Standing Committee Against Censorship

Major activities: What major actions, projects, initiatives, or studies in your charge have been completed by your group since July 1, 2019? In each activity describe the more important features of the work, and connect your work to the [NCTE Vision Statement](#), if applicable.

1. List names, affiliations, and geographic region for all committee members.

    CHAIR, Paula Greathouse (2020) (Tennessee Tech University, Cookeville, TN)
    Annamary Consalvo (2021) (University of Texas at Tyler, Tyler, TX)
    Katharine Covino-Poutasse (2021)(Fitchburg State University, MA)
    Ann D. David (2021) (University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX)
    Brooke Boback Eisenbach (2021) (Lesley University, Cambridge, MA)
    Gretchen Oltman (Emeritus – 2020)(Omaha, NE)
    Mark Letcher (2022) (Lewis University, Romeoville, IL)
    Yvonne Atkins (2022) (Tyler Independent School District, Tyler, TX)

2. What actions, projects, initiatives, or studies are "in progress" at this time?

    Our goal for this year was to focus on our research findings on age appropriateness in order to use these findings to support a potential position statement. While we have continued to gather, submit, and discuss our research findings on age appropriateness to a shared Goggle folder, the impact of COVID-19 has halted our progress.

3. What have you accomplished so far, and what is your timeline for future work?

    We diligently worked on two presentation proposals that would be sponsored by our committee at the annual convention in Denver. We collaborated with a publisher and secured several authors of young adult literature as panelists for a discussion on judging appropriateness in writing stories for adolescents. This endeavor supported NCTE's vision of assisting teachers in providing access for more diverse voices in their curriculum. We also crafted a proposal that focused on self-censorship. Both these sessions were originally accepted, but were then rejected for the virtual conference format.

    Two of our current members, Brooke Eisenbach and Paula Greathouse, collaborated with NCTE's LGBT Advisory Board Committee Chair Henry "Cody" Miller as guest editors for a themed issue of *English Journal – Affirming LGBTQ+ Identities.* The issue was released in September. Additionally, members of our committee crafted an article that offered teachers guidance in addressing censorship challenges of LGBTQ texts and topics in the ELA classroom. It was included in the themed issue of *English Journal* mentioned above.

    We have met several times since the last annual meeting. However, with the disruptions in education and our personal lives as a result of COVID-19, we have not yet found the time to meet since March, 2020.

    This past year, each member has continued to contributed research findings on age appropriateness to a shared Google folder. During our virtual annual meeting, we will review these findings and continue our conversation on crafting a position statement on this topic.

4. How has the work of your group contributed to NCTE's role in shaping the profession of teaching and/or the understanding of literacy in educational contexts?

    The SCAC assists any and all NCTE members in the event that they find themselves facing a challenge of censorship in the classroom. Given the increasing number of recent challenges surrounding texts that explore race, gender and sexuality, our support is not only needed, but it is imperative in upholding the vision of NCTE. As a resource in this capacity, we are helping shape the profession of teaching and the understanding of literacy in educational contexts. In teachers' efforts to support student's literacy development and access to diverse texts, our committee

continues to provide resources (rationales, position statements, censorship kits, etc.) that offer guidelines and frameworks that help educators advocate for students' rights to read and write.

Suggestions from your group: Your good ideas help direct future NCTE actions.

1. What significant changes or trends in our field point to action from the Council?

   NCTE has a policy on the preparation of ELA teachers, and a belief statement on the inclusion of technology in the ELA classroom, however, attention has not been given to the virtual ELA classroom, or the preparation of virtual ELA teachers. We would like to see more resources and discussion on virtual English language arts classrooms, pedagogy in the virtual ELA classroom, and teacher preparation of virtual ELA educators.

2. What trends need to factor into medium- to long-term NCTE planning?

   Given the projected increase in the number of students opting to attend school in virtual contexts after COVID-19, this trend (virtual ELA classrooms, literacy pedagogy, virtual ELA teacher prep) should be considered.

Paula Greathouse, Chair