

Book bans are censorship

Published: Jacksonville.com - Opinion column

Book banning, initially started by religious leaders, has been practiced since the 1600s. Recently, the number of books banned from schools and libraries has been rapidly increasing throughout the United States. Florida is leading that charge with over 1,400 banned books.

Some well-known books temporarily pulled from school shelves for review or permanently banned in various Florida school districts include: The Holy Bible, “I is for Immigrants,” “A Storm Called Katrina,” “To Kill a Mockingbird,” “The Fault in Our Stars,” “The Handmaid’s Tale,” “The Perks of Being a Wallflower,” “The Hate U Give” and more.



Book banning is a form of censorship of knowledge and ideas. It is also a violation of a child's right to access knowledge that could be critically important to their well-being — for both children and adults. It removes the freedom to “seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing or in print, in the form of art, or through any other media" of the child's choice.

Reading can enhance creativity, impart good values, help language development and improve communication skills. Those are just a few reasons why reading is important in learning and education. One of the primary goals and functions in educating children is teaching them to think for themselves. The large majority of books that have been restricted have been children’s books.

In Florida, book bans are created and enforced at a school district level. Not every book is meant for every reader, but each reader should have the freedom and the right to be a part of determining whether a book is meant for them to read or not. It is time for the majority of our community who are against banning books to be heard.

Children must have the right to freedom of thought and conscience. With banning books and censorship of knowledge and ideas, what does that mean for the future of our community? What does that mean for children, adolescents and adults who want to broaden their understanding of the world around them by reading all kinds of books?

Tiffany Le, M.D., Jacksonville