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MUSE LAW LIBRARY MUSELETTER



Volume 37, Issue 2 // September 2022

Director's Message



As we round out “Week Four” of classes, it is great to see students finding a routine to study, collaborate, and prepare for classes. We love to hear active conversations and we support group work in our study rooms. We also know that a lot of people work best in a quiet environment. Thanks to everybody for **keeping quiet in our Reading Room**. In the coming weeks, you’ll see additional seating, especially in the first floor past L171. Delivery is delayed due to shipping and manufacturing challenges. Enjoy the great Fall weather.

Roger V. Skalbeck

Associate Dean for Library and Information Services

Library News



Constitution Day cake (September 16, 2022).

Fall is in the air. Or is it *autumn*? Interestingly enough, early citizens of the United States took to calling the season of pumpkin spice lattes, chilly evenings, and turning leaves *fall* instead of the very British-sounding *autumn* as a way to stake out our **young nation's linguistic identity**. *Fall* isn't the only word Americans meddled with. When Southerners began using the word *bluff* instead of river *bank*, the usage was attacked in England as "barbarous." Other words retained their old meanings in the New World even as they became obsolete in England -- *bureau*, meaning chest of drawers, and *allow*, *guess*, and *reckon* meaning *think*. This divergence was intentional. Thomas Jefferson said, "The reasons for American English being different than English English are simple: As an independent nation, our honor requires us to have a system of our own, in language as well as government." Jefferson himself coined the "Americanism" *belittle* in 1787, the same year delegates of the Constitutional Convention signed the Constitution in Philadelphia. A day Americans celebrate on the 17th of September as Constitution Day. A holiday the Law Library celebrates all week. And now we are full circle.

Featured Resources



Manage Your Passwords with LastPass

Hold up. Did this password require letters *and* numbers? Was there a special character? No, it said "NO special characters." If this is you trying to remember your passwords, we have a solution.



UR Law School Exam Archives

Want to see examples of old exams given by your professors in years past? Find them here.

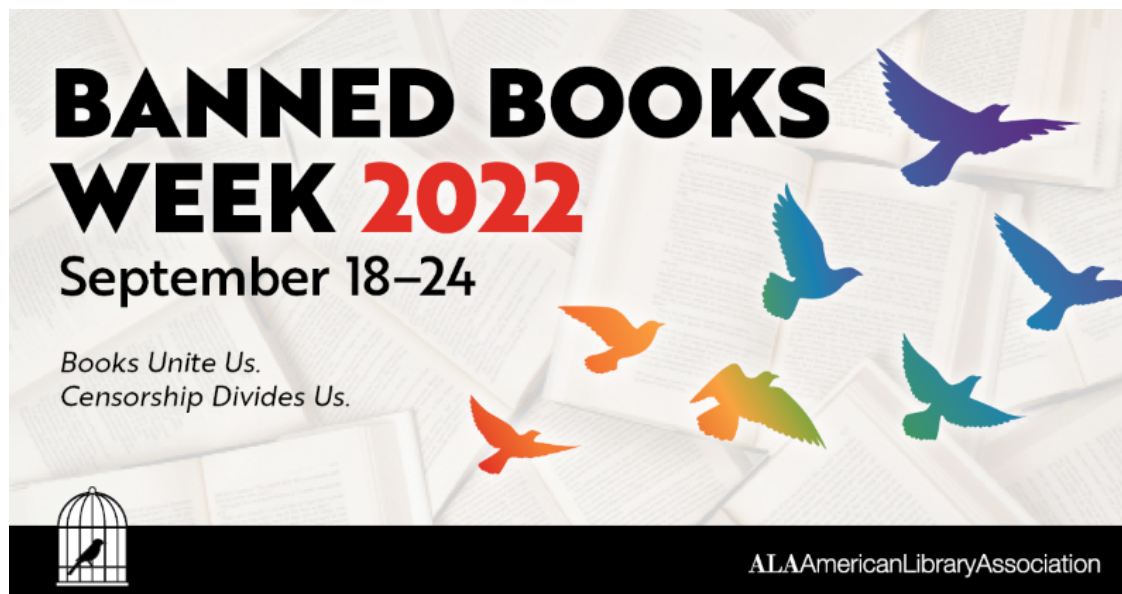
Materials Update



We added **43** new books to our collection this month. Browse the Law Library's latest resources on our [updated materials list](#).

Looking for an e-book? We added **over 1800** new e-book titles this month. Check out our [updated e-book list](#).

Things to Consider



[Banned Books Week - Your Faculty Recommends These Classics](#)

By Alex Clay Hutchings

Banned Books Week is September 18-24, 2022. This is an opportunity for Americans to reflect on the dangers of censorship and support efforts to bolster free speech and expression. It's also an event librarians take very seriously. With a recent rise in attempted and realized book bans, librarians have stepped into the frontlines of a bitter culture war. [Read more...](#)

Student Services Corner



MuseKids Storytime!

Parents, bring your kids! Beginning **Saturday, September 24 at 10:30 AM**, the Law Library will be hosting MuseKids Storytime. All law students and faculty with children are welcome. Join us in the library for fun law-themed children's stories and crafts. Snack will be provided. All ages are welcome!

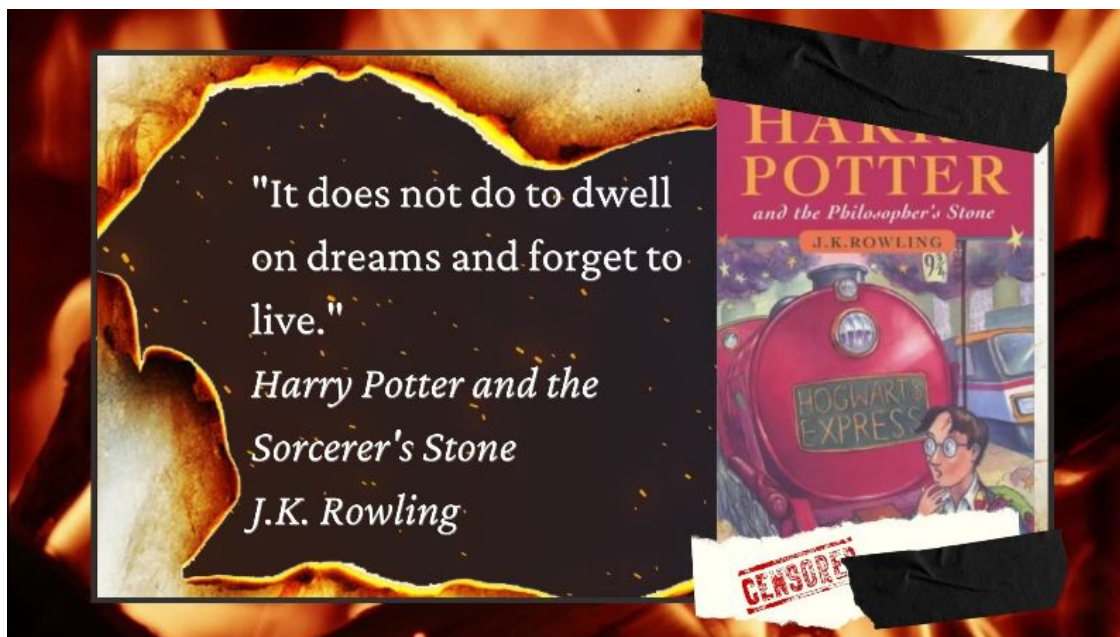
MuseDay Tuesday

Join us in the hall outside the library each Tuesday starting September 2 for bite-sized research, resource, and tech tips. Drop in anytime between 12 - 1. New topics every week. Each MuseDay you attend you earn a raffle ticket. Grand prize: \$100 gift card to the UR Spider Shop.

If you are a student who wants to have your voice heard and be published in MuseNews, contact [Alex Clay Hutchings](#), Student Services Librarian.

The Facepalm

Legal News to Make You 🙄



Hide your children! Another Facepalm is here!

Ever worry that your kids are being exposed to too much sex, violence, and obscenity in the media they consume? Ever worry that reading *Harry Potter* will turn your child into a wizard? Well, ban it! Ban it all!

September 18 - 24, 2022 is **Banned Books Week**. It a time to challenge the affronts to the great American tradition of free speech and fight the power by reading, of all things. In a very recent and very politically charged **case out of Virginia Beach**, VA state delegate Tim Anderson filed suit against Barnes & Noble Booksellers for (*gasp*) selling books. Specifically two books which he found offensive -- Maia Kobabe's graphic novel memoir *Gender Queer* and the high-fantasy novel *A Court of Mist and Fury* by Sarah J. Maas. The challenge to *Gender Queer* may be outrageous, but not entirely surprising given the recent uptick in attempted bans of LGBTQ+ literature around the country. But why *A Court of Mist and Fury*? The novel is unarguably steamy, but no steamier than *Game of Thrones* or your average Fabio-emblazoned romance novel. And like George R.R. Martin's novels, is marketed to an adult audience and shelved in the adult fiction section. And even more eyebrow-raising is that *A Court of Mist and Fury* is the second in a series of four books. So the other three are fine, I guess?

Anderson's vehicle for the suit was a jalopy of a 1950 Virginia statute that allowed any concerned citizen to challenge a book as obscene. If a judge found probable cause, then they could issue a temporary injunction against selling the book. And anyone caught selling it, regardless of your knowledge of the ban, could be found criminally liable. B&N, Amazon, *you*. Literally anyone selling a

book banned in Virginia. Better be careful what used books you list on Craigslist.

After a strong rebuff by Barnes & Noble with an assist from the ACLU, a Virginia judge tossed the case and ruled the statute unconstitutional. And let's hope the ruling sticks without additional challenges. As Anderson exuberantly notes in an online statement, "We are in a major fight. Suits like this can be filed all over Virginia. There are dozens of books. Hundreds of schools." Ah, the dream of a school without books. Utopia.

Banning books is nothing new. And it should be noted that the majority of banned and challenged books are by or about people of color or members of the LGBTQ+ community, leading to calls of racism and bigotry under the guise of "decency" and "parental rights." Books like *The Hate U Give* and *All Boys Aren't Blue* are just two contemporary examples. In the past, censors have found wild reasons to ban some seemingly innocuous literature.

J.K. Rowling's *Harry Potter* series has famously been subject to numerous bans and book burnings, as Harry and the gang have been accused of "glorifying witchcraft, promoting the occult, [with] tones of death, hate, lack of respect and sheer evil, leading children to hatred and rebellion, confusing children, and leading them astray." I guess the censors took "He Who Must Not Be Named" literally.

In 2006, a Kansas school district banned E.B. White's beloved children's book *Charlotte's Web* because they believed it was unnatural for animals to talk. They went as far as claiming "showing lower life forms with human abilities is sacrilegious and disrespectful to God."

A school in Wisconsin banned Shel Silverstein's children's poetry collection *A Light in the Attic* because its inclusion of a poem entitled "How Not to Have to Dry the Dishes," as it would encourage children to... not dry the dishes. That doesn't hold a candle to another Wisconsin ban of *A Light in the Attic*, which alleged Silverstein's poetry "glorified Satan, suicide and cannibalism, and also encouraged children to be disobedient." Yikes.

Finally, middle-school required reading *Diary of a Young Girl* by Anne Frank has been repeatedly banned, not for its depiction of the Holocaust or terror or atrocity or anti-Semitism, but because then 13-year-old Anne wrote a few lines about her emerging sexual desire, specifically for another girl. And an Alabama

school district banned it because it was, quote, "a real bummer."

With that, another Facepalm is in the books.

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MUSENEWS BLOG

LIBRARY HOURS

QUESTIONS?

Have a questions about Muse Law Library resources, events, or other goings-on? Want to share your ideas with us? Email Alex Clay Hutchings, Research & Student Services Librarian, at ahutchings@richmond.edu.

CHAT WITH A LIBRARIAN

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