

## Ban of some popular books

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"Participating in book banning is just like being involved in indoctrination. Too much control over what students read can distort reality for them," he said.

Pamela Thombs said, "We don't carry children's books that don't provide wholesome learning experiences for children. None of these books need to be banned. These books exemplify what African-American culture is about, and they help children of all races understand that culture."

Andrea Bush, School Counselor at Cook Middle School, finds it difficult to understand why books such as "The Living Bible" or the "American Heritage Dictionary" would be banned. She disagrees with book banning, but says that perhaps we do need a rating system to identify the appropriate age level for a text. "Rating would be better than banning," she said. "This would give adults an opportunity to choose for themselves and for children in order to provide guidance." However, she says that a variety of people should be involved in the rating.

Several other African-American classics have been placed on the hit list. August Wilson's "Fences" was listed because it is "demeaning to women." Maya Angelou's "I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings" was cited because it "preaches bitterness against whites and contains a child molestation theme." Ralph Ellison's "Invisible Man" was removed because it contained "profanity and images of violence." "The Autobiography of Malcolm X" is said to be presented as a "how-to manual for crime" which presents "a racist view of whites," which also contains racism, and violence. "Uncle Tom's Cabin" was pulled because it contained the word "nigger."

Dr. Shirley Manigault, chairperson of the English Department at Winston-Salem State University, said, "Uncle Tom's Cabin should not be banned. It deals with the issue of slavery at a time in history when it was especially relevant. At least it makes acknowledgement of the brutality of slavery."

Dr. Elwanda Ingram, WSSU English instructor, is an advocate of reading because it helps students become critical thinkers. She questions whether some of the parents or members of various school boards have even read the books they have challenged. According to the banned books guide, a book can be challenged because of the front cover or because of a single objectionable word.

Dr. Alton Pollard, religion professor at Wake Forest University, says that book banning has no place, but book selection does. He would not give a third-grader a copy of "Native Son" to read. However, he would like to know that there is a certain criteria for giving a text "a grade of evil" so that it crosses racial lines consistently. Otherwise he sees the possibility of more African-American works being targeted for advocating separatism. He finds this very hypocritical and biased.

Allyson Buie, manager of the Intimate Bookshop on Coliseum Drive, provides a display each year "to increase awareness about how banning books violates human rights. 'Nobody has a right to tell us

what we can read," she said. "It is a personal choice." She said people are often shocked that forms of the Bible have been banned as well as "Grimm's Fairy Tales," "Mother Goose Rhymes" and books by Shel Silverstein, Judy Blume and Maurice Sendak.

Workers at the Intimate Bookshop in Chapel Hill say that they have been participating in this recognition for eight years, and it is by far their largest display each year. Mike Handy said they chose to sponsor an essay contest this year, so several of the high schools and elementary schools in the area have signed up to view their display. Elaine Gaertner from the Intimate Bookshop in Chapel Hill said since education is a top priority in the city and the citizens tend to like controversy, the display has been very attractive to the community. "Even at 1 o'clock in the morning, noses are pressed against the window. Many of them have already read the

books, but they want to purchase another copy to find out what the controversy is about. For many of them, the book identified was their favorite book," she said.

"Banned Books Week — Celebrating the Freedom to Read" is an opportunity to deliver the message of freedom to choose and the freedom to express one's opinion, even if that opinion might be considered unorthodox or unpopular. The essential purpose of the celebration is to ensure the availability of those unorthodox or unpopular viewpoints to all who wish to read them.

National Banned Books Week is sponsored by the American Booksellers Association, the American Booksellers Foundation for Free Expression, the American Library Association, the American Society of Journalists and Authors, the Association of American Publishers, and the National Association of College Stores.

## American Legion assists neighbor in need

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After Hairston lost her eyesight, Prysock applied for a grant to have the inside of her house renovated in 1991. He knew that the potbelly stove she had in the house would be dangerous to her, so she needed an alternative heating method.

Hairston's next-door neighbor, Lily Wilson, made sure that Kat had a balanced dinner each day. "She was very alert and she kept abreast of what was going on in the community and the world. She was also very involved in her church, Pleasant Union Missionary Baptist Church, and in the American Legion Post Auxiliary," Wilson said.

According to Woodruff, Hairston kept the inside of her house "as neat as a pen," however, the outside was in need of a paint job. As a result, neighbors often complained that the house was an eyesore in the community.

When Commissioner Woodruff was on her regular beat delivering "Meals on Wheels," a neighbor brought this to her attention. As Woodruff is a member of the auxiliary of the American Legion Post No. 220, she took the idea to them as a community project. Simington said the group had to recruit members and get them involved with the job. Members of the auxiliary brought food, drinks and other refreshments to the members as they worked.

The veterans worked for several Saturdays to get the job done. The house had to be scraped, corked, sandblasted and washed. They were able to use a sandblaster belonging to the City of Winston-Salem. After they cleaned the house, they used eight gallons of primer and almost 20 gallons of paint. The original order called for 11 gallons of paint, but the house soaked up the paint so quickly, the members had to

provide additional buckets. Richard Brooks of the Housing Unit told members how to finance the paint. As a result, the Housing Unit volunteered to pay for part of the paint. Dan Cornelius from the Housing Unit for Forsyth County helped provide tools for scraping the house. All of the work was done on a volunteer basis.

Henry Wilson has been in the organization for 33 years. He enjoys the many programs the group does throughout the year. He appreciated being able to assist the group in "brightening-up the neighborhood."

Carl Miller, post judge advocate of the chapter, was impressed with the project because three of the workers were former post commanders. "Too often past leaders seem to drift away, but Henry Wilson, George Brady and I are still busy," he said. "I was impressed that these commanders still had the interest to carry on programs."

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