



Assembly on Literature for Adolescents of NCTE

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## ALAN Online News:

### *ALAN's Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Censorship, Submit to the New ALAN Picks, See Changes to ALAN Membership Charge Identifier*

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*In this issue: ALAN's statement on Intellectual Freedom and Censorship, Submit to the new ALAN Picks, Membership Charges*

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### *ALAN's Statement on Intellectual Freedom and Censorship*

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An important aspect of the mission of ALAN is to combat censorship. In response to recent efforts across the United States to control the books, authors, and historical facts educators and teacher librarians may teach to adolescents, the Intellectual Freedom Committee of ALAN states the following position:

We value lively, honest, open discourse and inquiry around the topics raised by young adult authors and their books. Access to these texts which represent the spectrum of human experience is of vital importance to teens and to our democracy.

We believe that talking with young adults and participating in their reading lives is the surest way for teachers, parents, and other trusted adults to help students navigate the complexity and nuance of thought-provoking reading material, rather than simply denying access. We trust adolescents with the liberty to choose their own reading selections, as that freedom of choice encourages students to read and think critically and develop lifelong reading habits.

We advocate for teen access to young adult literature that represents the range of humanity in regard to race, class, gender, sexuality, religious affiliation, body image, neurodiversity, and physical abilities. Every child has the right to see themselves reflected in their school curriculum and the books they read.

We respect the expertise, professionalism, and integrity of librarians and teachers in the thoughtful selection of appropriate materials and topics for teen access in school libraries and classrooms, and we value their trusted support and guidance of young adults' growth as readers.

We affirm the right of parents to influence the reading lives of their own children and express their concerns regarding text selections in school, but we caution that they must not impinge upon the rights of others to freely craft their own reading lives, whether inside or outside the school building.

We encourage all parties to engage in civil discourse with educators themselves about their reasoning for text and topic selections. Regarding the selection of learning materials, we also remind all parties of their obligation to follow with fidelity school board policies and legal processes founded in best practices delineated by professional education organizations, especially by considering these selections in their entirety when determining their appropriateness for availability in the school setting.

We condemn, in the strongest terms, scapegoating and blacklisting practices designed to demonize and dehumanize teachers and librarians for their support of teens in exercising their First Amendment right to free thought and expression.

We stand in solidarity with educators, teacher librarians, and young adult literature authors who have been intimidated, threatened, and challenged due to their advocacy for teens' right to read, and we support their right to express their views freely under the First Amendment.

We join with other professional organizations, including the American Library Association, the National Council of Teachers of English, the International Literacy Association, and the National Council for the Social Studies to affirm and defend students' right to read and pursue both contemporary and historical inquiry without unnecessary and arbitrary barriers.

We know that intellectual freedom is foundational to an educated citizenry and essential to the preservation and practice of democracy. We are dedicated to protecting this natural human right, and therefore, we insist on open access to all school reading materials for all students.

The stakes of inaction are high. We must ensure freedom of intellectual thought and speech, for our teenagers need to wrestle with the complexities, ambiguities, and diversities of human experience in order to gain the wisdom necessary for their successful participation in—and leadership of—our democracy. Our teens of today will be running the country tomorrow. For their future success and ours, we must work together to light the path ahead for our nation's students by opposing the censorship efforts aimed at keeping them in the dark.

### **Statement Authors**

This statement was composed by ALAN's Intellectual Freedom Committee Co-Chairs:

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### **Statement Reviewers**

This statement was reviewed by ALAN's Executive Committee and Board of Directors: [ALAN Executive Committee](#): Mark Letcher, ALAN Executive Director; Danielle King-Watkins, ALAN President; Sarah Ressler-Wright, ALAN Past-President; Jewel Davis, ALAN President-Elect; Daria Plumb, ALAN Treasurer

ALAN Board of Directors: Robert Bittner, Jewel Davis, Shalonda Foster, Morgan Jackson, Jung Kim, Victor Malo-Juvera, Lisa Morris-Wilkey, Keisha Rembert, Julia Torres

For further information and resources, please see our website: [Assembly for the Literature of Adolescents at NCTE](#)

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## **Submit to the New ALAN Picks**

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Write a Book Review for ALAN Picks!

Is there a young adult or middle grades book coming out or recently published (within the past 12 months) that you think would be perfect for educators to use in their curriculum or classroom? We are looking for book reviews by educators, for educators that incorporate culturally responsive teaching strategies and



Individual (\$40/year\*)  
Institutional (\$60/year\*)  
Student (\$10/year\*)

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