

Editorial: On censorship

We were amazed, delighted, and frightened at the response to our call for papers on the topic of censorship. Amazed at the sheer volume of essays, letters, brief notes, bibliographies, and interviews on this tense and timely topic; delighted that the submissions included comments by editors, librarians, teachers, and parents, as well as by an astonishing number of writers who have been on the receiving end of censorship and repression in Canada. Frightened by the revelation of the extent of censorship, the intensity of feelings pro and con, and by our own rather hesitant reaction to some of the work submitted. In editing this material we had to type up some words that *CCL* has not printed before and to okay some comments that seemed at first reading extreme; we had to control the urge to soften and tone down, and in a few cases we did ask writers to reconsider their angry language. As Perry Nodelman says, we are all censors.

As Professor Nodelman suggests, however, if we take a stand against censoring material, insisting that all materials including violent and horrifying materials be available to all readers, then we must also accept the responsibility of clarifying to children why we are horrified or offended by some materials, and what are our own standards of language and action. Refusal to censor should not mean refusal to condemn or failure to suggest alternative modes and mores.

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