



# Storm in the Mountains: A Case Study of Censorship, Conflict, and Consciousness

*James Moffett*

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In 1974 one of the most important and tumultuous textbook conflicts in the history of the United States occurred in Kanawha County, West Virginia.

James Moffett had developed for Houghton Mifflin a highly regarded program with a rich array of subjects and ideas, media and methods, points of view, and cultures that the people of Appalachia feared would undermine the values they had taught their children.

Moffett lets the book banners speak for themselves through interviews and through the official objections written by citizen reviewers of the texts. He shows exactly how the protesters regard particular reading selections and ultimately, how they think. His commentary on their objections builds an unusually broad perspective on censorship, which he relates to many current issues of society learning, and—the chief concern of the protesters—religion.

Storm in the Mountains is a timely book. The Kanawha County ruckus emboldened censors to escalate their efforts. Textbook publishers routinely precensor texts to avoid the objections dramatized in West Virginia. And fundamentalism has become a major political force.



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