

FAST **FACTS**

Recent Statistics from The Library Research Service

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MATERIALS CHALLENGES 1995 FOR COLORADO PUBLIC LIBRARIES

CHALLENGES TO DISPLAYS

This year, the single most common reason for a challenge was "homosexuality." This accounted for almost two-thirds of all complaints.

The next most common objection was "unsuited to age group." Both objections challenged displays in Colorado.

The challenges in Colorado public libraries in 1995 included 3 displays; one by P-FLAG at Mesa County Public Library District, "*Banned Books Week*" and "Population and Planet Earth" at Jefferson County Public Library.

In Mesa County, the library received 53 challenges against a display by Parents and Friends of Gays and Lesbians (P-FLAG). The library also received an equal number of supportive comments, after widespread community discussions about the display. The Board of Trustees voted to keep the policy allowing community groups to sign up to use display space.

In Jefferson County Public Library, *Banned Books Week* displays were challenged for the second year. Objections ranged from nudity, sexually explicit materials, and fear of children seeing displays to depictions of suicide and showing "questionable values." Another exhibit from the Colorado Population Coalition was challenged on political grounds.

60 TITLES CHALLENGED

In 1995, 16 public libraries reported 116 challenges made to 60 items in Colorado. This compares to 1994, when 24 libraries reported 91 challenges to 81 items. For 1995, ALA's Office of Intellectual Freedom received 740 reports of materials challenges.

In 1995, over half of all Colorado libraries reporting materials challenges were in metropolitan areas with populations greater than 100,000.

Over half of the challenged titles were intended for children and young adults, up from 40% in 1994.

Four items were removed: a blank book, an out of date weight-loss book, an infomercial and a book judged poorly written.

Four items were moved to another part of the collection; mostly from children's to young adult or adult areas. The rest of the materials were retained with no change in shelving and availability or the action was dropped.

Almost two-thirds of all challenged titles hold copyrights of 1990 or newer, up from one half last year. One title stands out with the oldest copyright, 1957. This is Judy Blume's **Forever**, which also appears on ALA's 1995 list of most challenged titles.

CHALLENGES BY REGIONAL LIBRARY SERVICE SYSTEM (RLSS)	MATERIALS CHALLENGES		LIBRARIES WITH CHALLENGES	
	NUMBER	PERCENT	NUMBER	PERCENT
Arkansas Valley RLSS	1	1%	1	6%
Central Colorado RLSS	34	29%	6	38%
High Plains RLSS	11	9%	3	19%
Pathfinder RLSS	54	47%	2	13%
Plains & Peaks RLSS	13	11%	1	6%
Southwest RLSS	1	1%	1	6%
Three Rivers RLSS	2	2%	2	13%
TOTAL	116		16	

PUBLIC LIBRARY	NUMBER OF TITLES CHALLENGED	NUMBER OF CHALLENGES
Jefferson Co PL	13	17
Pikes Peak LD	13	13
Douglas PLD	7	5
Fort Collins PL	6	6
Loveland PL	6	4
Denver PL	3	7
Arapahoe LD	2	2
Boulder PL	2	2
Aurora PL	1	1
Canon City PL	1	1
Durango PL	1	1
Fort Morgan PL	1	1
Grand CO LD	1	1
Mesa PLD	1	53
Montrose LD	1	1
Summit CO PL	1	1
TOTAL (No. libraries = 16)	60	116

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TITLES WITH MULTIPLE CHALLENGES	NUMBER
<i>Banned Books Week</i> - ALA/Jefferson Co PL	3
The Duke Who Outlawed Jelly Beans by Johnny Valentine	2
Rhyme Stew by Roald Dahl	2

CHALLENGED TITLES EXAMINED BY TYPE AND INTENDED AGE OF AUDIENCE

TYPE OF ITEM	PERCENT
Fiction	65%
Nonfiction	32%
Unknown	3%

INTENDED AGE	PERCENT
Children	40%
Young Adult	12%
Adult	43%

CHALLENGED TITLES EXAMINED BY FORMAT AND COPYRIGHT

FORMAT	PERCENT
Book	72%
Video	10%
Display	8%
Periodical	3%
Audio	2%

COPYRIGHT YEAR	PERCENT
1990 - 1994	60%
1985 - 1989	17%
1980 - 1984	5%
1970 - 1979	10%
Other	8%

TOP FIVE REASONS FOR CHALLENGING MATERIALS

REASON	PERCENT
Homosexuality	42%
Sexually Explicit	13%
Unsuited to Age Group	10%
Violence	7%
Offensive Language	6%

RESOLUTION OF CHALLENGE	PERCENT
No Change in Status	70%
Action Dropped	10%
Gone (removed from collection)	7%
Moved/reclassified	7%
Other	5%
Damaged and Replaced	2%

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