

Book Buzz

With Carolyn Larson

Head Librarian at Lihue Public Library

Bringing you the buzz on new, popular and good books available at your neighborhood library.

Book annotations are largely culled from online publisher descriptions and published reviews.

CELEBRATE the FREEDOM to READ during BANNED BOOKS WEEK

Banned Books Week is observed during the last week of September each year. Librarians, teachers, and booksellers across the country use Banned Books Week to teach the importance of our First Amendment rights, and to draw attention to the danger that exists when restraints are imposed on the availability of information in a free society.

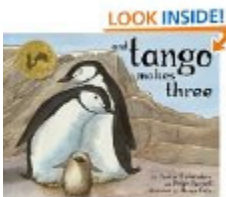
The annual event reminds Americans not to take this precious democratic freedom for granted. It celebrates the freedom to choose or the freedom to express one's opinion even if that opinion might be considered unorthodox or unpopular. Banned Books Week also stresses the importance of ensuring the availability of these diverse viewpoints to all who wish to read them.

After all, intellectual freedom can only exist where individuals have the right to hold any belief on any subject and to convey their ideas in any form they deem appropriate. In addition, it requires that society ensures the right of unrestricted access to information and ideas regardless of the communication medium used, the content of the work, and the viewpoints of both the author and receiver of information. Freedom to express oneself through a chosen mode of communication, including the Internet, becomes meaningless if access to that information is not protected. Intellectual freedom, implies a circle, and that circle is broken if either freedom of expression or access to ideas is stifled.

Book Buzz this week offers a short list of banned or challenged books that are available to read at your local public library. Although each of these titles was the target of attempted bans, most of the books are still available, thanks to the efforts of librarians to maintain them in their collections. The selection below comes from the American Libraries Association's list of last year's (2008) top most frequently challenged books. From children's books to books for adults, the list also includes some frequently banned and challenged classics.

Celebrate your freedom to read!

And remember next week the words of Jo Godwin, "A truly great library contains something in it to offend everyone."

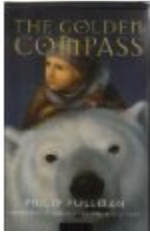


And Tango Makes Three

By Justin Richardson and Peter Parnell

Children's Picture Books: Richardson

Reasons for challenges or banning: anti-ethnic, anti-family, homosexuality, religious viewpoint, and unsuited to age group.



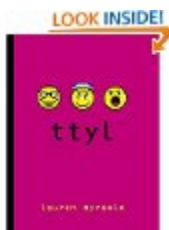
His Dark Materials (trilogy)

The Golden Compass, The Subtle Knife, The Amber Spyglass

By Philip Pullman

Young Adult Science Fiction: Pullman

Reasons for challenges or banning: political viewpoint, religious viewpoint, and violence.

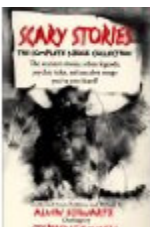


TTYL, TTFN, L8R, G8R (series)

By Lauren Myracle

Young Adult Fiction: Myracle

Reasons for challenges or banning: offensive language, sexually explicit, and unsuited to age group.

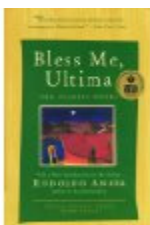


Scary Stories (series)

By Alvin Schwartz

Juvenile Non-Fiction 398.2 Sch

Reasons for challenges or banning: occult/satanism, religious viewpoint, and violence.



Bless Me, Ultima

By Rudolfo Anaya

Young Adult Fiction: Anaya

Reasons for challenges or banning: occult/satanism, offensive language, religious viewpoint, sexually explicit, and violence.



The Perks of Being a Wallflower

By Stephen Chbosky

Young Adult Fiction: Chbosky

Reasons for challenges or banning: drugs, homosexuality, nudity, offensive language, sexually explicit, suicide, and unsuited to age group.



Gossip Girl (series)

By Cicily von Ziegesar

Young Adult Fiction: Ziegesar

Reasons for challenges or banning: offensive language, sexually explicit, and unsuited to age group.

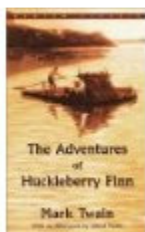


The Kite Runner

By Khaled Hosseini

Young Adult and Adult Fiction: Hosseini

Reasons for challenges or banning: offensive language, sexually explicit, and unsuited to age group.

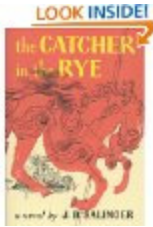


The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn

By Mark Twain

Classics: Twain

Reasons for challenges or banning: profane and offensive language, racism, support of racism.



The Catcher in the Rye

By J. D. Salinger

Classics: Salinger

Reasons for challenges or banning: profane language, promotion of premarital sex.

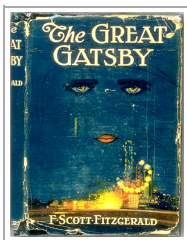


The Color Purple

By Alice Walker

Classics: Walker

Reasons for challenges or banning: violence, sexual conduct, racism.



The Great Gatsby

By F. Scott Fitzgerald

Classics: Fitzgerald

Reasons for challenges or banning: profane language and sexual references.

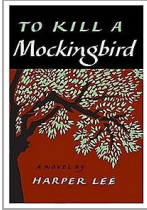


The Grapes of Wrath

By John Steinbeck

Classics: Steinbeck

Reasons for challenges or banning: profanity, libel, political viewpoint, subversive material.



To Kill a Mockingbird

By Harper Lee

Classics: Lee

Reasons for challenges or banning: racial slurs, profanity, frank discussion of rape.