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5 Banned Book (Librarian Approved) Must-Reads: In Honor of Banned Books Week

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Abstract

Each year, the American Library Association celebrates Banned Books for one week to inspire conversation, thought, and awareness around censorship. This Banned Books Week, Musselman Library is celebrating the freedom to read by promoting books that are banned or challenged in other libraries.

We have pulled together a list of 5 books, some old and some new— but all equally beloved — that have been banned or challenged. [*excerpt*]

Keywords

American Library Association, Banned Books, Banned Books Week, Musselman Library

Disciplines

Collection Development and Management | Information Literacy | Library and Information Science

5 Banned Book (Librarian Approved!) Must-Reads

In honor of Banned Books Week

By Mallory Jallas and Alexa Schreier

October 1, 2015



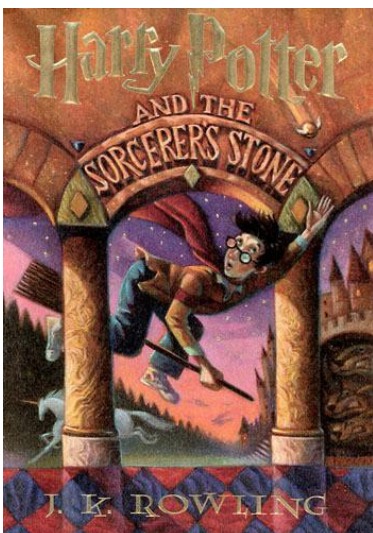
Mallory



Alexa

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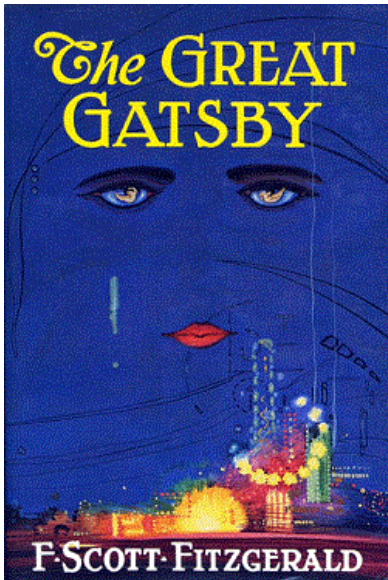
We have pulled together a list of 5 books, some old and some new— but all equally beloved—that have been banned or challenged.



Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone by J.K. Rowling

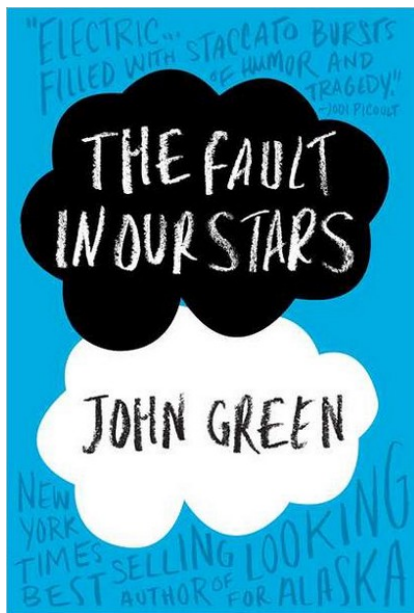
Harry Potter is a character that most of our students and Alexa and I have both grown up with. Between the 7-book series and the popular films, *Harry Potter* has become engrained in popular culture, but it also has the distinction of being the most frequently

challenged book from 2000–2009. Rowling’s story follows three young wizards and their time at Hogwarts School of Witchcraft and Wizardry. The title has been most commonly challenged for “occult/Satanic, anti-family themes, and violence.”



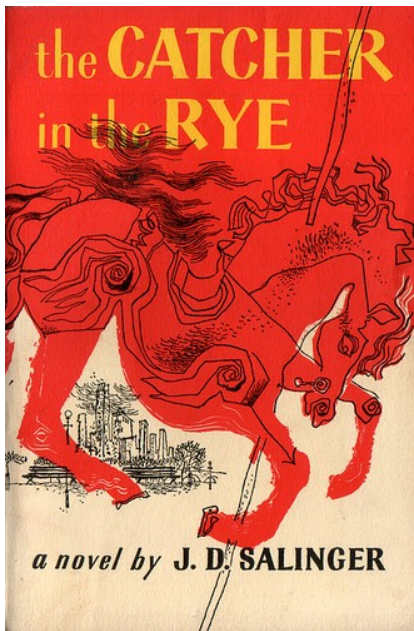
The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

This summer Alexa had the opportunity with her [Holley Internship](#) to work in Musselman Library’s Special Collections and College Archives. During her time at Special Collections she discovered that we have **over 25 different editions of *Great Gatsby!*** While Fitzgerald’s classic tale of the roaring twenties might be required reading for some, the book has been challenged for language and sexual references.



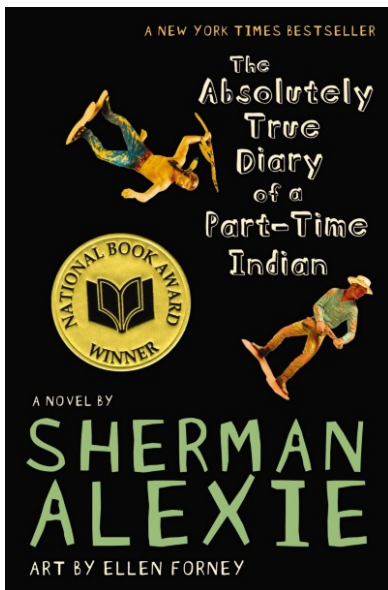
The Fault in Our Stars by John Green

John Green’s popular book has been known to leave readers in tears and was also the inspiration for Mallory’s submission to last year’s [Edible Books Festival during National Library Week](#). The New York Times Bestseller, *The Fault in Our Stars*, is a love story of two teenagers with cancer. Although the book has been made into a popular film, it has still been challenged for crude language and sex.



Catcher in the Rye by J.D. Salinger

Along with Fitzgerald's tale of *Gatsby*, Salinger's *Catcher in the Rye* is well known as required reading in many high school English classes, prompting its role as a favorite classic. In this coming of age story, many young adults find themselves easily identifying with the feelings and experiences of Holden Caulfield through his chronicled adventures. Salinger's classic tale has been challenged and/or removed from numerous high school libraries across the country. In 1992 the book was challenged in Carlisle, PA for complaints of profanity and immorality.



The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian by Sherman Alexie

Sherman Alexie's National Book Award winning title was one of the most frequently challenged books in 2014. Alexie tells the story of a teenager growing up on the Spokane Indian Reservation who leaves to attend an all-white high school. It has been challenged for "instances of racism, vulgar language, bullying, and violence." If you enjoyed reading Sherman Alexie's *Flight*, we would definitely recommend following up with *The Absolutely True Diary of a Part-time Indian*.

Happy reading!

Mallory Jallas is the Research and Instruction Librarian & Alexa Schreier is the Holley Intern at the Gettysburg College [Musselman Library](#).