

## **Rogue Librarians, Bonus Episode Banned Books Week and Season 3 Preview**

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Welcome to the Rogue Librarians, a podcast in which three librarians discuss banned books.

We are your hosts, Marion, Dorothy, and Alanna, and we are the Rogue Librarians.

We are almost ready for our upcoming season, but we didn't want to let Banned Books Week go by without saying hello and teasing our upcoming episodes and sharing important announcements.

First things first, happy Banned Books Week.

Woo-hoo.

Yippee.

Yay.

That may be an oxymoron, but.

Yes, but our *raison d'être* is to discuss banned books.

And as you all know, in 2024, there are already more attempts to ban books than ever before.

But before we get to that, we have a few announcements.

So we've been going through some changes behind the scenes here, and we are going to have to say at least a temporary goodbye to Alana as she pursues some important life goals.

And Alanna, you're really the glue that holds this enterprise together, and we're just going to miss you terribly.

So much.

Well, thank you.

I'm going to miss both of you so much too.

And is it okay if I just spend a few minutes sharing my thoughts on how important this has been to me?

Well, I feel incredibly lucky that I've had the opportunity to work with both of you and that I've been able to read and discuss so many wonderful books over the past two years.

It's been a lot of fun, and I've learned so much from our discussions and our interviews with many fabulous authors.

And I'm feeling really sad that I need to step away from working on our podcast for personal medical reasons.

And I thought I would just give a brief history from my perspective of how this podcast got started and feel free to jump in when I'm finished.

Is that okay?

Sure.

Yes.

Okay.

So I was thinking back to how we started this podcast together in June 2022.

And we, I think the three of us were all thinking about how much we loved podcasts and podcasts about books specifically and what we wanted to potentially do.

And the two of you had already been thinking about banned books.

And I thought that sounded like a really important cause to discuss together and share with others.

So when we originally decided to do this, I had no idea what was going to be involved in starting a podcast.

And that summer, I remember spending a lot of time researching and creating our website, setting up our social media pages, and just figuring out how we were going to record our first episode.

And Dorothy created our logo, Chris created our music, Lizzie came on board to be our audio editor, and we had all of the ingredients we needed to get started.

And we're really lucky that Lizzie was our editor for the first year and that Dorothy took over the editing for the past year, and has done a fabulous job.

Thank you.

And Heather ran our Twitter page until we decided we were not comfortable staying on that platform anymore.

So as the producer of our podcast, I learned so many things and wore many hats behind the scenes, doing things from writing scripts to show notes to corresponding with authors and publicists for our interviews, making suggestions for what to cut from our recordings, uploading our episodes and updating our website and social media feeds.

And now I feel like I have so many talents that I never knew that I could possess and do not know if I will put any of them to use again anytime soon.

But I have learned so much throughout this process.

And I'm so proud of all of the episodes we created.

And I'm also so glad that the two of you will be continuing this podcast without me.

I look forward to listening to you and I hope to join you to record an episode here and there whenever I can.

And I hope our listeners will continue to read great books and spread the word about the importance of fighting for the freedom to read as well.

So thank you to the two of you.

I am so happy that I've had this experience with you.

Well, that list of things that you just said is why you are the glue that holds this enterprise together.

So we are going to have to learn all of those things now as well.

And I will be there to help as you transition.

And I'm sure you will do a fabulous job.

Well, thank you.

Thank you.

And I just want to say it's been just an incredible journey of love to work through this podcast with you and Alanna specifically.

And but for obviously Dorothy and I are going to continue.

But it, you know, you're right.

I mean, this is just become such an important endeavor that we've all taken on.

And none of us had a clue what we were doing when we started.

So I just feel very proud as well.

And a little trepidation now that we're losing our glue.

But we're going to do our very best to keep the quality really high and to just, you know, keep reading and discussing banned books.

So thank you.

Thank you, Alana.

Thank you.

So as I mentioned, Dorothy and I are dedicated to continue.

And we're looking forward to bringing you another exciting season of banned books, as well as special episodes.

In fact, the three of us just had an amazing chat with Nadine Pinede about the December 3rd release of her YA novel, *When the Mapou Sings*.

You won't want to miss this episode.

Nadine was incredible to talk to and shared some of her research about and her personal connection to the country of Haiti, a country which many of you know, was recently falsely maligned during the presidential debates.

So that episode is currently in editing.

Yay, Dorothy, and will be released on October 8th.

We have another interview coming up with a librarian, a fellow librarian and author, Bethanie Finger, which thank you, Alanna, for arranging that.

You're welcome.

She seems great.

So I hope it's a lot of fun to talk with her.

Yeah.

Then in October, don't miss the release of our pre-election special episode in which we discuss current legislation on the ballots affecting book banning, censorship, and criminalizing librarians.

We are also going to try to look into key candidates and their stance on censorship, and the freedom to read, and just the importance of using your vote.

If you find the freedom to read an important issue, we're going to help you figure out who to vote for.

Absolutely.

Just to echo what Dorothy just said, your biggest voice right now is your vote.

We strongly encourage you to do your research and to use your vote, use your voice.

But moving on, we realized that over the past year, we've gotten a little bit away from our original intention, which for this podcast, which is to read and discuss banned books.

While it has been awesome meeting authors and discussing their books and censorship in various forms, we do want to get back to our roots.

We plan to do that by focusing more on our own discussions of the banned books.

That will begin in November with Perks of Being a Wallflower by Stephen Chbosky.

I'm really looking forward to digging into that one.

Then also, I'm very much looking forward to Fun Home by Alison Bechdel.

I'm familiar with the Broadway play, but we'll do the Book in December.

In January, we are going to do another.

Last year in January, we did Are You There God?

It's Me Margaret, or at least that's when we recorded it.

We're going to do Fahrenheit 451, do another look at a historically banned book by Ray Bradbury, which I have not read.

I can't even believe I'm admitting that.

You guys will really like it.

Yeah.

Looking forward to it.

Yeah.

Then in February, we thought we would do Eleanor and Park by Rainbow Rowell because it's a nice love story for Valentine's.

Oh, and I also thought we thought about doing a little special for Banned Books Week, where we book talk some books about banned books.

Say that five times fast.

Yeah.

Good luck.

If we get it together fast enough, we might just attach it here or, hey, maybe it's just more fun to have it as a little extra bonus.

You never know.

A bonus is always a bonus.

We wanted to give you guys also some information for Banned Books Week.

The ALA, which is known as the American Library Association, started Banned Books Week in 1982 because they were quite alarmed at an uptick in attempts to ban books in schools.

It has since been celebrated at all levels of the book community.

Now, we're breaking records again and not in a good way.

The ALA's Office for Intellectual Freedom documented 1,247 demands to censor library books and resources in 2023.

Now, that's the highest level ever documented by OIF in more than 20 years of tracking.

That's 65% more than in 2022, which was already a quote unquote banner year.

So these are not the kinds of statistics that we want to be seeing, and we really need to let our voices be heard to reverse that.

So Banned Books Week focuses on the freedom to read, and this year's theme is Freed Between the Lines.

I love that little play on words.

So you already know, dear listeners, that we think books are meant to be read, and we believe that books can literally save lives.

So finding that right book at the right time is so important.

Of course, book bans and censorship threaten that freedom, and it's just a stepping stone to threaten more freedoms, because they're not going to stop there.

The ALA, they've got many, many resources, which we will put in the show notes.

But they have pointed out that books are not the sole target of attacks orchestrated by conservative parent groups and right-wing media.

School and public librarians are being doxxed.

They're subject to defamatory name calling online.

If you listened to our interview with Amanda Jones, then if you haven't, it's definitely worth a listen to hear what has been happening.

Just all kinds of harassment, direct threats, threatening people's lives.

So it's not just the books, they're going for so much more.

Exactly.

You can also go to our website, [theroguelibrarians.com](http://theroguelibrarians.com) to find a list of resources on our About page, which includes a link to Unite Against Book Bans, which has many suggestions for things to do.

But just to mention a few of them here, if you want to get involved, it's not too late.

Libraries, schools, and bookstores generally have special programs this week, and you can always find titles that someone somewhere doesn't want you to read.

Circulating those books from your public library is the best way to show that not only do we want to read them, but we want them in our libraries.

You can also check out webinars that the ALA has put together, and you can find those links in our show notes.

They'll be talking to some experts, so you might learn something new.

I just want to mention too that if your public library, your local public library is not having a Banned Books Week program or display, ask them why not?

Because I think some of the libraries are probably feeling sufficiently bullied that they don't want to have the book banners come after them.

But maybe the freedom to read people need to come after them, because that's what we're really fighting for is our own freedom.

So just a thought there.

I also heard that you can participate in the stand for the Banned Virtual Readout.

The way to do this is to film yourself reading a favorite banned book and to post your video on the Banned Books Week YouTube channel.

And that information will also be in the show notes.

You can certainly reach out to your favorite banned or challenged author.

And let me tell you, having been a librarian for quite a while and having had the chance to talk to a few authors, both on this podcast and at various conferences over the years, authors do not like being banned.

It's very hurtful to them.

Not just hurtful financially and to their careers, but just personally hurtful.

And so if you want to take the time to write them a quick letter and let them know how much you have benefited from their books, they would be most appreciative.

Yes, Marian, I completely agree with that.

And in addition, if you haven't already checked out the organization Authors Against Book Bans, creators are joining together to try to fight for the freedom to read.

And their website explains what they're trying to do.

And they recommend that you check out Unite Against Book Bans, as well as PEN America and other organizations that are working to fight censorship.

And we've talked to a few authors in our interviews who are part of this organization.

And it's great that they are part of this fight as well.

And it affects not only their livelihoods, but also the opportunity for children to read the really important works that they're putting out there.

So we want to make sure we can do everything we can to support them.

Absolutely.

Thank you, Alanna, for that terrific reminder.

So as always, we hope that our readers will read along with us and join in our discussions in the upcoming season.

So send us your comments, send us your questions, and send us your suggestions for books that you would like to have us discuss.

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As a patron, you receive bonus audio content and we give you personalized book recommendations and other great perks.

Finally, a big thank you to Chris for creating the music, to Heather and Lizzie for their assistance, to Dorothy for editing this episode, and, as Dorothy said, to our patrons for their financial support.

We couldn't have done this podcast without any of them.

Finally, thanks to all of you for reading with us because books are meant to be read.