



Katherine Paterson

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Author Profile

In December 1992, a parent of a fifth grader in Kansas objected to Katherine Paterson's *Bridge to Terabithia* (1977) for its language and its portrayal of a nontraditional family. The novel was withdrawn from classrooms. This book has also been challenged in Illinois, Michigan, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Georgia, Texas, and California, and it has appeared several times on the list of the ten most banned books in the United States. Other objections have centered on its portrayal of alleged "New Age" religion, disrespect for authority, theological treatment of death, and negative portrayals of Christianity. Another book, *The Great Gilly Hopkins* (1978), has been challenged in schools in North Carolina, Connecticut, and Texas for its use of profanity, obscenities, and derogatory remarks about God.

In an interview about censorship challenges to *Bridge to Terabithia*, Paterson noted, "As the daughter of missionaries, as a missionary myself, and as a minister's wife, I care deeply about the moral lives of children." Paterson believes that books are uniquely suited to develop children's inner strength and argues that censorship of children's books leads to children's "intellectual and spiritual poverty."

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