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Banned Books Week

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Banned Books Week

Abstract

As promised, I'm going to tell you about what the library is doing for Banned Books Week! I have had a lot of fun planning it. First of all, we're going to have pins with book covers on them so that students can show off their favorite banned book. There will also be snacks, and a comment box where they can write their feelings on censorship which will be posted on Facebook and Twitter, hopefully every day but it depends on how many responses we get. I'm also making up signs so that students can see the title and then turn it around to see the reasons why the text was banned. A lot of them are really interesting, and maybe books you might not expect. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

Musselman Library, Gettysburg College, Fortenbaugh Internship, Reference and Instruction, Banned Books Week

Disciplines

Collection Development and Management | Library and Information Science

Comments

The Interns at Gettysburg College's Musselman Library captured their internship experiences since the spring of 2011. Over time the blog has featured Fortenbaugh, Smith, and Holley interns. They shared updates on semester long projects, responded to blogging prompts, and documented their individual intern experience.

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Blogging the Library

The Interns @ Gettysburg College's Musselman Library

Banned Books Week

Wednesday, September 28, 2012

By: Kelly Fullerton '13

As promised, I'm going to tell you about what the library is doing for Banned Books Week! I have had a lot of fun planning it. First of all, we're going to have pins with book covers on them so that students can show off their favorite banned book. There will also be snacks, and a comment box where they can write their feelings on censorship which will be posted on Facebook and Twitter, hopefully every day but it depends on how many responses we get. I'm also making up signs so that students can see the title and then turn it around to see the reasons why the text was banned. A lot of them are really interesting, and maybe books you might not expect. Like *Captain Underpants*, which was banned because it contains poop jokes and potty humor. Which is why I loved it when I was little. We're going to showcase *Harry Potter*, *Twilight*, *The Hunger Games*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *Of Mice and Men*, and *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* during the week. I think the students will be most interested to know that *Hunger Games*, *Twilight* and *Harry Potter* have been banned, but then again maybe they'll surprise me and go for the classics. I also hope that they like the buttons, I had so much fun making them! Button making machines are awesome, and I wouldn't mind making some more.

Learning about Banned Books Week has been particularly interesting to me. Some of the books that are banned have actually won awards and are considered some of the most popular books published, like *Huckleberry Finn* or *To Kill a Mockingbird*. There seems to be a repetition of reasons for banning as well, mostly offensive language, anything involving sex or drugs, violence, and religious views that are controversial. This seems to represent the mindset of the country, to me at least. For instance, the book *It's Perfectly Normal*, which explains to teens what puberty is like and what they will be going through, is banned because it involves sex and has pictures of the human body. Because educating them about their own bodies and sex is a topic that is uncomfortable and so we either ignore, or blatantly don't discuss it. I think the banned books that bother me the most are the ones that are banned because some of the characters are homosexual though. Not that I agree that any of these books should be banned, but banning for that reason particularly irks me. Just the fact the characters are homosexual is enough for the public to ban them, regardless of what they are actually doing in the book. Which is just plain ridiculous, in my opinion anyway. I don't want to get too political about it, but reading about all these censored books has definitely given me something to think about.

As part of my internship, Clinton gave me an article to read about a children's book that was causing an uproar. The book uses the word scrotum in the context of a little girl who hears it and makes up her own ideas about it and what it means. Because of that word, schools are banning the book from elementary schools and possibly public libraries. It's tough to balance, I think, when it comes to children. Wanting to educate them but also not including material that isn't appropriate for their age group. Maybe there is a way to work with that though. In elementary school the students won't know what it means, but if they ask, their parents or teachers will have to explain it to them, which again is a uncomfortable topic they don't want to broach. Maybe I'm getting too political again but it seems to me if something makes us uncomfortable as a society we sweep it under the rug and refuse to talk about it. Anyway, I've decided to read through the Banned Books list, because I want to know what everyone is making such a fuss about. And it'll make for some very interesting reading.

<http://bloggingthelibrary2012.blogspot.com/>