many concepts in the work tied directly to later work in the courses. Time spent varied with the ability of the group. Material was adapted both to nondirected discussion in small groups and directed discussion in large groups. Teachers tried to keep it completely devoid of theological indoctrination.¹⁷⁰

The program at Washington High School in Mason, Ohio, used mimeographed material to provide information on the origin and history of the Bible. Students were taught the difference between "fundamentalist" and "literalist." Study began with the creation, the story of Cain and Abel followed by a discussion of Bible history from Eden to Sinai. The Ten Commandments were studied with

¹⁷⁰ Ibid., p. 17.

more Bible history from Sinai to Babylonian captivity. The Books of Ruth, Esther, and Job were studied as well as selections from Psalms, Proverbs and Ecclesiastes. In the New Testament the Sermon on the Mount was used as a summary of teachings of Christ. The story of the Good Samaritan, the Prodigal Son and the story of the talents were also studied in the New Testament. Students were taught to use the Bible Concordance to find selections on specific topics and to acquaint them with some parts of the Bible that were not studied. The reading was largely done aloud followed by discussion, quizzes, tests, and written themes. Movies of the Books of Esther and Ruth were shown. Each student was asked to bring his own Bible but various translations were kept on hand for those who did not have any or didn't wish to bring large family Bibles. Only one per cent of the students objected to the use of the Bible in school.¹⁷¹

Thayer S. Warshaw began his study of the Bible by convincing the students that they needed information on the Bible. They read some short stories of which they could make no sense because of lack of Biblical knowledge; they looked at some political cartoons which they "did not catch;" they took a pretest which most did miserably on. Having convinced the students of their need for Biblical instruction, Warshaw cautioned them that they would not discuss meaning or interpretation. Students were asked to use the King James Version of the Bible as Warshaw felt that they would meet most Biblical allusions this way. Comparisons were made with other translations

¹⁷¹Hildebrand, op. cit., pp. 1022-1024.

to help clarify the meaning of words. Assignments were made from The Holy Bible in Brief three times a week, and three times a week students had five minute quizzes. The assignments were linked with literature, music and art. Students heard about Moby Dick, Thomas Mann's Joseph and His Brothers, Milton's Samson Agonistes, Faulkner's Absalom, Absalom, and Marc Connolly's Green Pastures. One day the students had a concert featuring the city superintendent of music singing "Little David Play on Your Harp," and records of Sammy Davis' "Tain't Necessarily So," Joan Baez' reading of Moses, and Handel's Messiah. Two other periods were spent viewing slides. Students brought in many materials. Half way through the study students scored 86.5 per cent as opposed to 22 per cent the first time on the pretest. Tested eleven weeks later they had dropped only 16 per cent.¹⁷²

Susie Tucker points out that the Old Testament and Apocrypha are "a complete national literature, representing men at differing stages of growth and understanding through history and legend, folk-tale, battle-song, elegy and lyric, legal document and priestly code, by allegory and apocolypse, by proverb and meditation, both in verse and prose." She suggests that "we view the story of Jonah and the fate of Nineveh as an allegorical plea for tolerance of other nations, and the Song of Songs as a collection of sheer secular love lyrics." Dividing by types, she gives the following suggestions for reading:

Narrative	The Weeing of Rebekka, the Life of Joseph, the death of Sisera, the Adventures of Samson,
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¹⁷²Warshaw, op. cit., pp. 91-94.

- the Books of Ruth, Esther, Judith, Tobit, the Saga of David, the Death of Saul, Solomon, Daniel, The Nativity, Paul at Ephesus, His Sea-Voyage.
- Wisdom The book of Job, passages in praise of Wisdom (Proverbs III, 13-19; Proverbs VIII), the wisdom of Solomon, the Virtuous woman and her opposite, 'Vanity of Vanities' (Ecclesiastes, end of last chapter), the occupations of men (Ecclesiasticus XXXVIII, 24, 59), Human Misery (Ecclesiasticus XI, 1-10), Natural Beauty (Ecclesiasticus XLIII).
- Selected Psalms XVIII, XXII, XLV, L, LKV, LXXXVIII, XCI, CVII, CIX, CXXXVII, CXLVIII.
- The Story of the Creation, and the stories of Noah and of Abraham and Isaac.
- Satire and Invective Against Idols (Jeremiah X, 1-16; Isaisah XLIV, 9-20) the Fall of Tyre (Ezekiel XXVII), False Shepherds (Ezekiel XXIV, 1-10).
- Elegy David's lament over Saul and Jonsthan (II Samuel; I, 19-27).
- Love Lyrics The Song of Songs, Poetry from Isaisah, Chapters I, XI, and dramatic dialogus in LXIII, 1-14, Paulins Prose, Hymn to Love (I Corinthians XIII), the Whole Armour of God (Ephesians VI, 10-20), 'What shall we then say...?' (Romans VIII, 31-37), Letter to Philemon, the Valley of Dry Bones, Dies Irae, Revelation I and XXII.

Miss Tucker also suggests teaching some good hymns that are poetry and music, for example, George Herbert's "Sweet day, so cool, so calm, so bright;" Donne's "Wilt thou forgive that sin;" a Shaker song "Tis the gift to be simple;" and a Negro spiritual "Were you there when they crucified my Lord?"¹⁷³

¹⁷³Susie I. Tucker, "The Use of English," reprinted in English for Maturity by David Holbrook (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1961), pp. 91-94.

Tucker's program treats the Bible strictly as literature with the idea that it is cultural heritage to be passed on, but she does not make use of any historical material.

John R. Whitney describes a unit in Religious Literature in the Western World outlined by the Pennsylvania Department of Public Instruction as including the Hebrew Bible, Apocalyptic Writing and Talmud, the New Testament and Qur'an. Much of the study is verbal discussion.¹⁷⁴ A Nebraska program provides for study of the Bible throughout the literature program in junior and senior high school. For example, the eleventh grade has a unit on "Sin, Frustration and Loneliness," which among The Scarlet Letter, Moby Dick, and other literature includes the Book of Job.¹⁷⁵

Programs differ but certain classroom procedures and suggestions can help the teacher. The following guidelines were suggested from the use of the Bible as literature in Minnesota:

1. The teacher should be well-informed on religion and be able to handle the subject objectively. Objectivity means that the teacher will help students deal with all aspects of a religious issue without stressing any "right one."
2. The teacher should understand that it will be easy to lose sight of the main issues by pouring quantities of unintegrated facts on students. Develop clearly stated objectives, e.g. to develop understanding and appreciation of religion and its role in human life.
3. Materials presented should be within the range of knowledge, maturity, and competence of students at their own levels.

¹⁷⁴Whitney, op. cit., p. 90.

¹⁷⁵Hunt, op. cit., p. 40.

4. Practices of religion should be presented in an accurate, factual way.
5. Sufficient time should be allowed for adequate presentation and discussion of this issue or concept under consideration.
6. Teachers should be provided inservice training.
7. May make consultation with church leaders, but the curriculum should be developed by educators without pressure from any group.
8. Give the PTA an opportunity to study and react on the guidelines.¹⁷⁶

Several of the studies have provided some insights into various aspects of the study of the Bible in public school. For one thing, some educators are dubious of the ability of the secondary school teacher to present religious literature in terms of good scholarship and balanced viewpoint.¹⁷⁷ Although they later rejected the statement, the State Board of Education of Maine stopped using the Bible in history and literature classes on the grounds "that non-sectarian discussion of the Bible is impossible."¹⁷⁸ Also, the teaching of three religious literatures rather than one or two appears to make comparative elements in student discussions more open and enlightening, less guarded and apologetic. It was found that the divergent views a classroom may present do not threaten to polarize the students into alienated groups but instead aide the class discussion and student response.¹⁷⁹ It was suggested that students seek the explanation of priests and ministers

¹⁷⁶"Guidelines for Teaching About Religion in the Public Schools," Minnesota Journal of Education, XLVIII (December, 1967), p. 20.

¹⁷⁷Whitney, op. cit., p. 95.

¹⁷⁸Hogan, English Journal, p. 493.

¹⁷⁹Whitney, loc. cit.

when disturbed about a particular section.¹⁸⁰ The reports said that special consultants tended not to be of so much use as they aired their own views; the theologians were interested in different theological views, the educators in a philosophic view.¹⁸¹ The studies reported no local objections, although in one study parents voiced good-natured complaints that they had to study the Bible too much to keep up with their children.¹⁸²

¹⁸⁰Hildebrand, op. cit., p. 1022.

¹⁸¹Whitney, op. cit., p. 96.

¹⁸²Warshaw, op. cit., p. 99.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

"Pressures against books in the classroom and libraries are undermining education," said the National Council of Teachers of English in "An Open Letter to the Citizens of Our Country." "Although in this statement we cannot set up a legal defense of the right of the trained teacher to determine the best and most challenging reading for their students, we can affirm their professional right and responsibility to do so."¹⁸³ Many groups are seeking to remove this right and responsibility from the professional. Their influence in having books removed from library shelves and classrooms, usually on racial, religious, or moral reasons, is increasing. The school and the teacher can prepare for censorship by having well established policies for book selection and procedures for handling controversy.

The well prepared teacher should stay informed on controversial literature, should have a good knowledge of the needs and emotions of teenagers, and should follow good methods in teaching controversial material. The teacher must choose carefully what literature to use in the class; because of the necessity of time, some censoring of literature must take place.

Unanswered questions arise in the study of controversial literature. What is the effect of suggestive literature on the teenager unprepared for it?

¹⁸³ Leonard A. Waters, "The Right to Read--as the NCTE Presents It," College English, XXVII (November, 1965), p. 161.

Various studies have presented statistics that can be used on the effect of suggestive literature, but many of these studies concern the delinquent, not the normal teenager, and have not been conclusive.¹⁸⁴ What changes need to be implemented in teacher education courses to prepare teachers to deal better with public criticism, to select material for courses, and to teach controversial literature? The college cannot equip the graduates with kits of knowledge to solve every problem; however, courses concerning relation of the school with the public are usually reserved for the graduate levels. Should they come earlier in the teacher's education?

Those who are not teachers would probably be more interested in further study of topics only briefly mentioned in this study. The psychologist might be more interested in the effects of reading on the individual; the school board member might be more interested with legal aspects of censorship. This report has attempted to provide material of specific interest to the literature teacher concerning censorship, ways of dealing with the public, book selection, and methods of teaching controversial literature.

¹⁸⁴ Livengood, *op. cit.*, pp. 16-17, recalls the remarkable finding of Representative Kathryn Granahan when serving as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Postal Operations in 1959. During a tour of the United States Granahan came up with the following statistics: one in every twelve persons arrested in the United States is a juvenile and in every case obscene literature was found either on them or in their possession elsewhere, and 80 per cent of the inmates of juvenile mental institutions in Pennsylvania are children under fifteen and every one of them is there because they read this (lewd) literature.

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APPENDIX

I. LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

1. As a responsibility of library service, books and other reading matter selected should be chosen for values of interest, information and enlightenment of all the people of the community. In no case should any book be excluded because of the race or nationality, or the political or religious views of the writer.
2. There should be the fullest practicable provision of material presenting all points of view concerning the problems and issues of our times, international, national and local; and books or other reading matter of sound factual authority should not be proscribed or removed from library shelves because of partisan or doctrinal disapproval.
3. Censorship of books, urged or practiced by volunteer arbiters of morals or political opinion or by organizations that would establish a coercive concept of Americanism, must be challenged by libraries in maintenance of their responsibility to provide public information and enlightenment through the printed word.
4. Libraries should enlist the cooperation of allied groups in the fields of science, of education, and of book publishing in resisting all abridgment of the free access to ideas and full freedom of expression that are the tradition and heritage of Americans.
5. The rights of an individual to use a public library shall not be denied or abridged because of his race, religion, national origins or political views.
6. As an instrument of education for democratic living, the library should welcome the use of its meeting rooms for socially useful and cultural

activities and discussion of current public questions. Such meeting places should be available on equal terms to all groups in the community regardless of the beliefs and affiliations of their members.

Adopted June 18, 1948, amended February 1, 1961 by ALA Council

II. SCHOOL LIBRARY BILL OF RIGHTS

School librarians are concerned with generating understanding of American freedoms and with the preservation of these freedoms through the development of informed and responsible citizens. To this end the American Association of School Librarians reaffirms the Library Bill of Rights of the American Library Association and asserts that the responsibility of the school library is:

To provide materials that will enrich and support the curriculum, taking into consideration the varied interests, abilities, and maturity levels of the pupils served.

To provide materials that will stimulate growth in factual knowledge, literary appreciation, aesthetic values, and ethical standards.

To provide a background of information which will enable pupils to make intelligent judgments in their daily life.

To provide materials on opposing sides of controversial issues so that young citizens may develop under guidance the practice of critical reading and thinking.

To provide materials representative of the many religious, ethnic, and cultural groups and their contributions to our American heritage.

To place principle above personal opinion and reason above prejudice in the selection of materials of the highest quality in order to assure a comprehensive collection appropriate for the users of the library.

Endorsed by the Council of the American Library Association July, 1955.

III. CITIZEN'S REQUEST FOR RECONSIDERATION OF A BOOK

Author _____ Hardcover _____ Paperback _____

Title _____

Publisher (if known) _____

Request initiated by _____

Telephone _____ Address _____

City _____ Zone _____

Complainant represents:

_____ himself _____

_____ (name organization) _____

_____ (identify other group) _____

1. To what in the book do you object? (Please be specific; cite pages.)

2. What do you feel might be the result of reading this book?

3. For what age group would you recommend this book?

4. Is there any good about this book? _____

5. Did you read the entire book? _____ What parts? _____

6. Are you aware of the judgment of this book by literary critics? _____

7. What do you believe is the theme of this book?

8. What would you like your school to do about this book?

_____ do not assign it to my child _____

_____ withdraw it from all students as well as from my child

_____ send it back to the English department office for
reevaluation.

9. In its place, what book of equal literary quality would you recommend that would convey as valuable a picture and perspective of our civilization?
-

Signature of Complainant

IV. BOOK REVIEW SOURCES

in

THE HUMANITIES DIVISION

BOOK REVIEW DIGEST, 1905-

Includes works of both fiction and non-fiction of a popular nature arranged alphabetically by author, with excerpts from the selected reviews. Title and subject for each annual volume.

BOOK REVIEW INDEX, 1965-

Index to reviews of both fiction and non-fiction, popular and technical. Arranged alphabetically by author of the work reviewed.

AN INDEX TO BOOK REVIEWS IN THE HUMANITIES, 1960-

Includes reviews of books concerned with art, architecture, biography, drama, dance, folklore, history, language, literature, music, philosophy, travel and adventure. Arranged alphabetically by author of the work reviewed.

UNITED STATES QUARTERLY BOOK REVIEW, 1945-1956

A selective bibliography and a review of recent books, published from 1945 to 1956. Subject arrangement: biography and memoirs, history, literature, philosophy and religion, social, biological and physical sciences, technology and reference works. Index of authors and titles in each number.

BOOKS ABROAD (Quarterly)

Devoted to comment on recent books. Of particular value is the section "Foreign Literature in Review," which includes works in many languages.

LIBRARY JOURNAL (Semimonthly)

Lists reviews under headings "New Books Appraised" and "The Book Review." Includes fiction and non-fiction.

NEW YORK TIMES BOOK REVIEW (Weekly)

Reviews current fiction and non-fiction. Indexed under the heading "Book reviews" in the New York Times Index.

NEW YORK REVIEW OF BOOKS (Biweekly)

Reviews current works.

SATURDAY REVIEW (Weekly)

Reviews current fiction and non-fiction; includes articles covering a variety of subjects.

V. THE FREEDOM TO READ

The freedom to read is essential to our democracy. It is under attack. Private groups and public authorities in various parts of the country are working to remove books from sale, to censor textbooks, to label "controversial" books, to distribute lists of "objectionable" books or authors, and to purge libraries.

These actions apparently arise from a view that our national tradition of free expression is no longer valid; that censorship and suppression are needed to avoid the subversion of politics and the corruption of morals. We, as citizens devoted to the use of books and as librarians and publishers responsible for disseminating them, wish to assert the public interest in the preservation of the freedom to read.

We are deeply concerned about these attempts at suppression. Most such attempts rest on a denial of the fundamental premise of democracy: that the ordinary citizen, by exercising his critical judgment, will accept the good and reject the bad. The censors, public and private, assume that they should determine what is good and what is bad for their fellow citizens.

We trust Americans to recognize propaganda, and to reject obscenity. We do not believe they need the help of censors to assist them in this task. We do not believe they are prepared to sacrifice their heritage of a free press in order to be "protected" against what others think may be bad for them. We believe they still favor free enterprise in ideas and expression.

We are aware, of course, that books are not alone in being subjected to efforts at suppression. We are aware that these efforts are related to a larger pattern of pressures being brought against education, the press, films, radio and television. The problem is not only one of actual censorship. The shadow of fear cast by these pressures leads, we suspect, to an even larger voluntary curtailment of expression by those who seek to avoid controversy.

Such pressure toward conformity is perhaps natural to a time of uneasy change and pervading fear. Especially when so many of our apprehensions are directed against an ideology, the expression of a dissident idea becomes a thing feared in itself, and we tend to move against it as against a hostile deed, with suppression.

And yet suppression is never more dangerous than in such a time of social tension. Freedom has given the United States the elasticity to endure strain. Freedom keeps open the path of novel and creative solutions, and enables change to come by choice. Every silencing of a heresy, every enforcement of an orthodoxy, diminishes the toughness and resilience of our society and leaves it the less able to deal with stress.

A statement prepared by the Westchester Conference of the American Library Association and the American Book Publishers Council--May 2 and 3, 1953. The statement has been endorsed by the American Book Publishers Council, Board of Directors; the American Library Association Council; the American Booksellers Association Board of Directors; the National Commission for the Defense of Democracy through Education, appointed by the National Education Association of the U. S. A.; the Book Manufacturers' Institute.

Now as always in our history, books are among our greatest instruments of freedom. They are almost the only means for making generally available ideas or manners of expression that can initially command only a small audience. They are the natural medium for the new ideas and the untried voice, from which come the original contributions to social growth. They are essential to the extended discussion which serious thought requires, and to the accumulation of knowledge and ideas into organized collections.

We believe that free communication is essential to the preservation of a free society and a creative culture. We believe that these pressures toward conformity present the danger of limiting the range and variety of inquiry and expression on which our democracy and our culture depend. We believe that every American community must jealously guard the freedom to publish and to circulate, in order to preserve its own freedom to read. We believe that publishers and librarians have a profound responsibility to give validity to that freedom to read by making it possible for the reader to choose freely from a variety of offerings.

The freedom to read is guaranteed by the Constitution. Those with faith in free men will stand firm on these constitutional guarantees of essential rights and will exercise the responsibilities that accompany these rights.

THE PROPOSITIONS

We therefore affirm these propositions:

1. It is in the public interest for publishers and librarians to make available the widest diversity of views and expressions, including those which are unorthodox or unpopular with the majority.

Creative thought is by definition new, and what is new is different. The bearer of every new thought is a rebel until his idea is refined and tested. Totalitarian systems attempt to maintain themselves in power by the ruthless suppression of any concept which challenges the established orthodoxy. The power of a democratic system to adapt to change is vastly strengthened by the freedom of its citizens to choose widely from among conflicting opinions offered freely to them. To stifle every nonconformist idea at birth would make the end of the democratic process. Furthermore, only through the constant activity of weighing and selecting can the democratic mind attain the strength demanded by times like these. We need to know not only what we believe but why we believe it.

2. Publishers and librarians do not need to endorse every idea or presentation contained in the books they make available. It would conflict with the public interest for them to establish their own political, moral, or aesthetic views as the sole standard for determining what books should be published or circulated.

Publishers and librarians serve the educational process by helping to make available knowledge and ideas required for the growth of the mind and the increase of learning. They do not foster education by imposing as mentors the patterns of their own thought. The people should have the freedom to read and consider a broader range of ideas than those that may be held by any single librarian or publisher or government or church. It is wrong that what one man can read should be confirmed to what another thinks proper.

3. It is contrary to the public interest for publishers or librarians to determine the acceptability of a book solely on the basis of the personal history or political affiliations of the author.

A book should be judged as a book. No art or literature can flourish if it is to be measured by the political views of private lives of its creators. No society of free men can flourish which draws up lists of writers to whom it will not listen, whatever they may have to say.

4. The present laws dealing with obscenity should be vigorously enforced. Beyond that, there is no place in our society for extralegal efforts to coerce the taste of others, to confine adults to the reading matter deemed suitable for adolescents, or to inhibit the efforts of writers to achieve artistic expression.

To some, much of modern literature is shocking. But is not much of life itself shocking? We cut off literature at the source if we prevent serious artists from dealing with the stuff of life. Parents and teachers have a responsibility to prepare the young to meet the diversity of experience in life to which they will be exposed, as they have a responsibility to help them learn to think critically for themselves. These are affirmative responsibilities, not discharged simply by preventing them from reading works for which they are not yet prepared. In these matters taste differs, and taste cannot be legislated; nor can machinery be devised which will suit the demands of one group without limiting the freedom of others. We deplore the catering to the immature, the retarded, or the maladjusted taste. But those concerned with freedom have the responsibility of seeing to it that each individual book or publication, whatever its contents, price or method of distribution, is dealt with in accordance with due process of law.

5. It is not in the public interest to force a reader to accept with any book the prejudgment of a label characterizing the book or author as subversive or dangerous.

The idea of labeling supposes the existence of individuals or groups with wisdom to determine by authority what is good or bad for the citizen. It supposes that each individual must be directed in making up his mind about the ideas he examines. But Americans do not need others to do their thinking for them.

6. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians, as guardians of the people's freedom to read, to contest encroachments upon that freedom by individuals or groups seeking to impose their own standards or tastes upon the community at large.

It is inevitable in the give and take of the democratic process that the political, the moral, or the aesthetic concepts of an individual or group will occasionally collide with those of another individual or group. In a free society each individual is free to determine for himself what he wishes to read, and each group is free to determine what it will recommend to its freely associated members. But no group has the right to take the law into its own hands, and to impose its own concepts of politics or morality upon other members of a democratic society. Freedom is no

freedom if it is accorded only to the accepted and the inoffensive.

7. It is the responsibility of publishers and librarians to give full meaning to the freedom to read by providing books that enrich the quality of thought and expression. By the exercise of this affirmative responsibility, bookmen can demonstrate that the answer to a bad book is a good one, the answer to a bad idea is a good one.

The freedom to read is of little consequence when expended on the trivial; it is frustrated when the reader cannot obtain matter fit for his purpose. What is needed is not only the absence of restraint, but the positive provision of opportunity for the people to read the best that has been thought and said. Books are the major channel by which the intellectual inheritance is handed down, and the principal means of its testing and growth. The defense of their freedom and integrity, and the enlargement of their service to society, requires all bookmen the utmost of their faculties, and deserves all citizens the fullest of their support.

TABLE I

PEARL ALDRICH'S CHART
TO DISTINGUISH BETWEEN WORTH WHILE FICTION AND TRASH

SERIOUS	SUPERFICIAL
<p><u>Definition:</u> 1. Writing that requires philosophical thought by both reader and writer 2. Writing that deals with deep moral problems of life that affect people permanently</p>	<p><u>Definition:</u> 1. Writing that deals with the obvious or easily seen 2. Writing that deals with temporary problems</p>
<p><u>Purpose:</u> To present a universal truth about life as that author sees it</p>	<p><u>Purpose:</u> To make the reader's dreams come true</p>
<p><u>Mark:</u> 1. At the end, the reader will still have to make decisions about the way the author solved the problems. 2. Characters make major personality changes slowly and, sometimes, painfully.</p>	<p><u>Mark:</u> 1. A god-like figure who solves everyone's problems. At the end all the reader has to do is sigh with satisfaction. 2. Characters make major personality changes easily and quickly.</p>
<p><u>Life expectancy:</u> A well-written serious book has a good chance of being a permanent addition to the literature of a country and/or the world. It can sell immediately after publication or be ignored until many years after the author is dead.</p>	<p><u>Life expectancy:</u> A well-written superficial book usually has a temporary, although well-paid, existence. It can be tremendously popular for a short time and the author get as well heeled as income taxes permit, then be forgotten just as fast.</p>

TABLE II

WILLIAM J. O'MALLEY'S CHART
FOR MATERIAL CONTAINING SEX

	LITERARY S PHISTICATION DEMANDED OF READER			
	No reading background	Little background	Moderate background	Increasingly larger background
"No" love	High School anthologies, <u>Tom Swift</u> , etc.	H. MacInnes A. MacLean	<u>Lord of the Rings</u> , <u>Separate Peace</u>	<u>Member of the Wedding</u> , <u>Moby Dick</u> , <u>Huck Finn</u> , <u>Lord of the Flies</u>
Pure love		Tarzan	<u>Marty</u> , <u>Mr. Chips</u> , <u>Waterfront</u> , <u>Anne Frank</u> , <u>Intruder in the Dust</u>	<u>Jane Eyre</u> , <u>Pride and Prejudice</u> , <u>David Copperfield</u>
Sex implied	<u>True Confessions</u> , et. al.		<u>Mockingbird</u> , <u>Rain</u> , <u>Rebecca</u> , <u>Mrs. Mike</u> , <u>Ethan Frome</u> , <u>Cry</u> , <u>The Beloved Country</u> , <u>Catcher in the Rye</u> , <u>West Side Story</u>	<u>Vanity Fair</u> , <u>Skin of Our Teeth</u> , <u>Anna Karenina</u> , <u>Scarlet Letter</u> , <u>Flannery O'Connor</u>
Briefly described		Costain, Shellabarger, Van Wyck Mason, et. al.	<u>All Quiet on the Western Front</u> , <u>Good Earth</u> , <u>Cypresses Believe in God</u> , <u>Go Tell It on the Mountain</u> , <u>Black Like Me</u>	<u>Old Testament</u> , Shakespeare, <u>Tom Jones</u> ,
Described, clear context			<u>Too Late the Phalarope</u> , <u>Caine Mutiny</u> , <u>Graham Greene</u> , <u>Grapes of Wrath</u>	<u>Kristin Lavransdatter</u> , Chaucer

TABLE II (continued)

Moral context unclear	<u>Life, Look</u>	<u>Time</u>	<u>Of Mice and Men</u> , <u>1964</u> , <u>Rabbit Run</u> , Nabakov, Mary Renault	<u>Ulysses</u> , T. Williams, <u>Sanctuary</u>
Without (?) moral context	<u>Candy</u> , <u>Fanny Hill</u> , G. Metalious, Yerby, <u>Playboy</u>	J. McDonald, I. Fleming, E. Caldwell	<u>Another Country</u> , <u>Giovanni's Room</u> , <u>Boys and Girls Together</u> , T. Capote, N. Mailer	<u>Lady Chatterley</u> , E. Albee

Comments: (1) Each teacher has to make his or her own graph. (2) The graph should be made, or added to, as soon after reading as possible. (3) Scenes which don't "bother" us, frequently cause trouble for adolescents.

A STUDY OF CONTROVERSIAL LITERATURE
IN THE HIGH SCHOOL ENGLISH PROGRAM

by

WANETTA KAY ADAM

B. A., Kansas State University, 1965

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Teachers of high school literature are increasingly faced with censorship of works used in the classroom or recommended for reading to students. The purpose of this paper is to provide the teacher with a body of information to help him understand and combat censorship of classroom material and to help him in teaching controversial literature.

The author discusses the apparent increase of censorship in the schools as a variety of groups, including right-wing organizations and civil rights groups, pressure the schools for the special interests of their members. This pressure may come in the form of a direct complaint or in the absence of certain literature from texts and removal of books from library shelves. Objections may be on the basis of race, religion, nationalism or a variety of other reasons but most frequently are in the form of labeling the objectionable work "obscene." The Supreme Court has provided significant opinions in the Roth and Jacobellis cases on the legal determination of obscenity and has clearly stated its attitude on the worth of the Bible as literature.

The middle section of the report contains a discussion of suggestions for the teacher and school for avoiding censorship and reacting to criticism. It discusses the need of the school for good preparation of faculty, administration, and school board through involvement of the public in the school program, good communication between teachers and board of education, clear policies of book selection, and clear procedures for handling controversy. The individual teacher must also be prepared with information and material on controversial literature. When facing objectors it is recommended that the teacher defend the principle of the freedom to read and the professional

rights of the teacher to select materials rather than to defend the specific work. For this reason the last part of this section contains some arguments of freedom to read and of professional rights, including those arguments of John Stuart Mill and Milton. Arguments concerning the effect of censorship on a country and on the impossibility of keeping a student from contact with controversial literature are also given.

The last section deals with methods of teaching controversial literature and book selection. Selection of books must rest chiefly on the quality of the work and the sophistication and maturity of the students. Suggestions and programs of teaching controversial material discussed in literature are used to compile guidelines for the teacher in approaching works which might become controversial because of sex and morals, race, economic, religious, or ethnic problems. Special problems and guidelines for teaching the Bible as literature are discussed as well as some of the approaches being used in its teaching. In all cases the teacher is urged to prepare the student to judge the literary quality of a work, to understand character, mood, purpose, and to maintain aesthetic distance before undertaking anything controversial.

Certain things do appear clear in the censorship of school literature: (1) censorship works best quietly when no questions are asked and no publicity is received, (2) the teacher probably cannot avoid using controversial material as evidenced by the variety of books attacked and the impossibility of pleasing everyone, (3) there may be an actual need to teach this type of literature to the modern adolescent, and (4) the selection of material should remain essentially with the professional teacher.