

Defending the Right to Read

Univ of Illinois - November 12, 2022

Presenter:

Carolyn Foote - Free Range Librarian & Consultant - Austin, TX

Carolyn Foote

Former District Librarian
AASL Library Collaboration Award
AASL Social Media Committee
White House Champion of Change

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Any time we eliminate or wall off certain narratives, we are not getting the whole picture of the world in which we live.

- Jason Reynolds

As More States Consider Legislation to Restrict Teaching About Racism, Educators Are Fighting Back

by Christina Joseph
Jun 12, 2021 | Filed in [News & Features](#)



Gov. Greg Abbott tells state agencies to develop standards to block books with "overtly sexual" content in schools

Katy ISD cancels event with acclaimed children's author after parents allege 'critical race theory'

Claire Goodman, Staff writer
Oct. 4, 2021 | Updated: Oct. 4, 2021 2:37 p.m.



< "Front Desk" book - and others like...

It has come to our attention that the fifth grade class is reading a book aloud in school entitled "Front Desk". My husband and I are extremely upset that this racially divisive book is even part of the curriculum in our school community and is being read aloud in class.



Loving Your Country Means Teaching Its History Honestly
"We should approach history with a sense of curiosity and security. You won't make me hate my home. You can, however, motivate me to preserve what is ...
[time.com](#)

Texas Headlines

Long Island Library Pulls All LGBTQ Material in Children's Section During Pride Month

f PENNSYLVANIA EDUCATION

Central Bucks School Board passes library book policy; community members say it's a new kind of book ban



By [Emily Rizzo](#) · Updated Jul. 27, 2022 3:50 pm



Heated exchanges as hundreds fill Dearborn School Board meeting over LGBTQ+ book debate

By Randy Wimbley | Published October 13, 2022 | Education | FOX 2 Detroit

From around the country

Policy EFB(Exhibit) Content Guidelines

Theme	Elementary	Intermediate	Middle	High*
Profanity	M	M	S	C
Passionate and/or extended kissing	N	N	M	P
Horror	N	M	S	C
Violence	S	S	S	C
Bullying	S	S	S	C
Drug or alcohol use by minors	N	N	S	C
Tobacco use by minors	N	S	S	C
Drug or alcohol use by adults	M	S	S	C
Glorification of suicide, self-harm, or mental illness	N	N	S	S
Brief description of non-sexual nudity	M	M	S	C
Illustrations or description of nude intimate body parts	N	N	N	N
Detailed descriptions of sexually explicit conduct or sex acts	N	N	N	N
Sex scenes or sexual activities	N	N	N	M
Discussion or depiction of gender fluidity	N	N	N	N

N = None

M = Minimal - the content rarely appears throughout the volume,

S = Some - the content occasionally appears throughout the volume.

C = Common - the content appears throughout the volume but is not a main theme of the volume.

P = Prevalent - the content is frequent enough to be a main theme of the volume.

Parents of students always have the authority to limit their own student's access to any and all materials in a library.

Keller ISD, TX

Policy changes

Who are the @FReadomFighters?



#FReadom Fighter

Defending the right to read.

visit www.freedom.us for more info

@technolibrary |

Total book challenges in 2022 set to exceed 2021 record.

681

**attempts to ban or restrict library resources
between January 1 - August 31, 2022**

1,651

**unique titles targeted between January 1 -
August 31, 2022**

**Why does this matter?
Why should we care?**

Challenge Effects

- School Librarian/Teacher/District self-censorship
- Effects on publishing
- District and School Board policy shifts and changes
- Student voices



History Repeats Itself

PARENTS' GROUPS PURGING SCHOOLS OF 'HUMANIST' BOOKS AND CLASSES



By Dena Kleiman

May 17, 1981

@technolibrary |

Parents' Groups Purging Schools Of 'Humanist' Books and Classes

By DENA KLEIMAN

In Onida, S.D., birth control information has been removed from the high school guidance office, and the word "evolution" is no longer uttered in advanced biology. "Brave New World" and "Catcher in the Rye" have been dropped from classes in literature. The award-winning children's book "Run Shelley, Run" has been banned from the library.

In Plano, Tex., teachers no longer ask students their opinions because to do so, they have been told, is to deny absolute right and wrong. In Des Moines, Iowa, a high school student production of "Grease," the hit Broadway musical, was banned. In Mount Diablo, Calif., Ms. Magazine is off the school library shelves; it is available only with permission from both a parent and a teacher.

Lobbying Methods Sophisticated

Emboldened by what they see as a conservative mood in the country, parents' groups across the nation are demanding that teachers and administrators cleanse their local schools of materials and teaching methods they consider antifamily, anti-American and anti-God.

Armed with sophisticated lobbying techniques and backed by such national

organizations as Moral Majority, the Eagle Forum and the Christian Broadcasting Network, these parents are banding together to remove books from libraries, replace textbooks, eliminate sex education courses and balance lessons of evolution with those of Biblical creation, at least. They also seek to revise such things as the open classroom, new math and creative writing, asserting that these relatively unstructured academic approaches break down standards of right and wrong and thus promote rebellion, sexual promiscuity and crime.

'Secular Humanism' Opposed

There have always been disgruntled parents of one political persuasion or another. But visits to several cities and interviews with educators and leaders of the movement in cities around the nation show that today's groups are far more numerous, well organized and vocal. Their focus is no longer a specific book or course of study but rather the very nature of public education itself. The philosophy of "secular humanism," they say, permeates every facet of school life, from learning the alphabet to high school lessons in American history.

"I think about what I'm doing twice," said Betty Duke, who teaches ninth grade history at Vines High School in Plano, a suburb of Dallas, where no specific book has been eliminated. "Is there anything controversial in this lesson plan? If there is, I won't use it."

<https://www.nytimes.com/1981/05/17/us/parents-groups-purging-schools-of-humanist-books-and-classes.html>

Libraries are great democratic institutions that serve people of every age, income level, location, ethnicity or physical ability, and provide the full range of information resources needed to live, learn, govern, and work. Because libraries bring free access to all, they also bring opportunity to all.

- ILoveLibraries.org

#FReadom - How to write, speak, support

Write a letter to the editor

Use these instructions to send a letter to the editor to a local paper. The letter can relate to current events in your area or a letter in support of libraries and how librarians support students. Let local papers hear from library supporters!

Click [here for TIPS](#) on writing your letter.

After you write your letter or after it is published, please [document it here](#) in our form so we can gather statistics! (anonymous needed).



Write a letter to your school board

FReadom Fridays



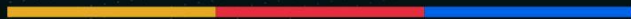
#FReadom Friday #4

#BannedBooksMonth

Share a book that celebrates diversity & why it impacted you. You can use our template to post the book cover, too! Use hashtag #FReadom

#BooksUniteUS

visit www.freadom.us for more info



What can you do?

Be prepared with policies

Pre-write rationale statements

Use good & thoughtful communication

Educate your stakeholders ahead of time

Do practice scenarios



What can you do?

Letters to editor

Speaking at school board

Letters to library board/school board

Publicity efforts

Media outreach



“But it’s not just the books under fire now that worry me. It is the books that will never be written. The books that will never be read. And all due to the fear of censorship. As always, young readers will be the real losers.”

- Judy Blume