

# Library Lingo

An MSU Libraries Publication

VOLUME 2 ISSUE 2

OCTOBER 2008

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## Renne Library Fall Hours

Mon.-Thurs	7am - 12am
Friday	7am - 6pm
Sat.	10am - 5pm
Sun.	10am - 12am

## Creative Arts Library Cheever 207 Fall Hours

Mon.-Thurs	8am - 10pm
Friday	8am - 5pm
Saturday	10am - 5pm
Sunday	10am - 10pm

## Special Collections

Mon.-Fri.	9:30am-5pm
Sat. & Sun.	- Closed

## Library Telephone Numbers

AV/Microform	994-5299
Circ.	994-3139
CAL Library	994-4091
ILL	994-3161
Reference	994-3171
Special Coll.	994-4242

## Banned Book Week at the Library

Help MSU Libraries celebrate Banned Book Week each day at noon beginning Monday, September 29 through Friday October 3 at Renne Library.

During Banned Book Week, libraries across the country celebrate readers' freedom to choose what they read and writers' freedom to express themselves through written or visual works. Each day at noon, members from the MSU community will read passages from their favorite banned or challenged book which include titles like *Howl*, *Harry Potter*, *Fahrenheit 451*, and many more. In addition to the readings, visit the library's display on Banned Books or even better -- check out a banned book from the library's collection

Stop by the reference desk for a selected list of banned or challenged books owned by MSU Library.

## Banned Book Week Readers—Why They Chose the Book They Did

I chose to read *Fahrenheit 451* because I love the irony that it was banned, since perhaps the book's most obvious message is that people should be able to decide for themselves what they will read.

—Josh Johnson, Graduate Student in English

"*I Know Why the Caged Bird Sings* by Maya Angelou was required reading during a 1986 freshman year class at the University of Tennessee taught by Dr. Greer Fox. Coming from a small racially-homogeneous and comfortable town in South Central Ohio, this book was my epiphany moment that my heretofore and taken-for-granted assumption of universal equality and unlimited opportunities was misguided. I was not jaded, though. The book's message of dignity, perseverance, and triumph in the face of deep-rooted injustice, ignorance, and hatred forever changed my soul and world view. To ban this book and its potential impact on others would silence the bird in all of us."

— Carrie Myers, Assistant Professor, Education

"Despite its many honors and acclaim, *To Kill a Mockingbird* has been banned because of its language and depiction of race relations in the American South. I chose Harper Lee's novel because it has elicited protest both by whites, who argued it undermined race relations, and by blacks, who argued it portrayed African Americans in a stereotypical manner. But we cannot ignore the history of race relations in the U.S. because it makes us uncomfortable or even because we hope we have gone beyond its ugliest manifestations."

—Mary Murphy, Professor, History

"*Of Mice and Men* by John Steinbeck has been banned or challenged since shortly after its publication. At the same time, it has been required or suggested reading for untold masses of high school English students. It has been condemned for its themes of depression era poverty, use of rough language and what has been characterized as a mercy killing. Even so, it is a tender tale of the deep friendship between two unlikely companions and the strength of their dreams in the face of impossible odds."

—Tamara Miller, Dean of Libraries

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"Howl is the most famous and important poem associated with the Beat generation literary movement. Published in 1957, Howl directly challenged many of the predominant social morays of an acknowledged conservative decade. It was banned by a federal court for obscenity and established as contraband in this country. Anyone found with a copy of Howl on his/her person could be arrested and charged with a federal crime. Soon after, in another highly visible federal obscenity trial, the ruling was overturned and Howl was judged to possess significant cultural value. Howl is a significant piece of American literary and counter-cultural history."

— Timothy Donahue, Instruction and Outreach Librarian, Libraries

"I loved reading the first few Harry Potter books out loud to our daughter, and I have followed up reading the others on my own. I normally get the books within 24 hours of their release because my daughter finishes them in that time. I chose to read some of Harry Potter to highlight the absurdity that a series of books that has done so much to promote reading among young people might actually be targeted for potential banning."

—Jeff Adams, Assistant Vice Provost, University College

"It is difficult to choose from the bibliography burned/banned by the Nazis. I selected Bertolt Brecht's *The Threepenny Opera* (1928) for its aesthetic innovation, socio-political critique, and collaboration between the dramatist and composer Kurt Weill. *The Threepenny Opera* is a complex 'musical comedy' that posed a threat to dictatorship!"

— Patty Simpson, Associate Professor, Modern Languages

"The Watson's go to Birmingham—1963, written by Christopher Paul Curtis, is a young adult book, a Newberry Honor winner and was named a Coretta Scott King Honor Book. The book is a story about the Watson's family trip from Michigan to Birmingham in the summer of 1963, coinciding with the bombing of the 16<sup>th</sup> Street Baptist Church bombing. It's a poignant story that makes the Civil Rights movement real to children, a book with a lot of humor and seriousness intertwined."

—Cathy Zabinski, Associate Professor, Land Resources and Environmental Sciences

I think the book is important because of its obvious and scathing indictment of war, government and bureaucracy. it is also one of my favourite works of literature -- it was recommended to me by my high school science teacher my freshman year and I immediately connected with the sur-reality it portrayed.

— Josef Verbanac, Adjunct Professor, English