FYS 003: Banned Books: Ideology, Suppression, Censorship
fall 2014  M/W 12:30-1:45

Professor Beth Younger
Office: Howard 225
e-mail: beth.younger@drake.edu
office hours: M/W 2:00-3:00 and Thursday 1:00-4:00

Course Description & Goals
This first year seminar will explore, examine, and analyze the practice, function, and ideology of what is commonly known as “book banning.” Often, books are challenged with the best intentions—to protect others (frequently children) from difficult or “offensive” ideas and information. In order to understand these practices and the ideology behind them, we will read banned and challenged books as well as essays and articles on the topic. The course will focus on the social and cultural ideologies that motivate the restriction of reading materials, primarily in the United States. Throughout the semester, we will try to answer various questions about censorship: What kinds of materials are considered “offensive?” Why do some groups (or individuals) try to restrict access to certain books? What are the motivations of these groups, and what are the functions of censorship? We will also grapple with questions of literary and social value, feminism, sexuality, language, and representation.

Required Course Materials
The Perks of Being a Wallflower, Stephen Chbosky
The Handmaid’s Tale, Margaret Atwood
The Catcher in the Rye, J. D. Salinger
Forever, Judy Blume
Annie on My Mind, Nancy Garden
Ghost World, Daniel Clowes
Speak, Laurie Halse Anderson
A Writer’s Reference, Diana Hacker (required)
course packet (available at Copy Cat)

Participation
Your active participation is essential for the success of this class. First Year Seminars are designed to help facilitate your successful transition to college level study, and each student is an important component of the learning experience. This course is also an introduction to college writing, reading, and critical thinking. Participation includes doing all of the assigned reading and writing, but reading the material is just the first step. Please use your voice to ask questions, make points, and discuss your perceptions and ideas. Dialogue and discussion are required and are integral aspects of the course.

Film Lab
You might have noticed that there is a film lab attached to this course. This lab is scheduled on Sundays from 12:00-2:00. We will view films some weeks, but not every week. Attendance is required. I will provide a schedule for the film lab. Film lab will be held in Meredith 228.

Attendance and other course policies
Attendance and promptness are expected. It is important that you understand that I DO NOT distinguish between excused and unexcused absences. I allow two absences without
penalty; if you are absent more than twice, whatever the reason, I reserve the right to lower your course grade by one letter grade per absence. A total of five absences over the semester automatically result in your failure of the course. If you are absent, check with a classmate for any materials you missed—do not email or call me and ask what we covered.

NOTE: No cell phones are allowed in class. If you use or even look at your cell phone during class, I will take it away from you. Second violation: you will be asked to leave and will be marked absent. No laptops allowed unless office of disability services mandates it.

Course Requirements and Grading
Three papers will be assigned throughout the semester. These writings are designed to help you get used to the process of analytical and critical writing. In these papers you will be asked to engage with the texts in this course in a variety of ways, including doing research. Your goal will be to examine and interrogate the ideas and ideologies of the novels we read in light of their status as a “challenged” text.

Each of you will be responsible for a presentation in which you will present your research on a topic related to book banning, freedom of speech, or censorship. Your presentation should focus on a critical overview of the book, the event, and/or the outcome.

One final essay of 6-8 pages will be required. This essay will be your opportunity to demonstrate your engagement with the course materials and with your experience of this FYS. We will discuss this project and the requirements for fulfilling this assignment at length in class.

Note: I will provide an assignment sheet for each assignment. All assignments must be completed in order to pass the course. Also, late assignments will be penalized one full letter grade for each calendar day of lateness. There will be no exceptions.

Grade Distribution
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Assignment</th>
<th>Due Date</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Participation, in class writing</td>
<td>daily</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Papers (10% each)</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Presentation</td>
<td>TBA</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Essay</td>
<td>Dec. 11</td>
<td>30%</td>
</tr>
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Plagiarism
Plagiarism can be defined as the presentation of another’s work as your own, whether by intention or by accident. Failure to acknowledge and cite a source is plagiarism. So is using a paper you’ve written for another class, or having a friend substantially edit your paper. And most definitely downloading a paper from the Internet is plagiarism. Plagiarism is a serious academic (and legal) offense and will result in your failure of this course and possibly suspension or expulsion from the University. As a matter of college policy, all incidents of plagiarism are reported to the Dean of A & S and to the dean of the student’s college (if not A & S).