



**NORTH HUNTERDON-VOORHEES  
INTELLECTUAL FREEDOM FIGHTERS**

Supporting students' right to read  
and silencing censors since 2019

[tinyurl.com/nhv-stoptheban](http://tinyurl.com/nhv-stoptheban)



**NHVfREADom**

Martha Hickson

[mehickson@comcast.net](mailto:mehickson@comcast.net)

## Articles & information

[5 Book Ban Trends to Watch in 2023](#): A forecast from PEN America's Jonathan Friedman.

[Banned in the USA](#): In response to the expanded scope of censorship, PEN America has collated an Index of School Book Bans, which documents decisions to ban books in school libraries and classrooms in the United States from July 2021 to June 2022.

[Book Challenge Resource Center](#): Guides for students, teachers, librarians, parents, and activists for fighting censorship from the National Coalition Against Censorship.

[The Daily](#): *New York Times* podcast about when book banning came to a small NJ town.

[Fighting False Narratives & Misinformation About Books in Schools](#): Adapted by [Free to Read Rochester](#), these FAQs can be used in any community.

[How to support diverse books during a book ban](#): Get the facts to bust the myths.

[A mom wrongly said the book showed pedophilia](#): *The Washington Post* reveals the lie about *Lawn Boy* that started the wave of book banning.

[The right-wing mothers fuelling the school-board wars](#): *The New Yorker* examines Moms for Liberty.

[What's it like to be the target of a book banning effort?](#) Martha shares all the details in her article for *School Library Journal*.

[Why national advocates are getting more involved in school board elections](#): *Education Week* examines the national groups influencing BOE races.

## Take action!

- [Join Unite Against Book Bans](#)
- [Disarm disinformation with the SIFT strategy](#)
- [Try these action ideas](#)
- [Follow organizations that fight for your right to read](#)
- [Learn how to report censorship or donate to freedom fighting organizations](#)

# Action ideas

1. Stay informed via PEN America and EveryLibrary
2. Join [Unite Against Book Bans](#)
3. Disable disinformation with the [SIFT technique](#)
4. [Report](#) challenges and bans of books, library programs, and displays
  - [American Library Association](#)
  - [National Coalition Against Censorship](#)
  - [Comic Book Legal Defense Fund](#)
5. Read
  - [Banned books](#)
  - [Start a banned books club](#)
6. Write
  - Letter of appreciation to a librarian
  - [Letter to BOE](#), library board, administrators, library director, trustees
  - [Letter to editor](#)
  - [Local and state representatives](#)
  - [Favorable reviews](#) for banned books you have read and recommend
7. Post to social media
  - Unite Against Book Bans has [ready made graphics](#)
  - [Share the story](#) of how book banning has affected you
  - Tag #FReadom
8. Attend
  - Library events, especially programs spotlighting marginalized communities (attendance statistics matter)
  - BOE meetings, and speak up; [Unite Against Book Bans has talking points](#)
  - [Peaceful protests](#)
9. Host
  - [House party to inform others](#)
  - [Candidate forum](#)
10. Hold the media accountable; no “false balance”
11. Vote
  - [Suggestions for identifying compatible BOE candidates](#)
12. Run for office
13. Donate to the [organizations that support intellectual freedom](#)
  - Money, not books
14. Represent; sport your Banned Books merch:
  - [#FReadom](#)
  - [American Library Association](#)
  - [FReadom: Literacy for All](#)
  - [United Against Book Bans](#)

# Organizations to follow



@OIF

Subscribe to the weekly  
[Office of Intellectual Freedom news](#)



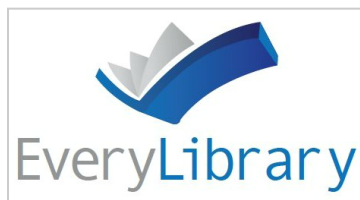
@BookRiot

Subscribe to the weekly  
[Censorship News Roundup](#)



@CBLDF

Comic Book Legal Defense Fund  
[Banned Books Week Handbook](#)



@EveryLibrary

[See the Legislation of Concern list](#)  
[Consult the Book Censorship Database](#)



@FReadomFighters

NATIONAL  
COALITION  
AGAINST  
CENSORSHIP

@ncacensorship

[Book Challenge Resource Center](#)



@njea

[Center for Honesty in Education](#)



@PENAmerica

[Banned in the USA](#) report



@RedWinBlueUSA

[Trouble Maker Training](#)  
[Book Ban Busters](#)



@UABookBans

# SUPPORTING AUTHORS

**Direct action to support authors affected by book bans**

## Report Spam Reviews

Censors are spamming authors reviews on Amazon. Help stop them by:

1. Locate targeted book on Amazon.
2. Filter to 1 star reviews.
3. Click "Report" any review using censor keywords like "harmful to minors", "porn", "filth".

## Elevate 5 Star Reviews

To balance spam from censors, elevate 5 star reviews by marking them as "Helpful". Do so by:

1. Locate book on Amazon.
2. Filter to 5 star reviews.
3. Mark reviews as "Helpful".

## Create Positive Content

If you've read the book, start creating positive content through the following methods:

- Writing your own reviews
- Sharing reviews, praise, photos reading the book on all SM platforms
- Participate in #FreedomFridays



# How to find compatible Board of Ed candidates

1. Email the candidates or pose questions on their campaign sites
  - Addresses available from County Clerk's office (see [Hunterdon County, NJ](#))
  - Request answers to the questions that concern you
  - Ask whether the candidate has signed the [Unite Against Book Bans candidate pledge to support the freedom to read and oppose book bans](#)
2. Host or attend a candidate forum
3. Examine candidate's social media posts, especially in the year before the election
4. Search candidate's name in Facebook groups dedicated to the issues you care about, pro and con
  - Candidates appearing in these groups active in NJ would be problematic on issues of intellectual freedom and diversity:
    - [Moms for Liberty](#)
    - [NJ Fresh Faced Schools](#)
    - [NJ No Left Turn in Education](#)
    - [Team PYC](#) (Protect Your Children)
5. Review BOE meeting public comments over the past year
  - Posted on district's BOE site
  - Videos and/or transcripts
6. Talk to friends and neighbors
7. Ask teachers or school librarians
8. Ask a teacher's association representative
9. Check local news media for coverage or endorsements
10. Connect with your local political party organization
11. Check candidate's party affiliations
  - Not always a reliable indicator
  - [Majorities on both sides oppose book-banning](#)
  - But those who favor recent book-bannings tend to be registered R

**When you've made your choices, share your research on social media or in conversations to help your friends and neighbors**

# How books enter the library

## LIBRARIAN

- Master's degree in library & information science
- Ongoing professional development training
- Specialized tools for collection development
- Knowledge of authors, publishers & student interests



## POLICY 2530

Directs librarian to choose materials that:

- Support curriculum & student needs
- Stimulate growth & creativity
- Show opposing sides of issues
- Represent society
- Are relevant to today's world
- Possess artistic, historic, literary quality
- Are appropriate to level of users



## PROCESS

- Gather input from staff & students
- Analyze collection to show usage, age & coverage gaps
- Read professional book reviews
- Recommend materials to building & district administrators for approval
- Send purchase request to state-contracted school library book distributor for fulfillment

*"Literature transforms human experience & reflects it back to us ... in that reflection we can see our own lives & experiences as part of the larger human experience."*

**RUDINE SIMS BISHOP**