

Library holds banned book week

Adam Smith
Reporter

This week the library is sponsoring its annual banned book week. The event, sponsored by the American Library Association, "is a reminder of the freedom to read in this country," said library director Kate Hickey.

The list of 100 books is a compilation of the most challenged books of the last 10 years. The list includes "Go Ask Alice," "Anne Frank: The Diary of a Young Girl" and "Harry Potter," among others. Most of the books on the list are books for children and young adults.

The banning of books has gone on since the beginning of the printed word. In many countries today, book banning is a way of life. Hickey questioned such control, saying the government needs to trust that its citizens will read intelligently.

"Just because you read a book about communism, that doesn't mean you'll become a communist," she said.

Banning books can have a positive side, Hickey said. "I think it's a testimony to the power of books that people want to ban them." Parental concern is often the main reason books are challenged in school and public libraries across the country. It shows that parents care about what their children are reading.

"It keeps everybody on their toes," Hickey continued. "Almost all of us could think of a book we think others shouldn't read."

Religion, sexuality and violence are the main reasons books are challenged today. Books about witchcraft and the occult often cause problems for public libraries.

Hickey said there has never been a book challenged since she became director. These kinds of

issues are often raised in primary and secondary schools, she said.

So what's next for books?

"I worry about the Patriot Act," Hickey said.

This act, passed by Congress, allows the government to secretly access library records and has many civil rights organizations in an uproar. "I know that a lot of people are protesting against the Patriot Act," she said.

"I do think there is a trend in this country toward conservatism," Hickey continued, "but I think that our country is becoming more multicultural."

The Belk library has many of the books on the list. Several of the juvenile titles are not available, however. "Everyone should read a banned book," Hickey said.

Contact Adam Smith at pendulum@elon.edu or 278-7247.

What is your favorite banned book?



"Brave New World"
Tarrah Goforth, senior



"Of Mice and Men"
Meghan Ciatello, freshman



"The Diary of Anne Frank"
Jennifer Amundsen, freshman



"Catcher in the Rye"
Josh Tanner, sophomore



"Catcher in the Rye"
Mark Gustafson, senior

Students share the title of their favorite book that has been banned in some of the libraries in the United States.

Commonly Banned Books

"Scary Stories to Tell in the Dark"
- Alvin Schwartz

"The Diary of Anne Frank"
"1984"
- George Orwell

"The Catcher in the Rye"
- J.D. Salinger

"Where the Sidewalk Ends"
- Shel Silverstein

"Of Mice and Men"
- John Steinbeck



"The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn"
- Mark Twain

"Our Bodies, Ourselves"
Boston Women's Health Book Collective

"The Dictionary of American Slang"

"The Merchant of Venice"
William Shakespeare

"The Martian Chronicles"
- Ray Bradbury

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